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Islam, Migration and Integration: The Age of Securitization

Miaji, Abdel Baten

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LUND UNIVERSITY

PO Box 117
221 00 Lund
+46 46-222 00 00

Ayhan Kaya (2009) *Islam, Migration and Integration: The Age of Securitization*, London: Palgrave Macmillan. 249 pp.

The perception of Muslim migrants in Europe has undergone a dynamic change following several recent events, including the Rushdie Affair (1989), Gulf War I (1990), the Bosnian War (1992), 9/11 (2001), the Afghanistan War (2001) and Gulf War II (2003), the murder of Theo Van Gogh (2004) and the Cartoon Crisis in Denmark (2006). Those events have not merely intensified Islamophobia, but they have also spawned a deeper interest in Islam, especially among non-Muslim scholars. Within the Muslim Diaspora in Europe the consequences of the above events and the effects of several other factors, such as unemployment, poverty, exclusion, violence, and the supremacy of culturalism and neo-liberal political economy, on the lives of Muslim immigrants living in West Europe are elaborately discussed in "Islam, Migration and Integration: The Age of Securitization" by professor Ayhan Kaya.

The book is divided into six main chapters in addition to the Introduction which recounts the present reality of European migrants and focuses on introducing the problematics of immigration flows into Europe, which have been called an 'influx', 'invasion', 'flood' and 'intrusion' by a number of European politicians as well as scholars (p. 8). Beyond the racist tone used to describe the immigrants, especially Muslims migrants, the neo-political sphere in Europe is also scrutinising and securing the borders of Europe in order to prevent the flow of immigrants into what Kaya has termed 'Fortress Europe'. He vehemently describes how in the modern technological age this securitisation process of European states, collectively 'Fortress Europe', has benefited one group of people – the winners who act as brokers of migrants – and at the same time has disfavoured another group: the "losers", or the immigrants themselves. Nation states and European political extremism seem to be turning from 'welfarism' to 'prudentalism'. The book explores the position of Euro-Muslims in general and Euro-Turks in particular, while explicitly discussing the Muslim migrants in four Western European countries: Germany, France, Belgium and the Netherlands.

The contents of the first four chapters of the book are easily intelligible from their titles: 'Germany: from Segregation to Integration', 'France: from Integration to Segregation', 'Belgium: a Culturally Divided Land' and 'The Netherlands: from

Multiculturalism to Assimilation'. These chapters provide concise statistical data on migrants in the above-mentioned four countries and offer a discussion on immigrants to those countries, including historical accounts of immigration, policies towards migrants, integration, assimilation and multiculturalism. The fifth chapter is a general discussion on Muslim immigrants in Germany, France, Belgium and the Netherlands, the comfort they draw from keeping their own cultural and religious heritage intact, the making and unmaking of communities, the lives of new immigrants – what Kaya has termed 'imported brides and bridegrooms', multiculturalism versus the neo-colonial governmentality of the receiving states, French-style republicanism versus German or Dutch multiculturalism, and the need for the political integration of migrants. The final chapter elaborately discusses Islam as driving force, individualisation versus institutionalisation, religiosity among Muslims migrants in different countries, Euro-Islam and the politics of honour, and religious tendencies among younger generations who see religion as a tool of emancipation.

As stated earlier, this study is meant to analyse Muslim immigrants in Europe in general and the Euro-Turks in the above-mentioned four countries in particular. Germany has the second largest Muslim population in Western Europe, after France which has nearly 6 million Muslims (p. 39). However, Turkish immigrants or their descendants, approximately three million, constitute the largest Muslim community in Germany while the second-largest group of Muslim immigrants in Germany are of Moroccan origin. After the World War II, especially in the 1950s, the economic miracle of the post-war era resulted in an increased demand for labour. Migration further accelerated in the 1990s, after the end of the Cold War. Today, the 8 million migrants in Germany, out of its total population of 82 million, have become a major issue in the country's politics (p. 43). While in power, the Social Democratic Party (SPD) moved towards restrictive policies on migrants' rights, while Helmut Kohl's government in coalition with the Christian Socialist Party (CSU) and Free Democratic Party (FDP) radicalised the restriction of further immigration and adopted a policy of encouraging repatriation. However, recent governments have adopted more generous policies towards

