located the right note). The process has to be constantly repeated, as this is one of 51 such notes for a single chapter, filling five pages of small print, causing annoyance, distraction, and wasting the reader's time. Why the information could not have been included in the main body of the text is a mystery.

The other and more important critique, and although there is no reference to this in the book, it would appear to be a virtually unrevised reprint of the writer's PhD thesis, submitted over four years ago,* published in 2011, but with no attempt to take into account the important changes that have occurred in the meantime. The fact that the narrative breaks off at the beginning of 2007, and for instance, the summaries of the Commission's annual reports on Turkey's progress towards accession do not go further than November 2006 make it next to impossible to avoid this conclusion. Of eleven other books published on this subject since his thesis was presented, only one features in the bibliography. This matters, since much has happened over the past five years. In broad strokes, Turkey's EU accession process has been stuck in the doldrums, with a consequent severe weakening of the conditionality mechanism, while democratisation has continued, with important constitutional amendments passed in 2010, a new constitution now under active consideration, and a sharp reduction in the political power of the armed forces. There is no mention of any of these important trends in the book, or any consideration of the likelihood that Turkish democratisation has acquired its own momentum, seriously weakening the central argument advanced in its pages. Publishers should not accept unrevised doctoral dissertations without being much more discriminating.

William Hale, *SOAS*

* Ali Resul Usul, *The limits of political conditionality in Turkey: an analysis of the EU's impact on democratic consolidation in Turkey over a twenty-year period (1987-2007)* (University of Essex, Ph.D, 2008).

Harem Histories: Envisioning Places and Living Spaces

***Edited by* Marilyn Booth**

Durham: Duke University Press, 2011, 416 pages, 9780822348696, $24.95.

Controversies over the realities of life in the harem have long been in need of a treatment that challenges the stereotypically narrow perception of the concept and provides the opportunity to see the harem's multi-layered structure from a critical perspective. This collection of readings on the harem as a cultural and social institution provides such an approach. As stated by the editor, the emphasis of the book is "on the concept/institution/image of the harem as shaped and represented within the societies of the Middle East and North Africa, while . . . [contributing writers] also attend to its representational and political uses by visitors to and observers of these societies."

In keeping with this claim, this book

offers a multi-layered treatment of the harem, which, in the process of deconstructing its popular meaning, may surprise the reader. Asma Afsaruddin's examination of the lives of women in the prophet Muhammad's time, based on a comparison of female entries in biographical dictionaries starting from the period of Abbasid (133/750-648/1250) to that of Andalusian and Mamluk (648/1250-992/1517), traces in careful detail the changing conceptions of the moral excellence of women and as well as the prescriptive conduct manuals of the time, which explains the normative behavior of women concerning their presence and roles in public space.

Yaseen Noorani analyzes early Islamic literary texts and suggests that these describe a relational space defined by status rather than the modern division of social space as public and private, thus challenging the assumed parallel structure between Islamic and modern Western societies regarding the organization of the social realms. Therefore, he argues, the residue of assumptions about the harem as public and private is not applicable to early Islamic society. Noorani's critical approach cautions the reader to realize that attempting to understand the harem by applying modern conceptions rather than its own social and political norms might lead the scholar to a dead end.

Treating the issue from the perspective of the social construction of space, Irvin Schick conceptualizes the harem as a set of sites crucial to gender construction and critically ponders the political implications of social-spatial practices in terms of enabling social and economic power. Also exploring the Harem as comprising multi-layered, complex structures of space, Nadia Maria El Cheikh elaborates on the lived harem in the era of Abbasid Baghdad.

Leslie Pierce delves into the issue of *Muhaddere* ("respectable women") and the complex social practices this term connotes. Based on a *fetwa* issued by Ebussuud Efendi in the 16th century, she suggests that the lines drawn were about the social class rather than religious standing. Pierce analyzes the evolution of change in social conduct based on the edicts of the Ottoman Kanunname from the mid 15th to the mid 16th centuries by exploring two themes. First, she traces issues of domestic space, sex, and gender as envisioned by the imperial center through the Kanunname's decrees. In the second part of the discussion, she questions what Kanunname's accomplished from both practical and ideological points of view and how they situate the Kanunname's evolving vision of a socio-sexual medium.

Jateen Lad, writing on black eunuchs, treats the issue of guardianship of the harem inside the Topkapı Palace in Istanbul as protection of a space that was considered forbidden and inviolable, with reference not to women but to its imperial nature and the Sultan himself. This explication is based on multiple and sometimes conflicting readings and interpretations concerning the hierarchical structures relating to the *Valide Sultan* (The mother of the Sultan) and *cariye* (concubines). Lad's attempt to analyze and understand the architectural space from within, all parts of which black eunuchs were able to access, offers a new and creative perspective for envisioning the life of this harem.

Holly Shissler critically analyzes the fiction of Ahmet Mithat Efendi to shed light on the 19th century harem from the class perspective of the time. Shissler

compares two of Efendi's novels to illustrate his understanding of the harem as supporting self-interest as distinct from selfishness. She shows what aspects of the institution of the harem Ahmet Mithat Efendi regarded as central to the construction of a good society. His middle class harem does not illustrate the traditional concept of an affluent, capricious, and loveless harem; rather it is the locus of women's entrance into the real world. He believed that deviation from the ideal family structure in the harem in pursuit of immediate pleasures rather than true love would bring only misfortunes.

Marilyn Booth focuses on the status of the female as a national subject in 1920's Egypt in relation to the harem, arguing that a new literary genre appeared at this time addressing "fallenness" rather than prostitution and its position in the social space as a political issue. Contextualizing her argument in a debate on representations of the space of the harem and that of street, she contrasts these texts to elite memoirs and biographies of female experience and reads them as against legalized prostitution.

Other perspectives in this collection focus on personal and domestic aspects of the harem. Julia Clancy-Smith's article opens up a new perspective on socializing and recreation, such as sea bathing, in harems in pre-colonial Tunisia. Whereas Heghnar Zeitlian Watenpaugh analyses the harem in terms of biography and domestic architecture, gender, and nostalgia in modern Syria, Nancy Micklewright unveils domestic interiors in photography from the late Ottoman era. Joan DelPlato examines clothing and eroticism in 19th century visual representations. Orit Bashkin scrutinizes harems, women, and political tyranny in several historical novels of Jurji Zaydan.

In brief, this volume is a much-needed and long-awaited scholarly and interdisciplinary collection of essays on the multi-layered nature of the harem over time and in various contexts as it was imagined, represented, and experienced in Middle Eastern and North African societies and by the visitors of these societies and it is hoped will stimulate further exploration into and fresh perspectives on this issue. It might be used as a textbook in the field of literature, cultural studies, Middle Eastern studies, gender studies, and the visual arts and arts history providing insights for a field that is so far understudied.

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Rise of Think Tanks: Foreign Policy and National Security Culture in Turkey

***By* Bülent Aras, Şule Toktaş, *and* Ümit Kurt**

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In the recent decade, the number of think thanks in Turkey skyrocketed. Those numbers should not cause overexcitement since along with the serious think tanks many others consist solely of a catchy name and an internet website. Indeed, the think tank sector is a fledgling one in Turkey. The position of think tanks in the