From the text of the translation in bold. When al-Ḥusaynī provides dates, either in full or in brief, Bosworth provides the corresponding Gregorian dates in brackets. When al-Ḥusaynī provides dates, either in full or in brief, Bosworth provides the corresponding Gregorian dates in brackets. With regard to the translation of specific terms, Bosworth uses a varied approach. For a small number of terms (e.g. ribāt, dihqān, khutbah, rakās, mithqāl and mann) Bosworth provides no translation, assuming that the meanings of these terms are understood. For a larger number of specialized or otherwise problematic terms, however, Bosworth provides a transliterated rendering of the Arabic in parentheses following his translation. Examples include such basic terms as “slave-soldier (mamluk)” (p. 39) and “ceremonial tent (surādiq)” (p. 103), as well as more specialized terms like “parasol (chatr)” (p. 27) and “saddle-cloth (ghāšiya)” (passim). For some terms, however, such as ʿadāq and mahr, Bosworth uses the same translation (i.e. “bride price”), while in other instances he translates certain terms differently based upon the flow of the narrative. For awbash, Bosworth gives at least two separate meanings: “common people” (p. 15), and “the rabbles” (p. 36). This reviewer finds no problem with Bosworth’s decisions in this regard, for in the end his goal is to provide a smooth and accurate translation of al-Ḥusaynī’s work.

With regard to the narrative style, Bosworth follows the straightforward method al-Ḥusaynī employed in the original text. Arranged chronologically, the history charts the rise of the Seljuqs from their humble beginnings as tribesmen who made a name for themselves attached to the Ghaznavids, moves through to the height of their power during the reign of Mālik Shāh (d. 485/1092), and ends with Toghril b. Arslān’s death in 590/1194 at the hands of the Khwarazm Shah Sultan ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn Tekish. Within the history we find detailed accounts of Alp Arslān’s forays against the Byzantines leading up to the Battle of Manzikert in 463/1071, as well as fierce competition between the later Seljuqs and their Ildregizid and Khwarazm Shah rivals. Although al-Ḥusaynī slips into a more florid literary style at times and incorporates numerous idiomatic phrases in his work, Bosworth presents a smooth, accessible text while also providing a literal translation of the Arabic. For example, when discussing the rebellion of Fadlūn of Ganga in 459/1067, Bosworth states “an Satan seduced led him astray” followed by the literal translation, “Satan breathed into his nostrils and erected barriers at the beginning and the end of his affairs” (pp. 33–4). Numerous other examples of this simplification of al-Ḥusaynī’s text can be found throughout Bosworth’s work. In addition, when dealing with names where the vocalization has not been established, Bosworth leaves it up to the audience to decide; when referring to a locale near Khākistar, he writes “K. ’r. b. n (?)” (p. 27). Bosworth’s attention to detail, erudition, and scholarly acumen and humility are to be lauded here, for they have resulted in a masterful translation of a work essential to anyone interested in events surrounding the Seljuq dynasty.

In addition to three separate indexes (e.g. Persons, peoples, tribes; Places; Technical terms), a small map is provided, along with an extensive and informative series of discursive endnotes. Although this reader would have provided footnotes, especially when dealing with a translation with commentary, this should not detract from the importance and usefulness of Bosworth’s work.

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NASSER RABBAT: Mamluk History through Architecture: Monuments, Culture and Politics in Medieval Egypt and Syria.