

presidential election to the centrist candidate Emmanuel Macron, the movement's national presidential electoral vote percentages, led by Marine Le Pen and the Front National party, were higher than anything previously seen in France.

Although Kepel's book helps unravel the growth in French jihadism and how its newest generation led it to the November 2015 Paris attacks, it also provides an important warning about the potential for future conflict within France. When diagnosing this future, Kepel notes that France now contends with

two kinds of protest movements [that] have developed alongside one another: right-wing ethnic nationalism and Islamism as parallel conduits for expressing grievances. They both bear a strong utopian element that restores a mythical dimension to a disastrous social reality by projecting onto it a utopia where those who are left behind today will triumph tomorrow. These two world-views redefine group memberships, solidarities, and enmities along lines that are not defined in terms of social class, even though they are fed by an obsessive fear of losing social status (p. 3).

Kepel's book would be well suited for an undergraduate course related to terrorism in the West, the aftermath of French colonialism, issues of French and European immigration and integration, and connections between jihadi networks in the West and the Arab world. It also provides concise arguments bereft of excessive academic jargon. Those steeped within jihadi studies might find many background information topics covered in prior studies, but Kepel's book nonetheless threads together French society at large, the French Muslim community, and the French jihadosphere. It no doubt will become an important resource for those wanting to better understand French jihadism.

SUSSAN SIAVOSHI, *Montazeri: The Life and Thought of Iran's Revolutionary Ayatollah* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017). Pp. 318. \$29.99 paper. ISBN: 9781316509463

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doi:10.1017/S0020743818001381

Revolutions are fascinating events in the annals of human history. Revolutions occur when a seemingly spontaneous eruption of popular energy leads to unprecedented bursts of violence and, if successful, the collapse of age-old sociopolitical orders, replaced by a new, yet-to-be-defined order, and followed by more violence. While most of those who make revolutions remain anonymous actors of history, key leadership leave their visible imprint. Establishing a new order and holding on to power becomes the challenge of the revolutionaries. In this process, some revolutionaries have participated in building a new order with levers of power that came back to haunt them. Did St-Just and Maximillian Robespierre regret eliminating Georges Danton through the same levers of power that sent them to the gallows a few months later? Did Leon Trotsky or Grigory Zinoviev regret being major participants in creating a new order that would later be used by Stalin to kill both? The answer to both hypothetical questions is probably less important than how these smart actors came to be in such inescapable corners. The answer seems to be in the dynamic relationship between power and principle. Each seems to have opted for power in the hope of returning to their principles at some point in the future.

But this was not the case for the revolutionary under study by Sussan Siavoshi. Grand Ayatollah Hosein Ali Montazeri, was a key actor in Iran's 1979 revolution, and an architect of the Islamic state in Iran. Furthermore, he was a student and lifelong follower of Iran's revolutionary leader, Grand Ayatollah Khomeini. Yet, Montazeri was also a tragic figure who was elected heir-apparent to Khomeini only to stand up to him and the rest of the ruling establishment resulting in his dramatic fall from power. However, his fall was not for want of power but because he maintained his convictions and principles. Siavoshi's work provides new details about his ideas and life.

Siavoshi traces Montazeri's life path from his early upbringing in his native Najafabad through his rise and subsequent downfall as an arch outcast and critique of the Islamic Republic. The book is well written and easy to read. It is also well researched and provides new details on Montazeri's life, intellectual development and political thought, which in turn shed new light on the 1979 revolution. In the first section of Part 1, Siavoshi covers his early life and education as a student of prominent jurist Abdul Karim Haeri-yazdi and later Ruhollah Musavi Khomeini. Montazeri was a bright student who was forthright in asking questions and voicing his opinion, reaching the level of *ijtihad*, independent reasoning, in 1949, allowing him to become a teacher and scholar who had among his students Ali Akbar Rafsanjani and Ali Khamenei. This section of the book also contains a useful discussion of how the Shi'i educational system is organized in religious seminaries and its various schools of thought in the 19th and 20th centuries.

