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Book Reviews – Buchbesprechungen – Comptes Rendus

Robyn Creswell: *City of Beginnings: Poetic Modernism in Beirut*. Princeton & Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2019. 272 pp. [series: *translation/transnation*] ISBN 978-0691182186 (hardcover).

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Robyn Creswell opens his excellent study of a strangely neglected topic—Modernism in the Beirut of the 1950’s—in dramatic fashion, as though it were a novel: ‘It is a scene out of Balzac: a young man from the provinces arrives in the city, hoping to make his fame as a writer.’ That ‘young man’ is the Syrian poet known—and now world-famous—as Adonis (Adūnīs in Arabic), born ‘Alī Aḥmad Sa‘īd Esber in 1930 to an Alawite family of farmers in a remote Syrian village. Though this is not a biography of Adonis, or only *en passant*, as it were, he dominates the account, and rightly so. Of the book’s six chapters, four are devoted to his work and influence, and they are consistently illuminating. To my knowledge, this is the first scrupulous and perceptive study in English both of Adonis’s early poetry and of his impact as a critic, anthologist and literary theorist. Perhaps more importantly, it is the first detailed account of Modernism (*al-ḥadātha* in Arabic) as it took shape, quite tumultuously, in the Beirut of the Fifties. The first two chapters give a vivid picture of that city in the post-war period, complete not only with its literary and political factions and disputes but extending even to its architectural aspects, such as the Phoenicia InterContinental Hotel, designed by Edward Durrell Stone (the lead-architect of New York’s Museum of Modern Art), and which opened in 1961; the hotel with its ‘white, delicately perforated façade’, as the Lebanese journalist Samir Kassir put it, served as a visible symbol of newly Modernist Beirut, helping to enhance the popular image of that city as ‘the Paris of the Middle East.’ The photograph of the Phoenicia InterContinental that Creswell includes, among several other striking photos in the book, gives a good sense of its imposing presence.

In his Introduction and first two chapters, the author provides a close account of the various rivalries and factions contending for influence in Beirut. Pride of place goes to the innovative journal *Shīr* (Poetry), founded in 1957 by the poet Yūsuf al-Khāl on the model of Harriet Monroe’s *Poetry Chicago*. The journal ran to forty-four issues from 1957 to 1964 and then from 1967 to 1970. Its striking abstract cover-design, shown here facing an equally austere table of contents page from 1958, announced something new and radical. Poetry, and

poetry alone, would be, and continue to be, its focus. But from the first issue, it represented a radical challenge to other factions, whether traditionalist or Marxist or nationalist. First, it openly strove to break with the rigid conventions of Classical Arabic verse with its intricate prosody and rhyme; and second, it promoted openness to literature world-wide, as opposed to the narrowly defined Arabic tradition. To this end it espoused translations from a wide range of foreign poets—English and American (Whitman, Pound, Eliot), French (Valéry, St.-John Perse, Michaux, Bonnefoy) and Spanish (Lorca, Jiménez, Paz), Italian (Quasimodo) and German (Rilke). But translation—or *naql* in Arabic, a word of varied nuance—served a deeper ambition: along with the break with conventional form, it served as ‘a tool to redefine poetry as such’, as Creswell puts it. As al-Khāl wrote in the introduction to his *Anthology of American Poetry* in Arabic translation, ‘One of the guiding principles of *Shīr* is that a creative engagement with the poetic heritage of the world is necessary for the renaissance of Arabic poetry.’ Years later, Adonis would complain that

What we did with *Shīr* magazine has not been given, even now, its necessary critical reading. It had been studied, for the most part, antagonistically; or else it has been studied for what we did with form the escape from meter, rhyme, inherited standards, etc. But these are surface readings. Our experience at the magazine, as an experience of poetic creativity, was essentially cultural and civilizational—one that transformed the concept of poetry itself as well as the way it is written.

Such aims provoked a furor. They appeared to be an assault on the integrity, and the luster, of Arabic poetry as it had stood for centuries. The traditional forms and conventions were sacrosanct. Moreover, classical Arabic poets and critics had always been blithely unaware of, and indifferent to, the poetry of other cultures. Poetry in Arabic was seen as supreme, and incomparable, in its consummate perfection. Even worse, to ‘transform the concept of poetry itself’ led to disturbing innovations, such as the prose poem (*qaṣīdat al-nathr*) which to other more traditional poets, such as the brilliant Iraqi ‘pan-Arabist’ poet Nāzīk al-Malā’ika (1923–2007), herself something of an innovator in the use of ‘free verse’, seemed to betray a misunderstanding of ‘the limits of poetry’. The diverse strands of the controversies that surrounded the little magazine are too intricate to be unravelled in a brief review. Suffice it to say that Creswell untangles them expertly. And his cast of warring characters is quite large. They include not only the literary traditionalists but Marxists, who espoused a poetry that was *engagé* (in the journals *al-Ṭarīq* and *al-Thaqāfa al-waṭanīya*), and nationalists of various stripes, represented by the journal *Adab*. He presents vivid cameos of such figures as Charles Malik, philosopher and diplomat with his espousal of ‘Personalism’; or Anṭūn Sa’āda (executed 1949) and his Syrian Social

