


Istanbul) and gender roles and norms; the increasingly conservative governmental initiatives regarding women's place in society; and last, but not least, how these have been challenged by the feminist movement, one of the most organized social actors in Turkey since the 1990s, would have been useful in the introductory chapters, allowing direct links to various chapters of the book.

Lastly, in exploring ordinary women's experiences in the Middle Eastern context, the book excels in overcoming the religious/secular binary and the overemphasis on religion, which is to be applauded. However, aiming to overcome these binaries, I worried whether it downplays differences in the way women of various class backgrounds experience and negotiate the patriarchal boundaries of the pockets of society in which they exist, maybe drawing on different capitals as well as discourses. It is not as if Sehlüköglü does not see or write about this; she has deliberately conducted research in neighborhoods of varying socio-economic standing and these dynamics are mentioned within chapters. However, this is done in a diffused, scattered manner, and almost never taken up directly. I thought it would have been useful to have a discussion in the introduction or conclusion that ties together this thread which runs through chapters, with maybe some reflection on ordinary women who are not in the book – for example, the non-conservative upper-class women who also are one of the carriers of trends in sport, or middle-/lower middle-class women who might choose mixed-gender gyms. While all women negotiate with patriarchal norms in Turkey, the choosing of the gym is part of that negotiation for women who go after their passion. Also, there are many women who choose to go to mixed-gender gyms, which requires some reflection.

Yet, of course, a book cannot include everything, and these considerations actually underline that this is an interesting and rich book dealing with an overlooked area, which accomplishes what it sets out to do and raises questions in the process. I believe, especially, that certain chapters would generate much interest, curiosity, and discussion if assigned in undergraduate and graduate courses alike, in sociology and anthropology courses dealing with subjectivities, leisure, everyday practices, and women beyond the Global North.

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İlkim Büke Okyar, *Arabs in Turkish Political Cartoons, 1876–1950: National Self and Non-National Other*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2023, xiv + 329 pages. doi:[10.1017/npt.2023.31](https://doi.org/10.1017/npt.2023.31)

Büke Okyar's book, *Arabs in Turkish Political Cartoons, 1876–1950: National Self and Non-National Other*, is an exceptionally well-crafted work that offers a coherent framework for examining the visual construction of Arabs in cartoons during the late Ottoman and early Republican periods and highlights the role of these images in

the formation of national boundaries and identity. The book delivers a detailed historical analysis of the political and societal shifts from the Ottoman Empire to the Republic of Turkey and the forging of national identity by putting the changing image of Arabs at its center. While doing so it provides a dynamic exploration of the world of satirical press, political cartoons, and cartoonists in the context of challenges posed by censorship and government pressure, reflecting the evolving regimes and political landscapes.

The book has seven chapters, as well as introduction and conclusion, that meticulously trace the emergence and transformation of the image of Arabs in political cartoons, paralleling the changes in the political landscape from the nineteenth century to the 1950s. Chapter 1 begins by exploring ethnic and cultural boundaries drawn from early Ottoman entertainment and studies the earliest depictions of Arabs in the scripts of Karagöz (Dark-eye) shadow theater, a pivotal element of entertainment of Ottoman public life. Büke Okyar identifies two primary stereotypes in these scripts resulting from centuries-long inter-ethnic interactions in the Empire: the “white Arab,” emblematic of Middle Eastern traders often viewed as cunning and unreliable, and the “black Arab,” typically representing individuals from North Africa and Sub-Saharan regions, who, through the Ottoman slavery system, became servants in İstanbul and were portrayed as loyal yet naive.

Chapter 2 takes the reader into the world of lithography, highlighting its significant role as a medium of politics in the transformation from the nineteenth-century Ottoman press to the Republic. It skillfully explains how illustrative art revolutionized political cartoons in general, making them a system of knowledge dissemination and communication shaped by, and shaping, political experiences. The text then explores the evolution of the satirical press during four distinct periods, each marked by unique political, economic, and social changes, and different forms of censorship: the pre-Hamidian era (1860–1876), the Hamidian era (1876–1908), the post-revolutionary era (1908–1918), and the Republican one-party era (1918–1950s). The study primarily examines contemporary satirical publications that were presented to the Ottoman and Turkish Republican audiences. Notable cartoonists in these periods contributed to satirical journals. During the Ottoman period, publications like *Kalem*, *Djem*, and *Davul* were written, in Ottoman-Turkish and French. Satirical newspapers such as *Karagöz* and *Hayal-i Cedid* were also prominent. In the early Republican era, the satirical press included *Karagöz* and *Diken*, as well as *Gülyüz*, *Aydede*, and *Akbaba*. These publications faced inconsistent lifespans due to censorship, political pressure, and the alphabet reform, leading to frequent closures and re-openings, often under different intellectuals and cartoonists.

Chapter 3 delves into the concrete cultural exchanges between Ottoman and European cartoonists, examining their stylistic approaches and representational similarities. It studies the way in which European fascination with the East during the nineteenth century, initially romanticized, shifted drastically in response to the Empire’s disintegration and military failures, as well as Sultan Abdulhamid II’s oppressive regime. The chapter then highlights how in this context, young Ottoman intellectuals, educated in Europe and influenced by nationalist movements there, began projecting orientalist views onto the Empire’s Arab provinces and depicted Arabs as uncivilized, nomadic savages – a stark contrast to the Ottoman identity. They believed that while the Empire needed to be reformed, *mission civilisatrice* should start from the periphery where it was needed most. In so doing, this chapter

effectively traces and captures how macro-political transformations were reflected in the European and Ottoman lithographs that constructed the European orientalism and Ottoman imagination of its own Orient. This analysis is indeed crucial for understanding the conception of the “Ottoman Orient” and its lasting impact on the habitat of Turkish political cartoonists during the Republican period later on.

