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ing to Ayalon, the region as a whole has considerably improved in its journalistic endeavors and professional development. This fairly detailed historical analysis of the Arab press, using both Arabic and western language sources, does not claim to be a comprehensive history of the region's press. However, by examining the early development of the Arab press in such a diverse geographical area, it opens new areas for further inquiry and research, in particular the role of the press during the last decades of the 20th century.

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Faith and Freedom: Women's Human Rights in the Muslim World, edited by MAHNAZ AFKHAM. (Gender, Culture, and Politics in the Middle East) 244 pages, notes, appendix, index. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1995. \$39.95 ISBN 0 8156-2667 3

The chapters in this excellent collection were written for a 1991 Washington conference on women's rights in the Muslim world. They include what has become an almost obligatory chapter on the compatibility of women's rights with the tenets of Islam. However, for the most part, these analyses go far beyond "cutting edge." They are complex and subtle examinations of gender, class and ethnicity in the context of state, regional and global political economic systems.

As someone completing a book on the prospects for democratization in the region, I admire especially the incisive way that the contributors to this volume examine civil rights and political behavior. The authors compare the rights of women and ethnic minorities, connect the content of personal status laws to the international politics of clerical alliances and examine the politics of sexuality in several contexts. However, the most remarkable contribution by this volume to the current discourse on democracy in Muslim societies is its sophisticated treatment of religious fundamentalism.

In chapter after chapter, the politics of Islamist movements are woven into analyses of class and ethnic conflict, struggles over the control of political regimes and the impact of global economic restructuring on domestic societies and political economies. Here, religious fundamentalism ceases to be a sacred cow or one side in a clash between civilizations, becoming instead a collection of social movements that employ a religious idiom to debate contemporary problems—and to justify the claims of movement leaders to a right to dominate the politics of state and region.

Using what I have privately come to think of as "Fatima Mernissi's thesis," several contributors look at the conflict of interests between women and the men from social groups making up the core constituency of Islamism. Their insights from political economy are combined with psychological and sociological models of gender relations, illuminating the ugly and frequently violent gender politics of fundamentalist movements. These chapters add significantly to the dialogue between those who see Islamism as a postmodernist phenomenon—a reaction to the failures of modernization—and those who see it as a local idiom of modernity itself, as an instrument for challenging crumbling "old regimes."

Among the best qualities of this collection are its readability and the inclusion of case studies illustrating major theoretical issues. Thus it promises to be a good book for teaching, a proposition I plan to test next semester in a course devoted to democratization in the Middle East.

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Modern History & Politics: Maghreb

Algérie: le grand dérapage, by ABED CHAREF. 526 pages, biographies, glossary. La Tour d'Aigues (Vaucluse): Editions de l'Aube, 1994. FF160 (Paper) ISBN 2 87678 196 4

L'Algérie dans la tourmente, by JUAN GOYISOLO. Translated from Spanish by Mohamed Saad Eddine El Yamani. 101 pages. Strasbourg: La Nuée Bleue, 1994. Distributed by Stendhal Diffusion, 16 Rue des Grands Augustins, 75006 Paris. FF78 (Paper) ISBN 2 7165 0344 3

Abed Charef is Algeria's premier political reporter and one of the few to work in both the Francophone and Arabophone press. His coverage of the October 1988 riots for the Algiers bureau of Agence France Presse led to his first book, *Octobre* (Algiers: Laphonic, 1989), which, despite flaws in its analysis, remains the best account so far of that momentous event. Now with the excellent Algiers weekly, *La Nation*, which supports a negotiated solution to the country's current conflict, Charef has narrowly avoided assassination on more than one occasion.

Algérie, le grand dérapage is a riveting account of the 1989-94 period and must reading for anyone interested in contemporary Algerian politics. The narrative begins with the liberalization of the political system that followed the October riots, reaches mid point with the January 1992 coup d'état and concludes with the stalemate in the dirty war between the army and armed Islamist groups. The centerpiece of the story is, not surprisingly, the rise of the FIS and the changing manner in which the Algerian power apparatus met the Islamist challenge.

In discussing the 1990-91 period, Charef underscores the deep skepticism of the army high command toward the political and economic reforms that were under way at the time. The army took a dim view of the numerous street marches organized by the FIS, Berberist parties and other long repressed social forces; its security service—the notorious *Sémité Militaire*—set out early and with considerable success to bring both the newly formed political parties and "independent" press organs under its control. The army, as Charef tells it, developed an abiding hatred of the FIS, and the FIS's strike of May-June 1991 provided the first opportunity for the generals to administer a blow to "those who thought