

Islam, Democracy, and Cosmopolitanism At Home and in the World by Ali Mirsepassi and Tadd Graham Fernee, 2014, Cambridge University Press.

This book presents a critical study of citizenship, state, and globalization in societies that have been historically influenced by Islamic traditions and institutions. Interrogating the work of contemporary theorists of Islamic modernity such as Mohammed Arkoun, Abdul an-Na'im, Fatima Mernissi, Talal Asad, Saba Mahmood, and Aziz Al-Azmeh, this book explores the debate on Islam, Democracy, and Modernity, contextualized within contemporary Muslim lifeworlds. These include contemporary Turkey (following the 9/11 attacks and the onset of war in Afghanistan), multicultural France (2009-10 French burqa debate), Egypt (the 2011 Tahrir Square mass mobilizations), and India. Ali Mirsepassi and Tadd Fernee critique particular counterproductive ideological conceptualizations, voicing an emerging global ethic of reconciliation. Rejecting the polarized conceptual ideals of the universal or the authentic, the authors critically reassess notions of the secular, the cosmopolitan, and democracy. Raising questions that cut across the disciplines of history, anthropology, sociology, and law, this study articulates a democratic politics of everyday life in modern Islamic societies.

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Why Reservation for Muslims? by Habibur Rehman, 2013, New Delhi, Gyan Publishing House.

There is wide range of variations in the conditions of Muslims across the country but one thing is certain that Muslims as a whole exhibit the perceived discrimination and deprivation practically in every segment. The Sachhar Committee Report and the Misra Commission findings too have revealed that Muslims are economically, educationally, socially and culturally, a miserable lot. In many respects they are worse than scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. They are under siege due to lack of education, shrinking political space, deprivation and frustration. They are at the lowest pedestal of the society and need affirmative actions to bring them within the national milieu.

A debate is going on throughout the country to uplifts the conditions of Muslims through affirmative measures, however due to lack of authentic material of the subject, the government as well as political parties and the meaningful people are finding it difficult to evolve an appropriate strategy.

Misra Commission has suggested welfare measures for the development of weaker sections of Muslims including reservation in educational institutions and employment in government sectors on the pattern of SCs/STs and backward classes. It has also chalked out the modalities for the implementation of its recommendations within the framework of Indian Constitution. However, there is a sense of despair among Muslims pertaining to the implementation of Misra commission report because they have seen the fate of Sachhar committee report.

It is a golden opportunity for the government to show its strong will and compassion for the Muslims by bailing them out from the morass in which they have been dragging for several decades. The implementation of Misra commission recommendations with earnestness and urgency they deserve will not only benefit Muslim community but would enhance India's prestige as a secular democracy and reflect upon the large-hearted tolerance of Indian society and would go a long way in enriching the age-old pluralistic culture of the country.

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Ramifications of being a Minority in India

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Everyday Lived Islam in Europe Edited by Nathal M. Dessing, Nadia Jeldtoff, Jørgen S. Nielsen, and Linda Woodhead, 2013, Ashgate.

This book offers a new direction for the study of contemporary Islam by focusing on what being Muslim means in people's everyday lives. It complements existing studies by focusing not on mosque-going, activist Muslims, but on how people live out their faith in schools, workplaces and homes, and in dealing with problems of health, well being and relationships.

Offering fresh empirical studies of everyday lived Islam, the book offers a new approach which calls for the study of 'official' religion and everyday 'tactical' religion in relation to one another. It discusses what this involves, the methods it requires, and how it relates to existing work in Islamic Studies.

Cosmopolitanisms in Muslim Contexts by Derryl N. Maclean & Sikina Karmali (ed.), 2014, Edinburgh University Press.

Looking at moments in world history when cosmopolitanism pervaded Muslim societies this collection of 9 essays focuses on instances in world history when cosmopolitan ideas and actions pervaded specific Muslim societies and cultures. The contributors explore the tensions between regional cultures, isolated enclaves and modern nation-states.

Cosmopolitanism is a key concept in social and political thought, standing in opposition to closed human group ideologies such as tribalism, nationalism and fundamentalism. Recent discussions of it have been situated within Western self-perceptions. Now, this volume explores it from Muslim perspectives.

