

**Citizenship, Identity, and
Education in Muslim
Communities**

Essays on Attachment and Obligation

Edited by
Michael S. Merry
and
Jeffrey Ayala Milligan

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FOREWORD

Scholarship is a calling—a mission-driven endeavor—and its adepts are summoned to tackle serious challenges in the world, and offer reflections, analysis, and visionary ideas in order to move matters forward. It is not a calling to simply report on what is taking place—that is what modern journalism does. Nor is it a calling to constantly be engaged in public debates—that is called politics. Scholarship is a calling to transcend the day-to-day conceptions of what is going in the world—a calling to be unafraid of what *is* to come, and to shape what *may* come.

Scholars have identified a key challenge that faces us today: the interplay between Islam and political liberalism, not only in the West, but also crucially in the Muslim world. When we note “Islam” in this regard, we refer to it as not a set of rituals, but rather as a worldview—a *Weltanschauung* that underpins a legal heritage, a spiritual inheritance, and a theological tradition. In short, what Muslims describe as their *turath* (tradition)—which is the sum of their religious sciences and the cosmology that goes along with it, and are inseparable from it. This volume provides an intriguing contribution as it takes on that interplay from many different angles.

These angles can be addressed through a variety of themes. Can political liberalism, insofar as it is expressed in notions of democratic citizenship, reconcile with the Muslim presence that is now an integral part of the West? This is not an easy question to answer—it begs the primordial question of all societies, “Who are we?” This volume also raises interesting questions about how that question relates to obligations and feelings of belonging. Individualism does not displace the desire for societal cohesion, and that cannot be properly addressed without looking at this issue. Key to this is our understanding of secularism—the question for liberals everywhere is what type of secularism is fundamental and needed for a successful, pragmatic politic.

This line of questioning is not theoretical alone—the absence of a suitable paradigm has already led to a number of crises in Europe in particular. The ban on building minarets in Switzerland in late 2009, and the numerous *hijab*/headscarf controversies are just two examples. We must take this seriously, as our concept of citizenship cannot remain intact without progressing past these problems—the alternative is to allow the populist far right to provide shortsighted, narrow answers that are unsustainable, and ultimately destructive.

Discussions on this point by the contributors to this volume look at both the ramifications of such a question within the West, and within the Muslim world. What arise as issues to be discussed when we consider the interplay between Islam and political liberalism in the Muslim world itself? This leads us to consider the various “Islamization” projects that have been worked on in various parts of the Muslim world. Islamization is a word coined by the contemporary Islamic philosopher, S. M. Naquib al-Attas, whose influence went far beyond his native Malaysia in stimulating Muslims around the world to consider how Islam can become *relevant* to global discourse. [That had to take place by attaching oneself to the concept which underpinned his interpretation of “Islamization”—the view of the world informed by, and defined by, Islam; or, as he put it, the Islamic worldview—a powerful, and unique, philosophical engagement with modernity.] It has not always worked out particularly well—the Islamic world remains deeply affected by being colonized in its recent history, which plays a great role in defining how basic education itself, let alone higher intellectual thought, has developed.

It’s important not to overstate these queries, for such queries do not define how the overwhelming majority of Muslim Westerners (or non-Westerners) go about their lives in relating to their societies. Even practicing believers (and there is much evidence to suggest that the overwhelming majority of Muslim Westerners, as well as most Muslims around the world, are not practicing) do not generally trouble themselves with philosophical questions of this nature. They generally exist as most individuals do—affected more by social, economic, and political issues.

Nevertheless, these remain as important questions. In the West, we have so stigmatized the Muslim community in our midst, on account of their connection (even though it may be tenuous) to Islam, that it becomes a virtual necessity, for us as Westerners, to carry out this exercise. The validity of it aside, it may be that we will never recognize the Muslims, whether as individuals or as a community, as part and

parcel of our various European collectives, until we are psychologically able to view Islam as a European religion. Whatever can be done to treat that psychological condition in a positive and genuine manner, should be done, and soon. Moreover, within the Muslim world itself, the way that education has developed in recent years indicates that Islam remains a key issue—even if they might not be wholly religious. The empirical analysis that is begun in this volume needs to be intensified and widened, in order to properly understand the experiments that have taken place.

However, in the midst of that, we must consider a question that Muslims are asking themselves: Is the Islam they are attached to a substitute for an ethnic identity, or a call to purpose—an ethical worldview? That needs to be unpacked, to see if the very questions are correct—as do the incessant and constant fear-mongering about the *ummah*. The concept of the *ummah* has never stopped Muslim communities from becoming indigenous, cultural creationists in the various societies that they inhabit all over the world—and there is no need to think their loyalty is somehow questionable if they maintain that sort of connection now.

For Muslims, Westerners, and Muslim Westerners, therefore, there are a number of interesting queries that should not be avoided and should be engaged. Engagement does not mean compromise, but it does mean being very serious about the depth of our understanding on both sides. Without the deepest type of engagement, we will go nowhere, but with seriousness and genuineness being our twin guides, we may discover things that can lead us to a far more hopeful future for this world and for future generations.

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CHAPTER 1

Citizenship as Attachment and Obligation

MICHAEL S. MERRY AND
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Islam and the Crisis of Citizenship

Efforts to address citizenship entail defining, elucidating, and defending the rights, roles, and responsibilities of persons who share a political culture. The discussion encompasses the political rhetoric of freedom and equality on one hand, and decency and social cooperation on the other. Citizenship describes articulated dispositions, entitlements, and actions dictated by governments and constitutions, where cultural, political, and religious differences find common ground. Its virtues remain ideals. Some states manage better than others to deliver on these ideals, while others champion the importance of citizenship in only the thinnest sense. Whatever the case, citizenship entails a reciprocal relationship between individuals and the state, taking in a variety of social, economic, and political virtues, though the ranking of these virtues is unsettled. The contours of citizenship include various and sundry modes of attachment and obligation.

