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erism on academic freedoms and existing legal frameworks for this particular college or educational institutions in general.

The anecdotal records, descriptions, and student narratives are most engaging and deepen the reader's understanding of the meaning-making processes of the youth in Kerala in the 1990s. The book examines the complex intersections of sexuality, politics, and fashion with caste/class/gender hierarchies as mediated by globalization and consumerism. There's an excellent section on masculinity/femininity and sexuality in public spaces that reveals what it means to be a single woman in Indian society. A more deliberate use of the concept of cultural hybridity within the postcolonial framework may have provided an alternative space for the analysis of how the students themselves were able to (or not) reconcile the cultural, political, economic, and educational dichotomies that they confronted in their daily lives.

While offering a detailed critical analysis of Kerala as a model in social development and a successful educational system, the book not only provides important insights into the politics of globalization (or liberalization, as it is more commonly construed in India); Lukose also presents a comprehensive tracing of the evolution of gendered identities under the influences of colonial, postcolonial, capitalist, and traditional forces. The description of the social democracy prevalent in the state of Kerala, and the understanding of citizenship within the politics of India, offer political and economic possibilities of what a similar trajectory might mean for other countries of the "third world." The publication is a timely one and makes an important interdisciplinary contribution to research literature in fields such as educational anthropology, sociology, economics, culture studies, gender studies, political science, and international education.

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Islam and Higher Education in Transitional Societies edited by Fatma Nevra Settie and Reitumetse Obakeng Mabokela. Rotterdam: Sense Publishers, 2009. 100 pp. $29.00 (paper). ISBN 978-90-8790-703-7.

This compact book, which consists of an introduction and six chapters, deals with different aspects of higher education in contexts where Muslims make up a majority and a minority of the population. It is a valuable addition to the comparative education literature despite being uneven and of rather poor production quality. One needs to get past certain essential problems with the volume before appreciating its value. To begin, the introduction, or "Overview" as it is called, is only a paltry 2.5 pages and falls far short of providing a justification for, and conceptual overview of, the edited collection. The stated aims of the book are to address the question "What kind of role does Islam play in the context of higher education in transitional societies?" and to "offer insights into higher education system in non-Western world" [*sic*] (1). Despite these objectives, the chapters deal with different aspects of higher education in the Western and non-Western world and in

transition and nontransition countries. It includes cases about the United States, Pakistan, Iran, the United Kingdom, South Africa, and Turkey.

The six core chapters are not about Islam per se but about academic freedom, Muslim minorities in higher education, and secularism. Since there is effectively no introduction that puts these topics into a context, it is up to the reader to make sense of how and if each chapter relates to Islam. What comes across throughout the volume is that the expertise of the authors is not in Islam, whether understood as a religion, a culture, or a set of institutional traditions. In fact, many references to Islam are inaccurate or muddled. Rather, authors exhibit competence in areas that deal with education, gender studies, multiculturalism, and the politics of schooling. The use of Islam in the title is hence somewhat of a misnomer in the same way as "transitional societies."

Two of many instances of how the book is on shaky ground when it comes to Islam can be found in the use and translation of specialized terminology. For instance, in chapter 2, the commonly used term "*Shari'ah*" [*sic*] is translated as the "word of God, as practiced by the Prophet Mohammad" (19). It would be more accurate to describe *Shari'a* as a code of law derived from the sacred text of the Quran and the teachings and example of the Prophet Mohammed. The author then translates "Ulema" simply as "Islamists" (20). This designation is misleading to say the least. The term "Ulema" refers generically to the Muslim scholarly class (the singular is *alim*). Members of the Ulema may or may not be Islamists, a term that usually implies someone who is sympathetic to and/or active in Islamist politics. The Ulema, a group with specialist knowledge, similar to academics, harbor a range of ideological and political positions. These facts of error and interpretation are not simply minor mistakes; at best, they can lead to misinformation and, at worst, perpetuate negative misconceptions about Islam and its institutions.

It is unfortunate that the front of the book (the overview and chap. 1, in particular) are the weakest, so the reader needs patience to continue to the stronger sections. The brief introduction is followed by a chapter on Muslim student development in the United States, which is simply not of publishable quality. It cites Wikipedia as the source for a quote, does not present a clear argument, overgeneralizes, and does not offer any evidence whatsoever to back up claims about problems of Muslim student development on campuses in the United States. After these two initial setbacks, the book picks up significantly, and the succeeding five chapters offer original and interesting insights into a range of issues.

Chapters 2 and 3 offer insightful analysis about academic freedom and censorship. They complement each other especially well and could be viewed as making up the heart of the volume. Chapter 2, "Islam and Higher Education in Pakistan," by Ayesha Razzaque, provides a concise historical overview of the development of higher education in Pakistan. It takes a highly critical view of the curbs of academic freedom, whether in the name of religion, national security, or political corruption. It provides some fascinating cases and anecdotes to explain how censorship operates in Pakistan that are in themselves worth the price of the book.

The strongest chapter in the volume is "Wary Travelers: Academic Freedom in the Islamic Republic of Iran and the United States" by Sharon Karkehabad. The author provides a sharp analysis of the limits of academic freedom through a comparative analysis of higher education policies in the Islamic Republic of Iran

and the United States in the post–September 11, 2001, era. Karkehabad contextualizes issues of academic freedom in time and place. Influenced by the work of Amartya Sen, she draws on the concept of "agency freedom" (45) to grapple with how actors can maneuver in higher education when faced with curbs on academic freedom. After outlining a difficult state of affairs as a result of the Patriot Act in the United States and the Islamization of higher education in postrevolutionary Iran, she remains hopeful about the power of people to overcome constraints in higher education through the exercise of agency. She offers wise words of advice when she concludes that "academic freedom is not given to scholars, intellects, and students. Academic freedom requires agency on the part of the individual to search, to question, to act, to venture into spaces beyond our knowledge and understanding, to travel and explore uncharted terrain in order to share experiences, ideas, and to create understanding between people" (47).

The two chapters that deal with issues of Muslim minorities in South Africa and the United Kingdom are satisfactory and certainly raise critical issues about race in the academy and the importance of higher education for Muslim women. The final chapter on secularism in Turkey is especially strong for its methodological discussion on how to undertake comparative discourse analysis on ideology using textbooks.

On the points of style and production, the book would have benefited enormously from more content involvement of the editors and quality control by the publisher. A number of contributions read more as draft chapters than final products. The numerous mistakes of spelling, grammar, punctuation, faulty translations and interpretations, and incomplete reference lists continually distract the reader from the interesting content. Despite these shortcomings, the volume offers some original data and sharp analysis of underexplored fields of study about academic freedom, higher education in Muslim societies, ideology and textbook analysis, and the performance and strategies of Muslim students in contexts where they are minorities.

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Exploring the Bias: Gender and Stereotyping in Secondary Schools edited by Elspeth Page and Jyotsna Jha. London: Commonwealth Secretariat, 2009. 272 pp. $32.00 (paper) ISBN 978-1-84929-007-4.

Exploring the Bias examines gender stereotyping in secondary schools in seven Commonwealth countries: the Seychelles, Trinidad and Tobago, Malaysia, Samoa, India, Pakistan, and Nigeria. The seven case studies are preceded by a chapter that provides a common theoretical framework and research approach along with statistical data (mainly from the *Human Development Report* and the *Global Monitoring Report*) that serve as a context for each of the country case studies. The theoretical framework is informed by "five broad and fundamental assumptions" (4–6):