

## References

- Faist, T 2000, *The volume and dynamics of international migration and transnational social spaces*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Suutari, V & Brewster, C 2000, 'Making their own way: international experience through self-initiated foreign assignments', *Journal of World Business*, vol. 35, pp. 417-436.

**Hashas, Mohammed, de Ruiter, Jan Jaap & Vinding, Niels Valdemar (eds.) (2018) *Imams in Western Europe: developments, transformations, and institutional challenges*, Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press. 438 pp.**

Islam has been a significant target of political debates and academic research in Europe since the 1980s when it became apparent that many of the migrant workers, who had come from Muslim countries to temporarily work in France, Germany, Great Britain, etc., were actually going to stay in Europe. The Muslim population – in fact a very heterogeneous group of people – has grown rapidly in Western Europe during the past five to six decades, and issues such as building of mosques, creating Muslim organizations and veiling have all been both debated and studied. The role of imams, however, has not received as much scholarly interest so far.

Mohammed Hashas, Jan Jaap de Ruiter and Niels Valdemar Vinding have edited an extensive book, *Imams in Western Europe. Developments, Transformations, and Institutional Challenges*, to help fill this gap in academic research. The book consists of two parts and 21 chapters in total. According to the editors, the first part intends to be more theoretical and the second one be based on country-specific case studies. This division works only partially, as there are country-specific chapters in the first part, and a chapter on a typology of imams in the second part.

The chapters offer a diverse look into issues concerning Islamic religious authority in general, and imams in particular, in present-day Europe. The reader of the book learns about the different roles that imams have in the European context but also about the role that European states play in attempting to domesticate Islam and Muslims. Imam training is one of the major themes of the book and it is discussed in Finnish, Italian and British contexts, among others. Two chapters concentrate on specific imams, namely Yassin Elforkani in the Netherlands, and Tareq Oubrou in France. What is laudable, is that two chapters have women and their religious authority in focus. A bit surprisingly, one of these chapters concentrates on Morocco.

Of the diverse contents of the book, I will discuss two in more detail. First, *Imams in Western Europe* succeeds in pointing out how the meanings, roles and tasks of imams differ from one country to another, and from one time to another. The chapter (8) on the reinvented role of imams in France by Solenne Jouanneau is a case in point. Jouanneau describes the changes that have taken place in the role and status of imams as the Muslim population in France has transformed from predominantly migrant workers into permanent residents

and citizens. Whereas in the 1970s, the French state was not particularly interested in the religious life of its migrant population, the following decades changed this and Ministers of the Interior and other government actors have been increasingly involved in regulating Islam. This has involved, among other things, surveillance of mosques and imams, and more or less direct attempts to influence the organization of French Islam.

Niels Valdemar Vinding, for his part (chapter 12), builds a typology of imams of the West based on his research. While he notes that the typology is still a work in progress, it already indicates the many roles and positions that imams can have. Vinding has developed his typology on two dimensions – institutional and epistemic authority – and ends with 12 different types of imams, from those with formal training and an institutional position to self-taught independent imams. Vinding points out, quite correctly (p. 250), that several other dimensions could be taken into account as well. These include tasks of imams, age and gender, among others. Still, even with two dimensions Vinding's typology offers valuable information.

Second, the book presents several case studies of imam training, which is a topical and debated issue in present-day Europe. Mosques and imams can play an important role in the integration of Muslims, which is one of the reasons why European states are keen to govern their actions. Also, mosques and imams have been under surveillance in many countries since the terrorist attacks in 2001, and in some cases even longer, as mosques are seen as potential spaces for radicalization. One of the questions that have been discussed is whether imams should receive their training in Muslim countries or in Europe. Many European Muslims opt to get their religious training in Muslim countries, and those imams who are sent to work in Europe by Muslim countries or organizations, have quite understandably received their training elsewhere than in Europe. For European states, training organized within their borders means that they have better opportunities to influence the contents of the sermons and teachings given by imams.

Training for imams can be organized in many ways, and they all face challenges. Several European universities offer study programmes in Islamic theology but, as Göran Larsson mentions in his chapter (7), these programmes do raise questions among many Islamic actors such as mosques and organizations. Study programmes organized by state authorities or Muslim communities in Europe also face challenges of credibility and legitimacy, as Tuomas Martikainen and Riitta Latvio note in their chapter (21). There have been failed attempts to organize imam training, for example, in the Netherlands and in Spain.

These challenges do not mean, however, that there would not be interest in organizing imam training in Europe. Larsson writes in his chapter (7) about a Swedish survey which showed that representatives of mosques and Muslim organizations had an overwhelmingly positive attitude towards a proposal to start an imam training programme. The respondents were, however, more interested in learning about the Swedish language and society than Islamic theology, especially if theology was to be taught by non-Muslims in secular universities. A study among chairpersons and imams of Finnish mosque associations, described by Martikainen and Latvio in their chapter (21) also indicated a positive attitude

towards the possibility to have a Finnish imam training programme, and especially imams were interested in academic Islamic studies.

The biggest shortcoming of *Imams in Western Europe* concerns its geographical coverage. For some reason, Germany has been left out of the book. The situation of imams in Germany is discussed several times in the book, but there is no chapter dealing specifically with the German context. This is difficult to justify, as Germany has one of the largest, if not the largest Muslim population in Western Europe. I would have also expected to see an article dealing with Denmark and another one with Austria, maybe Switzerland as well. Instead of including these countries, the book has three articles dealing with France and another three with Italy. Why this is so, is not made clear to the reader. Be it as it may, I would argue that a book on Western Europe with no less than 21 chapters but with none dedicated to Germany, is somewhat lacking.

Despite of this shortcoming, *Imams in Western Europe* is an important contribution to the scholarly discussions on Islam in Europe, as it contains new and topical information on imams in European societies. In fact, the book would be recommendable reading for policymakers as well, considering the interest that European states have on guiding and governing the ways in which Islam is being practiced. There is a need for better understanding of the different roles and positions that imams can have, as well as the role played by both European and Muslim countries in the shaping of the imamate in Europe.

Johanna Konttori

Postdoctoral researcher, Study of Religions, University of Helsinki, Helsinki, Finland.

E-mail: johanna.konttori@helsinki.fi

**Killias, Olivia (2018) *Follow the Maid: Domestic Worker Migration In and From Indonesia*, Copenhagen: Nordic Institute of Asian Studies. 241 pp.**

*Follow the Maid* is a rich multi-sited ethnographic study that traces the journey of Indonesian migrant women who labour as domestic workers. The book written by Olivia Killias, senior lecturer at the Institute of Social Anthropology and Cultural Studies in University of Zurich, is a welcomed contribution to the scholarship of migrant domestic workers. It is based on 14 months of fieldwork and conducted mainly between 2006 and 2009. The six chapters of the book (excluding the Introduction and Conclusion) map the “stages and sites” of the migratory process. The women navigate through a complex system of formal and informal institutions and networks that carries them from their homes in Central Java to recruitment agencies in Jakarta and finally to their work destination in Malaysia. Likewise, the book captures how Indonesian migrant women negotiate their relationships with families and employers as well as a range of intermediaries who make up the global care chain.

Much of domestic worker migration research has either focused on workers’ plight and conditions in destination countries or on the migrant decision-making practices and the impacts of migration in the receiving countries. Departing from these defined spaces,