Nationalist Party (SSNP), to which Adonis belonged (earning him a year in a Syrian jail); the Mahjar ‘School’ active in Brazil and Argentina; or the controversial, CIA-funded Congress for Cultural Freedom (CCF) with Ignazio Silone and Stephen Spender as its blundering foreign advisors. Even the great Iraqi poet Badr Shakir al-Sayyāb makes a somewhat ambiguous appearance under these auspices. One issue that preoccupied the CCF (and others) was whether an openness to foreign literature would have the effect of weakening indigenous traditions. Thus, at the Rome Conference of 1961, Stephen Spender chided Adonis for his ‘complete disregard for the ancient heritage of Arabic poetry’, a rebuke as astonishing for its ignorance as for its inaccuracy. Creswell remarks with justified asperity: ‘It is somewhat breathtaking to read an English poet who knew little to nothing about Arabic literature rebuking Adonis, a *poeta doctus* if there ever was one, for breaking with his own heritage.’

These opening chapters provide context for what is the true heart of the book: a rich and subtle consideration of Adonis’s early poetry and criticism under four rubrics. These are, first, in Chapter Three, an analysis of *The Songs of Mihyar the Damascene* of 1961, usually seen as a ‘turning-point’ in Adonis’s work as well as a powerful contribution to the *Shīr* program of ‘transforming’ Arabic poetry. The sequence bears an epigraph from Hölderlin, a resolutely ‘foreign’ influence, which Creswell in a rare lapse misquotes, though he translates it correctly (it should read: *Warum, o schöne Sonne, genügst du mir...nicht?*). The strange, shadowy, indeed vaporous, figure of Mihyar has inspired much comment. He is ‘man’ but at the same time, a kind of ghost, even the shadow of a ghost. He seems to exist, if he exists at all, in a kind of occultation, like the dim image on a photograph in the developing tray that never quite comes into focus. Even so, he is a compelling figure—or perhaps I should say, a compelling absence—as one of the opening poems, a ‘ritualistic eulogy of the hero’, as Creswell terms it, shows:

He does not know how to speak this speech.
He does not know the voice of deserts.
For he is a seer, stony-slumbered.
But he is freighted with far-off tongues....

In Chapter Four, the author turns to the Arabic prose poem which I mentioned earlier. Adonis, influenced by Suzanne Bernard’s *Le Poème en prose de Baudelaire jusqu’à nos jours* (1959), saw in the form the possibility of a ‘new music’. In a manifesto of 1960, written while he was living in Paris on a one-year fellowship, he wrote that ‘the prose poem has its music, but it is not a music that submits to the old, canonized rhythms. Instead, it is a music that responds to the experience of dynamism and our new life—a rhythm that renews itself in every instant.’ It didn’t hurt that the new hybrid form represented a revolt, a ‘quadi-

anarchistic gesture of individual rebellion against classical norms.’ In this chapter, Creswell invokes the powerful influence on Adonis of the great French poet St.-John Perse (whose complete poetry Adonis translated). Perse was long a discernible influence on Adonis whose verses often tacitly echo his and it is good to find him acknowledged here (though Creswell claims that he is virtually forgotten nowadays. Not true: I read him almost daily!)

This chapter also includes a lengthy discussion of the poet Unsī al-Ḥājj (1937–2014) and his contributions to the Arabic prose poem, as well as his translations of the bizarrely deranged French modernist Antonin Artaud—a hysterical author not calculated to curb the Lebanese poet’s unbridled outbursts. ‘I seek a virgin scream but do not find even a hesitant murmuration’ is one of the poet’s calmer ejaculations (I use the word advisedly). Creswell provides a translation of two of his works, including the violent masturbatory fantasy ‘The Bubble of Origin, or the Heretical Poem,’ from his collection *Lan* of 1960. This strikes me, at least in translation, as the sheerest bilge, lacking any recognizable poetic merit. It is a shame that Creswell finds it necessary to devote so many pages to this studiously unhinged poet while saying almost nothing about the highly original Syrian poet and dramatist Muḥammad al-Maghūṭ though he does acknowledge him in a note. (Readers interested in al-Maghūṭ can read a selection of his poems in the excellent *Joy Is Not My Profession*, translated by John Asfour and Alison Burch)¹.

Creswell’s most interesting chapter may be his fifth, ‘The Counter Canon’, on Adonis’s work as an anthologist and, in particular, his monumental, and quite radical, *Dīwān al-shīr al-‘arabī* (Anthology of Arabic Poetry) of 1964, in three volumes (the fifth edition of 2010 is in four volumes). The anthology represented nothing less than a ‘revision of the *turāth*’, i. e. the canonical tradition. Creswell shows just how drastically Adonis reconfigured the tradition. Thus, he excludes all panegyric (*madḥ*), all vituperative verse (*hijā’*), both of which genres constitute the bulk of traditional Arabic verse. It had always been one of Adonis’s ambitions to sever poetry from politics, in this case state sponsorship of canonical anthologies. As he put it, alluding to Mallarmé’s dictum, (‘to purify the dialect of the tribe’) this was ‘to purify the poetic tradition of politics.’ What we are left with in his anthology is what Creswell calls ‘the poetics of melancholy’, a compendium of poems of lament (*marthīya*). Celebrated poems are slashed, e. g. Abū Tammām’s great ode on the conquest of Amorium, reduced to a few lines. There follows an interesting discussion of the role of *ta’wīl* (meaning both ‘reversion to the origin’ and a form of hermeneutics) in Adonis’s method of ‘excavating the buried pluralism of the *turāth*.’