Next, Montazeri's process of politicization and radicalization in the militant 1960s is detailed. Siavoshi notes that, as a follower of Grand Ayatollah Hosein Boroujerdi, similar to the majority of his colleagues, Montazeri neither opposed nor supported Musaddeq; but, that in the early 1960s, he became active and supported Khomeini in his confrontation with the shah, enduring prison, torture, and exile. Siavoshi describes how Nematollah Salehi Najafabadi's book *Shahid-e Javid* (The Eternal Martyr; Qom: 1968) had a profound impact on Montazeri and others. This book gave a new interpretation of, and a more militant analysis on, martyrdom of Imam Hosein in the Battle of Karbala. The new interpretation asked followers of the third Shi'a Imam to take a more proactive position on social and political issues. Here, a discussion of influential 'Ali Shari'ati, a French-educated thinker whose views on revolutionary Shi'ism were similar to the mentioned book, may have added depth to the author's work. Shari'ati had finished his education and returned to Iran as a university lecturer in 1964, and his views may well have influenced the author of *Shahid-e Javid*.

Siavoshi discusses Montazeri's role and impact after the victory of the 1979 revolution in detail, noting that while Khomeini's 1970 book on the rule of jurist, *Vilayat-I Faqih*, provided the framework for the Islamic state in Iran after 1979, it was Montazeri's work on the same subject that detailed the content of such a political system. Hence, not surprisingly Montazeri became a key player in writing the Islamic Republic's constitution. While it is true that the document which was produced under Montazeri's influence later went through changes that turned the Islamic Republic into an even more restrictive construct, it is also true that the document which was originally produced under his guidance restricted much of citizen rights from the very beginning and that Montazeri had no problem with such restrictions.

The book then moves to areas in which Montazeri came into confrontation with the rest of the political establishment: his support for liberation movements and treatment of

opposition activists by the security forces. Siavoshi shows how Montazeri's support for Hizbullah in Lebanon eventually brought him into confrontation with the more pragmatic approach of the rest of the establishment. As contacts between the Regan Administration and the Iranian leadership came close to opening the doors for a new era of relations, elements associated with Montazeri exposed the contacts to the media. As a result, the Iran–Contra ordeal began and a close relative of Montazeri was executed. Perhaps more importantly, Montazeri's takeover of Iran's prison system in 1985 and his confrontation with Khomeini over the prison massacre in the summer of 1988 point to his eventual downfall. In both cases, Montazeri stood by his principles, supporting likeminded movements and treating prisoners humanely. But it was the latter issue that put him on a collision course with Khomeini.

After his fall, Montazeri had plenty of time to reflect on his past and that of the revolution he had played a significant role in creating. The second part of the book provides the reader with translations of some of Montazeri's key writings and Siavoshi's analysis of his legacy. Siavoshi includes writings that discuss Montazeri's influence as a religious and as a political leader, providing insight to his impact on the reform movement in Iran. In these writings we see Montazeri's ability for self-criticism, and his criticism of the ruling establishment after his fall from power. Perhaps most importantly, Siavoshi notes Montazeri's willingness to accept the will of the people and even a secular state if it came about democratically.

Had Montazeri decided to maintain his silence for a few months in 1988 (that is the distance between the opening of his confrontation with Khomeini and his death in 1989), he would have certainly become the supreme leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran with near unlimited influence. But this was not to be, in the age-old dichotomy between power and principle, he chose the latter. Siavoshi's book shows the making of this unique revolutionary personality in detail and is a most welcome addition to the study of the 1979 revolution in Iran.

TAHIA ABDEL NASSER, *Literary Autobiography and Arab National Struggles*, Edinburgh Studies in Modern Arabic Literature (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2017). Pp. 219. \$100.00 cloth. ISBN 9781474420228

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doi:10.1017/S0020743818001393

The topic of Arab autobiography has enjoyed something of a renewal in the years since the publication of Dwight Reynolds' key edited volume *Interpreting the Self: Autobiography in the Arabic Literary Tradition* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 2001). In *Autobiographical Identities in Contemporary Arab Culture* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2014), for example, Valerie Anishchenkova examines contemporary articulations of Arab identity in various media, from autobiographical novels to film, video, and cyber-writing. Yasir Suleiman's *Arabic, Self and Identity: A Study in Conflict and Displacement* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), meanwhile, combines sociolinguistic and qualitative research methods to explore