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by Kassir, others might take issue with the notion that the Beirut-ization of the country is the highest possible aim, and that a “Westernized Mediterranean Arab metropolis” (28) is the highest conceivable praise for a modern Middle Eastern city.

Beirut has always lent itself to rhetorical hyperbole, and Kassir offers his share of romantic panegyric. In the final analysis, the most significant and lasting legacy of Kassir’s interrupted life may be found in this erudite, evocative, and highly compelling testament to the city he called home.

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The editor begins this weighty book with an updated Weberian argument that modernity, neoliberalism, technological advances, and globalization will inevitably lead to an Islam that is more individualistic, democratic, bourgeois, and secular. Even radical “Shari’a based” movements will crumble under the irresistible pressure of market-driven transformations.

The first segment of the book is significantly entitled “Islam, Economy and Politics.” It contains an essay arguing that Islam and capitalism are not incompatible, another opposing Olivier Roy’s dismissal of “political Islam,” a third attempting to demonstrate that the Turkish Gülen movement is best understood as a Muslim form of global neo-liberalism, and a fourth tracing the intellectual career of a “post-Islamist” cleric in Pakistan. The conceptual alternation between high-level theory and focused biography continues in the next section, “Globalization and Islam,” which begins with a wide-ranging chapter documenting the rise of a “transnational Islamic public” and continues with a broad argument representing Salafism as a modern rejection of modernity. The third piece is another intellectual history, comparing the theology of Yusuf al-Qaradawi with the moral claims of Chandra Muzzaffar. The fourth returns to Gülen and other “post-political” Turkish charitable foundations, concluding that “civil Islam” both challenges and accommodates the secularist Kemalist state.

The third part, “Muslim Society in the West,” contains one impressionistic outline of the salience of “Islamophobia” in Britain, as it affects converts.
The remaining chapters are more conventionally sociological, and use the comparative method to study Muslim groups within predominantly Catholic populations. The first analyzes two miniscule Islamic “communities” in Poland, one consisting of long-term and well-assimilated residents (the Tatars), the other a motley, scattered, apolitical and almost invisible group of recent immigrants. Nonetheless, under the influence of a generalized European Islamophobia, the migrants are regarded with suspicion, not only by the Polish Catholic majority, but also by the Tatars, who fear being labeled Islamic radicals by their countrymen. Another chapter contrasts the strategies adopted by two distinct Muslim immigrant groups in the “religious field” of Brazil. One group, composed of successful business people, is homogenous ethnically and is locally confined. It is resistant to assimilation and also strongly assertive of Muslim identity. The other consists primarily of educators; it is ethnically heterogeneous and physically dispersed. Its members are moderate, cosmopolitan, and concerned with avoiding any confrontation with their Christian neighbors. The final piece in this section describes the efforts of the Association of Young Muslims of Italy (GMI) to gain a voice in the Italian public sphere. Combating the Italian assumption that Catholicism is a crucial marker for national identity, these children of immigrants strive to integrate themselves by educational outreach and participation in local level cultural activities. In terms of religious practice and belief, the members of the GMI—especially girls—tend to ignore the traditional ritual demands of Islam in favor of consulting their own consciences. From the evidence of these chapters, some Muslims in the West are becoming or remaining less “traditional” while others (at least in Brazil) are not. Numbers, heterogeneity, degree of integration, time of residence, level of education and amount of dispersion are all factors that appear relevant. Whether the number of “Shari’a-oriented” Muslims will increase should Islamophobia take a stronger hold is not considered, nor are more zealous Muslim communities studied.

Six extremely varied chapters make up the final segment, which is entitled “Islam and Muslim Societies.” Here one would expect to find the strongest proofs of the general argument. However, what we find instead is a decidedly mixed bag. One paper is a dense historical account of the varieties of Islam appearing in a Nigerian city, another provides a similar historical account of Islamists in Syria, unfortunately predicting that they will easily be co-opted or suppressed by the Assad regime. A third paper considers the ways in which Islamic dress has been adopted and interpreted by Muslims, another describes state-religion relationships in Malaysia, yet another delves deeply into the role of Islamic welfare groups in promoting civil society in
Indonesia, and the final chapter is a preliminary study of views about the treatment of expatriate workers in the UAR.

Some of the chapters do suggest that Islam is indeed destined to be “domesticated” under the pressure of the global marketplace. Much of the data, however, is ambiguous, narrowly focused, or highly abstract. The secularization argument is further undermined by the absence of attention to more conservative Islamist groups. That this is so does not detract from the volume’s considerable interest, which derives mainly from the variety of topics covered.

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Akram Khater seeks to reformulate a number of broadly accepted tropes about the early modern Middle East: the centrality of Islam to the Levantine historical experience, the association of secularism with modernity, and the opposition of religious and historical studies. In tracing the history of Hindiyya al-‘Ujaimi’s meteoric rise and fall, Khater argues that Christian institutions in eighteenth-century Mount Lebanon became a site for remaking the meanings of gender, religion, and modernity in the Levant. This book tells the remarkable tale of an eighteenth-century Aleppan nun whose career as a visionary and saint both reflected and contributed to the remaking of Maronite relations with the Vatican, as well as the self-conscious creation of an “authentic” and authoritative Eastern Christianity in Bilad al-Sham. Hindiyya al-‘Ujaimi, born into a wealthy and pious family in Aleppo, confounded familial expectations from an early age with her absolute commitment to her religious practice and her increasingly personal and powerful visions of Christ. Her convictions engendered a series of conflicts with family and church authorities that eventually led to her leaving Aleppo, at the age of twenty-six, to start a new convent in the mountains of Lebanon.

Mount Lebanon, conceived of as a naturally spiritual landscape in direct opposition to the materialist milieu of cosmopolitan Syrian cities like Aleppo, was home to a number of monasteries and convents that became sites of contest over ecclesiastical authority. Hindiyya’s institution, founded after four years of struggle and failure, was especially problematic for Maronite