¹ al-Maghūṭ, Muḥammad 1994.

The concept of *ta'wīl* is, of course, usually associated with Shi'ite, and especially Ismaili Shi'ite, practices of interpretation: the endeavor to discern the hidden (*bāṭin*) meanings lurking beneath literal (*ẓāhir*) statements. Adonis employs this ancient method in interpreting the classical heritage and yet, perhaps unsurprisingly, this is all in the service of futurity. It is, as Creswell describes it, 'a revisionary fracturing of its [i. e. the tradition's] unity and an attempt to identify the historical precursors of an as-yet-unrealized Arab modernism.' Creswell's discussion of this is one of the most valuable and astute of his readings of Adonis's method.

This chapter leads quite logically into the author's sixth chapter on 'the modernist elegy'. For Adonis is very much a poet of elegy, as shown in the last section of *The Songs of Mihyar*. Here he eulogizes such figures as Abū Nuwās, a poet at once sublime and scurrilous, Bashshār ibn Burd, a poet of doubtful orthodoxy, and al-Ḥallāj, the great visionary Sufi executed for blasphemy in 922—for Adonis (as for Louis Massignon, the French scholar who influenced Adonis) a 'Christ-like figure of resurrection or indeed an Adonis-like figure of vegetal rebirth'. In this chapter, Creswell also discusses Adonis's *A Tomb for New York* of 1970, an 'experimental' poem that reads (to me at least) as a hodge-podge of diverse influences (Lorca, Whitman, the French tradition of the *tombeau*-genre, etc.) that never cohere successfully.

In an epilogue, covering the years from 1979 to 2011, Creswell discusses Adonis's enthusiastic initial support for the Iranian Revolution, an ignoble misstep in an otherwise honorable career. Even with Creswell's explanations, it is hard to understand how the poet, always intent on severing poetry from politics, could welcome Khomeini's thuggish assumption of power, let alone his brutal and murderous policies. Adonis even wrote a wretched scrap of doggerel, duly published in a newspaper (and later suppressed), to celebrate the event. Within a year, Adonis had revised his view as Khomeini's true agenda became unmistakably apparent. As Creswell summarizes his disillusioned position: 'Khomeini turned out to be a politician after all.'

City of Beginnings, originally the author's doctoral dissertation at New York University, is meticulously documented. Its bibliography is exemplary. It is also very well written, with little, if any, of the sort of jargon that usually deadens literary-historical studies; it is a pleasure to read, both for the lucidity of its prose as for the tacit but evident sympathy of imagination that enlivens it throughout. Creswell's translations are exact but nuanced; and this is especially on display in his translations of poems. For example, his version of Adonis's 'The New Noah' (*Nūḥ al-jadīd*) of 1958, a magnificent poem, is beautifully executed; it gives one the hope that he will now publish a selection of his translations from Adonis's poetry, including his *magnum opus* 'The Book' (*al-*

Kitāb), his masterpiece (written after the period covered here). Finally, Creswell succeeds admirably in his initial aim. He has set Modernist Beirut firmly on the map.

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In the dynastic history of China, the period from 800 to 1400 is conventionally remembered as a discreditable age of political disunity and intricate interstate relations, bracketed by the mighty Tang (618–907) and Ming (1368–1644) dynasties. It was also a time when “barbarian” incursions from the north intensified again as the Khitan, Jurchen, Tangut, and Mongol successively established their regimes and conquered parts or all of China. On the other hand, this period has witnessed a dramatic upsurge of visual and material sources that significantly deepen our understanding of the vitality and prosperity of the time, as well as the specific multi-state and multicultural contexts. Consisting of in-depth case studies of various forms of sources, this volume, which originates from the grand Conference on Middle Period China held at Harvard in 2014, represents a collective effort of scholars at the forefront of Chinese art history, archaeology, and history to illuminate this pivotal age in Chinese history. Through examinations of a multiplicity of visual and material cultures, it aims to show the numerous connections between these visual cultures and politics, literature, trade, religion, class, and region (p. 12).

The eight essays contained in the volume are divided into four pairs — “Making Art in Funeral and Ritual Contexts”, “Setting a Scene”, “Appreciating the Written Word”, and “Cross-Cultural Transfers”. Relying on a meticulous study of twelfth-century decorated tombs in Henan and Shanxi, Deng Fei tackles “who made these [...] tombs” and “how were they built and decorated” (p. 42). By taking a look at the brick makers, clay carvers, and painters, Deng labels these decorated tombs as “modular constructions” that testify the emergence of “moderately wealthy families” that did not follow the cultural lead of the literati (p. 75). Focusing on three late twelfth-century paintings depicting Buddhist arhats, Phillip E. Bloom interrogates the specific approaches adopted by the painters to show the mediation between the mundane and supramundane. In particular, these paintings render that otherwise hidden aspects of internal ritual visible, thus mediating and enacting Buddhist belief.

