



REGIMES OF MOBILITY

Borders and State Formation in
the Middle East, 1918–1946

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AFTERWORD:
NON/STATE ACTORS, TIMELINES,
BORDER AND/VERSUS TERRITORY,
GLOBAL CONTEXTS

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Packed with insight and expertly curated by Ramazan Hakkı Öztan and Jordi Tejel, this volume has two fundamental messages relevant to scholars of the post-Ottoman Middle East in particular and to modern historians in general. Borders were shaped by both non-state and state actors, who interplayed; and people experienced life on and across borders in wildly different ways.¹ This was the effect of complex mobility regimes, a concept that, developed in 2005,² is analysed in this volume's introduction and brought to life in the chapters.

Having had the privilege to think with those chapters, I have divided my text into four parts. These are exploratory, for an afterword should be short. I start with outlining an ideal-type four-stage approach to interwar *mashriq*

¹ As Öztan and Tejel's introduction shows, they build on earlier works such as Inga Brandell (ed.), *State Frontiers: Borders and Boundaries in The Middle East* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2006), on the present times; see also e.g. Sabri Ateş, *Ottoman-Iranian Borderlands: Making a Boundary, 1843–1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), p. 3, who 'highlights the role played by borderland communities in the process of [Ottoman-Qajar] boundary making' from the mid-1800s.

² Ronen Shamir, 'Without Borders? Notes on Globalization as a Mobility Regime', *Sociological Theory*, Vol. 23 (2005), pp. 197–217.

border-making – an exercise meant to fine-tune the afore-noted issue of the role played by state/non-state actors. Next come two notes on timelines. The interwar *mashriq*'s borders did not develop synchronously, some even having Ottoman roots; and they did not develop linearly. Then, I review the distinction between border and territory, including a discussion of the 'central periphery', a case I explored in a 2017 monograph.³ I end by zooming out to global contexts.

1: State and Non-state Actors in Four Stages of Border Making

Let me begin by noting that it would be fascinating to explore how sea and air border making aligned, and did not, with land borders.⁴ As for the latter, there is no doubt that both state and non-state actors made and shaped them, as this volume's co-editors and many contributors expertly demonstrate. Having affirmed this crucial point, volume contributors fine-tuned it, showing that the balance between state and non-state actors as well as the composition of each differed in what we could term different ideal-type stages of border making.

In a first stage, people imagined where a future border may lie.⁵ As Alex Balistreri shows, central here, at least in nascent Turkey, were parliamentarians, inter alia those drawing up the 1920 *Misak-ı Milli*, and presumably other politicians and intellectuals writing 'articles' and holding 'speeches' (p. 29). Bureaucrats and officers, too, probably thought of 'nation-state borders as "ideological boundaries"' (p. 31). They and the parliamentarians and politicians, as well as some intellectuals, were state actors who seem to be quite central in this stage. But three qualifications are in order. Turkey was

³ Cyrus Schayegh, *The Middle East and the Making of the Modern World* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2017).

⁴ On air, see Priya Satia, *Spies in Arabia: The Great War and the Cultural Foundation of Britain's Covert Empire in the Middle East* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 7, discussing the relationship between British problems of 'seeing'/understanding the wartime Middle East and its postwar use of air policing, which could not be 'seen', as it were. On the sea, see e.g. Kobi Cohen-Hattab, *Zionism's Maritime Revolution* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2019).

⁵ For an influential related work, see Thongchai Winichakul, *Siam Mapped: A History of the Geo-body of a Nation* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1997).

de jure recognised internationally only in 1923; hence, at least international legal historians may not see these actors as unproblematically representing a state. (Indeed, historians of different sub-disciplines may always disagree on the stateness of a particular sort of actor.) Moreover, these actors' professional background and their political/bureaucratic role in the nascent state differed: state actors are not identical. And their view of future borders may well have been influenced by the behaviour of, and texts by, non-state actors living on the ground.⁶

