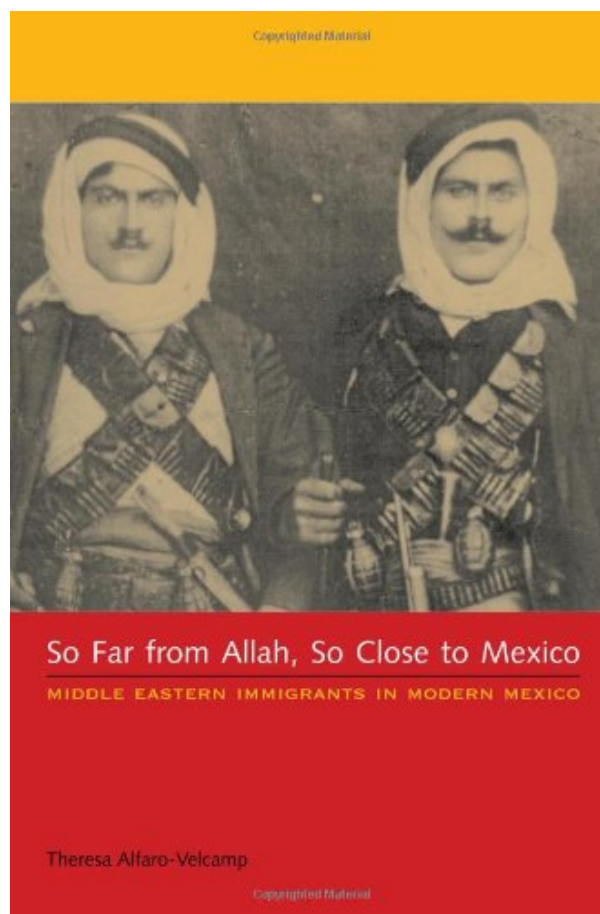


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MIDDLE EASTERN IMMIGRANTS IN MODERN MEXICO

Theresa Alfaro-Velcamp

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About the Author

THERESA ALFARO-VELCAMP is Assistant Professor of History at Sonoma State University in Rohnert Park, California. She has published numerous scholarly articles on Middle Eastern immigrants who settled in Latin America.

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SO FAR FROM ALLAH, SO CLOSE TO MEXICO: MIDDLE EASTERN IMMIGRANTS IN MODERN MEXICO BY THERESA ALFARO-VELCAMP PDF

Middle Eastern immigration to Mexico is one of the intriguing, untold stories in the history of both regions. In *So Far from Allah, So Close to Mexico*, Theresa Alfaro-Velcamp presents the fascinating findings of her extensive fieldwork in Mexico as well as in Lebanon and Syria, which included comprehensive data collection from more than 8,000 original immigration cards as well as studies of decades of legal publications and the collection of historiographies from descendants of Middle Eastern immigrants living in Mexico today.

Adding an important chapter to studies of the Arab diaspora, Alfaro-Velcamp's study shows that political instability in both Mexico and the Middle East kept many from fulfilling their dreams of returning to their countries of origin after realizing wealth in Mexico, in a few cases drawing on an imagined Phoenician past to create a class of economically powerful Lebanese Mexicans. She also explores the repercussions of xenophobia in Mexico, the effect of religious differences, and the impact of key events such as the Mexican Revolution.

Challenging the post-revolutionary definitions of mexicanidad and exposing new aspects of the often contradictory attitudes of Mexicans toward foreigners, *So Far from Allah, So Close to Mexico* should spark timely dialogues regarding race and ethnicity, and the essence of Mexican citizenship.

- Sales Rank: #97141 in Books
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About the Author

THERESA ALFARO-VELCAMP is Assistant Professor of History at Sonoma State University in Rohnert Park, California. She has published numerous scholarly articles on Middle Eastern immigrants who settled in Latin America.

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A great introduction to Middle Eastern immigration to Mexic

By A customer

This is a great book and research work of Mexican history. Middle Eastern immigration to Mexico and the history thereof is not a very prominent area of study among "general" scholars and students of history but

Professor Theresa Alfaro-Velcamp introduces the reader to this history in seven analytical and descriptive chapters that will give us the minimum and necessary dose of knowledge needed.

Often the history of Mexico that we study and learn is political and economical and linear. Linear in the sense that we usually begin with the War of Independence then passing through the Mexican-United States war, La Reforma, the Reconstruction, the Porfiriato, the Mexican Revolution and so on. But rarely is any space or time given to the history of immigration to Mexico especially from the Middle East.

So Far from Allah, So Close to Mexico is the book that will help cover that gap of history that is usually not taught to us in the general course. However, as the subtitle of the book "Middle Eastern Immigrants In Modern Mexico" reflects, Dr. Alfaro-Velcamp only focuses on the recent immigration from the Middle East to Mexico. Basing herself on over 8,000 original immigration cards and plenty of other data, she begins to trace the history all the way back to the beginning of the Porfiriato and ending up to the contemporary era.

As a historian myself I strongly recommend this book to any person interesting in expanding their knowledge of Mexican history. This is a book that will help you further appreciate Mexican history and understand how Middle Easterners were also part of the social construction of "Mexicanidad" and how their struggles and ambitions were no different than those of any other Mexican. However, Professor Alfaro-Velcamp's book will also teach us that Middle Easterners were faced with certain political and judicial obstacles that made it hard for some of them (especially working-class) to merge and fit into the Mexican melting pot. Nonetheless this is a book that contributes to the expanding and new research of Mexican history.

So Far from Allah, So Close to Mexico will help you appreciate Mexican history and the history of Middle Eastern immigration to Mexico. The book's structure will further help the reader understand certain aspects of this history since it focuses on certain aspects and issues necessary to further understanding. On a last note the author includes a bibliography that will help the reader with further reading. This is a very well researched book.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful.

Very informative book!

By chivas

An excellent detailed account of Middle Easterner immigrants in Mexico (Past, Present, Future?) and a large bibliography that can serve independent researchers. The only downside to this book is that some of its chapters overlap. A great untold story.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.

Excited to read this book

By Manuel Castillo

I just ordered this book after discussing this subject with a coworker.

I was fortunate enough to Dr Alfaro- Velcamp on a flight. I remember how passionate the author was about teaching as well as learning about different cultures.

Can't wait to start reading this book!!

Manuel Castillo

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