Book Review

Samina Yasmeen (ed.), *Muslims in Australia: The Dynamics of Exclusion and Inclusion*. Islamic Studies Series, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 2010, pp. xi + 330, ISBN 978-0-522-85637-8.

Muslims in Australia emerged out of two projects of the Centre for Muslim States and Societies (University of Western Australia): (i) research on Muslim identities in Australia and (ii) a symposium on Muslim Citizens (from the United States and Australia) and the promotion of social inclusion in the new counter-terrorism context. The first three chapters provide theoretical and conceptual considerations to help understand the dynamics of exclusion and inclusion.

Samina Yasmeen (pp. 11-29) provides a (political science) model that takes into account the 'perceptual' context of the excluded and the excluders and the interdependency of representations of the 'others' of communities and the multi-directionality (even intra-communal) of processes of exclusion. Geoffrey B. Levey (pp. 30-55) analyzes how the rise of greater religious and ethnic identification has been met: exclusion with separation of religion and politics and inclusion with multicultural policies, Muslims being viewed as challenging the latter and the liberal secular state whose 'principled pragmatism' is embodied in a multiculturalism that should provide means to respond to those changes. Michael Humphrey (pp. 56-78) studies the question of integration of Muslims from the perspective of the broader immigration policy ('domestication') and national security ('securitisation') narratives and the ensuing questioning of Muslims' inclusion in this 'othering' process, multiculturalism now embodying only a space of 'tolerated cultural difference' and 'cultural resistance'.

The following five chapters explore Muslim strategies for dealing with this real process of 'othering'. Anne Aly (pp. 79-95) explores how the perception of media and political construction of fear of the Muslim 'other' after September 11, 2001 has led to four types of Muslim experienced and/or perceived fears, i.e. physical, political, loss of civil liberties, and insecurity, and to the emergence of a sense of community victimization, both illustrating the complex relationships that social inclusion involves. Adis Duderija (pp. 96-117) turns to the processes of identity construction and social orientation of Western(-born) Muslims wherein both exclusion (even perceived self-exclusion) and inclusion are at play to propose a 'self-other mutual identity construction dialectic' framework for the construction of a 'genuine and authentic (the self) which is socially inclusive vis-à-vis the broader society (the other)' (p. 112) through new scriptural hermeneutics. Jan A. Ali looks at how the Preaching Party (*Tablighi Jama'at*, 1927), present in Australia since the early 1970s, can, through the group's simple message and preaching approach, its 'universal and scripturalist' piety and very strong shared sense of intra-communal 'spiritual bond and brotherhood', provide strong close social ties to, and support for, disillusioned or disempowered Muslim immigrants, in a not always so welcoming Australian environment (pp. 118-40), although the group's marked exclusionist attitudes appear to remain a significant impediment for greater social inclusion.

The critique of sorts of Australian multiculturalism by Jeremy Northcote and Suzy Casimiro (pp. 141-61) identifies socioeconomic 'barriers' that make it extremely difficult for many Muslim refugee women to participate meaningfully in society and that 'reinforce' the 'cycle of isolation' and thus feeds into their experiences and perceptions of an exclusivist society, but which, it is suggested, greater social activism could assist to alleviate. However, Barbara Giles (pp. 162-85) shows how the importance placed by a community of Somali refugees on their educational choices, i.e. religious schools, for their children in negotiating their engagement with a new and radically different Australian cultural milieu is 'no more a barrier […] than the attitudinal barriers that are constructed to exclude Muslims from mainstream society' (p. 182).

The next two chapters discuss the law. Hanifa Deen provides a descriptive account (not a research paper) of the legal case between the Islamic Council of Victoria and Fire Ministries Inc. (from 2005 to 2007, with appeal and mediation) and the Religious Vilification Law to highlight what remains an unresolved issue regarding the protection of Muslims against religious vilification (pp. 186-203). Jamila Hussain examines similarities and differences between modern Australian family law and Islamic (Sharia) family law, i.e. marriage contract, divorce, 'limping' marriages, child custody, maintenance and alternate dispute resolution mechanisms, and tries to dispel the view that Muslim Family Law cannot find a place in Australia. She argues for 'accommodation'—not change—of Australian law to alleviate specific problems, e.g. Muslim women's 'limping marriages' (pp. 204-28).

The last three chapters address social and political ways in which greater inclusion of Muslim communities can be fostered. Danielle Celermajer (pp. 229-49) explores how interfaith and faith-secular dialogue can become strategies to foster the 'integration of interpersonal trust networks' (p. 230) with other faith communities (some also marginalized) and to seek greater inclusion via the 'web' of those social relations. Fethi Mansouri (pp. 250-69) analyzes intercultural tensions at the level of local governance wherein Muslims are 'racialized' into a threatening 'other' category that forms the basis of 'social' and 'political' exclusion, to explore how exclusion and inclusion work in local debates. William Maley (pp. 270-90) cautions the Australian government against dealing with Muslim militancy and 'alleged' security risks (e.g. Dr. Hanif's 2007 case) through political instrumentalization of liberal values for the sake of political expedience.

The work is an excellent introduction to the complex dynamics of exclusion and inclusion of Muslims in Australian society. Both theoretical and case based, the work addresses the important issue of the social belonging and identity of Muslims and wider social context and discourses, and provides for rather stimulating reading. Greater care should have been taken, however, to avoid the reoccurrence of demographic data, together with inconsistencies in some statistical numbers (e.g. Chapters 2, 10, 12), and details of a number of 'mediating' events that make for awkward repetitions. Lastly, the work includes a very useful glossary, selected bibliography, and index.

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