Citizenship is carried out in unique ways. In Europe, each state model differs in important respects; and in Asia, Africa and the Americas no country orients itself to the requirements of citizenship in exactly the same way. This has always been true, and until very recently virtually all notions of citizenship were inextricably linked to dominant religions, languages, and cultural artifacts such as music and literature.

In many places, minority groups have been relegated to second class status, excluded from economic opportunities and public life, or forcibly assimilated by states bent on incorporating their cultural others.

While debates and articulations of attachment and obligation manifest in various ways in different societies vis-à-vis specific minority groups, doubtless no group today is more singled out for scrutiny than Muslims regardless of whether they constitute a majority or minority, and regardless of their doctrinal or ethnic differences. The reasons for the excessive attention paid to Muslims, which seem both obvious and obscure, are difficult to disentangle from ideological, economic, and political interests. Whether advanced by ordinary imams, political pundits, ideologues, or scholars, familiar and well-rehearsed arguments traffic in caricature and hence polarize and distort rather than foster mutual understanding.

Of course Muslims are not the only group for whom occasional disputes arise vis-à-vis the state. Many conservative religious traditions find themselves in conflict with temporal political authority. But Islam's transnational character and the universality of its claims raise a number of questions concerning the primary commitments of Muslim citizens: the nature of their commitments, how they are ranked, and whether they conflict with non-Islamic institutional norms. Whether compliance with a lawful and legitimate government is a requirement for Muslims is not settled simply with appeals to Islamic law. Both personal and collective experiences with discrimination (as well as Western support for monarchical tyrants and controversial wars in, or sanctions against, Muslim countries), have interrupted Muslim loyalties toward the countries in which they reside. Whether Muslims live in majority Islamic societies or not is beside the point. In fact, many Muslims feel alienated by their own societies that often treat them as second class citizens, or worse, as outsiders. While most Muslims ask for public recognition, basic freedoms, and equal treatment, a vocal few grab headlines by denouncing Western or Western-supported governments as morally bankrupt. Membership in the global body of believers (*ummah Islamiyyah*) for many is the paramount form of citizenship from which primary attachments and obligations are derived.

For these and many other reasons, the primary loyalties of Muslims are routinely questioned in the media and the halls of government in a climate of socioeconomic uncertainty and fear. Seen from this perspective—again, majority or minority Muslim society is inconsequential—many simply see Islam as a fanatical religious ideology guided by unsparing and undifferentiated moral dogma. Viewed in this way,

Islam is portrayed as an insidious threat both to noble liberal democratic ideals and to capitalist economic interests (the latter often masquerading as the former). In Europe, for example, talk of the "Islamic threat" is ubiquitous and renewed appeals to "our norms and values" have become a mantra. As if to exacerbate the vulnerable socioeconomic position of Muslim minorities as an immigrant underclass, profiling, discrimination, and mistreatment on one hand, and extremist acts¹ of a radical few on the other, strengthen the politics of fear that sustains the right-wing diatribes of a minority political elite. Both sides of this polarized debate are vocal and visible and attract a disproportionate amount of attention in the media. These patterns continue to play out and thwart mutual understanding; they divide rather than unite persons around common ideals. This unsettling conception of citizenship leads to tensions between dominant groups who are skeptical about the "loyalty" of minority communities and fearful of changes that erode their social position, and minority—and frequently marginalized—groups who are determined to assert their rights to citizenship on their own cultural or religious terms. In a very real sense, then, one may speak of a crisis of citizenship.

The tension caused by cultural heterogeneity and the cultivation of common values and dispositions necessary to produce and sustain national political institutions is particularly acute in postcolonial societies. In many cases (Indonesia, Philippines, Nigeria), states did not exist prior to colonization and often contain, within arbitrarily defined colonial borders, a bewildering variety of cultures, ethnicities, religions, and languages from which newly independent governments have faced the challenge of forging new national identities to buttress newly-won citizenship. Most turned to the same institutional mechanisms—education, for instance—used in the developed world to create Euro-American style nation-states defined by dominant religious, economic, and cultural groups. The emergence of secessionist movements on the peripheries of many of these states has reinforced the experience of many contemporary developed societies: the effort to cultivate forms of identity supportive of democratic citizenship cannot afford to ignore or suppress other forms of attachment and obligation important to the individual and collective identities of a state's citizens.

As societies become increasingly heterogeneous, the values and dispositions necessary to reproduce the political institutions upon which legitimate states rely play a central role in reformulating policy. Some societies have sought to alleviate tensions by experimenting with

bicultural arrangements between their dominant groups (Canada, Belgium); though these “experiments” have proven to be difficult to maintain.² In some European states this has meant the reassertion³ of historically repressed languages and cultures (Welsh, Catalan), or an expansion of officially recognized minority religions (Hinduism, Islam) in various forms of institutional support. For more than twenty years Islamic and Hindu schools have received relatively equal treatment in Denmark and the Netherlands.

Of course, demographic changes have not prevented some states from clinging to ideas of citizenship grounded in historically dominant forms of belonging: Japan and China for example. Nor have demographic changes prevented other states, such as some in the former Yugoslavia or Soviet Union, from attempting to reassert traditional forms of nationalism with their conceptions of citizenship. In societies where this debate occurs, there are concerns about social cohesion and stability, particularly in times of economic crisis, mass immigration, and social and political unrest when spikes in unemployment, shrinking state budgets, reactionary politics, and pervasive unease and distrust feed the propensity to circle the wagons around historically dominant groups to the disadvantage of indigenous minorities and recent immigrant arrivals.

