

*Contemporary
Authors*

volume 167

Contemporary Authors[®]

A Bio-Bibliographical Guide to
Current Writers in Fiction, General Nonfiction,
Poetry, Journalism, Drama, Motion Pictures,
Television, and Other Fields

SCOT PEACOCK
Editor

volume 167



DETROIT • LONDON

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Contemporary Authors[®]

Preface

Contemporary Authors (CA) provides information on approximately 100,000 writers in a wide range of media, including:

- Current writers of fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and drama whose works have been issued by commercial publishers, risk publishers, or university presses (authors whose books have been published only by known vanity or author-subsidized firms are ordinarily not included)
- Prominent print and broadcast journalists, editors, photojournalists, syndicated cartoonists, graphic novelists, screenwriters, television scriptwriters, and other media people
- Authors who write in languages other than English, provided their works have been published in the United States or translated into English
- Literary greats of the early twentieth century whose works are popular in today's high school and college curriculums and continue to elicit critical attention

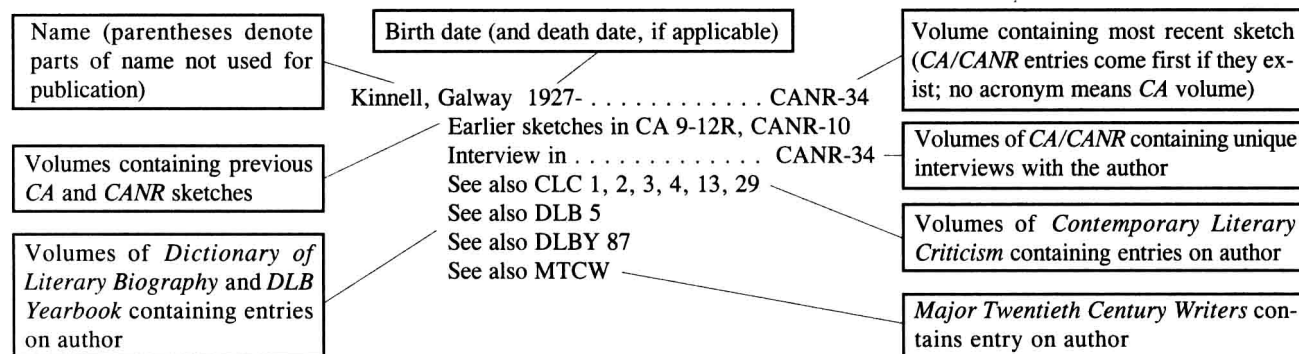
A CA listing entails no charge or obligation. Authors are included on the basis of the above criteria and their interest to CA users. Sources of potential listees include trade periodicals, publishers' catalogs, librarians, and other users.

How to Get the Most out of CA: Use the Index

The key to locating an author's most recent entry is the CA cumulative index, which is published separately and distributed with even-numbered original volumes and odd-numbered revision volumes. It provides access to *all* entries in CA and *Contemporary Authors New Revision Series* (CANR). Always consult the latest index to find an author's most recent entry.

For the convenience of users, the CA cumulative index also includes references to all entries in these Gale literary series: *Authors and Artists for Young Adults*, *Authors in the News*, *Bestsellers*, *Black Literature Criticism*, *Black Writers*, *Children's Literature Review*, *Concise Dictionary of American Literary Biography*, *Concise Dictionary of British Literary Biography*, *Contemporary Authors Autobiography Series*, *Contemporary Authors Bibliographical Series*, *Contemporary Literary Criticism*, *Dictionary of Literary Biography*, *Dictionary of Literary Biography Documentary Series*, *Dictionary of Literary Biography Yearbook*, *DIScovering Authors*, *DIScovering Authors: British*, *DIScovering Authors: Canadian*, *DIScovering Authors: Modules* (including modules for Dramatists, Most-Studied Authors, Multicultural Authors, Novelists, Poets, and Popular/Genre Authors), *Drama Criticism*, *Hispanic Literature Criticism*, *Hispanic Writers*, *Junior DIScovering Authors*, *Major Authors and Illustrators for Children and Young Adults*, *Major 20th-Century Writers*, *Native North American Literature*, *Poetry Criticism*, *Short Story Criticism*, *Something about the Author*, *Something about the Author Autobiography Series*, *Twentieth-Century Literary Criticism*, *World Literature Criticism*, *World Literature Criticism Supplement*, and *Yesterday's Authors of Books for Children*.

A Sample Index Entry:



How Are Entries Compiled?

