

them in colour. In contrast, the reader browsing through *Triumphs of Medicine* finds no colour; and though every page has a picture and many are full plates, few are really eye-catching. Many of the full-page illustrations are taken from X-ray films; again, their technical quality is excellent, but few non-medical readers will find them informative. Virtuoso examples of the radiologist's skills, such as a film showing exactly where blood is leaking from an artery into the intestine, mean little to someone who has never seen an angiogram before. The same criticism may be made of the photomicrographs; without explanation they are meaningless to the non-medical eye and they have little visual impact.

There is an exciting story to be told in the growth of medical expertise as part of the twentieth century explosion of scientific knowledge, but the telling must be adapted to the audience. Here the target is far from clear, for a collection of intellectually demanding essays has been confused and interrupted by a haphazard mixture of technical illustrations, historic cartoons, line drawings, portraits, and journalistic photographs. The packaging is not consistent with the content, and in consequence the result will please neither the specialist reader nor the curious layman. **Tony Smith**

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Musician with oblique flute, Persian album painting, 1560-70

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Islamic masterwork

Islam and the Arab World. Edited by Bernard Lewis. Pp. 360. (Knopf in association with American Heritage: New York, 1976.) \$35.00. (UK edition (*The World of Islam*) published by Thames and Hudson: London, 1976. £12.50.)

THE publication of this first American edition of *Islam and the Arab World* is truly an occasion for celebration.

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JOHN MURRAY

Furthermore, the celebrants need not be Arabic or Islamic scholars alone, for the volume is sure to be appreciated by the complete spectrum of professionals, from artists to zoologists. At a casual glance, this profusely and beautifully illustrated book might appear to be a classier version of a typical multi-colour 'coffee-table' book, which are more often valued for their role as icebreakers in a conversation, rather than for their intrinsic value. That would indeed be an incorrect impression because in the (effectively) fifteen chapters of the book, the reader is gently but carefully guided through topics such as the explosion of Islam in the Arabian peninsula and beyond, the art and architecture of the vast Dār al-Islām, ranging from Andalusia to Bengal, its literature, natural sciences, music and a bird's-eye view of its up-to-date political history. Each chapter is written by unquestionable authorities on their subjects, seemingly handpicked by Professor Bernard Lewis not only for their scholarship but also for their ability to communicate with the lay public and, what is more important, for their unusual sense of balance. In fact, there are perhaps only one or two chapters which occasionally show lapses in this latter mentioned quality.

The title of the book could be slightly misleading in that a potential reader may not realise the existence of whole chapters in the book dealing with Muslim Spain, Iran from the Safavids onwards, the Ottoman empire, and last but not least, Muslim India. Thus, in the strict definition of the Arabist, the present volume deals with the whole of Islamic culture (or "Islamicate" culture as the late Marshall Hodgson would have said) and not just Arabic civilisation. The corollary of that is the book's involvement with the whole of Dār al-Islām since the Prophet's birth.

The chapter entitled "The Scientific Enterprise" deserves special notice because of the sparkling characteristics of this long essay. It is well-known to students of Islamic science that other than the articles in *Encyclopedia of Islam* (incomplete second edition) or the *Legacy of Islam* (1974), there is not even a satisfactory monograph on the subject of Islamic science. Obviously, Professor Sabra's article in twelve pages (even if they are quarto-size pages) does not remove this inadequacy, but it goes a long way towards initiating an intelligent and non-partisan discussion about the paradox of the coexistence of rationalists (falasifa) and the orthodox religious thinkers (Ahl as-Sunnah).

Although the book is a masterwork, I would like to slip in a few minor criticisms here: the dust cover is too garish and projects too narrowly martial an image for such a world culture; the excellent chapter on music does not mention a word about Hindustani music; and for a confirmed epicure it is distressing to find not only a lack of mention of Turkish cuisine which vies with the French and Chinese as a primary world cuisine but that even the word 'food' is never mentioned. Perhaps the coffee-table culturists would at least have liked to know the origin of the word 'coffee'!

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