Of course this is not the whole story. There is also an undeniable awareness that citizenship cannot afford to be insular. Indeed, perhaps *because* of economic crises, but also climate change, pandemic health risks, and natural disasters, it is no longer possible to consider nation-states as isolated entities with singular requirements—certainly not in this age of the Internet and mass transportation. These facts raise the specter of *global* connectedness, and responsibility and articulations of citizenship, both in political theory and in the halls of government, more often than not assume a cosmopolitan character. Consequently, expanding notions of citizenship have never been more relevant or urgent. In societies spanning the globe there are lively discussions among academics, politicians, and ordinary citizens about its content and requirements.

Yet while a shared political culture is understood by most to mean something roughly coterminous with the nation-state, the idea of a shared political culture is disputed with growing intensity. Indeed, the normativity of so-called “free trade,” the importing and exporting of commodities and labor, the globalization of marketing and popular culture, and increasingly, supranational governance, mean that cultural and religious identities, but also social attachments and political

allegiances, are increasingly hybrid and in flux. Concurrent with the expansion of inequitable trade practices, the concentration of wealth and influence of multinational corporations, as well as the ever-expanding division between the haves and the have-nots, there emerges a pattern of transnational migration such as the world has never known, which further unsettles established conceptions of national or ethnic identity. Migration from the South to the North in the past quarter century coincides both with a rise in nationalism—and its cousin, xenophobia—as well as a resurgence of religious and cultural distinctions consistent with a politics of recognition. Accordingly, today, on every continent, the invocation of a nation’s putative ideals, beliefs, and values operates to exclude at least as many as it manages to include. It is not surprising that many consider *any* state-sanctioned declaration of what it means to be a “good citizen,” or to be “integrated,” a recent and dubious construction crafted by the engineers of political expedience. While there is much talk nowadays about the “multicultural society,” its rhetoric frequently amounts to little more than bare toleration and official expressions of tokenism.

Where these matters bear upon the situation of Muslims and Muslim communities, the meanings of citizenship are not confined to societies where they represent minority populations of fairly recent origin. The meanings attached to citizenship for Muslims in societies—even Islamic ones—in which they count as a strong majority, are not straightforwardly obvious; among other things they are complicated by nationality, ethnicity, immigration policy, and competing interpretations of Islam. The articulations of attachment and obligation in Bosnia or Tunisia will inevitably have to be balanced against a secular constitution but also take into account Serbian and Berber ethnic minorities respectively. Similarly, attachments and obligations for Muslims in Nigeria will inevitably be expressed against a web of complex interlocking concerns: disputes of political and economic power, interpretations of shari’ah, land rights, tribal identities, educational opportunities, and social class. Hence questions of public recognition of minority Muslim groups, defined ethnically, religiously, or otherwise, are equally a challenge for majority Muslim societies.

In majority Muslim societies the relationship between religious identity, ethnic identity, and citizenship presents a varied picture. In some states—Saudi Arabia, for instance—religious identity and citizenship may largely overlap yet not prevent the experience of social exclusion on gendered, economic or cultural grounds. In others, such as Malaysia, citizenship transcends religious identification, which roughly

parallels the ethnic differences among Malays, Chinese, and Indians, yet does not prevent a sense of socioeconomic marginalization, especially among Malaysians of Indian ancestry. In Indonesia, citizenship and religious identity transcend ethnic divisions but have not prevented the emergence of ethno-religious nationalisms that trouble dominant conceptions of citizenship.

While the tension between various notions of citizenship and other attachments and obligations is an issue confronted by any multicultural, religiously diverse state, such questions have assumed a greater urgency in a contemporary international climate where proponents of Islamist ideology advocate and carry out acts of political violence against both Muslim and non-Muslim societies while, as a result, proponents of other forms of Muslim identity, in all their diversity, become the object of suspicion and hostility from their fellow citizens. Clearly, then, being a Muslim today means a variety of things depending on the cultural and political context. Further, being a member of the global community of Muslim believers (*ummah Islamiyyah*), articulates a type of belonging that is often perceived either as being in conflict with what it means to be a local citizen, or else a Muslim identity that is indistinguishable from what it means to be a member of an ethnic group or a nation-state. Both forms of misrecognition are a frequent occurrence.

Citizenship, Identity, and Education

It is not surprising that shifting conceptions of citizenship affect educational practices, because states typically consider the promotion of citizenship integral to their educational goals. Yet in order to promote citizenship, states must organize, supply, fund, and govern schools so the requisite knowledge of the workings of political institutions is made available. Schools have long been the institutionalized instruments of the state par excellence to foster identification with one's national or regional identity and to awaken in young people an awareness of certain civic attachments and obligations. And as with nationalist conceptions of citizenship, so too are ethnic and religious identities sometimes promoted through both formal and informal systems of schooling. In the United States, for instance, public schools were explicitly tasked in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century with assimilating European immigrants into the cultural and political "mainstream" of American society, while involuntary,

nonwhite subjects of American power—Native Americans, African-Americans, Filipinos, Latinos—were schooled for marginalized and subordinate positions in political and cultural life. Ethnic or religious schooling that attempted to preserve particular identities—German language schooling during World War I or Catholic schooling in the nineteenth century—was actively discouraged as a threat to American civic identity, a fear echoed today in the suspicions of Islamic schooling in many western countries. The early twenty-first century, however, is in the midst of population movements and security threats that, if anything, exceed those of the early twentieth. Therefore, the basis for a shared political culture is an increasingly urgent question in societies around the world. And regardless of how or where this question is addressed, the relationship between education and citizenship is assumed.

But more than mere knowledge of political institutions, educational philosophers (far more often than governments) recognize the need to promote and cultivate the important skills and dispositions necessary for deliberation, among informed citizens, about socially and politically relevant issues. Deliberation entails the ability to reflect upon and communicate one's ideas and interests while engaging generously with the ideas of others. The aim of deliberative citizenship, therefore, is not only to locate shared political needs and interests necessary for the purposes of social stability, but also to possess the dispositions and habits necessary for meaningful recognition and interaction with others within one's shared political space.