The editors make every effort to secure new information directly from the authors; listees' responses to our questionnaires and query letters provide most of the information featured in *CA*. For deceased writers, or those who fail to reply to requests for data, we consult other reliable biographical sources, such as those indexed in Gale's *Biography and Genealogy Master Index*, and bibliographical sources, including *National Union Catalog*, *LC MARC*, and *British National Bibliography*. Further details come from published interviews, feature stories, and book reviews, as well as information supplied by the authors' publishers and agents.

An asterisk () at the end of a sketch indicates that the listing has been compiled from secondary sources believed to be reliable but has not been personally verified for this edition by the author sketched.*

What Kinds of Information Does an Entry Provide?

Sketches in *CA* contain the following biographical and bibliographical information:

- **Entry heading:** the most complete form of author's name, plus any pseudonyms or name variations used for writing
- **Personal information:** author's date and place of birth, family data, ethnicity, educational background, political and religious affiliations, and hobbies and leisure interests
- **Addresses:** author's home, office, or agent's addresses, plus e-mail and fax numbers, as available
- **Career summary:** name of employer, position, and dates held for each career post; resume of other vocational achievements; military service
- **Membership information:** professional, civic, and other association memberships and any official posts held
- **Awards and honors:** military and civic citations, major prizes and nominations, fellowships, grants, and honorary degrees
- **Writings:** a comprehensive, chronological list of titles, publishers, dates of original publication and revised editions, and production information for plays, television scripts, and screenplays
- **Adaptations:** a list of films, plays, and other media which have been adapted from the author's work
- **Work in progress:** current or planned projects, with dates of completion and/or publication, and expected publisher, when known
- **Sidelights:** a biographical portrait of the author's development; information about the critical reception of the author's works; revealing comments, often by the author, on personal interests, aspirations, motivations, and thoughts on writing
- **Biographical and critical sources:** a list of books and periodicals in which additional information on an author's life and/or writings appears

Obituary Notices in *CA* provide date and place of birth as well as death information about authors whose full-length sketches appeared in the series before their deaths. These entries also summarize the authors' careers and writings and list other sources of biographical and death information.

Related Titles in the *CA* Series

Contemporary Authors Autobiography Series complements *CA* original and revised volumes with specially commissioned autobiographical essays by important current authors, illustrated with personal photographs they provide. Common topics include their motivations for writing, the people and experiences that shaped their careers, the rewards they derive from their work, and their impressions of the current literary scene.

Contemporary Authors Bibliographical Series surveys writings by and about important American authors since World War II. Each volume concentrates on a specific genre and features approximately ten writers; entries list works written by and about the author and contain a bibliographical essay discussing the merits and deficiencies of major critical and scholarly studies in detail.

Available in Electronic Formats

CD-ROM. Full-text bio-bibliographic entries from the entire *CA* series, covering approximately 100,000 writers, are available on CD-ROM through lease and purchase plans. The disc combines entries from the *CA*, *CANR*, and *Contemporary Authors Permanent Series (CAP)* print series to provide the most recent author listing. The *CA CD-ROM* is searchable by name, title, subject/genre, nationality/ethnicity, and personal data, as well as by using Boolean logic. The disc is updated every six months. For more information, call 1-248-699-4253.

Contemporary Authors is also available on CD-ROM from SilverPlatter Information, Inc.

Online. The *Contemporary Authors* database is made available online to libraries and their patrons through online public access catalog (OPAC) vendors. Currently, *CA* is offered through Ameritech Library Services' Vista Online (formerly Dynix).

GaleNet. *CA* is available on a subscription basis through GaleNet, an online information resource that features an easy-to-use end-user interface, the powerful search capabilities of the BRS/Search retrieval software, and ease of access through the World-Wide Web. For more information, call 1-248-699-4253.

Magnetic Tape. *CA* is available for licensing on magnetic tape in a fielded format. The database is available for internal data processing and nonpublishing purposes only. For more information, call 1-248-699-4253.

Suggestions Are Welcome

The editors welcome comments and suggestions from users on any aspects of the *CA* series. If readers would like to recommend authors for inclusion in future volumes of the series, they are cordially invited to write the Editors; or call at 1-248-699-4253; or fax at 1-248-699-8054.

CA Numbering System and Volume Update Chart

Occasionally questions arise about the *CA* numbering system and which volumes, if any, can be discarded. Despite numbers like “29-32R,” “97-100” and “166,” the entire *CA* print series consists of only 164 physical volumes with the publication of *CA* Volume 167. The following charts note changes in the numbering system and cover design, and indicate which volumes are essential for the most complete, up-to-date coverage.

CA First Revision

- 1-4R through 41-44R (11 books)

Cover: Brown with black and gold trim.

There will be no further First Revision volumes because revised entries are now being handled exclusively through the more efficient *New Revision Series* mentioned below.

CA Original Volumes

- 45-48 through 97-100 (14 books)

Cover: Brown with black and gold trim.

