The book is an extensive survey of the legal systems of several Muslim states in the Middle East including Afghanistan (prior to foreign military intervention) and of the Sudan.

What is the legal system of a people? It is a mirror of their ideology, their customs, their historical background and their socio-economic conditions. Hence the book offers a very deep insight into the Muslims societies of the Middle East. The special attention paid by the author to the foreign trade and the forms of government of each Muslim country of the Middle East has particularly made this picture clearer and has enhanced much the value of the book.

It is, therefore hoped that the book will be welcomed by the diplomats, the politicians and the lawyers as well as by the tradesmen, and the students of political science.

From the study of the book one comes to know that the legal systems of the Middle East generally are mixed systems except Iran and Saudi Arabia. By the 'mixed system' the author means an amalgamation of the Islamic, local and the Western or the socialist systems. It is so, perhaps, because some experts think that the Western legal system is not repugnant to the teachings of Islam in its every practical aspect. Moreover it has been held by some scholars that the Western jurists acquired the principle of equity and equality before the law, from the Islamic concept of 'adl and supremacy of the Shari'ah. Some Orientalists like Goldziher and Joseph Schacht have been of the view that the Islamic legal system during its formative period borrowed heavily from the Roman and the Sasanid laws. People do agree and disagree with this point of view, but it should not be taken as an accusation of wrong doing.

The chapters on Iran and Saudi Arabia are very interesting. Iran is a country where the theory of Wilayat Faqih (the governance of the theologian jurist), as categorically enunciated by Ayat Allāh Khumayni, is enshrined in the Constitution of Iran in the form of the Guardian Council, The Wilayat Faqih means that the law of the land shall be based upon Islam as interpreted by the religious jurist. This theory is being translated in some Sunni countries into the demand for the interpretation of the Shari'ah in accordance with the principles laid down by the orthodox religious jurists. (fuqaha').

The Qur'an is the Constitution of Saudi Arabia and the Hanbali law is the law of the land. This uncomplicated system has produced marvellous results. The people are peaceful and the dispensation of justice the most expeditious.

The author gives a fine description of the Shi'ah sect in chapter 3; and a brief but excellent introduction of the major Islamic schools of jurisprudence in chapter 4. Nevertheless there are a few points to be reconsidered by the author. Firstly, the word qisas which is spelled as 'qasas' throughout the book. Secondly, there is a very subtle distinction between qisas and hadd which the author seems to have ignored. For example, see page 113 of the book. Thirdly, his statement that Muwatta of Mālik is the first collection of hadith (p. 162). This statement requires rephrasing because the recent researchers may not agree with this assertion.

Several errors are to be found in the bibliographical notes. For example, Alamgiriyyah ('Alamgiriyyah), al-Aynz, ('Aynī) Al-Ghazzazi (Ghazālī) and al-Marghināni (al-Marghinānī) (p. 13). It is hoped that the next edition will be free from such errors.