Citizenship is a concept that envelops specific political and legal rights, notions of inclusion and exclusion, and intimations of attachment and obligation. Attachments are sometimes, though not always, expressed through patriotic feeling around a set of presumably shared values and norms, or perhaps around a shared language and history. Moreover, attachments frequently garner strength from rituals (war commemorations, national holidays) and emotion-rousing speeches and creeds that extol the lives of political heroes. Yet even the less emotive expressions of citizenship normally point to a general sense of belonging to a particular place with others who share it, even if one expression of civic belonging is political indifference. Put another way, citizenship is the legal expression of how persons *identify* with a particular place.

Persons either are socialized into, or through immigration come to acquire, a particular civic attachment⁴; thus, as with education, citizenship and identity are also mutually reinforcing concepts even if one's

primary attachments lie elsewhere. Meanwhile, obligations of various sorts arise owing to one's shared membership in a community whose maintenance requires the (often unremunerated) service of those eligible to fill the requisite roles. Military service and jury duty are examples, but countless *voluntary* manifestations of attachment and obligation may be observed at various times and places. Sometimes these assume a cosmopolitan character but more often articulations of citizenship are expressed at the local level.

As implied by the reference to indifference in the foregoing paragraph, official membership within a nation-state may have little purchase on a person's identity. That is, while citizenship typically refers to political membership, in many instances other memberships simultaneously exist, and often have greater importance and priority. Indeed, conceptions of identity rooted in one's membership in, say, ethnic and/or religious communities more commonly summon one's attention and loyalty. To illustrate: an individual may have been born, raised, and educated in Turkey, possess a Turkish passport, speak fluent Turkish, and travel abroad as a Turkish exchange student yet not *identify with* Turkey per se (but rather with the Kurds). Of course, regardless of how she feels, this may not prevent her from being *identified as* Turkish by others unless, perhaps, she undertakes the formal steps of officially renouncing Turkish citizenship and replacing it with another. The same will be true for deeply religious persons whose faith is the most singular aspect of their identity. Those for whom faith is paramount may even have an antagonistic relationship toward their government (as was witnessed by the world of Buddhist monks in Burma in 2007).

However else identity is construed, it typically speaks to how persons wish to be recognized in the public sphere, but also where their primary attachments are fixed. For most people these attachments shift over the course of one's lifetime, and rankings vary depending on one's present commitments, but also as a direct consequence of how one is perceived by others. Such conceptions of identity do not inevitably contradict the role of citizen in a particular nation-state. For example, Muslim girls who choose to don the headscarf—whether they live in a majority Muslim society or not—may have complicated motives for doing so, regardless of how local and national governments interpret it. In other cases, conceptions of identity more obviously conflict with acceptable forms of citizenship, especially in multi-ethnic postcolonial states where ethnic nationalisms sometimes clash with imposed (and perhaps, artificial) national identities.

Citizenship and Belonging

Debates over citizenship often begin as crude demands employing the language of "integration." Integration is typically confrontational in its connotations; cultural difference remains a "problem" to be solved. In these situations, persons of minority or immigrant backgrounds are not given clear indicators of what being "integrated" means, yet it is assumed that it is their responsibility to integrate themselves. But of course in order for persons—of whatever background—to be "integrated" they must first feel that they are able to accept, and be accepted into, a social and political culture whose price of admission does not require the surrender of other attachments that may be of equal or even more value to them. This sense of belonging denotes not only the feeling one has of being a part of his/her society, but also—and perhaps more important—the conviction on the part of *others* that one belongs. In other words, by belonging we mean that persons do not feel questioned, judged, or discriminated against on the basis of one's appearance, but also one's political opinions, voting record, baseball team preference, language spoken at home, or affiliation with a particular school. Being integrated, then, describes not only one's first language, level of education, employment status, etc. but also the *psychological* condition of feeling oneself a part of the society she inhabits. But feeling oneself to be a part of one's society is just the beginning. For it must also be possible to *contribute* to society, *demonstrate* loyalty to it, and *express* themselves as citizens in a variety of ways. We suggest that this state of affairs describes a healthy pluralism, something that continually appears under threat in all democratic and democratizing societies.

The current climate of mistrust, uncertainty *and* hope demands a careful reappraisal of long-settled notions of democratic citizenship in light of new or heretofore ignored attachments and obligations as well as the collaborative formulation, by both Muslims and non-Muslims, of new conceptions of democratic citizenship that respect Muslims' religious attachments and obligations while legitimately rejecting those attachments, of Muslims and non-Muslims alike, inimical to democratic society. In view of this, we propose in these chapters to explore the tensions inherent in this complexity of belonging in various Muslim communities, the reconsiderations of civic identity it inspires in contemporary Muslim and non-Muslim philosophical discourse, and some of the reforms in educational policy and practice it influences. Carving out an identity—a place of belonging—within these rather different

contexts, and the role that education and citizenship play in constructing those identities, is the primary focus of this book. With these essays we contribute to a fuller and more nuanced understanding of the diverse and evolving discourse on citizenship, identity, and education for Muslims in the contemporary world.

Each of the contributions examine the interlocking notions of citizenship, identity, and education from different national and cultural perspectives. Specific case studies inform several of the chapters. Our aim is to capture some of the diversity of orientation and thinking on this complex subject, while also showing points of convergence across the international spectrum. Though various disciplinary backgrounds are represented in this volume, each contribution in its own way critically examines the manner in which different conceptions of citizenship, identity, and education are closely related. These conversations occur both at an abstract and a practical level.