Chapters 4, 5, and 6 unpack multifaceted interactions between Turks and Arabs depicted in nineteenth-century political cartoons. Chapter 4 turns, for instance, its attention to the capital, more specifically, to the Arab students in the Royal Tribal School and Arab bureaucrats in Sultan Abdulhamid II’s court, and particularly their contentious position during the constitutional revolution of 1908. Amid spreading Ottoman orientalism in the capital, the chapter, once again with examples from the satirical press, underscores the growing discontent among Ottoman-Turkish intelligentsia and public towards Arab bureaucrats, and reveals that rising ethnic Turkish nationalism and its stripping from religious identity are intertwined with reactionary aspects of Arab nationalism resulting partly from Arabs’ gradual exclusion from the Empire.

Chapter 5 explores the varied depictions of Arabs outside İstanbul in political cartoons. These cartoons reflect the changing historical contexts and political attitudes of the time. The images vary widely from the heroic and brave Arabs of Sanusiya, who resisted Western powers, to Egyptians portrayed as cowards failing to confront the same forces. This shift illustrates the transformation of Arabs from loyal citizens to unreliable subjects within an empire dominated by ethnically superior Ottoman Turks. Political fluctuations led to the depiction of Arabs in political cartoons as either allies or enemies. This reflects the cartoonists’ dilemma in portraying Arabs who were both outsiders and insiders within the Empire, but not fully part of the nation. This chapter examines how these representations were influenced by contemporary ideological movements such as Ottomanism and Islamism, and emerging concepts of nationalism and Turkism.

Chapter 6 examines two distinct events and their lingering effects on the images of Arabs: The Yemenite rebellion against the Empire in 1909 and North African Arabs’ defense against Italians during the Tripoli War in 1911–1912. The Yemenite rebellion was portrayed in Ottoman political cartoons as a betrayal, tainting the Arab image, whereas the North African resistance against Italian colonial ambitions was depicted more positively. However, the negative impact of the Yemenite rebellion in Ottoman political discourse and cartoons was more pronounced. This chapter also explores the effects of “betrayal” of the Ottoman-Turkish troops in the Levant during World War I in the satirical press of Republican Turkey’s nationalist narrative during the 1920s. That is, it successfully shows the process of otherization of Arabs from colonial and imperial to a nationalist and ethnic context. The Arab revolt of 1916 during World War I and ex-Ottoman regions’ fate under European-mandate governments later on particularly were major constitutive events in constructing the Republican-period Turkish perception of Arabs. The cartoonists reflected their grief over the loss of ex-Ottoman Arab provinces in the figure of the hostile and untrustworthy Arab. They made a strong effort, documented with various striking examples of the political cartoons, to alienate the Arab from Turkish collective memory in the early Republican period and represent them as non-national other in the Turkish national discourse.


Chapter 7 delves into the changing stereotypes of Arabs in the context of Turkish nationalism during the 1930s and 1940s, with a special focus on the Alexandretta dispute. It emphasizes how these stereotypes, especially the portrayal of black Arabs,

were derived from traditional characters in the Karagöz shadow theater. These images were reinterpreted, infusing them with notions of inferiority and abjection, aligning with the racial ideologies of the time. This racialization mirrored the trends in Western fascist regimes, such as those led by Hitler and Mussolini.

Overall, the book provides an in-depth analysis that uncovers valuable insights into the intricate and evolving depiction of Arabs in Ottoman-Turkish political cartoons during a pivotal historical era, tracing the gradual construction of Arab identity as an “other” in Turkish national identity. The study is an original and timely scholarly contribution. One minor criticism pertains to the study’s timeframe. It insufficiently explains why the investigation into the portrayal of Arabs concludes with the 1950s; the study does not adequately clarify and discuss the rationale behind this choice. Another minor point of critique is the fleeting mention of the recent mass migration of Syrians to Turkey and the subsequent increase in anti-Arab sentiment. This reference appears towards the end of the book suddenly and is somewhat disconnected from the main content and discussions of the study.

Apart from these minor points, *Arabs in Turkish Political Cartoons* offers a profound historical and cultural perspective, significantly enhancing the reader’s understanding of current Arab perceptions in Turkey. At a time when the integration of Syrian refugees into Turkish society and rising anti-Arab sentiments are hot topics among politicians, scholars, and the public, Büke Okyar’s work is remarkably relevant. It provides essential insights into the historical political factors that continue to influence the portrayal of Arabs in Turkey’s cultural memory. More than just illuminating the historical evolution of these perceptions, the book paves the way for a deeper comprehension of how past stereotypes and narratives shape contemporary societal attitudes.

Arabs in Turkish Political Cartoons is a welcome contribution that masterfully achieves the difficult task of putting the images of Arabs in Turkey into their social, historical, and political context. It marks a significant advancement in the field, providing a novel insight into the historical and cultural dynamics that have molded Turkish perspectives towards Arabs. Büke Okyar has crafted a work that is not only enlightening but also deeply vitally pertinent to grasping the intricacies of contemporary Turkish society and its identity formation. The writing is academic yet accessible, making it suitable for both scholars and general readers interested in Middle Eastern history, political science, sociology, race and ethnicity studies, and the art of political cartoons.

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Eren Duzgun, *Capitalism, Jacobinism and International Relations: Revisiting Turkish Modernity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022, x + 312 pages.
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Eren Duzgun’s book, *Capitalism, Jacobinism and International Relations: Revisiting Turkish Modernity*, offers a reinterpretation of “Turkish modernity” from 1839 to the present