- 101 through 167 (67 books)

Cover: Blue and black with orange bands.

The same as previous *CA* original volumes but with a new, simplified numbering system and new cover design.

CA Permanent Series

- CAP-1 and CAP-2 (2 books)

Cover: Brown with red and gold trim.

There will be no further *Permanent Series* volumes because revised entries are now being handled exclusively through the more efficient *New Revision Series* mentioned below.

CA New Revision Series

- CANR-1 through CANR-70 (70 books)

Cover: Blue and black with green bands.

Includes only sketches requiring significant changes; **sketches are taken from any previously published *CA*, *CAP*, or *CANR* volume.**

If You Have:

You May Discard:

CA First Revision Volumes 1-4R through 41-44R and CA Permanent Series Volumes 1 and 2	CA Original Volumes 1, 2, 3, 4 Volumes 5-6 through 41-44
CA Original Volumes 45-48 through 97-100 and 101 through 167	NONE: These volumes will not be superseded by corresponding revised volumes. Individual entries from these and all other volumes appearing in the left column of this chart may be revised and included in the various volumes of the <i>New Revision Series</i> .
CA New Revision Series Volumes CANR-1 through CANR-70	NONE: The <i>New Revision Series</i> does not replace any single volume of <i>CA</i> . Instead, volumes of <i>CANR</i> include entries from many previous <i>CA</i> series volumes. All <i>New Revision Series</i> volumes must be retained for full coverage.

A Sampling of Authors and Media People Featured in This Volume

Susan Wittig Albert

Already an author of nonfiction, Albert gave up her university career to write fiction. Her “China Bayles” mystery novels feature a middle-aged amateur sleuth who has given up practicing law to open an herb shop in such titles as *Rueful Death* and *Witches’ Bane*.

Gertrude Bell

A key figure in the creation of Iraq as an independent state, Bell was influential in her lifetime for her intimate knowledge of the Middle East. Bell’s travel writings, which include *The Desert and the Sown*, has proven useful to such fields as social science and diplomacy.

Jean Canavaggio

A renowned scholar of Cervantes, the Spanish writer responsible for the landmark novel *Don Quixote*, Canavaggio has written several books on the influential author. His *Cervantes* received France’s Prix Goncourt.

Lou V. P. Crabtree

A life-long inhabitant of Virginia’s Appalachian mountains, Crabtree expresses her love and intimate knowledge of the region’s land and people in *Sweet Hollow*, a gritty collection of short stories.

Albert French

French, a Vietnam War veteran, transformed his war-time trauma into the book *Patches of Fire*. He is also the author of the critically acclaimed novel *Billy*, which is set during the Depression years.

George Gissing

A Victorian-era novelist, Gissing focused much of his semi-autobiographical fiction on London’s lower classes. His novels include *New Grub Street*, *The Emancipated*, and *The Unclassed*.

Akiva Goldsman

Drawing on experience working with autistic children, Goldsman wrote the screenplay *Silent Fall*, about an autistic boy who witnesses his parents’ murders. He also authored the screenplays for *Batman and Robin* and *Lost in Space*.

W. C. Handy

Handy, who wrote numerous blues compositions like “Beale Street Blues,” also authored the nonfiction volume *Negro Authors and Composers of the United States* and the autobiography *Father of the Blues*.

Thich Nhat Hanh

A Vietnamese Buddhist monk, Hanh is a teacher, writer, spiritual leader, political activist, and a prolific author of spiritual texts. Among his best-known books are *Being Peace* and *The Miracle of Mindfulness*.

Willetta L. Heising

Founder of the Purple Moon Press, Heising is the author of the mystery fiction guide *Detecting Women*, an index to the twentieth-century mystery series created by female authors.

T. E. Lawrence

Lawrence, who led the Arab revolt during World War I, was also an archaeologist, scholar, and author. His *Seven Pillars of Wisdom* was described by Winston Churchill as one of the best books ever written. Among Lawrence’s other works is a translation of *The Odyssey*.

Dudley Moore

A comedian and actor in such films as *10* and *Arthur*, Moore is also an accomplished musician. In addition to writing several screenplays, Moore is responsible for *Off-Beat: A Musical Companion*, a reference work which covers pop to classical music.

Cokie Roberts

News correspondent Roberts frequently appears on *ABC News* and programs such as *This Week*. In addition to writing a weekly syndicated column, Roberts is the author of 1998’s *We Are Our Mothers’ Daughters*.

David S. Rohde

Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Rohde provides a day-by-day account of the 1995 Srebrenica massacre of Muslims by Serbian armed forces in 1997’s *Endgame: The Betrayal and Fall of Srebrenica, Europe’s Worst Massacre Since World War II*.