One aim of this book is to show that the tendency to focus solely on political citizenship, or alternatively, membership in the *ummah Islamiyyah*, to the extent that it ignores other attachments and obligations, cannot adequately account for the many tensions that exist within and between Muslim communities and the larger societies they inhabit. The essays gathered in this volume explore some of these shifts in philosophical and educational policy discourses on religious identity, civic identity, and education in a cross-section of the Muslim world, thus emphasizing the creative rather than the destructive responses to the tension between a globalization shaped by Western presuppositions and the demand of many Muslims to have a say in their integration into the global community rather than being assimilated into it on terms set by others. The essays gathered in this volume promise to serve up an engaging international, interdisciplinary conversation with the philosophical rigor such a subject deserves.

Islam and Democratic Citizenship: Theoretical Possibilities

The opening chapter of this volume, Andrew March's "Islamic Foundations for a Social Contract in non-Muslim Liberal Democracies," directly confronts the central question at the heart of concerns about the compatibility of Islam and democracy: Do the teachings of Islam itself militate against the sort of overlapping consensus between Muslims and non-Muslims around the political values that are necessary for the

existence of a liberal democracy?⁵ In doing so he avoids the easy platitudes of both those multiculturalists who claim there is no problem at all as well as those Islamists who argue that the question is settled in favor of the rejection of Muslims' loyalty to non-Muslim states. Rather, he carefully and critically examines a range of classical and contemporary Islamic legal discourses on the question of the permissibility of Muslims' citizenship in non-Muslim states and the nature of their obligations to such states to "examine the potential for a positive, principled, and stable Islamic affirmation of citizenship in a non-Muslim liberal democracy."

This includes, crucially, the question of Muslims' obligation to refrain from participating in efforts to harm the state of one's residence or to actively participate in the defense of the state, issues central to the widespread concern about "home-grown radicals" such as the 7/7 bombers in London or Major Nidal Malik Hasan, the U.S. Army officer who murdered thirteen fellow soldiers at Fort Hood, Texas to avoid fighting fellow Muslims. While March finds that there is a stream of Islamic legal discourse underwriting the notion that one's obligation to the *ummah Islammiya* trumps one's obligations as a citizen of a liberal democratic state, there are also interpretations of that discourse by authoritative Muslim jurists that articulate "firm and culturally authentic Islamic values . . . that can ground Islamically a social contract between Muslims and a non-Muslim liberal democracy." The conditions this discourse places on such a social contract, such as the security of Muslim citizens, the freedom to practice one's religion without fear of seduction away from it, and freedom to manifest one's religion, are conditions, March argues, that political liberalism is quite content to grant. While none of this guarantees that Muslim citizens and residents of liberal democracies will choose to interpret their religious obligations in this way, it is doctrinally plausible for them to do so. Thus, an overlapping consensus between Muslim and non-Muslim citizens on the shared political values necessary to a liberal democracy is possible, if not guaranteed.

If Andrew March's chapter asks whether Islam can include liberalism, Lucas Swaine asks the corollary question: Can liberalism include Islam? Swaine's "Demanding Deliberation: Political Liberalism and the Inclusion of Islam" identifies reciprocal and inclusive political deliberation as a central feature of liberal democracy and asks "whether Muslims face doctrinal or other religious impediments to becoming good citizens in pluralistic democracies."⁶ His answer, in short, is no. He finds no doctrinal or religious impediments to Muslim participation

in democratic political deliberation, noting as well the empirical fact that millions of Muslims *do* participate in such deliberation in both Muslim and non-Muslim democratic societies around the world. Swaine goes beyond this observation, however, to argue that Muslim citizens of liberal democracies have “special capacities to renew the vitality of democratic polities” by reintroducing into the political discourse of increasingly secular western—especially European—societies the perspectives of more heteronomous communities. In addition, Swaine asserts that “more liberal-minded Muslims” can, with liberal non-Muslim allies, facilitate a communication between Muslim and non-Muslim communities that translates liberal democratic principles in ways that make sense within the value system of Muslim communities while also translating the values of such communities in ways that resonate with liberal democratic concerns. In this way liberal political deliberation is enhanced by the inclusion of the broader range of voices present within a democratic society.

Despite the doctrinal and philosophical plausibility of an overlapping consensus between Islam and liberal democratic theory, Tariq Modood’s “Multiculturalism in the West and Muslim Identity” reminds us that what may be plausible is not necessarily practiced. He describes a “crisis of multiculturalism” that challenges the Muslim minority community in Britain—and by implication minority Muslim communities in other western democracies—to develop a sense of belonging to a British society that is perceived as being at war with Muslims abroad and insensitive to them at home, while at the same time the Muslim identity politics to which such perceptions give rise lead many in the majority to view British Muslims with suspicion, if not outright hostility. Modood argues that some classical liberal conceptions of citizenship ignore the myriad differences of actual citizens in order to assert the fundamental equality of citizens. On the other hand, some conceptions of multiculturalism posit specious distinctions between ascribed and voluntary identities in order to justify relegating religious identities to the private realm and thus preserve a secular public discourse. Both, he argues, are inadequate to meet this crisis. He argues instead for a “multicultural citizenship” that recognizes the political salience of differences—both those asserted by the members of a community as well as those ascribed to it from without—as the ever evolving social reality in which formal citizenship is enacted by actual citizens while at the same time eschewing the all-too-common multiculturalist rejection of the idea of a common identity across differences. A “multicultural nationalism” and a “multicultural

citizenship” that recognizes and celebrates difference—religious and otherwise—as part of who “we” are, Modood argues, offers a more hopeful solution to the present tensions between British Muslims and the larger British society. The reassertion of liberal conceptions of citizenship or conceptions of multiculturalism that deny the relevance of the very identity markers—in this case adherence to Islam—that serve to identify the Muslim community to itself and others does not offer such hope. Reconnecting with this form of multiculturalism is, he argues, “the best way to overcome the present state of fear, polarization and ultimately the suicide bombings in our cities.” The recognition and celebration of difference Modood calls for necessarily precludes the imposition, either overtly or implicitly, of preordained, authorized forms of identity. There can be no one, right way of being British and/or Muslim.