Key Features

- Contributors include Felicitas Becker, Thomas Kuehn, Ariel Salzman, Iftikhar Dadi and Muhammed Khalid Masud
- Chooses models from 4 areas: the Swahili coast, the Ottoman Empire/Turkey, Iran and Indo-Pakistan, showing the differences and similarities between areas
- Each region is covered in 2 chapters, providing a basis for comparison

Guardians of Shi'ism: Sacred Authority and Transnational Family Networks by Elvire Corboz, 2014, Edinburgh University Press.

A study of transnational Shi'ism that explains the constitution of clerical leadership patterns across borders.

What is the significance of transnationalism to Shi'i Islam? And how is a clerical authority shaped across borders? Based on a political sociology of two families of religious scholars, al-Hakim and al-Khu'i, Elvire Corboz explains the internal workings of transnational leadership patterns in Shi'ism for the first time.

Corboz compares the multifaceted roles played by Shi'i clerics in contemporary affairs with selective narratives about the traditional system of religious authority (the marja'iyya), political organisations and international charities. Whether informal or institutionalised, their authority networks are in constant negotiation between communities and states in Iraq, Iran, other Middle Eastern countries, the Indian sub-continent, South-East Asia and the West. This multi-sited approach clarifies the local and transnational dynamics that underpin clerical authority.

Key features

- Analyses the networking, philanthropic and political practices of Shi'i clerical figures across borders from a sociological perspective to enhance our understanding of Muslim authority
- Includes case studies of two prominent families of religious scholars, which explain the continued relevance of Shi'i clerics to Muslim politics and society
- Engages in the topical debate on transnational Shi'ism by exploring the cross-border religious networks in and beyond the Middle East.

Salaam, Love: American Muslim Men on Love, Sex, and Intimacy by (Ed.) Ayesha Mattu & Nura Maznavi, 2014, Beacon Press.

Muslim men are stereotyped as either oversexed Casanovas willing to die for seventy-two virgins in heaven or controlling, big-bearded husbands ready to rampage at the hint of dishonor. The truth is, there are millions of Muslim men trying to figure out the complicated terrain of love, sex, and relationships just like any other American man. In *Salaam, Love*, Ayesha Mattu and Nura Maznavi provide a space for American Muslim men to speak openly about their romantic lives, offering frank, funny, and insightful glimpses into their hearts-and bedrooms. The twenty-two writers come from a broad spectrum of ethnic, racial, and religious perspectives-including orthodox, cultural, and secular Muslims-reflecting the strength and diversity of their faith community and of America.

The Muslims Are Coming! : Islamophobia, Extremism, and the Domestic War on Terror by Arun Kundnani, 2014, Verso.

Death came instantly to Imam Luqman, as four FBI agents fired semiautomatic rifles at him from a few feet away. Another sixty officers surrounded the building on that October morning, the culmination of a two-year undercover investigation that had infiltrated the imam's Detroit mosque. The FBI quickly claimed that Luqman Abdullah was "the leader of a domestic terrorist group." And yet, caught on tape, he had refused to help "do something" violent, as it might injure innocents, and no terrorism charges were ever lodged against him.

Jameel Scott thought he was exercising his rights when he went to challenge an Israeli official's lecture at Manchester University. But the teenager's presence at the protest with fellow socialists made him the subject of police surveillance for the next two years. Counterterrorism agents visited his parents, his relatives, his school. They asked him for activists' names and told him not to attend demonstrations. They called his mother and told her to move the family to another neighborhood. Although he doesn't identify as Muslim, Jameel had become another face of the presumed homegrown terrorist.

The new front in the War on Terror is the "homegrown enemy," domestic terrorists who have become the focus of sprawling counter terrorism structures of policing and surveillance in the United States and across Europe. Domestic surveillance has

mushroomed—at least 100,000 Muslims in America have been secretly under scrutiny. British police compiled a secret suspect list of more than 8,000 al-Qaeda “sympathizers,” and in another operation included almost 300 children fifteen and under among the potential extremists investigated. MI5 doubled in size in just five years.

Based on several years of research and reportage, in locations as disparate as Texas, New York, and Yorkshire, and written in engrossing, precise prose, this is the first comprehensive critique of counter radicalization strategies. The new policy and policing campaigns have been backed by an industry of freshly minted experts and liberal commentators. *The Muslims Are Coming!* looks at the way these debates have been transformed by the embrace of a narrowly configured and ill-conceived antiextremism.

