

flicts in the electoral than in the protest arena. This is an important finding for understanding electoral and protest politics, especially if the integration-demarkation cleavage becomes even more important and wins ground also in other regions than the examined six West European countries.

The current political situation differs from that in 2005. This should encourage more studies to pursue similarly comparative and well-grained analysis combining data about protest events, party manifestos, individuals' attitudes, and state structures. Particularly important would be to enlarge the scope of protest event research to Eastern Europe, Asia, and Latin America, where the analysis of protest mobilisation and its relationship to political processes is still relatively scarce. Scholars also need to move beyond linear relationships and focus more on the causal mechanisms behind the described processes. In sum, the book does not give a detailed picture of protests or electoral politics in the examined countries, but rather provides a great theoretically grounded comparative analysis of changing cleavage structures and protest waves in Western Europe. I would highly recommend it to anyone interested in comparative politics in general and in electoral and protest politics in particular. It is well written and should be easily understood by students at the graduate and undergraduate level.

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Maurits Berger (ed.): *Applying Sharia in the West. Facts, Fears and the Future of Islamic Rules on Family Relations in the West*

Leiden 2013: Leiden University Press, 291 pp.

Sharia is usually considered the domain of legal sciences and Middle Eastern or Islamic studies. To date, there have been few sociological treatises on the subject. The monolithic divide between secular Western law and religious Eastern customs is still a significant tool for sweeping the topic off the table. Sometimes it is understood in terms of the long-standing divergence between modern societies, with their separation of church and state, and the Muslim world and its resistance to such secularisation. Besides being outdated, these views also provide only one limited part of the picture. A new book edited by Maurits Berger presents competing visions of sharia as imagined in modern Western societies today. It opens with contradictory quotations from two leading European authorities: the European Court for Human Rights, which has postulated sharia's incompatibility with human rights, and the Archbishop of Canterbury, who claims the opposite. These opinions seem to represent the two main approaches to sharia in the West today. There is a clear trend towards confrontation between the inclinations to declare sharia different in absolute terms as an embodiment of 'otherness' and the acceptance of a practical adaptive approach. This subtle shift in perspective, which involves not only theoretical thinking but also practical encounters, would appear to be a crucible for a radically new analytical conceptualisation of the issue and of the facts that are filtered through it. As readers of the book could learn, Western legal frameworks do not recognise sharia as law in the strict sense of the term but as a very different and much broader phenomenon. In addition, once re-contextualised in a new envi-

ronment it is modified in many ways. These facts lead us away from the notion of some ungainly Oriental customary law towards an understanding of the multiplicity of forms and manifestations of sharia. By focusing more on the relationship between the myriad forms of sharia as actually practised by members of Muslim minorities and informal Muslim authorities (including scholars, mediators and arbitrators), the book contests the conventional image of sharia.

Nevertheless, it is not the book's explicit aim to reflect on the pressures of sharia in relation to both state law and a person's duties under sharia—which perhaps correspond more with the idea of a set of ethical values than with the concept of law as understood within modern frameworks – or to challenge the ways in which sharia conventionally expresses itself through dominant modes of perception as a self-evidently objective normative system. In contrast to the legalistic point of view, a wide range of meanings of sharia are examined by diverse socio-legal scholars: sharia as an emic abstraction, sharia as an aspect of foreign national laws that is sometimes researched and applied by Western judges, and sharia as heterogeneous indigenous practices and desires seen from the emic perspective of Muslim minorities. These layers of signification are mostly overlooked, especially in the context of legal orthodoxy, and so the authors relativise our conventional way of thinking about 'the law of the others'. To illustrate this, I will just mention some findings that could be revealing for outsiders. From an emic point of view, sharia is usually seen as a highly prestigious concept whose importance can be compared to the pedestal of sanctity that the rule of law enjoys in many jurist communities. Even more interesting is the fact that, while in some secular (especially European) societies certain public stereotypes of sharia provoke a mistrustful resistance, sharia family rules were originally

perceived as a symbol of resistance against 19th-century European expansion. Nevertheless, the book under review is not based primarily on such contrasts, but focuses instead on the paradoxical situation faced by many Muslim minorities, for whom sharia is the central normative core of their daily lives while at the same time official legal authorities see it as mere social normativity. This paradox is treated differently in every country, since the differing emic visions of sharia encounter different national specificities and histories. This is exemplified by the country studies in the first section of the book. The geographic scope of this section comprises a rich mosaic, including America (Turner and Richardson), Australia (Hussain and Possamai), the United Kingdom (Nielsen), the Netherlands (Rutten), Albania and Kosovo (Sinani), and Greece (Ziaka). In addition, Rohe has collected many interesting facts from Germany and beyond, although his views are sometimes more doctrinal. His chapter is more of an introduction, as it demarcates clear lines, such as the boundary between the formal and the informal. He shows the unease felt by Western courts when it comes to applying sharia, which arises mainly from a lack of cultural sensitivity that may cause the minority to mistrust the official courts. Rutten later shows that even foreign national laws are often sharia-derived family codes. The term 'West' is used in its most conventional definition as understood by the inhabitants of the countries studied, regardless of the many other countries that might be perceived or might perceive themselves as Western, too. This conventional West is used in the title, but the West in the book works as a medium by which the 'otherness' of sharia is constructed. Considering the enormous diversity of how emic sharia is imagined—as illustrated, for example, by the fact that the Muslim minority in Australia originates from over 70 countries—the studies' empirical scope is by necessity limited. The

historical and cultural contrasts in how different countries approach religiosity are perhaps the most striking between America, which is traditionally open to public manifestations of religion, and European countries, which consider religion primarily a private matter (this includes Albania, which, although it is the only majority-Muslim country studied in the book, has inherited an officially atheist legacy). Another enigmatic contrast is found between Greece, which has preserved an old sharia legal system in the form of remnants of the Ottoman millet system, and modern Turkey, which secularised its legal system dynamically in an effort to remove those remnants from its modern national trajectory. In turn, this could be contrasted with the Netherlands, which has its own long-term experience with domestic legal plurality, and the United Kingdom, where the debate about establishing recognised sharia courts has proceeded the farthest.