In their contribution to this volume, “Being Muslim, a Fact or Challenge?” Yedullah Kazmi and Rosnani Hashim argue for just such a notion of identity. They reject the idea of a monolithic Muslim identity in favor of a conception of identity as a dialogical construct between the unique characteristics of any given individual—race, gender, ethnicity, religious belief—and the sociohistorical context in which he or she happens to live. Thus identity is not a preordained fact but rather a challenge, a life project in which the individual has the freedom and the responsibility to ethically construct an identity consonant with her fundamental beliefs and the sociocultural milieu in which she finds herself. For Muslims, Kazmi and Hashim argue, this involves building on the Qur’anic tenets that define what a Muslim believes “in the context of concrete historical and cultural reality” so that an Islamic spiritual expression is given to historical experience. This historical consciousness precludes the mindless acceptance of conceptions of Muslim identity formed in other sociohistorical contexts and demands the thoughtful consideration of what it means to be a Muslim in this particular context. This requires dialogue and deliberation, not only among Muslims as they wrestle with the challenges of living as Muslims in particular contexts and ensuring the Islamic survival of subsequent generations, but between Muslims and the broader societies they inhabit. Thus the conception of Muslim identity outlined by Kazmi and Hashim highlights the necessity of dialogue between Muslims and their non-Muslim fellow citizens over the ways in which the broader society shapes Muslim identity without changing its “Muslimness” and the ways that identity in turn “enriches the repertoire of meaning” available to the broader society.

Kazmi and Hashim argue that Muslim educators all too often ask the wrong questions. Rather than asking *what* should be taught, a question that tends to elicit prescriptive answers, Muslim educators should ask *who* is to be taught. Attending first to the particular needs of actual learners in concrete circumstances foregrounds and celebrates the diversity within the Muslim community and the diverse sociopolitical circumstances in which the members of that community reside. Kazmi and Hashim articulate a concept of Muslim identity potentially consistent with the expectations of democratic citizenship offered by Andrew March and Lucas Swaine as well as the “multicultural citizenship” and “multicultural nationalism” posited by Modood. And they raise the possibility of an approach to education designed to realize that potential.

These first four contributions to this volume lay important theoretical groundwork for the essays that follow. Tariq Modood reminds us of the problem that animates this book; namely, the apparent tensions between Muslim identity and democratic citizenship that manifests itself in Muslim residents of western democratic societies who feel marginalized and singled out for unreasonable scrutiny and the majority populations of these same societies suspicious of Muslims’ ability and interest to integrate into the mainstream as full-fledged, loyal citizens, as well as the claim from within some Muslim majority societies that democracy is un-Islamic. Modood offers the provocative concepts of “multicultural citizenship” and “multicultural nationalism” as a framework for bridging this gap and ameliorating these tensions, while Andrew March and Lucas Swaine identify and articulate characteristics required of such citizenship in a liberal democracy. These include a sense of belonging—both in terms of the legitimacy of one’s presence in and the capacity for loyalty to a multicultural, multi-religious polity, the willingness to contribute to the defense of such a society or, at the very least, refrain from participating in threats to it, and the capacity for engaging in political deliberation with other members of society who do not share one’s religious or other commitments. Yedullah Kazmi and Rosnani Hashim articulate a concept of Muslim identity consistent with both Modood’s multicultural citizenship and March’s and Swaine’s criteria of democratic citizenship. Though four essays cannot possibly cover everything that can or should be said on these topics, they at the very least put to rest the misbegotten arguments of both the “clash of civilizations” advocates and those radical Islamists who posit some fundamental incompatibility between liberal democracy and Islam.

These four essays demonstrate the theoretical *possibility* of a doctrinally plausible overlapping consensus between liberal democracy and Islam and offer some broad outlines of how such a consensus might be achieved. They suggest, in the language of John Dewey (1916), “something to be tried,” but they do not offer specific instructions or concrete examples. Such steps are the natural substance of educational experimentation, to which the other contributors turn their attention.

Islamic Education and Democratic Citizenship: Experiments in Practice

Perhaps no country is more consistently invoked to illustrate western fears regarding the purported tensions between Islamic education and democracy than Pakistan. Journalistic analyses of Islamic extremism in Pakistan almost universally locate its intellectual origins in the influence of the *madrasah* in the educational vacuum created by a failed system of government education. Matthew J. Nelson, however, argues in his chapter, “Dealing with Difference: Religious Education and the Challenge of Democracy in Pakistan,” that the challenge to democracy in Pakistan from religious education is not the *madaris* per se, which account for only a tiny minority of the overall full-time school enrollment, but rather the approach to difference supported by the large majority of those who choose a mixed—religious and secular—education for their children.⁷ Nelson’s extensive ethnographic study of the mixed education sector of an increasingly privatized Pakistani educational system reveals a widespread belief that the unity of Islam demands the suppression of sectarian and doctrinal difference in favor of a single, authoritative expression of what it means to be Muslim. Unsurprisingly, this authoritative version typically conforms to the beliefs and practices of the particular religious community questioned. Ignoring difference, or “overcoming” it in favor of a stress on commonalities, is seen by Nelson’s respondents as the best way to avoid sectarian conflict.

