

Voices of Gay, Lesbian, and Transgender Muslims Living Out Islam

IN 2010, Kugle published *Homosexuality in Islam: Critical Reflection on Gay, Lesbian, and Transgender Muslims*. I remember well how deeply impressed I was by that book for the intellectual rigor and ambition it showcased through an exhaustive interrogation of Islamic scriptural sources on the contentious issue of homosexuality and transgenderism. Four years later, Kugle has given us another significant output from the same research project. This book, however, focuses on the lived experiences of gay, lesbian, and transgender Muslims in the UK, the United States, Canada, the Netherlands, and South Africa. Given the paucity of empirical literature in this area, this book is a significant contribution to the field.

Kugle mentions in the introduction that this book aims at general as well as academic readers. I am certain that a general reader will indeed find the book informative and accessible, with its in-depth and often moving personal biographical narratives. The power of such narratives cannot be denied, and they deserve to be told. These narratives are organized into six chapters, each based on what Kugle calls a mode of activism, i.e., engaging religious tradition, challenging family and community, adapting religious politics, adjusting secular politics, forging minority alliances, and journeying toward individual identity. Kugle rightly argues that these stories collectively challenge the dualistic construction of being out and being in the closet. Within the everyday context, he asserts, gay, lesbian, and transgender Muslims live out their gender, sexual, and religious identities as a journey, characterized by tension and pain, but also creativity and joy. These stories are diverse and contingent. From this perspective, this book illustrates well the individual, social, and political dimen-

Judul Buku

Living Out Islam: Voices of Gay, Lesbian, and Transgender Muslims Living Out Islam: Voices of Gay, Lesbian, and Transgender Muslims

Penulis

Scott Siraj Al-Haqg Kugle

Penerbit

New York: New York University Press, 2014

Jumlah Halaman

275 pp

ISBN

978-1479894673

Peresensi

Andrew Kam-Tuck Yip

In this sense, this book is important and commendable.

Nonetheless, an academic reader may be left feeling dissatisfied, wanting deeper analysis from the stories this book tells, in order to enrich her or his theoretical and empirical reflections on the intersection of gender, sexuality, and religion. By and large, each of the six empirical chapters presents up to three lengthy and descriptive stories in turn, concluding with a limited sociological analysis of common analytic themes. This analysis also has not engaged fully with relevant theoretical and empirical literature. I am perplexed about the omission of the relevant recent works of several scholars, such as Rusi Jaspal, Dervla Shannahan, Asifa Siraj, Samar Habib, Ibrahim Abraham, and Momin Rahman. I am also disappointed that the promising assertion in the introductory chapter that this book is theoretically informed by the works of Saba Mahmood (i.e., subjectivity and ethical formation) and Talal Asad (i.e., the enmeshed and interweaving—rather than antagonistic—relationship between secularism and religion) has not been realized fully in the six data chapters, and especially in the concluding chapter.

In sum then, from an academic point of view, I find the book theoretically and empirically under-developed. However, I applaud Kugle's commitment to articulating the voices of this under-studied and much misunderstood minority. The 15 stories this book tells constitute a unifying narrative about the human capacity for positive meaning-making, as well as personal and socio-political change.

sions of identity formation. It exudes hope and OPTIMISM, reflecting human agency, resilience, and flourishing.

(Sumber: *Sociology of Religion* (AUTUMN 2015) 76 (3): 360-361 August 6, 2015)

The Inevitable Caliphate? A History of the Struggle for Global Islamic Union, 1924 to the Present

REZA Pankhurst's *The Inevitable Caliphate? A History of the Struggle for Global Islamic Union, 1924 to the Present* is an account of the struggle for the reestablishment of a caliphate in the Muslim world after its abolition in 1924. The widespread resonance of the idea of the caliphate among Muslims, understood as a united global state of Muslims, the author contends, is matched by the fear expressed by Westerners toward it. The idea of such a union, sometimes called pan-Islamism, has inspired movements and fears since at least the beginning of the twentieth century, and has reappeared with full force at the beginning of the twenty-first.

Thus, addressing a central but often undermined or dismissed idea in accounts of twentieth-century Islam, this is a valuable history written from a particular normative Islamic perspective that tries, and largely with success, to provide an even-handed treatment of a variety of contemporary Islamic trends. The author sets apart his analysis from most Western ones by refusing to hold up liberal democracy as the yardstick. Finding unsatisfactory the spate of writings that consider 'political Islam' as either a reaction or response to modernity, he sides with those scholars, such as Elizabeth Hurd and Michael Salla, who see it as a competitor of liberal democracy 'in terms of [its] universal appeal and scope' and a challenge to the epistemological roots of secularism (p. 13).

For his part, the author employs normative Islam, defined as that based on the Qur'an, Prophetic traditions, and scholars regarded by the majority or the mainstream as valid and legitimate, as the framework of analysing the claims of various Islamic movements. Although, what adopting such a framework entails, what kinds of

Judul Buku

The Inevitable Caliphate? A History of the Struggle for Global Islamic Union, 1924 to the Present

Penulis

Reza Pankhurst

Penerbit

London: Hurst & Company, 2013

Jumlah Halaman

xii + 216 pp

ISBN

978-1849042512

Peresensi

Ovamir Anjum



REZA PANKHURST
**THE INEVITABLE
CALIPHATE?**

*A History of the Struggle for Global
Islamic Union, 1924 to the Present*

inquiry it enables or disables, is not adequately explored. While a majoritarian understanding of Islamic normativity

is adopted, common as it is to Sunni Islamist framework, any attempt to adjudicate between various Sunni schools on matters of detail is avoided, at times to the detriment of a cogent account. What is promised, and delivered, is the reading of discourse around caliphate by different groups in different contexts. The idea of caliphate has even inspired a union of Muslim states, the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC), although the author dismisses, perhaps too quickly, the OIC's claim to represent the same religious unity and solidarity that existed in the past under the caliphate. Accepting such a claim, he contends, 'would lead to the logical conclusion that [the caliphate's] reestablishment was a redundant issue' (p. 3). Pankhurst seeks to demonstrate that the consensus of Sunni Muslims on the doctrine of the obligation of one Imam for all Muslims worldwide was, prior to the modern period, unquestioned—as against those modernizing or secularizing accounts that wish to assert otherwise.

At the heart of the author's account is Hizb al-Tahrir, 'the Liberation Party'—a now-international if marginal Islamic movement dedicated to the return of the caliphate through propaganda and political action, although it has rarely attained sufficient numbers in any region to pull off political action. The author argues that no other group has taken up the reestablishment of the caliphate as its central concern with such consistency. He is at pains to show how other parties that may be seen as espousing similar ideas, such as al-Ikhwan al-Muslimin (the Muslim Brotherhood), the Jamaat-e-Islami, Tanzeem-e-Islami, and al-Qaeda, in fact fall short of upholding this idea meaningfully with sufficient consistency.

(Sumber: *Journal of Islamic Studies* (2015)26 (3): 351-355. July 31, 2015)