A second stage concerned negotiating the border and drawing it on maps. This is when state actors appear most plainly at the forefront. Think for instance of Balistreri's Bekir Sami Bey, Georgiy Chicherin and Henry Franklin-Bouillon. A related point is that, as both Balistreri and Öztan's chapters argue, borders can be a means to a higher political goal. Their course can be sacrificed on the altar of national independence or security, which are ultimately determined by state actors. But also here, there are qualifications. Certainly the actors who led and finalised the negotiations were of the highest rank and they belonged to the government executive: the three afore-mentioned men were two foreign ministers and a plenipotentiary, respectively. In Turkey, the resulting border produced a massive clash with lesser-ranked state actors from another government branch, the legislative. Moreover, a border line on the negotiated map sometimes takes into account and follows on-the-ground stakes, which, however, often need to be large enough for the map-negotiators. That is: they are the stakes not just of any non-state actor but of socio-economically powerful men who hence matter to states. As Lauren Banko reminds us, citing Fredrik Meiton, Yishuvi electricity concessionaire Pinhas Rutenberg 'influenced the route of the 1922 eastern border with Transjordan' (p. 261); Jordi Tejel has shown how 'local community leaders', including Kurds, in and around Mosul helped shape the Turkish-Iraqi frontier.⁷

⁶ As Ateş, *Borderlands*, pp. 317–18, argues, locals 'at times appropriated and brought the state to the frontier to further their local interests'.

⁷ Jordi Tejel Gorgas, 'Making Borders From Below', *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 54 (2018), p. 811. Another, late Ottoman case, in which imperial actors *reacted* to local actors, is Isa Blumi, 'The Frontier as a Measure of Modern Power: Local Limits to Empire in Yemen, 1872–1914', in A. Peacock (ed.), *The Frontiers of the Ottoman World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 303–4.

A third stage may be called implementing the border, that is, actually demarcating the border line and establishing administrative structures. It is here that non-state actors become fully involved. The most fascinatingly intricate case is Katharina Lange's chapter on insurgents in Kurd Dagh, on the Turkish–Syrian border. Their 'motivations [for fighting] . . . were heterogeneous', including local; the border was both 'impediment' and 'resource', including to Turks from further afield who were fugitives; and local leaders like Kor Rashid conditioned supporting France *inter alia* on 'the establishment of a separate Qadha . . . with locally recruited officials' (pp. 183, 187, 185). Lange also underlines, however, that Turkish officers helped those insurgents. (This pattern held also to the west, across Cilicia, helping to force France to withdraw in 1921.) Certainly imperial French soldiers on the ground would not have categorically distinguished state from non-state soldiers facing them. Moreover, the Kurd Dagh non-state actors may have enjoyed particular leverage because the two bordering states were informally at war and, in this case, did not want to unduly alienate the local population.

The fourth stage, the focus of most chapters here, concerns the long-term administration of, and life in and across borders: 'the lived experience of territoriality'.⁸ Characterised by 'contested processes' rather than being 'fixed facts', and by 'interaction[s] between types of territorialities' rather than negotiations of only one, the state's, type of territoriality, this is the most complex stage.⁹ State authorities, among other things, enjoyed a 'growing capacity to know, act in and exert control over . . . arid frontiers', erected a complex 'infrastructure of frontier control', and used science, medicine and technology as reasons and pretexts to police borders (Robert Fletcher, p. 316; Banko, p. 267; Sam Dolbee). Meanwhile, people's 'movements and circulations . . . did challenge border infrastructure' and even Bedouin refugee groups kept a 'striking degree of agency', among other examples (Banko, p. 258; Laura Stocker, p. 299). Several aspects deepen this complexity. One was inter-state cooperation across borders, to the point of coordinating trans-

⁸ Matthew Ellis, 'Over the Borderline? Rethinking Territoriality at the Margins of Empire and Nation in the Modern Middle East (Part I)', *History Compass*, Vol. 13, No. 8 (2015), p. 411.

⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 411, 412, 415 (citing 'Negotiating Territoriality', in Ismael Vaccaro, Charles Dawson, and Laura Zanotti (eds), *Negotiating Territoriality* (New York: Routledge, 2014), p. 1).

desert travel schedules (César Jaquier, pp. 242–43). Another was circularity. State and non-state actors did not simply shape borders in parallel. Rather, their actions were often mutually constitutive, often involving a time lag. Thus, Turkey complicated access by Aleppine merchants – their complaints eventually made France create a refund system – but its ineffectiveness soon forced Aleppines to try staying in business in new ways (Öztan, pp. 97–98). Another example was Bedouin attacks on Syrian-Iraqi desert automobile convoys. This eventually triggered state countermeasures; these in turn eventually made attackers adapt and, as those measures discriminated against (i.e. slowed down) people secondary to imperial interests, such as Indian Muslim pilgrims, these eventually started using additional, alternative routes, in this case to travel from India to Mecca (Jaquier, p. 249).

Yet another aspect concerns how borders affected collective social structure. In Aleppo, some merchants were much more hurt than others.¹⁰ Some Kurd Dagh religious movements ‘denounced the glaring economic inequalities between Aghas and poorer peasants’ (Lange, p. 191). And in the 1930s, especially in Iraq the ‘reorganisation of the political landscape and of regional power distribution simultaneously caused major shifts in tribal alliances, leading to tribal disintegration’ (Stocker, p. 328). Last, borders smudged the line between state and non-state actors. Some of the latter turned into – and some continued being – para-state actors. Consider tribal leaders. Some, like Fahd Ibn Hadhdhāl, became state clients, and states ‘outsourc[ed]’ key policies to ‘gatekeepers’ and used some leaders as ‘proxy force[s]’ vis-à-vis other states (Robert Fletcher, pp. 293, 293, 297). Vice versa, a state like Iraq turned (what likely was a specific version of) tribal custom into constitutional law (Stocker, p. 331). And military intelligence officers embedded with tribes (Stocker, p. 329) probably had to adapt to be effective.¹¹ In sum, the new borders did not simply bring non-state and state actors into more contact. Rather, they

¹⁰ Besides Ramazan Hakkı Öztan’s chapter, see also Frank Peter, *Les entrepreneurs de Damas: nation, impérialisme et industrialisation* (Paris: L’Harmattan, 2010), esp. pp. 205–7; Geoff Schad, ‘Colonialists, Industrialists, and Politicians: the Political Economy of Industrialization in Syria, 1920–1954,’ (PhD thesis, University of Pennsylvania, 2001), p. 261.

¹¹ Or at least thought they adapted: Satia, *Spies*, p. 5: ‘long immersion in the desert would, they thought, allow them to replicate the apparently intuitive knowledge-gathering and navigational practices of nomadic Arabs’.

helped bring about various new informal deals in which the very nature of what and who the state and social groups were, and how they interacted, was partially renegotiated.

2: Timelines

This development may be framed as a continuation of an earlier new deal, in Ottoman Arab cities from the mid-1800s, between the ‘recentralizing’ Ottoman central state and well-rooted, powerful urban elites, especially notables, in Arab provinces.

As Istanbul was penetrating its provinces more forcefully, and with more institutions, it also had to engage – with carrots as much as sticks – the deeply rooted urban notable elites . . . [E]ach city’s elite became administratively and socio-culturally more strongly intertwined with Istanbul, which many more than ever got to know first-hand. ‘The Ottoman state [and] . . . local elites’ were tightly joined as ‘unequal parties to self-serving bargains’.¹²

Another new unequal bargain transpired around the same time in the Ottoman-Iranian borderlands. Its manifold people’s ‘territorial strategies and rationalities’ helped shape its halting but real transformation by Istanbul and Tehran, from the 1840s, into a harder, partly demarcated boundary; and a new type of state-society relationship rose in the process.¹³ Another new, rather ‘equal’ bargain linked the Ottomans and the Rashidis of Najd, an area in which Istanbul, fearing British encroachment, took increasing interest from the 1880s.¹⁴