However, this equation of unity with perfect sameness in the context of a competitive educational market yields monopolistic orientations that, in effect, pit each expression of religious identity against other expressions in an effort to define the terms of unity within its own rather particular set of beliefs and practices. Thus, though Nelson’s respondents believe that the suppression of difference in favor of unity will *prevent* sectarian violence, Nelson finds that it is in fact the denial

of difference that *contributes* to sectarian violence and undermines the promise of Pakistani democracy. In effect, Nelson's analysis of the nexus of Islam, Islamic education, and democracy in Pakistan recalls Kazmi's and Hashim's thesis that attention to the various expressions of Islamic identity that emerge from the ongoing effort to remain true to Qur'anic values in different sociohistorical circumstances is necessary to the success of democracy in diverse Muslim and non-Muslim societies. Nelson shares Kazmi's and Hashim's implicit concern that the suppression of difference in favor of authoritative commonality is inimical to democracy. He finds a small measure of hope, though, in the minority of his respondents who argued that differences should be respected and celebrated and the larger group of those who, once they recognized the ongoing fact of difference and the necessity to avoid conflict, concluded that respect for diversity must be a component of religious education. The critical educational question for Nelson, then, is how might it be possible to respond to local demands for religious education while countering the language of "unity-as-monopoly" and finding ways to appreciate the terms of religious difference, sectarian diversity, and ongoing political debate?

Robert Hefner's "Islamic Schools, Social Movements, and Democracy in Indonesia" describes one possible response to Nelson's question in the approach to Islamic education taken by a democratizing Indonesia.⁸ Hefner describes a contemporary system of Islamic education in Indonesia that is "among the most intellectually dynamic in the entire Muslim world," where girls make up fully one-half of the student population, and where "the overwhelming majority of Muslim educators have concluded that constitutional democracy is compatible with Islam, and is the best form of government for Indonesia."

Within this context, Hefner's chapter focuses on one recent trend in Indonesian Islamic education: the growing prominence of "integrated" schools that self-consciously attempt to infuse Islamic values and precepts into the secular curriculum in order to produce devout, well-educated graduates equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to engage with and transform the broader society. While these schools are committed to the "Islamization" of society, and a tiny radical minority has been implicated in acts of political violence, it appears that these schools, as well as the broader system of Indonesian Islamic schools may be more open to the conception of Muslim identity described by Kazmi and Hashim and thus more conducive to the respect for difference that Modood, March, and Swaine find so necessary to democracy and the absence of which Nelson reports from Pakistan.

Hefner reports the results of surveys of the general public and Muslim educators in 2004 and 2006 that show overwhelming majorities of both groups support key principles of liberal democracy and shari'a. However, other data show that actual political support for pro-shari'a parties is considerably lower than what these survey results might suggest. This suggests, Hefner argues, an ongoing effort of Indonesian intellectuals and citizens to work out a satisfactory balance between Islamic values and democracy in the world's largest Muslim country. Islamic schools' positive role in this process, Hefner suggests, should "dispel any impression that the Islamic educational establishment is a reactionary drag on an otherwise pluralist public."

Charlene Tan's and Intan Mokhtar's chapter, "Communitarianism and Islamic Social Studies in Singapore," moves the examination of Muslim education from one of the world's largest democracies to one of the smallest. Tan and Mokhtar critique the recently implemented Islamic Social Studies curriculum as a mechanism of a secular, democratic Singapore state intended to create "good" Muslim citizens in line with a distinctively communitarian conception of democratic citizenship. Their description of the Islamic Social Studies curriculum and its aims suggests a concrete experiment in the sort of identity construction described by Kazmi and Hashim coupled with the respect for difference called for by March, Swaine, and Nelson with the explicit purpose of producing multicultural citizens along the lines of that envisioned in this volume by Tariq Modood. Though Tan and Mokhtar are critical of certain aspects of the curriculum; namely its failure to adequately foster critical thinking skills, its superficial treatment of cultural difference, and a relatively uncritical embodiment of the state's nation-building agenda, the curriculum's effort to help "produce a comprehensive, systematic, and integrated educational system for the *madrasahs* in Singapore" represents an educational experiment that promises to shed light on the theoretical possibilities articulated in earlier chapters.

Finally, Rosnani Hashim concludes this volume's brief survey of educational experiments in the reconciliation of Islamic identity and democratic citizenship with a description of educational developments in Malaysia, perhaps the most vibrant Muslim-majority, religiously and ethnically diverse democracies in the world. She describes Malaysia's post-colonial efforts to transform an educational and political system that relegated religious identity to the private sphere into a system that tries to reflect the centrality of Islam to Malay culture and identity while at the same time respecting the rights of other ethnic groups within Malaysia's pluralistic society. Her historical account

traces Malaysia's response to the educational agenda promoted in the First World Conference on Muslim Education held in Mecca in 1977 through the implementation of a national philosophy of education in 1987 and subsequent efforts to integrate Islamic values into school curricula at all levels, including key universities such as the International Islamic University of Malaysia. Hashim notes that, while teaching methods have thus far changed very little, the effort to Islamize the curriculum of Malaysian schools and thus support Malay students in the development of a modern Islamic identity has made considerable progress.

One element of these educational reforms crucial to the flourishing of Malaysian democracy is their impact on the rights and freedoms of Malaysia's ethnic minorities, particularly the Chinese and Indian communities that comprise as much as one-third of Malaysia's population. Hashim notes that educational reformers have endeavored to protect minority rights to an education that reflects their culture through the support of Chinese and Indian schools at the elementary level and working to ensure that schools at all levels respect the cultural sensibilities of all Malaysians. The ongoing effort to reintegrate Islamic values into the core of Malaysian education and society has not been without its difficulties. Sporadic violence in response to the recent controversy over the use of the word Allah by some Christian groups to refer to God is but one case in point. Nevertheless, Malaysia's effort to cultivate Islamic identity, celebrate cultural pluralism, and promote democratic governance may well constitute the most successful and promising example of a multicultural Muslim democracy in the world today.

