The Community and the State,” she explains the role of the Muslim Umma (community) in the development of Islamic political thought, and the beginning of the caliphate and its development into an obligatory institution as well as the manner of electing the caliph. These two chapters contain basic information, quite helpful to the new student of Islam.

In the third chapter, “Kharijis and Zaydis,” Professor Lambton treats these and other movements historically, in particular their differences. The fourth chapter, “The Use and Abuse of Sovereignty,” sets forth the political thought and the significance of Abū Yūṣuf, Ibn al-Muqaffa', al-Jahiz, and Ibn Qutaybah. Here, she traces the unrest and weakness of the caliphate, the subsequent decline of the Muslim state, and the subsequent development of Islamic law and assimilation of some Greek and Persian thought, and the orthodox Muslims’ desire to define and elaborate the concept of the imamate and to transfer power. She further discusses what she terms “the creation of the myth of the Medinan caliphate as the golden age of Islam,” but fails to recognize that it is considered a golden age because the appointment of the caliph was by shūrā (consultation) and choice rather than by force and inheritance.

Chapter Nine, “The Extinction of the Caliphate,” deals with Ibn Jamā'ah and Ibn Taymiyyah, and is clearly the best in the book. The writings of both Ibn Taymiyyah and Ibn Jamā'ah are contrasted with previous writers like al-Mawardi and al-Ghazāli. Furthermore, many good points can be found in the exposition of Ibn Taymiyyah’s thought like his emphasis on justice and his difference from previous Sunnī writers in not accepting the Qurayshī lineage (i.e. being from the tribe of the Prophet) or the possession of special intellectual, physical and moral qualities as conditions for electing the imam.

Chapter Eleven, “The Imam/Sultan: Fadl Allah B. Rūzbihān Khunjī”, is another fine chapter. The exposition of Khunjī’s writings is clear, analytical, and makes useful points of contrast with other thinkers like Ibn Jamā'ah, Ibn Taymiyya and Ibn Khaldūn. Chapter Twelve treats jihād, its theoretical development, its role in Islamic thought, the relations between Muslims and non-Muslims in peace and in war, and taxation. Chapter Thirteen deals with the Shī‘ah, the Imāmiyyah, their history and political development, while Chapter Fourteen is a comparative exposition of the differences between the attitudes of the Shī‘ah jurists and their Sunnī counterparts toward government. The last chapter, “The Individual and State,” serves as a recapitulation.

A different title, (for instance, Theology and Jurisprudence on the Question of the Caliphate), would more accurately capture the substance of the book. Still the above noted difficulties notwithstanding, this book provides a useful introduction to the history and sources of medieval Arabic and Persian jurisprudence.

University of Maryland
College Park, Maryland, U.S.A.

Ahmed S. Moussalli


This volume is the first in a projected trilogy on the sociology of Lingayat culture, Karnataka, South India. The theoretical position derives from a previous trilogy on Lingayats by the author, based on fieldwork in “Shivapur” village and on synchronic
analysis of the village as a populistic community undergoing populistic modernization. The present volume spans more than eight centuries since the 12th-century origin of the Lingayat community; it depends heavily on interpretation of venerable Kannada-language sacred texts; and it results, not in verifiable social science, but in a perspective—i.e., that "the Lingayats [as a whole, always] signified a populistic community par excellence" (p. x). Thus the book is an exercise in humanistic sociology, which the author, who is both sociologist and Lingayat, sees as "exemplifying the point of intersection between my autobiography and my growth as a sociologist" (p. xi).

Following upon a personalized introduction, six chapters interpret the origin and evolution of Lingayat culture, the personalities of the founder-leader Basava and his colleagues, Lingayat cultural ideals and the institutionalization of them, world-view and supporting rituals, and the nature of Lingayat social order and social mobility within the Indian caste system. It rests with these chapters to elucidate the fit between Lingayat culture history and modern Shivapur-type "populistic communities" featuring: "(1) cooperative interdependence of the [social] groups, (2) a significant degree of group pluralism, (3) anti-elitism based on egalitarian goals, (4) systematic linkage with the external environment, and (5) a built-in propensity to modernization, involving changes consistent with its institutional framework" (p. 139). The author's contention is that, despite differences of detail, Shivapur "populistic community" exemplifies Indian rural peasant communites at large.

The seventh and final chapter is on theoretical implications of Lingayat religion for modernization conceptualization, and could stand on its own as an excellent critique of "Western sociology, [which] in both Marxist and non-Marxist traditions, has downgraded and even ridiculed the role of the peasantry in the modernization process" (p. 146). Here Ishwaran posits a universal modernization concept, in terms of which European modernization has been just one historical expression. He argues typologico-evolutionistically that the Lingayat type of "populistic community" has an inherent capacity for "modernization," and is at the source of an "Indian modernization paradigm." He concludes that modernization has differed historically as between Europe and India—in other words, Indian modernization is not "Westernization"—because Europe negated populism as a precondition for modernization, whereas India embraced its populistic communities for "playing a key role in the development of structural interrelationships between the nation-central institutions, modern political structures and a modern economy" (p. 146). Far from being pushed and pulled by market forces, urbanization, or central economic planning, then, India's peasants "have successfully forged linkages between the local structures, the regional system and the national system" (p. 147; cf. also Ishwaran's A Populistic Community and Modernization in India, 1977).

The present volume's advance over the Shivapur trilogy is its attempt to display Lingayats as culturally preadapted, by cultural concomitants of their rural populism, to accept change. This may be, but is not yet proved. After all, elitist Smarta Brahmans of Madras City have been similarly maintaining cultural core-values while also flexibly modernizing (see Milton Singer, When a Great Tradition Modernizes, 1972). Indeed, Basava himself and his colleague Siddarama were sophisticated and urbane individuals, while Allama Prabhu, another colleague, was an Indic philosopher.

So far, then, we can add Lingayats to a growing list of cultural traditions whose values and associated social systems have variously accommodated successfully to the requirements of modern bureaucracy and business entrepreneurship. Success seems to be no more characteristic of the alleged Lingayat ideology of egalitarianism and