Your Fatwa Does Not Apply Here: Untold Stories from the Fight Against Muslim Fundamentalism by Karima Benoune, 2013, W.W Norton & Co

In Lahore, Pakistan, Faizan Peerzada resisted being relegated to a “dark corner” by staging a performing arts festival despite bomb attacks. In Senegal, wheelchair-bound Aïssatou Cissé produced a comic book to illustrate the injustices faced by disabled women and girls. In Algeria, publisher Omar Belhouchet and his journalists struggled to put out their paper, *El Watan* (The Nation), the same night that a 1996 jihadist bombing devastated their offices and killed eighteen of their colleagues. In Afghanistan, *Young Women for Change* took to the streets of Kabul to denounce sexual harassment, undeterred by threats. In Minneapolis, Minnesota, Abdirizak Bihi organized a Ramadan basketball tournament among Somali refugees to counter the influence of Al Shabaab. From Karachi to Tunis, Kabul to Tehran, across the Middle East, North Africa, South Asia, and beyond, these trailblazers often risked death to combat the rising tide of fundamentalism within their own countries.

But this global community of writers, artists, doctors, musicians, museum curators, lawyers, activists, and educators of Muslim heritage remains largely invisible, lost amid the heated coverage of Islamist terror attacks on one side and abuses perpetrated against suspected terrorists on the other.

A veteran of twenty years of human rights research and activism, Karima Bennoune draws on extensive fieldwork and interviews to illuminate the inspiring stories of those who represent one of the best hopes for ending fundamentalist oppression worldwide.

Bosnian Muslims in the Second World War by Marko Attila Hoare, 2014,
Oxford University Press, USA

The story of the Bosnian Muslims in World War II is an epic frequently alluded to in discussions of the 1990s Balkan conflicts, but almost as frequently misunderstood or falsified. This first comprehensive study of the topic in any language sets the record straight. Based on extensive research in the archives of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia and Croatia, it traces the history of Bosnia and its Muslims from the Nazi German and Fascist Italian occupation of Yugoslavia in 1941, through the years of the Yugoslav civil war, and up to the seizure of power by the Communists and their establishment of a new Yugoslav state. The book explores the reasons for Muslim opposition to the new order established by the Nazis and Fascists in Bosnia in 1941 and the different forms this opposition took. It describes how the Yugoslav Communists were able to harness part of this Muslim opposition to support their own resistance movement and revolutionary bid for power. This Muslim element in the Communists revolution shaped its form and outcome, but ultimately had itself to be curbed as the victorious Communists consolidated their dictatorship. In doing so, they set the scene for future struggles over Yugoslavia's Muslim question.

Islamism and Democracy in India by Irfan Ahmad, 2013, Orient Black Swan.

Jamaat-e-Islami Hind is the most influential Islamist organization in India today. Founded in 1941 by Syed Abul Ala Maududi with the aim of spreading Islamic values in the subcontinent, Jamaat and its offshoot, the Student Islamic Movement of India (SIMI), has been watched closely by Indian security services since 9/11. In particular, SIMI has been accused of being behind terrorist bombings.

Islamism and Democracy in India is the first in-depth examination of India's Jamaat-e-Islami and SIMI. It explores political Islam's complex relationship with democracy and gives us a rare window into one immensely significant Islamic trajectory in a Muslim-minority context.

Irfan Ahmad conducted extensive ethnographic fieldwork at a school in Aligarh, among student activists at Aligarh Muslim University, at a madrasa in Azamgarh, and during Jamaat's participation in elections in 2002. He deftly traces Jamaat's changing position towards India's secular democracy and the group's gradual ideological shift in the direction of religious pluralism and tolerance. He demonstrates how the rise of militant Hindu nationalism

since the 1980s—evident in the destruction of the Babri mosque and widespread violence against Muslims—led to SIMI’s radicalization, its rejection of pluralism, and its call for jihad.

Islamism and Democracy in India argues that when secular democracy is responsive to the traditions and aspirations of its Muslim citizens, Muslims in turn embrace pluralism and democracy. But when democracy becomes majoritarian and exclusionary, Muslims turn radical.

