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Book Reviews

Will Kymlicka and Eva Pfössl (eds.), *Multiculturalism and Minority Rights in the Arab World*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014, 320pp. £55.00 (hbk).

This edited volume uncovers the way local discourses on the rights of minorities and indigenous people in the Arab world appeal to, reinterpret or reject both local traditions and the global discourse. The aim is to shed light on regional and global debates about diversity, democracy and prospects for multiculturalism. Ultimately, the book intends to answer the question: ‘Can minority politics serve as a vehicle for a more general transformative politics, supporting a broader culture of democracy and human rights and challenging older authoritarian, clientelistic, or patriarchal political tendencies’ in the Arab World (p. 6)?

The introductory chapter provides the rationale for the book, which is not to catalogue laws and policies adopted in relation to minorities in the Arab world (widely covered in the existing literature) but to understand cultural frames and assumptions that shape the debate around this issue in the region. A historical preamble to the discussion of minorities in the Arab world, concise but comprehensive and rich in bibliographical references, highlights the way nation-building and minority rights are deeply intertwined in the Middle East. However, because of colonial and postcolonial legacies, they have been perceived as mutually exclusive. Moreover, while acknowledging that the burden of history complicates struggles for minority rights, the editors reject the notion of ‘Arab exceptionalism’.

The volume is well organised in two parts. Part I offers an overview of historical perspectives (chapters 2 and 3) and theoretical insights (chapters 4 and 5). The chapters in this section, dense with information and skilfully written by the respective authors, are arranged in a coherent and logical order. The slight overlap on the emergence of the nation-state in the Middle East, the conceptualisation and categorisation of minorities in the region among these chapters and with the introduction is acceptable since this allows each chapter to be read as a self-contained unit. Chapters 4 and 5, respectively on models and methods on offer to manage diversity in the region and on the relevance of liberal multiculturalism for non-Arab minorities in the Arab world and for the management of relations with Arab minorities in the liberal democratic West, propose valuable alternative models to deal with the issue of minority rights both in the region and in the West.

Part II provides a small but interesting sample of case studies which offer insights into less-known minorities in the Arab world shifting the focus from religious minorities (on which there exist a vast literature) to those minorities which identify as a distinct national group or indigenous people and are relatively unexplored, in so doing offering an original contribution to the literature on the subject. Indeed, while covering the well-known case of the Kurds in combination with that of Sudanese Christians (chapter 10), the chapters also address the Western Sahara dispute (chapters 6) and the cases of Amazigh berbers in Algeria (chapters 7), Arab Israelis (chapters 9), Assyrian-Chaldeans in Iraq (chapters 11), as well as the case of a minority, migrant workers in the UAE, who are discriminated on the basis of their socio-economic status, i.e. poverty, rather than on their ethnicity (chapters 8).

threat to Bulgarian national identity and agent of Greek nationalism. That Bulgarian church independence movement, which was energised by foundation of Autocephalous Church of Greece in 1833, had to struggle against alliance between Greece and the Patriarchate should be an irony of history.

The book includes endnote bibliographies for each section, brief bios of the contributors and a detailed index in addition to six articles (and a postscript). The volume strongly suggested for scholars of the nationalism studies and the Balkan studies as well as common readers who are interested in knowing more than simplistic argument that the religion fuels hatreds and violence, and causes wars in Balkans and in the world generally.

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Elisabeth King, *From Classrooms to Conflict in Rwanda*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013, 212pp. £16.99 (pbk), £55 (hbk).

Since the end of the Rwandan genocide, researchers have attempted to theorise the roots of this conflict. Elisabeth King's book *From Classrooms to Conflict in Rwanda* contributes to this literature by analysing the role of a specific state institution in the leading of the genocide: the education system. While the academic literature tends to focus on the socio-structural and psychocultural conditions at the core of this conflict, this book attempts to provide a deeper analysis by exploring how the education system actually shaped these conditions. Drawing on document analysis, semi-structured interviews and comparative historical analysis, King provides an in-depth analysis of the role of education in forging the conditions for the genocide.

In chapter 1, King designs her theoretical framework in which education is understood as an institution that can contribute to both conflict and peacebuilding. Conditions present in the education system – such as horizontal equality/inequalities, exclusive/inclusive identities, stigmatisation, reconciliation, critical thinking skills, and interactions and continuums – are all analysed. King then argues that in the case of Rwanda, the education system actually contributed to the ethnic violence.

The book's main contribution is indeed chapters 2 and 3, which provide an analysis of the role of the formal education system in contributing to the socio-structural and psychocultural factors identified by King as core to ethnic violence. Chapter 2 focuses on the colonial period leading to the 1959 Revolution, and chapter 3 engages with the formal education found in Rwanda in the postindependence period to 1994. Both chapters share the same general argument that the education system and its content reinforced the ethnic divisions between Hutus and Tutsis, and contributed to conditions that were used to mobilise the masses both during the 1959 revolution and the 1994 genocide. Taking an instrumentalist approach, King agrees with the existing literature that says that the political and economical factors of the time were at the core of the ethnic tensions and that elites used and manipulated ethnicity to mobilise the masses for ethnic violence. She however suggests that these accounts do not successfully explain the foundations that allowed this mass scale mobilisation and that the education system is precisely one of these social locations that solidified the conditions of horizontal inequalities, exclusive identities and stigmatisation that allowed ethnic mobilisation. Both chapters also clearly demonstrate how formal education combined

with political, economical and social conditions can contribute to ethnic politics ranging from discrimination to violence.

Moreover, King explains how the inequalities faced in accessing education also followed gender and class divides. In addition, by re-introducing Kinyarwanda as the language of education in the primary schools and keeping French for the secondary schools, it ensured that only a certain sub-group of the Rwandan population was able to be educated in French in the decades leading to the genocide. However, by only interviewing individuals speaking French or English in her study, King inevitably ignores the voices and perceptions of those individuals excluded from higher education. In these cases, informal education such as community teaching would have certainly played a part in their understanding of the ethnic divides found in the Rwandan nation, and an analysis of these informal sources of community teaching would have provided a broader understanding of the role that education, both formal and informal, played in fostering the social-structural and psychocultural factors at the core of the Rwandan genocide.

Finally, King argues in chapter 4 that while important progress has been achieved by the Rwandan government in terms of access and quality of education since 1994, this institution somewhat remains a social location of division and exclusion. For example, King suggests that the presence of an official narrative that alienates Hutu experiences of the genocide and the financial support for Tutsi survivors of the genocide to access secondary schools can create resentment and exclusion instead of the desired policy of national unity. Again, while this is not the focus of this book, an analysis of informal education through the *Ingando*, where the official narrative of the genocide is actively taught, would have well complemented King's analysis here. Chapter 5 then locates Rwanda in the broader context of postconflict societies, providing lessons and examples from other case studies.

To summarise, King provides a sophisticated analysis of the role that the education system can play in fostering both conflict and peacebuilding using the example of the Rwandan genocide. This book will surely benefit scholars and practitioners in the field of conflict and peacebuilding studies, as well as education specialists. Moreover, as Rwanda is currently discussing the introduction of genocide teaching in the school curriculum, it is hoped that the policy-makers involved in this decision will have the chance to read this important study by Elisabeth King.

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