

*unWilling and unAble* (2021), for instance, argues that extensive US attention to China with no tangible European contribution would give Beijing the leeway to undermine the integrity of the transatlantic partnership, as the China-led “17+1 bloc” in Eastern Europe demonstrates. The edited volume has regenerated the debate over the future responsibilities of transatlantic partners, which—amid the great power rivalry on different fronts, including Ukraine, Taiwan, the Middle East and Africa—deserve intellectual scrutiny.

*Transatlantic Relations: Challenge and Resilience* successfully conceptualizes the sources of resilience in post-Cold War relations that have persisted despite the divergences and fragmentations that occurred mainly under US Republican leaders (that is, Ronald Reagan, George W. Bush and Donald Trump) and the attention these sources have received in traditional scholarship. The volume is a timely addition to the literature on transatlantic relations. It is particularly highly recommended to students and specialist readers in search of analysis of important issue-areas of the transatlantic relationship that have received comparatively less scholarly attention, such as the environment, as it skilfully brings to the fore, by combining recent history and a gaze to the future, previously under-discussed sources of resilience.

## Reference

Deni, John R. 2021. *Coalition of the unWilling and unAble: European Realignment and the Future of American Geopolitics*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

## In Your Face: Law, Justice, and Niqab-Wearing Women in Canada

**Natasha Bakht, Toronto: Irwin Law, 2020, pp. 266**

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For the past decade, at both the Canadian and international levels, public debates and the resulting legislation banning face-covering veils have criminalized women wearing the niqab and turned them into threats to public security and to the collective values of the nation-state. Constructed as public problems, these women have become the object of stereotyped representations—based on a gendered Islamophobia reinforced in the post-9/11 era—by various actors (politicians, researchers, activists) in the majority community. In Canada, niqab-wearing women’s access to the civic, political and judicial systems has been restricted: they have been prohibited from testifying in courts, and attempts have been made to prohibit them from acquiring citizenship and from voting in elections.

The legal scholar Natasha Bakht brings attention to these women whose dignity and human rights have been disregarded and whose voices have been silenced in the public sphere. The book aims to understand the meanings of the niqab by highlighting the voices and experiences of women who have chosen to wear it (chap. 1) and their strategies of resistance to counter the dominant political, legal and social representations of them (chap. 6). It also examines 10 main arguments (at the popular, political and legal level) against the wearing of the niqab in the public space—including threats to security and issues surrounding women’s equality (chap. 2). The book also analyzes opposition to wearing the niqab in judicial courts and argues that women should be allowed to wear it in courtrooms (chap. 3) and that the prosecution and adjudication in cases of sexual assault must include niqab-wearing women and their particular needs (chap. 4). It also examines the history of legislative bans of the niqab in Canadian public spaces

(chap. 5). To that end, Bakht employs a mixed methodology, varying between a testimonial analysis, a discourse analysis and a legal analysis, and applies an intersectional feminist analytical framework. The testimonial analysis includes semi-structured interviews of niqab-wearing women conducted in Ontario and Quebec, media interviews with niqab-wearing women, editorials written by these women, and affidavits in cases involving niqab-wearing women in different national contexts (Netherlands, Denmark, Belgium, France and England). The discourse analysis relies on material from 2007 to 2020, including newspaper articles, op-eds, blogs, academic articles, cases and legislation. The legal analysis is based on case law, legislation, and secondary sources from jurisdictions.

Bakht's goal with this book is to deconstruct the legal, judicial, political and social objections provided by the majority for restricting the rights and actions of niqab-wearing women. The book also seeks to analyze critically how law and politics—through their treatment of these women—can undermine the ideal of democracy, as they become tools to repress and exclude religious minorities in Canada rather than progressive tools “where the experiences and perspectives of individuals most directly affected contextualize and inform the law” (165). The book also offers a reflection on law as a discipline. It aims to critically examine how the law is biased, in the sense that it considers Christian cultural connotations neutral, while those of religious minorities—and particularly Islam—are considered “‘in your face’ visible” (6). Drawing on the Indigenous ethics of the Anishinaabe jurist John Borrows, the book also examines how love and kindness could be aspirational ideas to interpret rights in Canada and could bring transformative change.

This outstanding book, which sheds light on women about whom we speak too little, retraces, in a precise way, a Canadian history of face-covering regulation. It not only gives a voice to niqab-wearing women but also allows readers to question Canadian society. It demonstrates the manifestation of the “Muslim problem” in Western liberal states and how niqab-wearing women symbolize the limits of a nation and unleash moral panic. The book brings to light the injustices suffered by these women in gaining access to public speaking, while at the same time, certain political actors—often men—feel free to assess these women's lifestyle and clothing choices and speak in their place about their alleged oppression. At the methodological level, the book offers a rich body of data by combining the perspectives of niqab-wearing women in Canada, social representations in the Canadian public debate, a history of Canadian legal regulations about wearing the niqab, and artistic visual production around figures of niqab-wearing women. This book will be insightful and instructive for scholars in law, social sciences and philosophy, as well as for a larger public.

One critique of this book concerns the inclusion of minority voices in public spaces. If the book denounces the restricted access to public space for niqab-wearing women, it does not show how these voices—once access is granted—are received and how they can be met with skepticism. Future research could continue the reflection initiated by Bakht by analyzing how epistemic injustices against niqab-wearing women occur in public debates.

## **Behind Closed Doors: The Law and Politics of Cabinet Secrecy**

**Yan Campagnolo, Vancouver: UBC Press, 2021, pp. 352**

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When I was in graduate school, a nervous classmate began a presentation saying, “I'm going to begin by defining ‘definition,’” leading the instructor to comment, “It's going to be a very