

**Winner of the 2010 PCCBS Book Prize**

**Priya Satia, *Spies in Arabia: The Great War and the Cultural Foundations of Britain's Covert Empire in the Middle East* (Oxford, 2008)**

Priya Satia's *Spies in Arabia* is an innovative investigation of transformation in British espionage in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries and its impact on British intervention in the Middle East. Satia's book examines the conundrum of how British intelligence agents could gather information in a region they were attracted to because of its inscrutability, and shows how the British state depended on equivocal agents groping through a fog of cultural representations. Using an impressive range of sources, Satia has written a book that brings together the concerns of cultural, diplomatic, and imperial scholars with striking results. *Spies in Arabia* is an engaging, engrossing, and timely work that is sure to provoke debate.