The Cambridge Companion to American Islam by (Ed.) Omid Safi & Juliane Hammer, 2013, Cambridge University Press.

The Cambridge Companion to American Islam offers a scholarly overview of the state of research on American Muslims and American Islam. The book presents the reader with a comprehensive discussion of the debates, challenges, and opportunities that American Muslims have faced through centuries of American history. This volume also covers the creative ways in which American Muslims have responded to the myriad serious challenges that they have faced and continue to face in constructing a religious praxis and complex identities that are grounded in both a universal tradition and the particularities of their local contexts. The book introduces the reader to some of the many facets of the lives of American Muslims that can only be understood in their interactions with Islam's entanglement in the American experiment.

Alternative Realities: Love in the Lives of Muslim Women by Nighat M. Gandhi, 2013, Tranquebar Publisher.

Alternative Realities is a travelogue, a memoir, a satire and a feminist critique of Muslim women’s lives, interwoven with the author’s own ongoing struggles as a Muslim woman. Each chapter presents personal stories of women living in cities, small towns and villages in India, Pakistan and Bangladesh— the three lands to which Nighat Gandhi belongs. In writing their stories, she attempts to break the silence enshrouding Muslim women’s sexuality, and the ways in which they negotiate the restrictions placed on their freedoms within the framework of their culture. Women like Ghazala, who prefers the life of a second wife, ‘living like a married single woman’, to being bound within the ties of a conventional marriage; Nusrat and QT who believe theirs is a normal marriage, except that they are both

women; Nisho, who refuses to accept that her trans-sexuality should deny her the right to love, and Firdaus, writer and feminist, who can walk out of a loveless marriage but not give up on love, with or without marriage. Nighat also explores her own story as a woman who dared to make choices that pitted her against her family and cultures. *Alternative Realities* is her *jihad* or struggle to deconstruct the demeaning stereotypes that prevail about all Muslim women. It is a reflection of the myriad ways in which, despite these misogynistic forces, they continue to weave webs of love and peace in their own lives and in the lives of those they live with.

Burqas, Baseball, and Apple Pie: Being Muslim in America by Ranya Tabari Idliby, 2014, Palgrave Macmillan.

For many Americans, the words ‘American’ and ‘Muslim’ simply do not marry well; for many the combination is an anathema, a contradiction in values, loyalties, and identities. This is the story of one American Muslim family—the story of how, through their lives, their schools, their friends, and their neighbours, they end up living the challenges, myths, fears, hopes, and dreams of all Americans. They are challenged by both Muslims who speak for them and by Americans who reject them. In this moving memoir, Idliby discusses not only coming to terms with what it means to be Muslim today, but how to raise and teach her children about their heritage and religious legacy. She explores life as a Muslim in a world where hostility towards Muslims runs rampant, where there is an entire industry financed and supported by think tanks, authors, film makers, and individual vigilantes whose sole purpose is to vilify and spread fear about all things Muslim. Her story is quintessentially American, a story of the struggles of assimilation and acceptance in a climate of confusion and prejudice—a story for anyone who has experienced being an “outsider” inside your own home country.

Ethnographies of Islam: Ritual Performances and Everyday Practices by Baudouin Dupret, Pierret, Pinto, & Spellman-Poots, 2014, Edinburgh University Press.

Explores the impact of the ethnographic method on the representation of Islam in anthropology

This comparative approach to the various uses of the ethnographic method in research about Islam in anthropology and other social sciences is particularly relevant in the current

climate. Political discourses and stereotypical media portrayals of Islam as a monolithic civilisation have prevented the emergence of cultural pluralism and individual freedom. Such discourses are countered by the contributors who show the diversity and plurality of Muslim societies and promote a reflection on how the ethnographic method allows the description, representation and analysis of the social and cultural complexity of Muslim societies in the discourse of anthropology.

Key features

- Shows the benefit of using ethnography as a method to engage with and relate to specific empirical realities
- Includes case studies on ritual and symbols in Syria, Tunisia, Damascus, Algeria, Britain, Pakistan, Brazil, Lebanon
- Covers practices such as veiling, students' religious practices, charitable activities, law, and scholarship in Egypt, Jordan, Turkey and Yemen