Democracy and Difference

A recurring theme in each of the contributions in this volume is the question of difference. How a community accounts for and responds to difference appears to be at least one critical factor in realizing the potential of democratic citizenship and a democratic society. Is difference tolerated, respected, celebrated? If so, then the sense that one's identity is respected and therefore secure from external threats enables, though it does not guarantee, the sense of belonging that seems so essential to democratic citizenship. Respect for difference underpins the legitimacy of the various participants in democratic deliberation over the nature of the community in which those participants jointly reside. Or is difference denied, delegitimized, or targeted for elimination? If so, then

the full citizenship of those marginalized is denied and the citizenship claimed by those who carry out the marginalization is not recognizably democratic. The prospects of social cooperation are enhanced in the first case, while the prospects of social conflict are enhanced in the second.

Another point these chapters drive home is the fact that dealing with difference is a challenge for both Muslim communities and non-Muslim communities. Sectarian differences within Islam as well as differences between Islam and other religions may be denied in ways that mark minority ethnic, racial, or religious groups as illegitimate and thus undercut the possibility of democratic citizenship for minorities and the majority. Comparable forms of marginalization on the basis of gender have similar effects. On the other hand, formal and informal constraints on the expression of difference—such as the ban on the *burka* or *hijab* in French, Belgian or Turkish schools, the refusal in Britain to extend multicultural discourse to religious identity described here by Modood, or the racism and Islamophobia prevalent in so many western societies—also denies full democratic citizenship to those so constrained and undermines the claims of the societies engaging in such practices to be democracies. This does not mean, of course, that any and all forms of difference must be tolerated. It does mean, however, that any truly democratic deliberation over the forms of illegitimate difference *must* include and account for all elements of a society, not just the majority.

Understanding and respecting difference is, fundamentally, a pedagogical problem. Though it is not necessarily a problem to be addressed only by schools—it encompasses of course the civic education of the larger community—schools are nevertheless one important venue for addressing the problem. The contributors to this volume do not offer any recipes for addressing the challenge of difference in democratic society. Indeed any attempt to do so would be self defeating because the imposition of successful practices developed in one sociohistorical context on a different sociohistorical context likely neglects the salient differences of that context and thus fails the test of respecting and accounting for difference. This does not mean, however, that we cannot learn from the successes and failures of others and experiment with their practices, suitably adapted to the particularities of our own context. This is what we attempt to do in these essays, to establish the theoretical possibility of a philosophically and doctrinally plausible overlapping consensus between Islam and democracy, to identify respect for difference as one critical component of that overlapping

consensus, and to examine a range of educational practices in various sociohistorical contexts for insight into better ways to educate for difference and democratic citizenship in other contexts. It is our hope that the essays gathered here will further the deliberation and educational experimentation necessary to fully realize the democratic prospects of both minority and majority Muslim communities wherever they may be.

Notes

1. Brazen acts of violence and aggression, frequently carried out against civilian populations, are equated not with fanatical extremists but with Islam itself.
2. As many have noted, the different groups within a single nation-state often are strongly disinclined to learn about, or interact with, each other. This is certainly true of French and Anglophone Canadians as well as the Flemish and Walloons in Belgium, where verbal hostility is commonplace. Switzerland represents another example of a multi-lingual/multi-cultural state where one finds not so much mutual hostility as mutual indifference.
3. This reassertion does not always transpire as one might hope. Indeed, there is often discrimination associated with the newly found freedom to organize one's own institutions on a equal par with other groups. Examples are myriad, but the Quebecois constitutional requirements for French are one example.
4. Of course some individuals possess more than one citizenship owing to complicating factors of birth, parentage, or both.
5. An earlier version of this chapter was published in *The American Political Science Review* Vol. 101, No. 2, pp. 235–252. Reprinted with permission of Cambridge University Press.
6. An earlier version of this chapter was published in *Journal of Islamic Law and Culture* Vol. 11, No. 2 (May 2009), pp. 92–110. Reprinted with permission of Taylor and Francis.
7. An earlier version of this chapter was published in *Modern Asian Studies* Vol. 43, No. 3 (2009), pp. 591–618. Reprinted with permission of Cambridge University Press.
8. An earlier version of this chapter was published in Robert W. Hefner, Ed., *Making Modern Muslims: The Politics of Islamic Education in Southeast Asia* Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press. Reprinted with permission of University of Hawaii Press.

CHAPTER 2

Islamic Foundations for a Social Contract in Non-Muslim Liberal Democracies

ANDREW F. MARCH

Islamic Objections to Citizenship in Non-Muslim States

For Islamic doctrine, there are two broad problems with citizenship in non-Muslim liberal states. First, that those states are *liberal* in character; and second, that they are *non-Muslim* in character, both socially and politically. The first challenge of citizenship in liberal democracies for Muslim communities is to endorse the idea of entering into a social contract within a non-Muslim political community.

A minority tradition in Islamic law and ethics maintains that Muslims are not permitted to reside in a non-Muslim state, which is often referred to as *dar al-harb* (“abode of war”) or *dar al-kufr* (“abode of unbelief”), both in the sense of states with non-Muslim majority populations and states governed by other than Islamic law. Muslims who find themselves in such situations through conquest are obligated to migrate (perform *hijra*) to the “Abode of Islam” (*dar al-Islam*) (Abou El Fadl 1994). In classical jurisprudence, this position was advanced mostly by the Maliki school of law, predominant in North Africa (e.g., al-Wansharisi 1981, 2: 121–138), but in the modern period it has been advanced by Saudi adherents of the Wahhabi doctrine, which claims derivation from the Hanbali school of law (e.g., al-Shithri n.d.), as well as certain fundamentalist thinkers not adhering to any single school, such as the Egyptian Sayyid Qutb (Qutb 2001, 3: 286).