Fan Jeremy Zhang sets out to examine the popular culture of the thirteenth century by linking paintings, bronze mirrors, ceramic pillows, printed illustrations

and poems and plays of the period. By scrutinizing the complex interconnections between the performing arts and visual arts, as Zhang cogently argues, secular theater exerted different influences on viewers of different walks of life and it also provided venues for the spread of Quanzhen Daoism, thus “constitut[ing] a crucial development of Jin and Yuan visual culture [and] heralding the full blossom of theatrical imaginary in the subsequent Ming dynasty” (p. 147). Drawing on poems, maps, and paintings about the Ten Views of West Lake, Duan Xiaolin investigates the interplay and tension between text and image and their influences on the viewers “to capture ephemeral moments and to associate them indelibly with this cultural landmark” (p. 183). Rather than solely illustrating the scenes, that paintings provide a particular way of describing and representing the landscape and function as an effective medium to enhance people’s attachment to certain locations around the lake with the lake.

The third pair of essays center around the educated literati during the Southern Song (1127–1276) to demonstrate how intellectual values and market forces combined shaped the viewing process. Hui-Wen Lu begins with a study of a brick epitaph that was attributed to the fourth-century eminent calligrapher Wang Xianzhi (344–386) to analyze the fierce debate upon its authenticity in the early thirteenth century. Relating the brick to Wang Xizhi’s (303–361) Orchid Pavilion Preface (*Lantingxu*), Lu forcefully argues that although it was a fabricated work, the circulation of its rubbings and imitations reflected Song literati’s enthusiastic endorsement of calligraphy and connoisseurship, displaying the creation story of the tradition that elevated the Wangs to the position of gods of calligraphy. Patricia Buckley Ebrey focuses on some two hundred-odd colophons written by Zhu Xi (1130–1200) to show the Southern Song literati’s interest in antiquities and collecting of art and books. From these colophons, modern readers are able to grasp the “social world in which educated men found meaning and pleasure in showing others pieces of writing that they carefully preserved” (p. 250). Thanks to the development of woodblock printing and Neo-Confucian academies, this world further expanded the audience for handwritten documents and facsimiles of them.

The two essays in the last section turn to the aspects of cultural contact and material exchange of the period. Inspired by the motif of “bird and basin” in two late Tang tomb murals, Liu Jie links them to the Tang practice of setting small pools in gardens, which she traces to the influences of Persian products. Although being a quite popular theme in the Tang, in later times it gradually became rare due to “the fading of interest in foreign gold and silver objects” (p. 280). In contrast to these Chinese paintings appropriated Persian artistic traditions, Li Yiwen shows in her chapter how Japanese users added inscribed

Buddha images to Chinese bronze jars and mirrors and made them serve new ritual purposes. While these Chinese objects landed at Japanese ports, their social and cultural contexts changed accordingly so that their perception was mixed with both the Chinese makers' craftsmanship and the Japanese users' imagination of China, thus revealing "the unwritten interactions and exchanges among different groups of people from different regions" (p. 313).

Visual and material sources have been traditionally extensively utilized by art historians and they together depict a vibrant artistic world of China between 800 and 1400. The essays in this volume show, however, that visual and material cultures are being more widely studied by scholars across the disciplines, because they "reflected, adapted to, and reproduced the culture and society around them" (p. 18). Through analysis of paintings, ceramics, tomb bricks, and bronze mirrors, many previously obscured aspects of the cultures and societies became more visible and accessible. Thanks to the visual and material cultures, we are now able to have a stronger appreciation of the richness of the period, ranging from theater, travel, trade, ritual practices, to life of commoners and cross-cultural exchanges, of which extant textual sources are limited whereas visual materials are relatively abundant.

More importantly, this volume represents a rapidly advancing trend of the field to go beyond conventional dynastic periodization of Chinese history. As the title of the volume suggests, the essays are devoted to the "Middle Period" instead of the Eurocentric designations such as "medieval" or "Middle Age". Covering approximately six centuries years from the second half of the Tang to the early Ming, "Middle Period" is far broader than a dynasty or a century, thus enabling a better understanding of the linear narratives of Chinese history. In doing so, the contributors collectively remind the readers to shift away from periodizing visual and material cultures on the basis of dynastic changes but to pay more attention to this "grey zone in transformation, where old and new ideas overlapped and converged" (p. 1).

For someone whose interest rests more on the non-Han peoples of this period, I am pleased to see that two essays (Deng's and Zhang's) touch upon the question of Non-Han ruling houses, including the Khitan, Jurchen, and Mongol. Yet in both cases we can detect only little impact in the change in the ethnicity of the ruling house on tomb design and decoration. In many respects, this resonates with Li's (2008) insightful study of the Liao dynasty (907–1125) tombs at Xuanhua, as locality comes through as more important than political legitimacy to the development of visual and material cultures. However, if our focus of our observation is shifted further north, we may acquire a more lively picture of the visual and material cultures marked by indigenous traditions of non-Han peoples and trans-regional interactions (Steinhardt 1997; Kuhn 1998; Wu 2013).

This minor caveat aside, this volume is a timely addition to the existing scholarship about visual and material cultures of China from 800 to 1400, extending our understanding of the cultural and economic dynamism during the period. Full with intriguing observations and thought-provoking syntheses, it is bound to an indispensable book which will definitely inspire future researchers on the perennial topic in Chinese and Asian history.