new immigrants with the introduction of a new law in 2000 that replaced the stricter rules for immigrants to obtain German citizenship. The state has further appeased the minority communities by acknowledging cultural diversity and running state-financed television and radio programming for minorities. Many German Turks have integrated into German culture and language while simultaneously maintaining close connection to Turkish politics – what Kaya calls ‘living on both sides of the river’. According to Kaya, “places like Kottbusser Tor in Berlin, Kreuzberg, and Keupstrasse or Weiden-gassestrasse (sic) in Cologne are part replies of Turkish towns in terms of colours, rhythms, clothes, symbols, architecture, names, sounds, traditions and images” (p. 55). Turkish TV-channels, newspapers, media and music are visible in everyday life in Germany. In many ways, German Turks are also good patrons of Turkish politics, culture and religious groups in Turkey itself.

As the title chapter informs us, French policies towards immigrants, unlike the German, went in the opposite direction: ‘France: from Integration to Segregation’. France used to be considered a liberal state when it came to the policies of adopting immigrants and approaches to minorities. The country opened up its borders to guest workers at the end of the nineteenth century, accelerating the intake in the aftermath of World War II. Most of the guest labourers came from the French colonies, namely North African countries. When Germany restricted the entry of new guest workers, France opened up new opportunities for the trained and skilled Turks who had been preparing to go to Germany. However, “labour immigration was halted in 1974 due to economic recession and electoral choices” (p. 66), and as a result of the 1973 oil crisis and growing unemployment, France went through a growing stream of anti-Arab violence. The governments of Jacques Chirac (1974–1976) and Raymond Barre (1976–1981) took initiatives to stop family reunification by denying visas and deporting family members of the immigrants (p. 66). During recent years, French polity gradually went against immigrants as the term ‘migrant’, or ‘*étranger*’, was used to refer to the temporary character of migration while the term ‘*immigré*’ is used to denote African immigrants (p. 66). Moreover, the French public believe that France has already accepted too many immigrants. Nevertheless, the new legislation passed in 1997 included two provisions: a) automatic citizenship would “be granted to children born of foreign parents in France provided” the children had lived in France between the ages 11 and 18, and b) “those parents can apply for citizenship on behalf their children once they turn 13” (p. 72). It is important to note that in earlier legislation France only allowed granting citizenship to the third generation of immigrants, while the 1997 legislation appears to be something of an improvement. “Five years of residence, reaching the age of maturity, knowledge of the language, assimilation into French society, having not received a jail sentence in excess of six months, or committed crimes against the security of the state” are a few among a number of other strict requirements for eligibility to apply for French citizenship for immigrants in general. Fur-

thermore, the wave of Islamophobia seems to have become a major issue in the French Muslim Diaspora, as schools and several government entities have forbidden the wearing of headscarves for Muslim girls and women. While the French government demands more integration and assimilation into French society on the part of immigrants, “Muslims in the suburbs of large cities attend their isolated schools, pray at their mosques, shop at their isolated stores and develop their own marginal economy” (p. 91).

Belgium’s policies toward immigrants are more complicated and diverse than in other European countries. Belgium has three linguistic, geographical, political, administrative and economic regions: Flanders, Wallonia and Brussels. These three administrative regions are separately responsible for the welfare of their citizens, and policies towards immigrants differ from region to region. Although the government had restricted the number of foreign workers coming to Belgium, a shortage of labour convinced it to sign a bilateral recruitment agreement with Morocco and Turkey, in 1969 and 1970, respectively. The above-mentioned 1973 oil crisis also affected the Belgian economy and brought an end to issuing work permits to tourists. Interestingly, Belgium recognised Islam as an official religion in 1974 and encouraged the Turkish, Moroccan and Saudi states to be involved in and play an essential role in the institutionalisation process of Islam in the country (p. 103). “Later in the 1990s, the Belgian state changed its polity towards Muslims as the Belgian-Muslims faced significant structural problems including discrimination, high unemployment, criminality, exclusion and social deprivation” (p. 103). The politics of identity, culture and multiculturalism became so “successful” that they imprisoned the Muslim migrants and their children into their own ethno-cultural and religious ghettos. Kaya has analysed the conclusion of Bart Maddens, Jack Billet and Roeland Beerten (2000) concerning how the Belgian citizens perceived foreigners and states: “Flanders citizens who identified themselves as primarily Flemish tended to have a negative attitude towards foreigners, while those with a strong Belgian identity were more positive” (p. 111).