¹² Schayegh, *Middle East*, p. 37; internal quote: Elizabeth Thompson, ‘Ottoman Political Reform in the Provinces: the Damascus Advisory Council in 1844–1845’, *IJMES*, Vol. 25 (1993), p. 472. See also ‘Introduction’, in Jens Hanssen, Thomas Philipp and Stefan Weber (eds), *The Empire and the City. Arab Provincial Capitals in the Late Ottoman Empire*, (Würzburg: Ergon, 2002), p. 19; and, already in 1968, Albert Hourani, ‘Ottoman Reform and the Politics of Notables’, in William Polk and Richard Chambers (eds), *Beginnings of Modernization in the Middle East* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968), p. 43.

¹³ Ateş, *Borderlands*, pp. 5–6.

¹⁴ M. Talha Çiçek, ‘The Tribal Partners of Empire in Arabia: the Ottomans and the Rashidis of Najd, 1880–1918’, *New Perspectives on Turkey*, Vol. 56 (2017), p. 108.

Yes: postwar borders did signal a departure from late Ottoman times. At the same time, functionally, the continuous renegotiation of state-society relations in and across postwar borders can be seen as part of the aforementioned longer process of re-bargaining, which had started in cities and their rural surroundings and by the later 1800s reached frontier zones.¹⁵ Moreover, many authors in this volume – most explicitly Stocker, on state-tribal relations – see certain late Ottoman realities persisting in the 1920s; real change started around 1930. This periodisation sits well, Stocker notes (p. 321; also Öztan and Tejel, p. 5), with my characterisation, elsewhere, of the 1920s as an ‘Ottoman twilight’.¹⁶

Three additional notes on timelines concern borders more specifically.¹⁷ First, the interwar *mashriq*’s borders did not develop synchronously. In the 1920s–30s some were formally fully delineated much later than others: the Syrian–Turkish border in 1940, for instance. Second, interwar border management developed non-linearly, that is, it was in some ways and times reversible. A good example is the Second World War. In 1941–45 Britain, with considerable success, organised a single wartime Middle East/North Africa-wide economic-administrative area of production, exchange and consumption. Many border arrangements changed. Thus, Turkey, under great war-related economic pressure, joined that area and opened up its southern border. Many Aleppine traders and some manufacturers profited.¹⁸

The third note echoes this section’s first paragraph. Interwar *mashriq* borders did not quite pivot away from late Ottoman reality. Rather, they sharpened processes well underway, though this process, to repeat, remained

¹⁵ Eugene Rogan, *Frontiers of the State in the Late Ottoman Empire, 1850–1921* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Vladimir Hamed-Troyanski, ‘Imperial Refuge: Resettlement of Muslims from Russia in the Ottoman Empire, 1860–1914’, (PhD thesis, Stanford University, 2018); Nimrod Luz, ‘The Remaking of Beersheba’, in Itzhak Weismann and Fruma Zachs (eds), *Ottoman Reform and Muslim Regeneration* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2005), pp. 187–209; Janet Klein, *The Margins of Empire: Kurdish Militias in the Ottoman Tribal Zone* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011). See also Reşat Kasaba, *A Moveable Empire: Ottoman Nomads, Migrants, and Refugees* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2009).

¹⁶ Schayegh, *Middle East*, chapter 3.

¹⁷ See also Ellis, ‘Borderline’, p. 413, on periodisation; here, regarding the question of how different disciplines periodise borderlands differently.

¹⁸ Schayegh, *Middle East*, pp. 307–8.