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Islam in Pakistan: A History, by Muhammad Qasim Zaman, is an intellectual history of Islamic modernism in relation to its rivals: the traditional ‘ulama and the Islamist religio-political parties. The book traces the fortunes of these different Islamic orientations, especially the decline in Islamic modernism, over the course of the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, from the last decades of the British period through the seventy year history of Pakistan. Zaman approaches this topic through a detailed examination of the writings of representative ideologues of modernism, traditionalism, and Islamism, with a particular focus on debates about the desired nature of the Pakistani state, legal reform, and the position of religious minorities. While Zaman reviews Pakistan’s political history and various moments of mass agitation, his focus remains on the intellectual debates rather than attempting a sociological or ethnographic approach.

Zaman’s comprehensive presentation of these debates is both timely and long overdue. While it is unwise to overestimate the role of religion in shaping Pakistani history—a history of chronic economic underdevelopment, oscillation between military misrule and weak democracy, ethno-linguistic conflict, struggles between the central government and regional demands for autonomy, and an unenviable position at the frontline of the two major global conflicts of the last seventy years, the Cold War and the War on Terror—disagreements about the nature of Islam and its appropriate relationship to the state run through many of the issues that roil Pakistani society from the status of religious minorities, to laws on marriage, divorce, and domestic violence, to how to combat or contain Islamist militancy.

Zaman defines Islamic modernism as a “complex of religious, intellectual, and political initiatives aimed at adapting Islam [...] to the challenges of life in the modern world.” (3) The modernists claim that the true values of Islam embodied in the Qur’an and the example of the Prophet are largely in accord with modern liberalism and the nation-state, and are not necessarily represented by the scholarly tradition of Islam as it has developed over the centuries. This latter scholarly tradition is the basis for the claim to religious authority of the ‘ulama, whose members in Pakistan mostly adhere to either the Deobandi or the Barelvi traditions. Meanwhile, the Islamist groups, such as Mawdudi’s Jama’at-i

Islami, are suspicious of both Western liberal values and what they view as the built up accretions of the Islamic scholarly tradition.

Zaman traces the fortunes of these three orientations from their origins in the British period through independence and the formation of the Pakistani state up to the present moment. Many of the personalities (e. g. Ashraf Ali Thanawi, Muhammad Iqbal, Fazlur Rahman, Abu 'Ala Mawdudi) and events (e. g. the Khilafat Movement, the 1949 Objectives Resolution, the anti-Ahmadi agitations) discussed in the book will be known to readers familiar with the history and pre-history of Pakistan. What Zaman provides are the detailed ins and outs of the debates on these issues and the negotiations, contentions, and alliances between the state and the proponents of the different Islamic orientations. The different positions taken by the modernists, the traditionalist 'ulama, and Islamists on the nature and limits of state sovereignty and on what it might mean for Pakistan to be an *Islamic* state are the primary focus of Zaman's discussion. The increasing exclusion of religious minorities, especially Ahmadis, and the beleaguered position of traditional Sufi practices are also addressed.

The question that animates Zaman's project is how and why did Islamic modernism lose its intellectual vitality and never succeed in displacing the religious authority of the traditionalist 'ulama among the general populace, nor withstand the rise of Islamism, despite modernism's prominence in the early decades of Pakistan's history. One factor is the modernists' lack of any independent institutional bases, comparable to the associations and ever-multiplying madrasas of the 'ulama or the Islamist organizations and political parties. Another factor impeding modernism's appeal outside of elite circles might be the contradiction that Zaman points out between the modernists' proclamation of an ethic of justice and equality and their close alliances or even collusion with Pakistan's authoritarian rulers. But is this really a contradiction? An ideology whose conception of justice focuses mostly on the civil liberties of the individual without a serious critique of the economic and power structures that constrain the lives and prosperity of the vast majority of the Pakistani population will have a limited appeal for any but the elite. And the position of the ruling elite is tied to the stability of the state, even when that must be maintained through authoritarian measures. This may also be the root of modernism's lack of institution building and decline in intellectual creativity. "Modernism's control of or proximity to the levers of political power has not required a concomitant investment in the bolstering of its intellectual defenses." (p. 277)

While highlighting modernism's decline, Zaman also notes its continuing survival; "the Pakistani governing elite retain their modernist impulses" (p. 277), modernist legislation such as the 1961 Muslim Family Laws Ordinance continues

to stand while the draconian Hudood Ordinance has been defanged, and modernist arguments continue to be deployed by the judiciary and the government to avoid executing those accused of blasphemy. It would be a worthwhile project for another scholar to examine the roots of this survival within the judiciary, the state bureaucracy, and elite education and culture.

Although Zaman treats his material with great detail and comprehensiveness, there is one topic that is not addressed directly despite the fact that it permeates the history that he recounts. This is gender and the status of women. Many of the debates Zaman describes between the traditionalist ‘ulama, the modernists, and the Islamists concern the regulation of marriage, divorce, sexuality, and domestic violence, from the 1939 Muslim Marriages Bill (40) to the 1961 Muslim Family Laws (65), the legalization of birth control (71), the 1979 Hudood Ordinance (87), and the 2006 Protection of Women Bill (117). Yet, unlike the chapters devoted to the issues of minority rights, the nature of the state, and Sufism, nowhere in the book do we find a unified analysis of the gender ideology of the three orientations. Perhaps the author believes that sufficient attention has been paid to this issue by the many works on women and Islam. However, it would be extremely useful to have such an analysis within the context provided by Zaman. Certain questions are left unasked and unanswered, such as why is it women’s rights that are so consistently at the heart of disagreements between the different Islamic orientations, rather than the many other areas that could fall under the modernist ethic of justice and liberty or the ‘ulama’s conception of the reach of Shari’a? Why has the state been able, at least nominally, to defend the rights of women but not the rights of minorities? How do the different gender ideologies factor into the appeal of modernism for Pakistan’s Westernized elite and its lack of success with the rest of the population?

