

The modernization of Egypt is an important topic to discuss and understand, especially in our current climate. This academic work provides insights unknown before into a segment of society often neglected by historians, anthropologists, and ethnographers. This social history provides for the student, researcher, and academic alike a new framework in which to pursue our understanding of Egypt during this time.

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*Muslims in Western politics*. Edited by Abdulkader H. Sinno. Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2009. Pp. 320, with notes, references, figures, and index. \$24.95 (paperback). ISBN: 9780253220240.

Originally initiated as a conference in 2005 with the same title, *Muslims in Western politics* is a compilation of essays by authors who discuss the effects of Western institutions on Muslim minorities. The editor, Dr. Abdulkader H. Sinno, Assistant Professor of Political Science and Middle Eastern Studies at Indiana University, and his contributors peruse governments, parliaments, courts, the media, political parties, churches, and law enforcement. Spain, Germany, France, Great Britain, Canada, and the United States are examined, with references to Belgium, Greece, Italy, Denmark, and the Netherlands.

This book is separated into four parts with three chapters in each and a notes and references section after each chapter. Transliteration follows the system of the *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*. The index is fairly detailed. Chapter 1 begins with an overview of the book's purpose.

Part One, Western Muslims and Established State-Religion Relations, Chapter 2, "Claiming Space in America's Pluralism: Muslims Enter the Political Maelstrom," shows how the 9/11 acts have reduced the number of Muslims running for political office because of negative biases. To remedy the negative perceptions,

some Muslim scholars publicly discuss the concept of “Progressive Islam” and its ideas of “justice, gender equality, and pluralism.” Chapter 3, “The Practice of Their Faith: Muslims and the State in Britain, France, and Germany,” compares the government policies of each country and their affect on Muslims’ religious rights in public institutions. It argues that secularism might prevail in Western Europe, since the attacks by Muslims in Madrid, London, and Amsterdam were evidence that European Muslims’ religious practices belonged in the public domain. Chapter 4, “Religion, Muslims, and the State in Britain and France: From Westphalia to 9/11,” contrasts France’s “assimilationist” model to the “integrationist” model of the United Kingdom and reveals a comparison of both models towards Muslims.

Part Two, Western Muslims and Political Institutions, Chapter 5, “Muslim Underrepresentation in American Politics,” demonstrates that although the United States perceives Muslims more positively, ironically there are more Muslim politicians in some European countries (Belgium, Canada, the United Kingdom, and the Netherlands) than in the U.S. This underrepresentation is mainly attributed to large electoral districts with small numbers of potential Muslim voters and also public bias against Muslim candidates from the American-Israeli Public Affairs Committee, Evangelical churches, and conservatives. Chapter 6, “Muslims Representing Muslims in Europe: Parties and Associations After 9/11,” interviews three hundred European Muslim politicians and civic leaders to determine whether religion and identity played a role when implementing public policies. The leaders included “parliamentarians, city councilors, leaders, and spokespeople from civic associations, advocacy groups, and local and national umbrella organizations of mosque councils and interfaith groups, and also some . . . leading imams and Islamic scholars” from Western Europe. Muslim leaders stated that their faith did not determine their political party and that integration of Muslims with the West was necessary. Chapter 7, “Muslims in UK Institutions: Effective Representation or Tokenism?” discusses the fact that generally, Muslim councilors believed they could better serve Muslim minorities because of cultural similarities. But no matter what positions Muslims belonged to; nevertheless, all felt limited in certain ways for advocating the rights of Muslim minorities.

Part Three, Institutional Underpinnings of Perceptions of Western Muslims, Chapter 8, “How Europe and Its Muslim Populations See Each Other,” shows that Germans and Spaniards view Muslims and Arabs more negatively compared to the French, British, and Americans. But most European Muslims favor Christians and Westerners more than Middle Eastern Muslims do. In France, Muslims consider nationality before religion, while the opposite is true in Great Britain. Chapter 9, “Public Opinion toward Muslim Americans: Civil Liberties and the Role of Religiosity, Ideology, and Media Use,” discusses changes in public opinion towards Muslims by Americans since 9/11. The authors attribute the Americans’ support of restrictions on Muslims to television news, entertainment, and Christian conservatives. Chapter 10, “The Racialization of Muslim Americans,” claims that Muslims are “racialized” based on their religion and culture. These stereotypes initiate the support of civil rights infringements; with more women than men, more conservatives, and more Protestants supporting this law. However, more Americans are gaining knowledge about Islam and engaging in dialogue exchange.

In Part Four, Western Muslims, Civil Rights, and Legal Institutions, Chapter 11, “Canadian National Security Policy and Canadian Muslim Communities,” Canada’s “Anti-Terrorism Act of 2001” (C-36 Bill) is described, as are the amendments made to it under pressure from Muslim organizations because it singled out Muslims. Also, the chapter discusses Canada’s other methods of dealing with terrorism, such as security certificates, new immigration laws, and cross-cultural roundtables for dialogue. Chapter 12, “Counterterrorism and the Civil Rights of Muslim Minorities in the European Union,” introduces the European Union’s counterterrorism efforts since 9/11, such as to “intensify police, intelligence, and legal cooperation.” However, critics argue that civil rights are compromised by this law, and other laws must be implemented to prevent anti-Muslim discrimination. Chapter 13, “The Preventive Paradigm and the Rule of Law: How Not to Fight Terrorism,” argues that the Bush administration’s “preventive paradigm” contradicts the “rule of law.” Moreover, the U.S.’s preventive paradigm as a means to acquire information is reprehended because it is argued that it has not made us safer.

In Chapter 14, “Recommendations for Western Policy Makers and Muslim Organizations,” Dr. Sinno recommends that Western

institutions should end discrimination against Muslims from all directions, avoid “changing Islam,” have dialogue with Islamic scholars, encourage Muslims towards political office, and follow proper foreign policy procedures. For Muslim organizations, Sinno recommends: lobbying for their rights, transparency, accepting liberal values, and engaging in roundtables on security and civil rights.

*Muslims in Western politics* introduces a unique look at how Western institutions have affected the rights of Muslim minorities historically and since 9/11. This book is mainly directed towards political science and Middle East studies students. However, I recommend all libraries acquire this highly informative book.

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*I am you: a novel of lesbian desire in the Middle East.* By Elham Mansour. Translated and edited with an introduction by Samar Habib. Youngstown, New York: Cambria Press, 2008. Pp. 229. \$99.95 (hardcover). ISBN: 9781604975024.

At first, Elham Mansour’s novel seems like a stereotyped story of a Lebanese student who falls in love and has an affair with a young French woman in Paris. Siham is torn between her lover, who is openly lesbian, and her disapproving mother—both of whom are pressuring her. In short, female homosexuality seems to be identified with Western culture in opposition to Lebanese society. Siham takes a cowardly path at this point, and is in denial about her sexual identity.

When the scene shifts to war-torn Beirut, a variety of eye-opening female homosexual encounters are revealed. These are ironic critiques of Middle Eastern society’s assumptions about female sexuality and lifestyle. A single woman, a feminist, who lives alone and seems to have a “manly” appearance is assumed to be a lesbian by a young woman who is attracted to her and regarded as a danger by the husband of a neighbor. In fact, this daring feminist