

the reader wishing that more of these interviews were incorporated as evidence for her arguments. This would have been a particularly powerful approach in a book that is calling for empowerment of average Africans.

Ultimately the book is disappointing because it fails to suggest how to move in the direction indicated; it suggests that revolutionary change is needed and incremental change is insignificant but does not suggest how this will come about. Perhaps it is unfair to expect academics to provide such a pragmatic formula, but, in the end, reading this study leaves one with a sense of despair for the future of the people of the Great Lakes region.

Gallaudet University

David R. Penna

Dubai: The Vulnerability of Success. By Christopher M. Davidson. (New York, N.Y.: Columbia University Press, 2008. Pp. viii, 376. \$32.50.)

In this book, the author chronicles Dubai's rise from a small fishing and pearling community to one of the twentieth century's seemingly great economic success stories. It is more than a historical survey, however; in addition to providing a relatively detailed overview of Dubai's recent history and economic development—one based largely on the *laissez-faire* policies pursued by its rulers—the author addresses the problems inherent in such development, both in terms of its prospective long-term sustainability and its impact on the sheikhdom's political stability. Indeed, it is this latter component that makes this work particularly worthwhile, not only for those interested specifically in Dubai, but also those wishing to understand better the impact of globalization on the Middle East and developing regions in general.

Christopher M. Davidson argues that Dubai's economic development has largely depended on a political stability achieved through what has constituted an "unwritten ruling bargain" between rulers and nationals. The defining component of this bargain has entailed the distribution of Dubai's wealth—derived initially from oil, but more recently from other rent-generating activities—among the national population. Ironically, Davidson argues that Dubai's political stability is currently threatened by the very economic success it helped underpin. In addition to breeding among the national population an "uncompetitive rentier mentality," it has threatened Dubai's national identity, something evinced, among other things, by the undermining of national values and customs, even the use of the Arabic language, in deference to the large expatriate population that has come to take up residence there (178). Possibly of greater consequence, according to Davidson, has been Dubai's growing dependency on foreign economies.

Foreign interest and investment depends on continued political stability; as a consequence, Dubai's economic success has become increasingly vulnerable to even the perception of political volatility, whether in the sheikhdom, or in the region as a whole.

This monograph is a first-rate piece of scholarship, and provides a wealth of information and analysis about Dubai. That it is well researched goes without question, something perhaps best reflected in the numerous interviews conducted by the author with long-standing residents of Dubai. One criticism might be that Davidson tries to provide too much detail. This becomes most evident in the glut of Arabic names that crop up from time to time, often presented in their full form; even those familiar with the Arabic language will occasionally find that such incidences obscure more than clarify. This is a minor detail in the end, and in any event, Davidson's work was likely never intended for a broad audience. As one might expect with such a work, the style is much too erudite for the more casual reader, which is a shame in a way, as the story it tells is an interesting one, and, as already noted, of relevance even to those not necessarily interested in Dubai for its own sake.

University of Illinois at Springfield

Erik Eliav Freas

A Brief History of the Late Ottoman Empire. By M. Şükrü Hanioglu. (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2008. Pp. xiii, 241. \$29.95.)

This is a unique and remarkable study of the closing century of the Ottoman Empire by the scholar best qualified to lay out the salient and relevant aspects of a decaying empire and unsatisfactory attempts to rectify and firmly place it in the twentieth century of the Western world. The author, mindful of it being a most cosmopolitan state, refers to the years between 1789 and 1918 specifically as marked by incredible change in all aspects and strata of the multifarious structure of Ottoman society.

Although he does not ignore the standard historical treatments of the subjects, the author focuses on the broad historical trends and processes rather than dwelling on other than relevant single events. The emphasis, as designed by M. Şükrü Hanioglu, is to treat this turbulent period of the empire on the broad historical trends as he examines the imperial struggle to centralize the ruling process against the opposition of local rulers, developing national trends among the Muslim and non-Muslim millets, which had turned to the Western experience and support to dislodge loyalty to the center in Istanbul. Foreign powers, specifically the French, British, and Russians, as well as Protestant missionaries, seized