Michele Root-Bernstein

Root-Bernstein’s 1997 book *Honey, Mud, Maggots and Other Medical Marvels*, written with her husband Robert Root-Bernstein, describes many folk remedies that have been implemented throughout history.

Lawrence Walsh

Walsh, appointed in 1986 as Independent Counsel for the Iran-Contra investigation, is the author of *Iran-Contra: The Final Report* and 1997’s *Firewall: The Iran-Contra Conspiracy and Cover-Up*.

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Indexing note: All *Contemporary Authors* entries are indexed in the *Contemporary Authors* cumulative index, which is published separately and distributed with even-numbered *Contemporary Authors* original volumes and odd-numbered *Contemporary Authors New Revision Series* volumes.

As always, the most recent *Contemporary Authors* cumulative index continues to be the user's guide to the location of an individual author's listing.

A

**Indicates that a listing has been compiled from secondary sources believed to be reliable, but has not been personally verified for this edition by the author sketched.*

A/c CROSS

See LAWRENCE, T(homas) E(dward)

* * *

ADSHEAD, S(amuel) A(drian) M(iles)

PERSONAL: Male.

ADDRESSES: *Office*—History Department, University of Canterbury, Private Bag 4800, Christchurch 8020, New Zealand. *Agent*—c/o St. Martin's Press, 175 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10010.

CAREER: Historian and writer. University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand, professor of history, until 1998.

WRITINGS:

Debate on China, New Zealand Institute of International Affairs (Wellington, New Zealand), 1969.

The Modernization of the Chinese Salt Administration, 1900-1920, Harvard University Press (Cambridge, MA), 1970.

The End of the Chinese Empire, Heinemann Educational (London), 1973.

Province and Politics in Late Imperial China: Viceregal Government in Szechwan, 1898-1911, Curzon Press (London), 1984.

China in World History, St. Martin's Press (New York City), 1988.

Salt and Civilization, St. Martin's Press (New York City), 1992.

Central Asia in World History, St. Martin's Press (New York City), 1993.

Material Culture in Europe and China, 1400-1800: The Rise of Consumerism, St. Martin's Press (New York City), 1997.

SIDELIGHTS: S. A. M. Adshead is a historian specializing in Asia. His first book, *The Modernization of the Chinese Salt Administration, 1900-1920*, concerns what Edward Rhodes, writing in the *American Historical Review*, described as "a vital part of the traditional Chinese fiscal system, since after land salt was the most consistently taxed commodity." Rhodes called Adshead's 1970 publication "an important and lucid study." Another reviewer, Frank H. H. King, reported in the *Business History Review* that "Adshead's study touches significantly on several key topics during a period of transition," and Thomas A. Metzger, in his assessment for the *Journal of Asian Studies*, hailed *The Modernization of the Chinese Salt Administration, 1900-1920* as a "brilliant and absorbing book" and added that it is "distinguished by a fine ear for cross-cultural comparisons, sociological perspectives, the details of political power, and intellectual history."

In 1984 Adshead published *Province and Politics in Late Imperial China: Viceregal Government in Szechwan, 1898-1911*, in which he argues that provincial leaders undermined the stability of Szechwan's viceregal government by imposing traditional methods in their efforts at modernization. Jonathan Ocko, writing in the *American Historical Review*, proclaimed *Province and Politics in Late Imperial China* a work "replete with suggestive, cogent ideas."

Adshead's *China in World History*, which appeared in 1988, traces events in China during the twenty-two

centuries stretching from the unification of the Chinese empire to the death of Mao Zedong in 1976. *Journal of Asian Studies* reviewer Edward L. Farmer described the book as "a fresh, opinionated, and ambitious overview that will stimulate rethinking and jog new perceptions of both Chinese history and world history." Farmer concluded that *China in World History* "is full of provocative perspectives and deserves the widest possible reading and discussion."

In 1992 Adshead completed *Salt and Civilization*, wherein he traces the history of salt as a commodity. *American Historical Review* critic William H. McNeill, who called *Salt and Civilization* "a quirky masterpiece," observed that Adshead's "effort to pursue the manufacture, distribution, and consumption of salt is impressively learned" and that "his command of technology, geography, and economics is extraordinary; and his insights and suggestions are immensely provocative." Ursula Ewald, meanwhile, acknowledged Adshead, in a *Journal of Historical Geography* review, as "a leading authority on the salt trade, particularly in China," and she deemed *Salt and Civilization* "a wide-ranging and highly-impressive survey which is probably the most insightful and detailed summary yet produced." Clifford M. Foust, writing in *Nature*, called Adshead's book "an important contribution to commodity history and a laudable step towards truly comparative history."

