

perspective and possessing its own unique criteria of truth, seeing it rather as just a field of study subject to strict academic standards. As for the series itself, this reviewer does not think Gates was being disingenuous using some European accounts as entry vehicles for African culture, bearing in mind that it was meant to appeal to a mass, largely white, American audience, who really do not know much about Africa.

Projects of this kind will always engender criticism from academia, some of it deserved, some no doubt based upon jealousy and partisanship. And controversy is hardly new in African and African-American studies, and can in fact be beneficial. Gates's engaging style and presentation will surely create interest in African history and will find a home in World Civilization, Comparative Civilization, and African Civilization classes, as long as it is supplemented with films and videos from African directors and producers such as Djibril Diop Mambety or Mickey Madota Dube, part of a new generation of young black filmmakers who have emerged since the overthrow of apartheid in South Africa. The works of such artists are now becoming increasingly available from sources such as the *Library of African Cinema 2000* from California Newsreel. For there will always be a myriad number of African worlds that no single source can pretend to cover.

Cameron University

Richard A. Voeltz

Clarice Swisher, ed. *The Spread of Islam*. San Diego: Greenhaven Press, Inc., 1999. Pp. 240. Paper, \$12.96; ISBN 1-56510-966-X.

Ruth Roded, ed. *Women in Islam and the Middle East: A Reader*. London & New York: I.B. Tauris, 1999. Pp. xv, 271. Cloth, \$59.50; ISBN 1-86064-308-6. Paper, \$25.00; ISBN 1-86064-309-4.

These two anthologies have in common an examination of a particular theme, contained in the title, over the entire course of Islamic history from the time of the Prophet Muhammad in Arabia to the present. The similarities end there.

The Spread of Islam is one of six volumes in Greenhaven Press's "Turning Points in World History" series that seeks to examine pivotal events, evolutionary developments, or revolutionary new inventions that changed the course of history. This volume falls into the evolutionary development category as the spread referred to covers the entire period from the founding of Islam to bring a contemporary major world religion. The book comprises a series of secondary source essays selected on the basis of their "accessibility," although the term is not defined, each preceded by a summary of the author's main points. Greenhaven's in-house editor, Clarice Swisher, added an introductory essay, a collection of primary source documents, a glossary, chronology, reading list, and index. The book contains five chapters: "The Origin and

Growth of Islam in Arabia," "The East-West Spread of Islam," "The Spread of Islamic Art and Thought," "The Spread of Factions Within Islam," and "The Modern-Day Resurgence of Islam." An appendix contains extracts from fourteen primary sources also divided into four sections including "The Koran," "Personal Perspectives," "Poets and Writers," and "Twentieth-Century Resurgence of Islam."

This book does not seem to fill any specific need within the literature on Islam or to service any particular audience. While the articles are "accessible" in that they are easy to read, Frederick Denny's *An Introduction to Islam* (Macmillan, 1994), John Esposito's *Islam: The Straight Path* (Oxford, 1991), and R.M. Savory, ed., *Introduction to Islamic Civilization* (Cambridge, 1976) are equally readable and provide a more comprehensive discussion of the spread of Islam. The primary source documents (cover 20 pages with seven and one-half of those from the Koran and six of the fourteen from the twentieth-century) are too short and should be more closely related to the essays. One will find additional snippets of primary sources embedded in the essays. This reviewer also takes exception to claims by the editors that the book "features an extensive bibliography" (there are only 29 entries) and that it is an "indispensable research tool." Finally, this book will not, despite the editor's pretensions, provide "students [or teachers] with a complete, detailed, and enlightening examination" of the spread of Islam.

Ruth Roded's *Women in Islam and the Middle East* is a much more satisfying and valuable anthology. Roded, a senior lecturer in the History of Islam and the Middle East at the Institute of African and Asian Studies at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, has also included five chapters ("The Foundation of Islam," "Early Islamic History," "Women as Sources, Actors and Subjects of Islamic Law," "Women's Roles in Medieval Society," and "Twentieth Century Vicissitudes") covering the entire period from Islam's beginnings to the present. Roded's introduction also provides a very solid discussion of the literature on women in Islamic society within the context of social and intellectual movements in both the West and the Islamic world.

Unlike *The Spread of Islam*, the 23 articles contained here are all from primary sources and are evenly budgeted throughout the nearly fifteen centuries of Islamic history. The breadth of the sources and the length of the entries when combined with the introductory material provided by Roded means that this book provides a much better starting point for someone wishing to do research on Islamic women than the Greenhaven book does on the spread of Islam. A bibliography would have improved the usefulness of the book.

In conclusion, there are much better alternatives to *The Spread of Islam* for both teachers and students. *Women in Islam and the Middle East*, on the other hand, is highly recommended either as a starting point for the study of the topic or as a supplementary source book for courses on Islamic history or women's history.

University of Memphis

Calvin H. Allen, Jr.

Ken Wolf. *Personalities and Problems: Interpretive Essays in World Civilizations*. New York: McGraw-Hill College, 1999. Second Edition. Vol. I. Pp. xvii, 172. Paper, \$20.85; ISBN 0-07-071348-0.

Walter Moss, Janice Terry, & Jiu-Hwa Upshur, eds. *The Twentieth Century: Readings in Global History*. New York: McGraw-Hill College, 1999. Pp. xiv, 293. Paper, \$29.25; ISBN 0-07-289324-9.

Stephen Chan & Jarrod Weiner, eds. *Twentieth Century International History: A Reader*. London & New York: I.B. Tauris, 1999. Pp. xi, 340. Cloth, \$59.50; ISBN 1-86064-301-9. Paper, \$19.95; ISBN 1-86064-302-7.

Finding the right book of primary and secondary source readings for a history course is never an easy task. The selections might be too long or too short, overly focused on politics and personality, the right material pitched to the wrong grade level, good in one time period but weaker in another, useful but not interesting, etc. Teachers of world history have the additional problem of breadth vs. depth. Courses can start with pre-history and run to the present; they can try to cover every continent on the globe, and, today especially, they usually try to balance western and non-western perspectives as well. The three books reviewed here all have strengths, and they all have particular areas of emphasis that will please or dismay teachers considering them for their own courses.

Personalities and Problems is the smallest and simplest book to read and use. A slim volume of under 175 pages, it is accessible from several perspectives: it's easy to hold in the hand, has some simple line illustrations, and its selections are clearly organized into 14 paired groupings that run 10-15 pages each. The idea is straightforward: present the interpretive material as a comparison of problems dealt with in the East and West at the same time in history. So we see chapters on Hammurabi and Moses on law and civilization, Thucydides and Sima Quian on the value of history, Mansa Musa and Louis IX on state-building and the monarchy in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and Elizabeth I and Akbar on religion and the state. The Thucydides and Elizabeth chapters were not in the first edition, and neither was the one on Plato and Confucius. Material is designed to introduce students to world civilization from the earliest civilizations through the seventeenth century. The