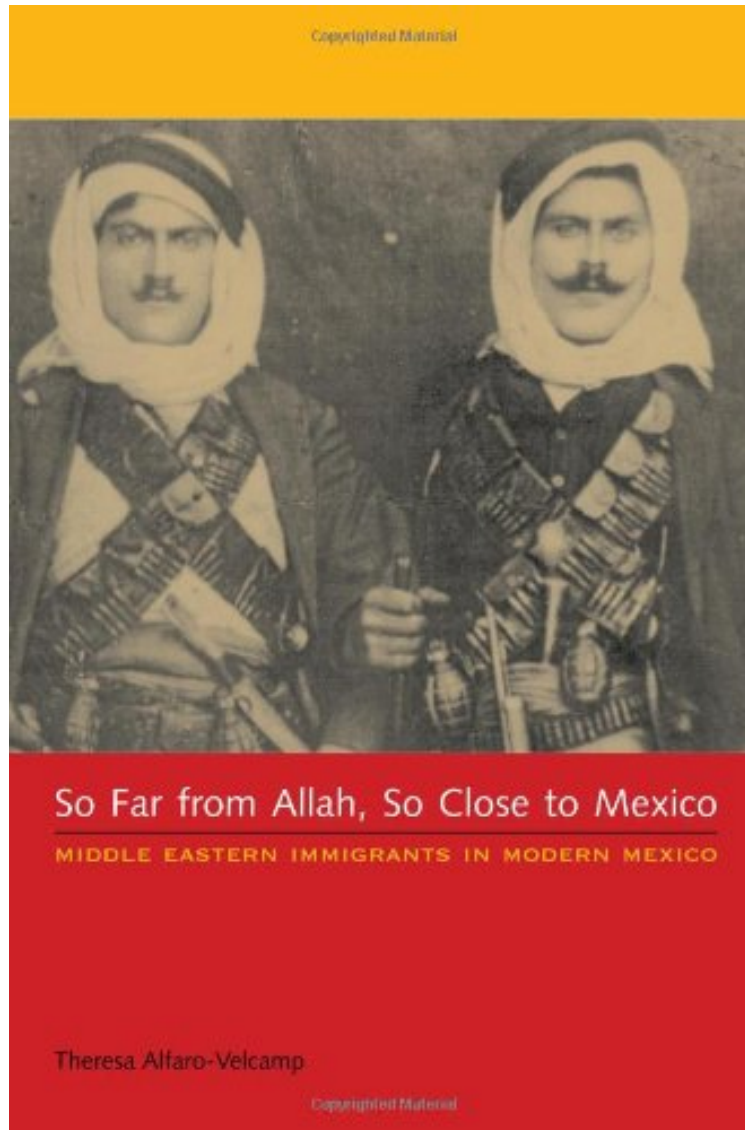


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So Far from Allah, So Close to Mexico: Middle Eastern Immigrants in Modern Mexico

Theresa Alfaro-Velcamp

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Theresa Alfaro-Velcamp : So Far from Allah, So Close to Mexico: Middle Eastern Immigrants in Modern Mexico before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised So Far from Allah, So Close to Mexico: Middle Eastern Immigrants in Modern Mexico:

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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.

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.