heterogeneous and reversible rather than inexorably leading to ever more state control.¹⁹ Sure, the Ottoman Empire, like other nineteenth-century states, ‘failed to realize comprehensive control over bounded political space’.²⁰ And yet, the late Ottoman *mashriq* had shared international borders with Iran and Egypt. The aforementioned Ottoman-Iranian(-Anglo-Russian²¹) negotiations regarding, and administration of, these borders presaged certain post-war developments; so did an Ottoman-Anglo-Egyptian agreement, under British pressure, in 1906 on the Rafah-Aqaba border and administrative consequences, which was predated by Egyptian khedival attempts since the early 1800s to gain control over the Sinai.²² In sum, the Ottoman Empire, which had always known a wide ‘diversity’ of territorial *limes*,²³ was not quite ‘borderless’ (Öztan and Tejel, p. 3) – certainly not in its last decades. (More broadly, Sabri Ateş argues, territorial sovereignty, including attempts to control frontiers better, started in the Ottoman east, as across Eurasia, in the mid-1600s.²⁴ This picks up Charles Maier’s famous argument about

¹⁹ Ellis, ‘Borderline’.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 415, referencing *The Transformation of the World*, Jürgen Osterhammel’s magnum opus. A recent study which, however, sees policy changes within the Hamidian period and between it and the Young Turk period is David Gutman, ‘Travel Documents, Mobility Control, and the Ottoman State in an Age of Global Migration, 1880–1915’, *Journal of the Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association*, Vol. 3, No. 2 (2016), pp. 347–68.

²¹ The British and Russian Empires were parties to Ottoman-Iranian border delineation negotiations in the 1840s and to border demarcation commissions in the 1910s: Ateş, *Borderlands*, chapters 2, 5, 6.

²² Ibid.; Nurit Kliot, ‘The Evolution of the Egypt-Israel Boundary’, *Boundary and Territory Briefing*, Vol. 1, No. 8 (1995), pp. 1–10; Yitzhak Gil-Har, ‘Egypt’s North-Eastern Boundary in Sinai’, *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 29, No. 1 (1993), pp. 135–48; Yuval Ben-Bassat and Yossi Ben-Artzi, ‘The Collision of Empires as Seen from Istanbul: the Border of British-controlled Egypt and Ottoman Palestine as Reflected in Ottoman Maps’, *Journal of Historical Geography*, Vol. 50 (2015), pp. 25–36. For ‘continuity between imperial and national states’ border making, see Liam O’Dowd, ‘From a “borderless world” to a “world of borders”’, *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, Vol. 28 (2010), p. 1042; similarly: Pekka Hämäläinen and Samuel Truett, ‘On Borderlands’, *Journal of American History*, Vol. 98, No. 2 (2011), p. 340.

²³ A. Peacock (ed.), ‘Introduction’ in *Frontiers of the Ottoman World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 3; also Kemal Karpat and Robert Zens (eds), ‘Introduction’ in *Ottoman Borderlands* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2003), p. 1.

²⁴ Ateş, *Borderlands*, p. 24.

changing modes of territoriality, with different modern stages starting in the mid-1600s, to the late 1700s and 1850s–70s, but not 1920s²⁵). An interpretation of the interwar years as sharpening an extant process also explains why the post-Ottoman ‘transition . . . to a bordered Middle East’ (p. 3) was ‘gradual’ (Öztan and Tejel, p. 3) and, indeed, incomplete. Even in the 1930s, ‘*la frontière turco-syrienne n’est . . . pas . . . une ligne fixe et précisément définie [mais] une zone de contentions*’,²⁶ and ‘although [cross-border tribal] disputes were in theory often successfully settled, the tribes did not necessarily agree with the results, and the government often lacked the will or the means to enforce the decisions’ (Stocker, p. 341).

3: Borders and/versus Territories

While many contributors to this volume argue and/or show that state initiatives and state-societal interactions formed mobility regimes around borders, many also state or in effect demonstrate that those regimes were not necessarily specific to borders. Rather, those regimes also covered other areas, in however different ways. This view – which is reflected also in classic works on territoriality and on mobility regimes in non-Middle Eastern monographs,²⁷ and in recent Middle Eastern historical reviews²⁸ – is here most explicitly embraced by Simon Jackson. He shows that a political centre like Beirut, the French Mandate capital, could also be a ‘border zone’, as it was an international port city (p. 127). He cites Peter Leary to the effect that ‘border making [has] simultaneously specifying and dispersing effect in

²⁵ Charles Maier, ‘Transformations of Territoriality, 1600–2000’, in Gunilla Budde et al. (eds), *Transnationale Geschichte* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2006), pp. 32–55.

