jority of the thirteen authors of this volume are scholars of religion, one a professor of cognitive science with an interest in cultural evolution and behavioral economics, and another a cultural anthropologist by training. One of the editors, Luther H. Martin, is well known for his cognitive work on the religions of the Graeco-Roman world.

In answer to the question, as to why historians should concern themselves with cognitive science and evolutionary modeling, Martin tells us that if historians are going to make assumptions about causality, then they must be able to identify the mechanisms of this causal process, about which the evolved features of human cognition can tell us much. Martin adds that in doing so historians also help solve problems in cognitive science.

Can cognitive science in fact complement historical analysis? Several of the articles seem to suggest that precise, rigorous analyses using cognitive theories can indeed cut through often mistaken common sense assumptions about past events. Thus, Anders Lisdorf's study of Roman omens and prodigies (omens directed at the state, and crucial in determining state policy) inquires into why certain events qualified as omens and others did not. Previous theories explained and assumed that public crises and fear prompted an increase in reports of prodigies which were accepted as such by the Roman Senate, whose job it was to accept or reject events of an unusual nature as omens. But as there is no available evidence on the interpretation procedures of the Senate on omens and prodigies, Lisdorf turns to other methods of analysis. A linear regression establishing a causal link between crises of varying degrees to the number of prodigies circulating shows that there is no significant relationship between the two. Therefore the fear thesis is not consistent with the findings. How, then, to establish the frequency of circulation and acceptance? Here cognitive models of micro-narratives, such as the urban myth model, based on counter-intuitive elements, may offer an explanation for the reporting and circulation of prodigies, while acceptance can be understood in terms of cognitive models of communication. For the latter, Lisdorf is able to demonstrate a logarithmic function that shows a valid connection between acceptance of a prodigy and its physical proximity to Rome. While accepting that this may not be a complete explanation, and that the distribution does not explain the rejections, Lisdorf offers us a more robust causality with the least number of exceptions. Similarly, Gabriel Levy in his discussion of Jewish niche construction uses concepts from evolutionary biology to explain Ashkenazi intelligence in certain types of reasoning. Levy does not eschew the importance of historical factors, such as emancipation of Jews in the 19th century, in the question of Jewish intelligence, but seeks, as he states, "for a suitable way to integrate the insights from cognitive science and evolutionary theory into the study of Judaism that does justice to both biological nature and the irreducible contingency of history" (31).

The articles in this volume offer welcome examples of rigorous analysis aimed at solving middle-level questions regarding past human behavior without recourse to speculative musings. They show us that common sense assumptions do not always bear the facts. Nor are the analyses conducted reductively. Behavioral responses are not reduced to brain physiology. Cognitive structures are recognized as deep structures that constrain expression and behavior in certain ways, but culture is also seen, corresponding to recent findings on neuroplasticity, as having an impact on the evolutionary process, and cultural evolution as a part of biological evolution itself. The articles point, therefore, to the larger questions of the human experience, the Big Picture, even as they examine the minutia of cultural phenomena. Such inquiries enrich our perspective of the past and remind us of what it is to be, beyond our cultural affiliations, human.

Supriya Mukherjee

Massicard, Elise: The Alevis in Turkey and Europe. Identity and Managing Territorial Diversity. Abingdon: Routledge, 2013. 255 pp. ISBN 978-0-415-66796-8. Price: £ 85.00)

On September 8th of 2013, ground was broken on an unprecedented, indeed groundbreaking, structure and project in Turkey. In the Ankara district of Mamlak, construction began on the first combined mosque-*cem* house (*cemevi*) in Turkey. Several prominent national newspapers covered the groundbreaking the following day; above all, the newspapers' reportage focused on the opinions and public reactions of prominent Alevis. Turkey's Alevis are a loosely-knit cultural-religious community who have struggled to define themselves against both hegemonic Turkish Sunni Islam and the refusal of the Turkish state to recognize them as a minority; while Alevi theology derives in part from Shi'a Islam, emphasizing reverence for such figures Ali and Hussein, their distinctive ritual practice is the *cem*, a terpsichorean performance known as a *semah*, in which participants, both men and women, circumambulate to the accompaniment of ballads played on lutes (*saz*). In spite of the ostensible good will behind the integrated mosque-*cem* house project, Alevi public figures voiced a variety of strong responses, both pro and con. While several Alevi activists and *dedes* (members of a sacral Alevi ritual lineage) praised the construction as a gesture of conciliation between Alevis and Sunnis, others condemned the project as "assimilationist" (*asimilasyoncu*), emphasizing in particular their skepticism over the support provided by the controversial Sunni Turkish theologian Fethullah Gülen. Moreover, a small, intermittently violent protest occurred near the construction site on the day of the groundbreaking. By chance, I was in Istanbul at the time, and was able to discuss the mosque-*cem* house initiative with a variety of friends and research contacts, both Alevi and Sunni. Inevitably, I encountered a wide spectrum of reactions, ranging from staunch enthusiasm to cynical dismissal.