Islam in Pakistan is an invaluable resource for any serious student of religion and politics in South Asia. Deeply researched, it delves into the complex intellectual debates and negotiations behind many of the most important developments in Pakistan’s political and religious history. A brief review cannot do justice to its wealth of detail and insightful analysis.

Ahrens, Tobias: *Kanpō. Einführung in die japanische Pflanzenheilkunde in 25 Fragen und Antworten.* München: Iudicium, 2018, 174 S., ISBN 978-3-862-05127-4.

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Die traditionelle japanische Heilmethode *kanpō igaku* 漢方医学 basiert auf den drei Säulen Kräutermethoden, Akupunktur und Shiatsu-Massage. Die Traditionelle Japanische Medizin (TJM) war für über 1000 Jahre die vorherrschende Theorie und Behandlungsmethode in Japan, und ist heute integrierter Bestandteil des Gesundheitssystems. Da Rezepturen auch ausgehend von einer schulmedizinischen Diagnose eingesetzt werden können, wenden 80 % der praktizierenden Ärzte *kanpō* regelmässig an.

Tobias Ahrens möchte mit seiner Einführung in die *kanpō*-Medizin ein möglichst breites Publikum erreichen. Die Gliederung in 25 Fragen und Antworten ermöglicht auch Lesern ohne medizinische Vorbildung einen guten Einstieg in das komplexe Thema. Ahrens erklärt die Grundlagen und Begriffe der Kan-Medizin anschaulich und fundiert. Der Verfasser hat sich nach dem Studium der Humanmedizin in Münster und Essen an der Shanghai University of Traditional Chinese Medicine in Akupunktur weitergebildet. Anschließend studierte er *kanpō*-Medizin und die japanische Akupunkturmethode am Oriental Medicine Research Center der Kitasato Universität in Tokyo und promovierte in traditioneller japanischer Medizin. Seit 2018 ist er als Assistenzarzt in der Klinik für Naturheilkunde und Integrative Medizin der Kliniken Essen-Mitte tätig.

In einem kurzen historischen Überblick über die Geschichte der *kanpō*-Medizin zeigt Ahrens Aufnahme, Assimilierung und Ausbau dieser Therapieform, die nach einer Phase der Bedeutungslosigkeit während der Moderne wieder neu entdeckt wurde als Behandlungsmethode der vielschichtigen Zivilisationskrankheiten, die durch veränderte Lebens- und Arbeitsbedingungen begünstigt werden. Die traditionelle Medizin mit ihrem gesundheitserhaltenden Ansatz trifft hier auf das gegenwärtige Bedürfnis nach sanften und nicht-invasiven Therapieformen zur Behandlung von komplexen Beschwerden und der Reduktion von möglichen Nebenwirkungen.

Einer der Vorzüge von Ahrens' Einführung ist die Sammlung und Übersetzung von 30 häufig verwendeten *kanpō*-Rezepturen. Die tabellarische Zusammenfassung von Symptomen, Diagnose und Rezeptur ist gewissermassen das Kernstück des Bandes und ermöglicht dem Leser einen anschaulichen Einblick.

In seinem kompakten historischen Überblick stützt sich Ahrens neben Quellen von Terasawa (*Evidence-based Reconstruction of Kampō Medicine*, 2004), und von Eberhard (*Leitfaden Kampō-Medizin: Japanische Phytotherapie*, 2003) auf eine breite Auswahl von Fachliteratur. Der handliche Umfang des Bandes fordert seinen Tribut an Detailreichtum, weshalb dem/der interessierten Leser/in zur vertiefenden Lektüre der Band *Medizingeschichte Japans* von E. Rosner (1989) empfohlen sei. Da Ahrens in seinem Band nicht vertieft auf die Quellen der traditionellen Heilmethode eingehen kann, seien der Verfasserin hier einige Anmerkungen dazu erlaubt.

Die *kanpō*-Medizin stützt sich auf die drei Klassiker der chinesischen Medizinliteratur der Han-Dynastie (202 v.d.Z.–220) *Huangdi neijing* 黄帝内经 (*Kōteidaiki*)¹, *Shang han lun* 傷寒論 (*Shōkanron*) und *Jin gui yaolüe* 金匱要略 (*Kinkiyōryaku*). In einer ersten Phase wurde das chinesische Wissen in Japan telquel übernommen. Die erste japanische Kompilation medizinischer Schriften, das *Ishinpō* 医心方 (10. Jh.) ist nach Themen und Symptomen gegliedert und sammelt darunter die Exzerpte aus den chinesischen Klassikern, neben dem allgegenwärtigen *Huangdi Neijing* insbesondere Chao Yuanfangs 巢元方 *Zhubing yuanhou lun* 諸病源候論 (ca. 610) und Sun Simiaos 孫思邈 *Beiji qianjin yaofang* 備急千金要方 (ca. 652). Das *Man'anjō* 万安方 (1304) und das *Ton'ishō* 頓医学抄 (1302–4) aus dem 14. Jahrhundert hingegen enthalten neben diesem traditionellen chinesischen Medizinalwissen auch neues Wissen, was sich beispielsweise in den erweiterten Faszikeln zur Frauenheilkunde zeigt, die den Song-zeitlichen State of the Art in Form von Chen Zimings 陳自明 *Furen daquan liangfang* 婦人大全良方 (1237) repräsentiert. Weiter enthalten *Man'anjō* und *Ton'ishō* eigene Ergänzungen der japanischen Ärzte, insbesondere des Kompilators Kajiwara Shōzen 梶原性全 (1266–1337).