²⁶ Seda Altuğ and Benjamin White, ‘Frontières et pouvoirs d’État: La frontière turco-syrienne dans les années 1920 et 1930’, *Vingtième Siècle*, Vol. 103, No. 3 (2009), p. 103.

²⁷ Maier, ‘Transformations.’ Shamir, ‘Without Borders’, pp. 199, 205–8, talks of local, national and regional boundaries and of hyper-ghettos (entire countries) and gated communities. Benjamin Hopkins, *Ruling the Savage Periphery: Frontier Governance and the Making of the Modern State* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2020), argues that nineteenth-century frontiers were less a space and more a set of practices. Each practice was found elsewhere; their combination created a frontier.

²⁸ Ellis, ‘Borderline’, p. 411, stresses the ‘relationship between borderland identities and modern discourses and practices of territoriality’.

space, causing, for example, both the building of walls at specific frontiers *and* the proliferation of sites of suspicion and verification far beyond the wall' (p. 116). And he invokes a 'rhizomic cartography of dynamically networked nodes' (p. 116); a case may be Rutbah (Jaquier, p. 244).

Other contributors to this volume show the blurriness between borders and other areas more implicitly. Bedouin refugee relocations linked borderlands and other areas (Fletcher, pp. 295–301). And Franco-British coordination in managing the Syrian-Iraqi borderlands radiated deep into both countries, affecting spatial organisation of convoys gathered as far back as Baghdad and Damascus (Jaquier, p. 245). On a related note, Stocker mentions late Ottoman police posts fighting Bedouin tribal raiders (p. 325).²⁹ Other Middle Eastern historians have noted the blurriness too. Studying the Syrian–Turkish border, Seda Altuğ and Benjamin White have argued that 'the creation [of post-Ottoman borders] forms part of state efforts to impose its authority on the national territory and its populations . . . not only in the border regions but across the entire territory'.³⁰

Another example is the area I have called the central periphery, encompassing southern Lebanon, northern Palestine, southwestern Syria and north-western Transjordan. Here, multiple police tools and tactics were at work. Many were used across Mandate territories. The reason was that the aforementioned four areas were not simply peripheral to, and marginal in, their respective country. They also together 'formed a transnationalized transport cross-road at the center of a still firmly integrated *Bilād al-Shām* [Syria, Palestine, Lebanon, and Transjordan]. [This] somewhat attenuated their peripheral position within their respective nation-state'. This was the case partly because considerable trade crossed this area, involving not only local but international trajectories, and included illicit goods such as Turkish and Lebanese hashish transported to Egypt. Moreover, activists from one country in *Bilād al-Shām* often crossed the central periphery to be politically active or fight in another

²⁹ For 1920s adaptations of late Ottoman policing, including the re-use of old Ottoman police stations, see Schayegh, *Middle East*, p. 185.

³⁰ Altuğ and White, 'Frontières,' p. 92. See also Zeynep Kezer, 'Spatializing Difference: The Making of an Internal Border in Early Republican Elazığ, Turkey', *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, Vol. 73, No. 4 (2014), pp. 507–27.

shāmi country, triggering considerable police and military interventions also across border lines.³¹

4: Global Contexts

What may future research look like? This question evidently has many answers. One concerns global contexts and linkages (see Öztan and Tejel, p. 4).

Contributors mention several developments. Jackson explicitly states the global dimension of the Ford franchise, unpacking how a global economic capitalist map was superimposed on – and to a point interacted with – the geopolitical map after the First World War. More implicit is Jaquier’s argument that the ‘interplay between the process of state formation and the growth of [automobile] mobility resulted in the creation of new mobility regimes that governed the movement of travellers through the Syrian Desert while discriminating between different forms of travel’ (p. 229). An interesting question here would be how automobility and the new state techniques it engendered here compared to, and was in interplay with, other regions, especially imperial ones, in the world. One may pose a similar set of questions to Dolbee’s account of the role that veterinary medicine played in legitimising and shaping border management techniques.³²

Moreover, modern Middle Eastern nationalists’ and nationalist politicians’ and bureaucrats’ thinking about borders and territoriality surely was globally embedded. Did non-Middle Eastern models inform their thinking? Did some confer with, learn from, non-Middle Easterners?