How might we comprehend the exceptional politicization of and debate over the mosque-*cem* house initiative, which has been couched by its supporters in the comfortable liberal terms of religious choice and interreligious tolerance? Any interpretation of the current politicization of this project in Turkey demands a broader perspective

on the distinctive dilemmas that define Turkey's Alevis; indeed, the mosque-*cem* house project is a sort of litmus test for these dilemmas. Fortunately, a recent publication offers just such a perspective on the Alevis. In her impressive, meticulously researched monograph, "The Alevis in Turkey and Europe. Identity and Managing Territorial Diversity," Elise Massicard deftly articulates and unravels the tensions of communal, religious, and political belonging that Alevis necessarily negotiate, and that have fascinated so many researchers, including myself.

Massicard draws on well over a decade of exhaustive research, conducted in both Turkey and Germany, to trace the contours and illustrate the specificities of "Alevism," which she usefully defines as "mobilisation in the name of Aleviness, which rationalizes it and sets it up as a cause" (6). As she persuasively argues, the dynamics, definitions, and dilemmas that orient Alevism cannot be understood as essential features of Aleviness. On the contrary, Alevism has taken shape in direct, dialectical relation to the hegemonic political logics of Turkey and Germany (as well as Europe more broadly). Furthermore, in its emergence as a transnational network of institutions and actors, Alevism exemplifies and illustrates the complex negotiations between local and translocal political forces that confront and undergird transnational movements throughout the contemporary world.

To organize her vast archive of data, Massicard draws on sociologist Pierre Bourdieu's concept of a "field … [or] system of relations between agents who position themselves in relation to each other around a common issue" (54). She traces the development of Alevism across three distinct fields in both Turkey and Germany – the political, the religious, and the cultural. In Turkey specifically, a series of contrapuntal successes and frustrations have marked the development of Alevism. Within the political sphere, defined specifically as the relationship between party organizations and state institutions, Alevism has largely failed to mobilize coherent support, despite several sputtering attempts to found specifically "Alevi" parties. In order to understand Alevism's frustration within the domain of partisan politics, a broader perspective on recent Turkish political history is indispensable. Until the tidal waves of urban migration of the 1950s and 1960s, Alevis were largely a rural population, lacking coherent institutional representation at the national level. As members of a relatively impoverished, newly urbanized proletariat, Alevis were especially receptive to the Leftist political movements of the 1960s and 1970s; by the end of the 1970s, Alevis as a whole were strongly associated with Turkey's political Left. In the wake of the 12 September 1980 military coup, all political parties were banned; leftist actors and institutions were subject to particularly harsh repression. Although the three decades since the reestablishment of multiparty elections in 1983 have witnessed several aborted attempts at founding new "Alevi" parties, partisan political representation has largely eluded Alevism. Rather than explicit political representation, Alevism has achieved institutional flourishing within the domain of civil society, as a plethora of distinct foundations and associations.

The religious field within Turkey has proven no more accommodating to Alevism than the political field, albeit for distinct reasons. While divergent goals and definitions of Alevihood itself have frustrated articulation of Alevism as a partisan political cause, Alevist actors of different stripes are united in their opposition to a single, hegemonic state actor within the religious field: the Turkish Directorate of Religious Affairs (*Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*; DIB). Ultimately, the imperative of the DIB, and the state bureaucracy more generally, to foster and maintain a singular, exclusive definition of Islam, based on the Hanafi School (*mezhep*) of Sunni Islam – to monopolize the religious field – has thwarted the articulation of Alevism in Turkey on religious grounds. Concomitantly, Alevism has thrived more thoroughly in what Massicard calls the "cultural field"; the cultural reconstruction of Alevism has emphasized "specific features which have become symbols, such as poetry, the ritual *semah* dance, and the emblematic *saz*" (130). Of course, this cultural articulation of Alevism has immense consequences for Alevis – the demands and arguments that they are able to articulate on cultural grounds do not have the same valence as political or religious demands. One of the more fascinating aspects of Massicard's argument concerns the vastly different circumstances and status of the Alevist movement in Germany, where Alevi organizations have succeeded in organizing within the religious field. As she shows, the distinct arrangement of German secularism, which encourages the formation of institutional religious interlocutors mandated to negotiate with the state, has allowed Alevis to achieve goals within Germany that remain out of reach in Turkey, most notably a formalized mode of Alevi religious education (194 f.).

In contrast to the German context, the articulation of Alevism in Turkey remains fraught and undetermined. While the cultural field has offered some space to Alevi mobilization, the state's continual refusal to recognize Alevism as such guarantees that the oscillation of Alevism among political, cultural, and religious fields will continue. Indeed, it is the oscillation that underlies the current controversy over the integrated mosque-*cem* house project. The institutional actors behind the construction of the mosque-*cem* house in Ankara have framed it as a specifically religious project; this intervention within the religious field has troubled the politics surrounding other, political and cultural interpretations of Alevism. Here, perhaps, Massicard's analysis falls somewhat short. While she offers a superb, systematic reading of Alevism as a movement spanning different fields of action, the reader is left to wonder how Alevis politicize the very *relationship among different fields, political, cultural and religious*. In this respect, the current mosque-*cem* house project represents a key juncture for Alevism itself. Nonetheless, Massicard's excellent, cogent monograph constitutes an indispensable resource for understanding the history and politics that have led to this juncture.

Jeremy F. Walton