The dissonance between Western and Muslim concepts of law opens up the possibility for both overlaps and gaps between the legal and social realms, and it prevents us from taking for granted their conventional borders. Instead, this dissonance, which is obvious throughout the book, redirects readers to the uncertain terrain that exists between sharia as a matter of both formal and informal social control and the questions of negotiating individual and minority identity. In the sense of the broader understanding of law as a partially societal phenomenon, Berger is right to claim that the book assumes a 'legal-anthropological approach' (p. 8), but it does not contain any detailed ethnographic descriptions. Instead it could be seen as a montage of various practical, empirical, theoretical and policy views whose configurations differ slightly from author to author and which could be perhaps more appropriately subsumed under the label of legal sociology. The anthropological approach is, however, perhaps most repre-

sented by the second section entitled 'Law versus Culture'. For example, the study by Moors contrasts Western fears of unregistered Islamic marriages with Muslim anxieties regarding the regulation of sexuality within transnational contexts. Another perspective is taken by Yassari, who explores the understanding and use of Islamic family law in German courts by both judges and participants in family disputes by looking at the example of the *mahr* (usually translated as 'dower'). Another interesting chapter for social anthropologists might be 'A Language of Hybridity' by Fournier and Reyes, which explores domestic violence and other intimate crimes relating to honour and otherness by studying the encounter between Canadian law and sharia-based culture-defence justifications. In addition, the country studies and the section on accommodation present a variety of issues that might inform social and cultural anthropology. To mention just a few: the legal metaphor of the chained wife, unequal divorce requirements for men and women, double marriages, extra-territorial and temporary marriages, and the internet as a factor that is increasing sharia diversity and individualisation.

The daily coexistence of sharia and traditional Western means of social control, especially state law, indicates that the conventional boundary between the secular and the religious is also no longer a valid starting point for serious analysis. Nevertheless, this does not prevent such a dichotomous vision of legal facticity from influencing representatives of Western justice systems or of Muslim minorities involved in negotiating the status of sharia—or the authors of the book themselves. While the public order perspective on sharia is represented by Rohe (chapter 1), the accommodative approach is covered by the authors (Foblets, Alwani, Lizzio and Saeed) of the third section, which they have called 'Need for Accommodation'. Rohe's enumeration of the reasons for (not)

applying sharia would seem to reflect the position held by a judge who works primarily with formal law and uses doctrine to resolve individual cases. By comparison, the latter authors take the minority situation within majority society as their starting point. Alwani, Lizzio and Saeed even see Western sharia as a sort of compass with which to navigate through the complex terrain of modern societies. Compared to many of the authoritarian regimes in the Muslim world, which use sharia to legitimise their approach to governance suppress alternative legal interpretations, sharia in the West is seen as a stranger in paradise, though one marked by many fears. The official freedom of religion allows for a multiplicity of viewpoints, interpretations, and ways of practising sharia. Nevertheless, there exist informal sharia authorities, whose prestige and the enforceability of whose opinions are based on similar principles of gravity as those of the churches. This may be the source of the motivation for reconciling sharia with Western values and legal frameworks and what makes the radical normative confrontation rather insignificant within Muslim minorities—which naturally does not correspond with the usual media narrative.

Although the book occasionally mentions legal and judicial pluralism, there appears to be some reluctance to use these terms within the context of sharia in the West (Turner and Richardson). If anything, sharia remains more of a moral proposition for regulating human behaviour or living law (to use Ehrlich's term for sociological regularities), and not so much a legal proposition. In addition, the actual legal role of sharia authorities remains enigmatic and unexplored. Their normative opinions are not directly seen on the level of legal decisions. The inquiry into sharia's socio-legal mechanisms themselves is only a peripheral topic here, which is another reason why the book's approach more closely resembles a sociology of sharia than

legal anthropology. Sharia practices are simply seen as something that is subject to state legal regulation and that has a specific normative dimension to it. Unlike in some countries, such as India, legal pluralism in the field of autonomous sharia family law is mostly considered unrealistic in Western countries. The question of 'applying sharia' should be understood as a compromise that ranges from sharia as conventionally identified with religious law to various areas of practices that differ on the level of eccentricity, while family (legal or social) rules probably represent the more exposed but not the most controversial segment. Sharia is thus seen more as a heterogeneous global knowledge that is localised in various different ways—for example, within family law disputes before Western courts. The question remains whether it will ever become law in the West or whether it will remain rather a social field on which the essence of home and otherness is negotiated. As stated above, sharia defies description in Western legal terms and should thus not be universally viewed as Islamic 'law'. The book provides reasonable although implicit arguments for separating the two concepts (sharia and law) in the terms of analytical tools.

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Constance DeVereaux and Martin Griffin: *Narrative, Identity, and the Map of Cultural Policy: Once Upon a Time in a Globalized World*

Farnham 2013: Ashgate, 196 pp.

This book studies the crucial issue of identity in a contemporary political reality. It is also an important contribution to narrative studies. Despite some imperfections, it reveals the role that narrative plays both in framing cultural policy and in creating the subjects of cultural policy. The book con-