Last, as contributors to this volume and other historians argue, the *mashriq*’s interwar borders were not simply those (characteristic) of nascent

³¹ Schayegh, *Middle East*, p. 17 (quote), pp. 85–87, 182–83, 242–43, 258–63; Schayegh, ‘The Many Worlds of Abud Yasin, or: What Narcotics Trafficking in the Interwar Middle East Can Tell Us about Territorialization’, *American Historical Review*, Vol. 116, No. 2 (2011), pp. 273–306. Also Haggai Ram, *Intoxicating Zion: A Social History of Hashish in Mandatory Palestine and Israel* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2020); Asher Kaufman, *Contested Frontiers in the Syria-Lebanon-Israel Region: Cartography, Sovereignty, and Conflict* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014).

³² Related, see Aro Velmet, *Pasteur’s Empire: Bacteriology and Politics in France, its Colonies, and the World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020), showing how Institut Pasteur researchers around the French empire became colonial players.

nation states. Rather, they were shaped by the imperial interests and policies of the European mandate powers too.³³ And crucially, in the interwar decades empires still helped shape, and were shaped by, modes of globalisation and deglobalisation.³⁴ Let us not ‘ben[d too much] toward the telos of the nation’, then.³⁵ This crucial, globally embedded imperial dimension included thinking with, and applying, old and contemporary models – what Jeremy Adelman has called mimesis and which is the subject of a burgeoning literature on interimperial relations.³⁶ In our case, for instance, some French border specialists were interested in Ancient Rome’s use of agricultural-military colonists to secure borders; and the British used British Indian police officials to ‘better’ police Palestine, including its borders, during the 1936–39 revolt.³⁷

To conclude, this wonderfully productive volume has shown that the interwar Middle East is and remains a fascinatingly complex field for studying borders and borderlands. All sorts of societal actors were involved, some turning para-state actors in the process; nascent nation state actors emerged; post-imperial Ottoman issues echoed; European imperial actors and policies mattered; and in various ways new international organisations, especially the League of Nations, played a role, too.

³³ Altuğ and White, ‘Frontières’, pp. 91, 100, invoke a ‘*limes impérial*’.

³⁴ Martin Thomas and Andrew Thompson, ‘Empire and Globalisation: from “High Imperialism” to Decolonisation’, *International History Review*, Vol. 36, No. 1 (2014), pp. 142–70. Related, there is a considerable literature on what some call ‘imperial globality’. See e.g. Tony Ballantyne and Antoinette Burton, ‘Empires and the Reach of the Global’, in Emily Rosenberg (ed.), *A World Connecting, 1870–1945* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012), pp. 285–431.

³⁵ Hämäläinen and Truett, ‘Borderlands’, p. 356.

³⁶ Jeremy Adelman, ‘Mimesis and Rivalry: European Empires and Global Regimes’, *Journal of Global History*, Vol. 19 (2015), pp. 77–98; ‘Introduction: Encounters of Empires’, in Volker Barth and Roland Cvetkovski (eds), *Imperial Co-operation and Transfer, 1870–1930* (London: Bloomsbury, 2015), pp. 3–33; Christoph Kamissek and Jonas Kreienbaum, ‘An Imperial Cloud? Conceptualising Interimperial Connections and Transimperial Knowledge’, *Journal of Modern European History*, Vol. 14, No. 2 (2016), pp. 164–82.

³⁷ Altuğ and White, ‘Frontières,’ p. 100; Gad Kroizer, ‘From Dowbiggin to Tegar: Revolutionary Change in the Colonial Police in Palestine during the 1930s’, *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, Vol. 32, No. 2 (2004), pp. 115–33.