Central Asia in World History is a 1993 volume by Adshead that, as *Times Literary Supplement* reviewer David Morgan noted, "surveys Central Asian history right down through the centuries." Morgan called Adshead's book a "provocative survey." Jo-Ann Gross, who reviewed *Central Asia in World History* for *American Historical Review*, found Adshead's book to be "a useful one for those nonspecialists interested in assessing how the history of Central Asia fits into the world community." She also acknowledged Adshead as "a specialist on the history of late imperial China." Ruth W. Dunnell, reviewing *Central Asia in World History* in the *Journal of Asian Studies*, advised: "Read this book. Your view of the world will never be the same."

Adshead is also the author of *Material Culture in Europe and China, 1400-1800: The Rise of Consumerism*. In this book, Adshead presents his interpretation of the rise of consumerism, focusing on trade and economy in and between China and Europe. Adshead not only discusses the intellectual basis of consumerism in such daily aspects of life as clothing, housing,

and food, but also argues that consumerism is a positive force in the development of the modern world.

BIOGRAPHICAL/CRITICAL SOURCES:

PERIODICALS

- American Historical Review*, April, 1972, pp. 564-565; December, 1985, pp. 1254-1255; April, 1990, pp. 559-560; April, 1993, pp. 466-467; June, 1994, pp. 865-866.
Business History Review, autumn, 1971, pp. 411-412.
Choice, December, 1988, p. 690; May, 1992, p. 1434; November, 1993, p. 514.
Economist, August 20, 1988, p. 75.
Geographical Journal, July, 1994, p. 31.
History: Reviews of New Books, spring, 1989, p. 129.
Journal of Asian Studies, November, 1971, pp. 191-192; August, 1989, pp. 583-584; February, 1994, pp. 155-156.
Journal of Historical Geography, October, 1993, pp. 475-476.
London Review of Books, October 26, 1989, p. 35; July 9, 1992, pp. 16-17; March 10, 1994, pp. 10-11.
Nature, August 13, 1992, p. 550.
Pacific Affairs, fall, 1986, p. 490.
Reference and Research Book News, September, 1993, p. 8.
Times Literary Supplement, July 30, 1993; December 31, 1993, p. 19.

OTHER

- Macmillan Press*, <http://www.macmillan-press.co.uk/catalogue/0690/0-333-69082-6.html> (June, 1998).*

* * *

AFFABLE HAWK

See MacCARTHY, (Charles Otto) Desmond

* * *

AGELL, Charlotte 1959-

PERSONAL: Born September 7, 1959, in Norsjo, Sweden; daughter of L. Christer Agell (in business) and Margareta Segerborg McDonald (an artist and teacher); married Peter J. Simmons (an arts adminis-

trator and master gardener), May 15, 1981; children: Anna, Jon. *Education*: Bowdoin College, B.A., 1981; Harvard Graduate School of Education, Ed.M., 1986.

ADDRESSES: *Agent*—Edite Kroll Literary Agency, 12 Grayhurst Park, Portland, ME 04101.

CAREER: Author and illustrator. Conducts workshops for youths and adults. Has worked previously as a teacher and education consultant.

MEMBER: Maine Writers and Publishers Alliance (board member).

WRITINGS:

SELF-ILLUSTRATED

The Sailor's Book, Firefly Books (Buffalo, NY), 1991.

Mud Makes Me Dance in the Spring, Tilbury House (Gardiner, ME), 1994.

I Wear Long Green Hair in the Summer, Tilbury House, 1994.

Wind Spins Me Around in the Fall, Tilbury House, 1994.

I Slide into the White of Winter, Tilbury House, 1994.

Dancing Feet, Harcourt (New York City), 1994.

I Swam with a Seal, Harcourt, 1995.

To the Island, DK Ink, 1998.

Some of Agell's works have been published in France.

WORK IN PROGRESS: Several sequels to *To the Island*.

SIDELIGHTS: Charlotte Agell commented: "I have always written and illustrated little books. When I speak to school children, one of my favorite 'show and tell' items is *Tommy Pickle*, an illustrated story about an elf and the girls who spy on him, 'written by Charlotte Agell, age 8 3/4. Pictures by C. Agell also.' A testimony to dreams, or stubbornness, perhaps.

"I grew up in Sweden, Canada, and Hong Kong. When I was a child in Montreal, I wrote a story about a boy in Maine. Vacationing friends had told me that Maine was a wonderful place. I called his town Hali-but and imagined myself to be him. I would fish for my dinner and have ruddy cheeks. It was a snippet of a story, really, but years later, I ended up coming to Maine for college for quite flimsy reasons. I wonder if that early piece of fantasy had not, in part, directed

me. Life imitates art. I have been living happily ever after in Maine since 1977.

"I love to read, bake, and to be outside—in the woods, on a mountain, or by the water—all three at once, sometimes, preferably on cross-country skis on new snow."