Bereits im Mittelalter zeigt sich demnach die Tendenz, das aus China übernommene Wissen zu erweitern und den japanischen Bedürfnissen der Zeit anzupassen. So erlangte die in der klassischen chinesischen Medizin eher am Rande behandelte Wundversorgung enorme Wichtigkeit im von Bürgerkriegen und Kämpfen erschütterten Japan, was sich in den Schriften Kajiharas niederschlug. Ab der Edo-Zeit findet zunehmend eine differenzierte Auseinandersetzung mit dem chinesischen Wissen statt, sowie die Entwicklung eigener Theorien und Methoden. Dazu gehört die Herausbildung der heute vor allem im Kantō-Gebiet gebräuchlichen Kohō-ha 古方派 durch Tōdō Yoshimasa und der hauptsächlich in Kansai praktizierten Gosei-ha 後世派. Auf Tōdō geht auch die Bauchdeckendiagnostik (*fukushin* 腹診) zurück, eine Eigenheit der TJM. Aus

¹ Vgl. hierzu die Übersetzung von Unschuld und Tessenow, in Zusammenarbeit mit Zheng Jinsheng (Unschuld/Tessenow, übers. 2011).

diesem Grund existieren heute trotz Überschneidungen sehr deutliche Unterschiede zwischen der chinesischen und der japanischen Heilkunde (29) im Hinblick auf Therapieform, Diagnosestellung und Rezepturen. „Kampo-Medizin ist eine traditionelle japanische Phytotherapie, welche integrativ, komplementär oder alternativ als symptomatische, konstitutionsadaptierte Therapieform eingesetzt werden kann“ (21).

Heute ist TJM ein eigenständiges Medizinsystem, dessen theoretische Grundlage die klassischen Schriften der TCM bilden. „Das Besondere ist, dass in der TJM eine stärkere Differenzierung der therapeutischen und diagnostischen Methoden zwischen Akupunktur und Pflanzenheilkunde erhalten geblieben ist“ (17). So vereint der Begriff TJM *kanpō* die Rezepturen der japanischen Phytotherapie (Pflanzenheilkunde), Akupunktur und Anma-Shiatsu-Massage. Demgegenüber umfasst die von der chinesischen Regierung seit dem 20. Jahrhundert vereinheitlichte und reformierte TCM Akupunktur, Pflanzenheilkunde, Tuina, Diätetik und Qigong. Die heute praktizierte Form der TCM ist als nicht, wie es der Begriff vermuten lässt, mehrere tausend Jahre alt, sondern eine moderne Erfindung, „die in Bezug auf Inhalt und Entstehungszeitraum von der ursprünglichen chinesischen Medizin abgegrenzt werden sollte“ (31).

Der Begriff *kanpō* wurde in Japan erst ab dem 19. Jahrhundert verwendet, um die heimische Medizin von der der Europäer (*ranpō*) abzugrenzen. Im Zuge der Modernisierung nach der Meiji-Restauration wurde auch das westliche Medizinsystem in Japan eingeführt, „da dieses vor allem bei der Bekämpfung von Infektionskrankheiten und der Behandlung von Kriegsverletzungen überlegen war. Im Folgenden war es nur noch Ärzten erlaubt zu praktizieren, die in westlicher Medizin unterrichtet worden waren“ (25). Trotz dieser Einschränkungen genoss die traditionelle Heilmethode in der japanischen Bevölkerung unverändert breite Akzeptanz und wurde nach wie vor praktiziert.

1976 wurde die *kanpō*-Medizin in das japanische Gesundheitssystem integriert, und seit 1987 werden für 148 *kanpō*-Rezepturen die Kosten durch die Krankenversicherung übernommen. 2001 schliesslich wurde die *kanpō*-Medizin in das Curriculum der Humanmedizin aufgenommen und gehört heute als fester Bestandteil zum Studium. All dies trug zur Akzeptanz bei. Die führenden Forschungsinstitute, die seither in Japan entstanden, sind das Oriental Medicine Research Center der Kitasato-Universität in Tokyo, das Center for *Kanpō* Medicine der Keiō School of Medicine der Keiō-Universität in Tokyo oder das Institute of Natural Medicine der Medical and Pharmaceutical University in Toyama. 2009 wurde mit der in London ansässigen International Society for Japanese Kampo Medicine (ISJKM) erstmals eine internationale Gesellschaft für Kampo-Medizin gegründet. Die Durchführung des 1. Kongresses für Traditionelle Japanische

Medizin (TJM) 2011 in Frankfurt am Main und der Internationalen Gesellschaft für traditionelle japanische Medizin (IGTJM) sowie der DÄGfA sprechen für ein stetig wachsendes Interesse auch ausserhalb Japans.

