

were the route through which young Muslims were first mobilized as Muslims. But the authors take this theme further and show a gender dimension: while many in the public debate presume to speak about or on behalf of women — usually in their absence — the women themselves have quietly, and increasingly not so quietly, carved out their own niche with their own agendas. In the final chapter, the perspective is turned fully on the European environment: “Is there space for European Muslims?” Self-perceptions, European and Muslim, clash, and Muslims locate themselves in four circles or facets of reference: experience in the local, national, European, and transnational context (160–163). Perhaps the asymmetry between these references, on the one hand, and most non-Muslim Europeans’ often much more limited horizons of reference, accounts for some of the tensions which feed the grand narrative.

*Islam in Europe* is a thought-provoking study that relates the experiences that the authors have collected over the years well to the broader research literature. Generally it is easily accessible and not too pervaded by jargon and should therefore be useful for senior undergraduates. However, it is a shame that the technical editing has not been more careful. Several sources are mentioned in the text that are absent from the bibliography, and the index is of little use, with no reference to key actors (e.g., Geert Wilders) or countries, the latter especially disappointing given the broad European coverage of this otherwise very useful study.

***Islam and Political-Cultural Europe.* Edited by W. Cole Durham Jr., David M. Kirkham, and Tor Lindholm. Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2012. 336 pp. \$128.00 Cloth**

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How is the interaction between “political Islam and an increasingly secular Europe” studied? What considerations are important in such an analysis? These questions are the driving force behind a growing literature that seeks to understand how Islamic sub-culture in European societies has both

shaped and been shaped by the majority culture and institutions. This volume seeks to push this discussion further by considering how the interactions between Muslim communities and European societies have played out in the cultural and political realms as well as the legal one. Durham, Kirkham, and Lindholm are ambitious in their endeavors, structuring the book into four sections: first, theoretical discussions on the compatibility between Islam, secularism, and religious freedoms; second, Islam as it relates to laws and politics in European countries; third, Islam, education, and macro-finance; fourth, extremism and security. The volume begins with theoretical considerations, and then is complemented with a series of case studies.

Several chapters in this volume provide nuanced analyses, and make strong contributions toward understanding the dynamics between Muslim communities and European societies. Durham, Kirkham, and Lindholm have succeeded in broadening the dialogue with the inclusion of subjects such as Islamic banking, Imam training, and institutional accommodation. These are key issues concerning the integration of Muslim minorities in Europe, and the pieces in this volume are relevant and timely. Subjects that have been prolifically written about elsewhere are revisited in this volume with fresh insights. Lisbet Christoffersen's piece on the Danish cartoon is a strong example of this. It is clear that the contributors are not interested in re-hashing old arguments, but want to entertain new perspectives. That this book is a compilation that includes works not only from academics but lawyers and policy-makers with a vested interest in these issues clearly demonstrate this. A particular strength of this volume is that a number of chapters explicitly deal with questions that have not been thoroughly addressed by existing literature, and are explored through a particular country study, bridging the gap between theoretical and empirical work. One example that deftly demonstrates this is Rik Torf's piece on "Muslims in Belgium," which essentially hits two birds with one stone. First, the piece tackles the difficult question of how state resources are allocated to Muslim communities when Islam is granted status as a state religion, but there is no clear figurehead to oversee the distribution of funds. This is in juxtaposition with other faiths, such as Christianity, where hierarchical institutional structures make this issue moot. Second, exploring this question through a case study of Belgium provides for an enriched understanding of this complex issue.

That being said, there are critiques to be made. It is not clear to the reader why these countries have been selected and why others have been excluded. To elaborate further, France is visited as country study

more than once, yet other European states that have large Muslim minorities are not discussed at all. Similarly, some explanation as to why the themes included in the volume were selected would have been useful. It is a credit to the book that there is such a breadth of topics being discussed, but there is unevenness with the engagement of these subjects. For example, the section that focuses on education and finance has three chapters on the former and only one chapter on the latter. Perhaps focusing the analytical lens on fewer themes and including a wider range of country studies would have created a better balance in the volume, providing more in-depth discussions on the topics at hand.

While this volume succeeds in providing the reader some excellent chapters on Muslim communities in Europe, noticeably absent were any general observations or conclusions by the editors. What is the way forward here? How does this book contribute to broad theoretical frameworks in the discussion of religion and politics or in comparative politics? This might prove difficult to do in an edited volume, however, some discussion on how this book plugs into wider literatures and dialogues would have been useful.

Last, some explanation in terminology would have been beneficial. Terms such as “Political Islam” and “European Islam” need to be unpacked. There are competing definitions of what these concepts mean and debate as to how much analytical purchase they can provide. It would have been helpful if at the outset of the volume the editors included a glossary of definitions as well as an explanation as to why these terms are being used. This is not to say that the volume was completely absent of this discussion; certain authors did engage with terminology in their pieces. It would have, however, better served the book if the editors had delved into this at the start.

In sum, this volume is engaging and provides important insights on both well-known and emerging debates regarding Muslim communities in Western Europe.