Agell's love of water and the outdoors translated into her first work, *The Sailor's Book*, about a boy and girl who sail on a sea they imagine to be a dragon. Irene Aubrey, a reviewer in *Canadian Materials*, praised the book's "lyrical tone," adding: "The great appeal of this picture-book fantasy lies in its simplicity and naivete."

Dancing Feet, another lyrical picture book offering from Agell, poetically celebrates the function of a variety of human body parts. *Booklist* reviewer Ilene Cooper called attention to the book's "jaunty rhyme," maintaining that *Dancing Feet* would be "especially good for story hours where kids will clap along to the catchy rhythm." Lesley McKinstry, writing in *School Library Journal*, called Agell's book "delightful," noting that it "shows individuals from a variety of cultures engaging in activities, making this a good choice to introduce similarities and differences among people." The *New York Times Book Review* called *Dancing Feet* "ebullient" and "celebratory."

BIOGRAPHICAL/CRITICAL SOURCES:

PERIODICALS

Booklist, July, 1994, p. 1952.

Canadian Materials, January, 1992, p. 18.

New York Times Book Review, September 25, 1994, p. 32.

Publishers Weekly, March 28, 1994, p. 95.

School Library Journal, May, 1994, p. 84.

* * *

AJAMI, Fouad 1946-

PERSONAL: Born in 1946, in Lebanon; immigrated to the U.S., 1964; became naturalized citizen. *Education*: University of Washington, Ph.D. (political science). *Religion*: Raised a Shi'ite Muslim.

ADDRESSES: *Agent*—c/o Pantheon Books, 201 East 50th Street, New York, NY 10022.

CAREER: Lehrman Institute, New York City, former research fellow; Department of Politics and Center of International Studies, Princeton University, Princeton, NJ, faculty member, until c. 1980; Paul Nitze School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University, Washington, DC, associate professor and director of Middle East studies, became Majid Khadduri Professor of Islamic Studies and director of Middle East Studies, 1980—. Contributing editor, *U.S. News and World Report*; consultant, *CBS News*.

AWARDS, HONORS: James P. Warburg post-doctoral fellowship, and Philip Lindsley Bicentennial Preceptorship, both from Princeton University; MacArthur Prize fellowship, 1982, for work on Middle East politics and culture.

WRITINGS:

The Vanished Imam: Musa al Sadr and the Shi'a of Lebanon, Cornell University Press (Ithaca, NY), 1986.

Beirut: City of Regrets, with photographs by Eli Reed, Norton (New York City), 1988.

The Arab Predicament: Arab Political Thought and Practice since 1967, Cambridge University Press (New York City), 1981, revised edition, 1992.

The Dream Palace of the Arabs: A Generation's Odyssey, Pantheon (New York City), 1998.

Contributing editor, *U.S. News and World Report*. Contributor of articles and essays to periodicals, including *New York Times Book Review*, *Foreign Affairs*, *Washington Post Book World*, *Foreign Policy*, *Politique Etrangere*, *Harper's*, and *New Republic*.

SIDELIGHTS: Fouad Ajami has made his name in the United States not only as a scholar and the director of the Middle Eastern Studies Program at Johns Hopkins University, but also as contributor to widely read periodicals like *U.S. News and World Report* and *Harper's*. He is also known for his impressive public speaking skills and regular appearances on television news shows for CBS. But while Ajami's eloquence seems to be universally admired, his political analyses, both in his role as Mideast expert on the evening news and in his writings, have sometimes met with controversy.

As the recipient of a number of prestigious fellowships, including, in 1982, the much-coveted MacArthur Foundation Award, Ajami's academic credentials have never been questioned. More controversial has been the political bent of some of his writings and

views, which have at times been called "anti-Arab." The American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee has protested CBS's extensive reliance on Ajami as its Mideast expert, in the face of many other able candidates. In a negative review of Ajami's latest book for the *Nation*, Andrew Rubin referred to a reported comment made by then-president George Bush that Ajami was "more anti-Arab than even the Israelis." Other critics, like Daniel Pipes of the conservative journal *Commentary*, admired Ajami's "free[dom from] the common Arab fixation on the perfidy of Israel."

Ajami's first major book, *The Arab Predicament*, relates the panic and sense of vulnerability that Israel's 1967 victory created in the Arab world. Organized into three parts, the book renders, in part one, the conflicts among three prevalent Arab points of view—"the radical, the Ba'thist, and the fundamentalist," according to a *Choice* reviewer; in part two, Ajami explores Egypt's central role in the Middle East and the effects of the influx of oil money into the region; in part three, he covers the rise of religious fundamentalism. This book was well received by critics from *Choice* and *Library Journal*. Elizabeth R. Hayford of *Library Journal* admired Ajami's ability to "[place] Islamic fundamentalism within the broad issues of relations between ruler and ruled."