Diesem trägt der schmale Band von Ahrens Rechnung. Er ist in 25 Kapitel unterteilt, von denen jedes – wie der Titel besagt – als Frage formuliert ist. Neben einer Definition von *kanpō* (21) unter Berücksichtigung historischer und klinischer Aspekte informieren die einzelnen Kapitel über theoretische Grundlagen ebenso wie praktische Anwendung. Der Kern des Bandes sind dreissig häufig genutzte Rezepturen, die der Verfasser sorgfältig übersetzt und aufbereitet darstellt. Überhaupt ist die benutzerfreundliche Gestaltung des Bandes hervorzuheben. Zahlreiche Grafiken und Tabellen erweisen sich dabei als ebenso nützlich wie das angefügte Glossar mit den japanischen Begriffen und ihrer deutschen Übersetzung.

Die Behandlung besteht im Wesentlichen aus drei Schritten: Anamnese, körperliche Untersuchung und Rezepturauswahl. Im Anhang des Bandes findet sich ein Fragebogen, der auf demjenigen der Medical School der Keio-Universität basiert. Dies dient nicht nur der Veranschaulichung für Laien und sonstige interessierte Leser, sondern zeugt auch vom praxisbezogenen Ansatz des Verfassers. Die körperliche Untersuchung umfasst neben der Befragung auch Zungen-, Puls und Bauchdeckendiagnostik (*fukushin* 腹診). Die Bauchdiagnostik ist eine Diagnosepraxis, die sich nur in der TJM findet. Sie ergänzt die in der TCM durchgeführte Palpation der Pulsdiagnostik. Aufgrund der Befunde gelangt der Therapeut zu einer Symptom- bzw. Befundkombination (*shō* 証) und wählt die passende Rezeptur aus.

Als Gründe für diesen Prozess der Reintegration traditioneller Heilmethoden nennt Ahrens zum einen den Wandel der Beschwerden (25) und als Folge davon eine Tendenz zu personalisierten Therapieansätzen in der wissenschaftlich orientierten Medizin (36). So verdrängten aufgrund des medizinischen Fortschrittes im 20. Jahrhundert sogenannte Zivilisationskrankheiten wie z. B. Diabetes, Bluthochdruck oder Allergien die Infektionskrankheiten als vorrangiges Beschwerdebild in der Bevölkerung. „Da dieses neue Beschwerdespektrum, das sich oft durch das gleichzeitige Auftreten verschiedener Symptome kennzeichnet, durch den Einsatz von *kanpō*-Rezepturen abgedeckt werden konnte, wurde *kanpō* wieder zunehmend als effektive Therapieoption wahrgenommen.“ (25) Der Ansatz, eine Therapie bereits im *mibyō*-Zustand (noch nicht krank) in der Grauzone zwischen Gesundheit und Krankheit anzusetzen, ist in der von Selbstoptimierung und Lifestyle-Ratgebern gefluteten Gegenwart wieder ähnlich aktuell wie zur Zeit des klassischen Kaiserhofes. Die Menschen leben in Wohlstand, und Medizin soll neben der Behandlung von Krankheiten auch der Verbesserung der Lebensqualität dienen. Zudem lässt der demographische

Wandel eine neue Notwendigkeit entstehen, Patienten mit verschiedenen Symptomen über längere Zeit hinweg möglichst nebenwirkungsarm zu behandeln. Es sei angemerkt, dass ein Blick auf die gegenwärtigen Forschungsprojekte des Oriental Medicine Research Center der Kitasato-Universität zeigt, dass unter anderem auch die Gynäkologie ein gefragtes Anwendungsfeld ist, wo neben der (traditionellen) Behandlung des unerfüllten Kinderwunsches auch die Menopause ein aktuelles Forschungsgebiet darstellt. In Japan, wo im Gegensatz zu Europa nur zurückhaltend mit Hormontherapie behandelt wird, stellt dieses Gebiet auch ein gewaltiges Marktsegment dar.

Literatur zur Traditionellen Japanischen Medizin *kanpō* existiert in deutscher Sprache erst in bescheidenem Umfang. Neben der bereits erwähnten Medizingeschichte Japans von E. Rosner sei hier auf die Dissertation von C. Oberländer zur Kanpo-Medizin² und Reissenwebers unlängst erschienener Band zur japanischen Phytotherapie³ hingewiesen.

Die Einführung von Tobias Ahrens informiert praxisorientiert und sorgfältig über historische und klinische Aspekte dieser Heilmethode. Die Darstellung dient dem Einstieg und einer ersten Orientierung ebenso wie der weiteren Vertiefung in das Gebiet. Der Verfasser liefert auch für Laien gut verständliche Erklärungen und führt den Leser in Grundsätze und Terminologie ein. Dies geschieht zum einen durch eine Klärung der zugrunde liegenden Konzepte und Symptomkomplexe, zum anderen mittels eines Glossars der japanischen Begriffe, ihrer Umschrift und der entsprechenden deutschen Übersetzung. Diese pragmatische und benutzerfreundliche Herangehensweise hebt sich zudem sprachlich angenehm von der häufig esoterisch-ideologisch geprägten Literatur ab. Der Autor sieht denn die traditionelle japanische Pflanzenheilkunde als valente komplementäre Methode zur westlichen Medizin.

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