In the Netherlands, Islam’s presence is more visible than in any other West European country. The country has passed three different phases: the first phase comprises the two decades following the World War II, between 1945 and 1965, when Dutch societal structure was characterised by pillarisation. During this period, the religious denominations were divided into the ‘Catholic pillar’, the ‘Protestant pillar’ and the ‘secular pillar’. The second phase of Dutch society occurred between 1965 and 1985 and was characterised by depillarisation and strong belief in governmental policies being able to bring about societal change. Finally, the third phase started in 1985 and continues until the present day. It “can be characterized by increasing civic demands of the government and efforts to close the gap between political authorities and the public” (p. 117). Surprisingly, the third phase is marked with the rising visibility of Muslim immigrants in public spaces. Islam has become the third-largest religious denomination

with 1 million Muslims in the country. According to Kaya, “With around 500 mosques, 40 schools, various associations for employers, women and men, and a Muslim broadcasting association, Muslim appearance has become a threat for the native Dutch” (p. 119). The presence of Islam in Dutch society made Fritz Bolkestein, the leader of the largest opposition party, to proclaim that Islam and Western values are incompatible and to label Islam as the great threat to liberal democracy. The murder of the filmmaker Theo Van Gogh in 2004 increased the tension between Muslims and the native Dutch. Government policy towards the new-comers has been harshly criticised; those who apply to come to the Netherlands either as ‘imported brides and bridegrooms’ or on account of family reunification need to fulfil certain requirements, such as demonstrating oral and written knowledge of the Dutch language as well as Dutch society and politics (p. 134). The authorities introduced a film called *Naar Nederland*, ‘Coming to the Netherlands’, to give a preliminary introduction to Dutch society and culture, including a depiction of two men kissing. This introductory film is aimed exclusively at those who come from outside Europe.

In the fifth chapter, Kaya analyses the position of Muslim immigrants in the four above-mentioned countries and underlines the gap between the old and new generations. He similarly compares the new generations of immigrants with North American immigrants and other immigrants and finds similarities in that the new generations have found in Islam a tool for emancipation. He even suggests behaviours for both the immigrants and the states to help both to integrate into a new milieu in the age of globalisation. The media look for a connection between immigrants and unemployment, criminality, Islamophobia, xenophobia as well as poverty. The roles of different Muslim organisations in those countries are notable and

may play a vital role in easing the situation and marginalising the gap between the native-born and Euro-Muslims.

As summarised by Kaya, “Germany hardly produced any policy of integration until the late 1990s, whereas France has always been a country of integration, or rather of assimilation. Belgium has experienced a mixture of assimilationist and multiculturalist integration policies, while the Netherlands has kept its paternalist colonial legacy transformed into a form of multiculturalism” (p. 35). Although European states are tightening immigration rules and securing their boundaries to keep asylum seekers out, flows of immigration continue through family reunification and ‘imported brides and bridegrooms’. The name of the book might more appropriately be “Euro-Muslims, Migration and Integration: The Age of Securitization”, instead of “Islam, Migration and Integration: The Age of Securitization”, as it mainly deals with Muslims in general and Euro-Turks in particular in the context of migration, integration, assimilation and multiculturalism in four European countries; and on the other hand, it very narrowly deals with Islam in a theological context. The study is well formulated with statistical data, interviews, a wealth of information, a comparison to immigrants in other countries in Europe and even in other continents, and deep analytical approaches. It is similarly informative for students and researchers in international relations as well as political science and a good handbook for general readers who are interested in European affairs, especially in Germany, France, Belgium and the Netherlands.

Abdel Baten Miaji

Department of History of Religions

Lund University, Sweden

Abdul_Baten.Miaji@teol.lu.se