Reviews of Ajami's *The Vanished Imam: Musa al Sadr and the Shi'a of Lebanon* revealed a mix of admiration and uncertainty about Ajami's role as a distant and somewhat skeptical onlooker of Middle Eastern political events. In a lengthy review in the *New York Review of Books*, Edward Mortimer began with a description of Ajami's brief encounter in a Beirut classroom in 1963 with Musa al Sadr, an Iranian Shi'ite cleric then just beginning his rise to power. Within a year Ajami had immigrated to the United States; although he was not personally a witness to Sadr's religious and political ascent, his Lebanese sources helped him to tell the tale of the man who raised the Lebanese Shi'a from a "despised minority" to the ruling party of Lebanon.

Early in the review, Mortimer spoke of Ajami's "brilliant American academic career, built largely on incisive exposure of the follies of his fellow Arabs." The comment mirrors similar criticism by others that Ajami has made his fortune by feeding American paranoia about Muslim extremists bent on terrorist acts. However, Mortimer quickly turned away from this type of critique and praised the book's eloquence, as well as its powerful hold on the complex realities Lebanon has endured. "[Ajami's] use of the [English]

language," wrote Mortimer, "represents one of those periodic transfusions of new blood which ensure its perennial vigor." Mortimer ascribed part of the power of Ajami's narrative to the strong feelings that underlie it: "It is almost as if one were to discover a life of Christ written by the young man who, when invited to sell all he had and give to the poor, went sorrowing away." In other words, Ajami's rejection of Sadr's "activist, modernist version of Shi'ism" is not without admiration or regret. However, Ajami also expresses regret that Musa al Sadr's legacy was in being taken up as a hero in the Iran Revolution and having his name invoked by men like the Ayatollah Khomeini to justify violent acts. In addition, the Imam's disappearance during a 1978 visit to Quaddafi in Libya gave him an otherworldly power that he as a flesh and blood man could never have matched.

Reviewers of *The Vanished Imam* in *Publishers Weekly* and the *Library Journal* joined Mortimer in praising *The Vanished Imam*. In *Library Journal*, Elizabeth Hayford wrote, "What begins as a narrow study of a relatively minor figure becomes a sensitive and probing analysis of current Middle Eastern society."

In *Beirut: City of Regrets* Ajami wrote a lengthy introduction and some accompanying text to what is largely a photographic essay by Eli Reed about the destruction of what had once been called "the Paris of the Middle East," according to *Library Journal* reviewer David P. Snider. A *Publishers Weekly* reviewer called the introduction "thorough, moving, and remarkably unbiased." A reviewer for the *Los Angeles Times Book Review*, however, commented that "Ajami recounts history with such a gentle spirit and understanding mind that his text does little to help us understand why the country rages with such hatred."

Ajami's 1998 work, *The Dream Palace of the Arabs*, has generated considerably more critical heat than his previous works. Although a *Publishers Weekly* review was positive, taking the book at its word, so to speak, and appreciating it as a "cohesive and illuminating cultural history" for "even the most general reader," reviews in journals with stronger political stances reflected those leanings strongly. Andrew Rubin's review for the *Nation* stated early on that, as a Mideast expert on television, Ajami "echoes the kind of anti-Arabism that both Washington and the pro-Israel lobby have come to embrace." Rubin showed some appreciation for Ajami's thoughtful analysis of the period of literary modernism that was born in the

Mideast from the early 1940s onward, but whose secular bent became non-viable after the religious revolutions that swept the region. Rubin, however, vigorously protested against some of Ajami's language to describe current Arab politics, including "tribal," "atavistic," "clannish," and "backward." Rubin called this kind of language "anti-Arab orientalism." He objected strongly to Ajami's characterization of "the struggle for a Palestinian homeland only as an internal Arab contest between modernity and tradition," which ignores "Israel's policy of systematic detentions of Palestinians, its destruction of Palestinian homes and entire villages, its ruthless attacks on refugee camps and its torture and nightly arrests."

Daniel Pipes's review for *Commentary* echoed much of Rubin's review but drew completely opposite conclusions. Early in the review, Pipes acknowledged the criticisms Ajami has faced from other members of the Arab-American community; for example, renowned cultural critic Edward Said of Columbia University (whom Pipes termed Ajami's "would-be rival") has indicted Ajami for his "unmistakably racist prescriptions." Pipes, on the contrary, applauded Ajami's "robust, blunt-spoken approach to the Middle East" and found him "blessedly free of the common Arab fixation on the perfidy of Israel," for Pipes an attractive, refreshing quality.

Of *The Dream Palace of the Arabs*, Pipes said, "To my taste, the early chapters of this book, in which Ajami uses poets and intellectuals to represent the political currents of the era, seem a bit contrived. As the book goes along, however, the argument becomes increasingly direct." Pipes noted particularly the final chapter of the book, "The Orphaned Peace," which critiques Arab intellectuals' rejection of the Oslo peace talks. "If Fouad Ajami is right," wrote Pipes, "Arab intellectual life will continue to exalt irrationality and to honor aggression for some time to come. We may not like this, but having read [Ajami's book], we can at least begin to understand it."

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ALAGOA, Ebiegberi Joe 1933-

PERSONAL: Born March 14, 1933, in Okpoma, Rivers State, Nigeria; son of Joseph Ayibatonye (a chieftan) and Jane Furombogha (Obasi) Alagoa; married Mercy Gboribusuote Nyananyo, September 26, 1961; children: David Ayibatonye. **Education:** University College, Ibadan, Nigeria, B.A. (with honors); University of Wisconsin, Ph.D. (history), 1966.

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CAREER: National Archives, Kaduna, Nigeria, archivist, 1959-62; University of Lagos, Lagos, Nigeria, lecturer in African history, 1965-67, director of Centre of Cultural Studies, 1972-77; Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan, senior research fellow, 1967-72; School of Humanities, University of Port Harcourt, Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria, dean, beginning 1977. Chair, Rivers State Council of Arts and Culture, 1973-75.

MEMBER: American Anthropology Association, Historical Society of Nigeria.

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SIDELIGHTS: A Nigerian historian and educator, Ebiegberi Joe Alagoa has written numerous works about his homeland, the Rivers State region of Nigeria. Many of these works deal with history and folklore as incorporated into the oral tradition of Africa. In his 1964 work, *The Small Brave City-State: A History of Nembe-Brass in Niger Delta*, Alagoa chronicles the history of the Nembe people who have lived near the Brass River estuary of the Niger Delta since the fifteenth century. Drawing on oral sources preserved in the national archives, as well as other published sources, Alagoa describes the social and political organizations, commerce, and politics of the Nembe Brass. He also describes the Akassa War between the Nembe and the British colonial trading company.

Several commentators have praised Alagoa's contribution to the recorded history of Nigeria. Judging Alagoa to be "well equipped to fuse the oral traditions of the Nembe people with the more standard sources," Robert O. Collins, writing in the *American Historical Review*, called the work "first a most useful contribution to the local history of the delta region and second a scholarly addition to the history of Nigeria as a whole." "The chapter on the Akassa War is particularly useful to the African historian," Collins added. In addition, a critic for *Choice* called the work "well written," praising Alagoa's "excellent analysis" of the region's institutions, noting that it supplements other works on Nigeria.

"Alagoa has written a historical study rather than an ethnography, thus omitting many cultural features which would interest anthropologists," noted Donald C. Simmons in a review for *American Anthropologist*. "However, anyone interested in the area can glean much background ethnological information from this interesting, well-documented study, whose minor faults are due not to the author but to the paucity of data available for reconstructing Nembe history." The "principal weakness" of *The Small Brave City-State* is Alagoa's "failure to carry the history of Nembe-Brass well into the twentieth century," according to Collins.

For young readers, Alagoa has contributed several volumes to London publisher Heinemann's "African

Historical Biographies" series. The goal of this series is to present African history from a native point of view, rather than from the colonial perspective so frequently employed. Thus, *King Boy of Brass* tells the story of a nineteenth-century boy-king of the Niger Delta who is at first a disappointment to his father, but redeems himself as a ruler and trader. Abiola Odejide, writing in *Reading Teacher*, contended that Alagoa's book turned the reader into a "detached observer, an auditor rather than a vicarious participant of a past experience." "The authors in all the Heinemann series are strongly aware of the historical perspective, leading to an overwhelming factual tone and the relegation of literary quality to the background," stated Odejide. On the other hand, the critic judged Alagoa's 1970 biography, *Jaja of Opobo: The Slave Who Became a King*, to be the more successful of the historian's two juvenile biographies. Because the author fictionalizes the early life of Jaja of Opobo, maintained Odejide, young readers are more likely to become engaged in the work.

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ALBERT, Susan Wittig 1940-
 (Robin Paige, a joint pseudonym)

PERSONAL: Born January 2, 1940, in Maywood, IL; daughter of John H. and Lucille (Franklin) Webber; married (divorced); married William Albert (a writer), 1986; children (first marriage): Robert, Robin, Michael. *Ethnicity:* "Caucasian". *Education:* University of Illinois, B.A., 1967; University of California-Berkeley, Ph.D., 1972. *Avocational interests:* Gardening.

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