



Benjamin Bruce.- *Governing Islam: Turkish and Moroccan Muslims in Western Europe* (Basingstoke UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), 312p.

The phenomenon of governing Islam in Western Europe for Morocco and Turkey has been spread widely since the 1970s. The way in which this phenomenon has begun to happen, the whys behind its prolonged existence, and the possible future effects it encompassed for the advance of Islam in Western Europe are what Benjamin Bruce, in *Governing Islam: Turkish and Moroccan Muslims in Western Europe*, will explore. A topic as such is unexplored.

Public opinion in European countries has rarely discussed governing Islam, and the small number of researchers who have talked about the theme have not investigated its allusions or examined the diplomatic aspects that render integrating Islam in the west feasible. How and why Morocco and Turkey control their religion in France and Germany in addition to the results of the religious policies of the Muslim states are interesting and important issues to which attention deserves to be called. Islam's homogeneity hides a field where a large number of religious actors and movements struggle to achieve religious legitimacy. This inevitable contest is often related to political concerns that make religious governance of paramount importance to Morocco and Turkey.

The foundation of the Turkish republic in 1923 marked the emergence of a complicated relationship between Islam and politics. After that date, aspects of continuity and change concerning the governance of Islam in addition to the confusing link between "official" and "unofficial" Islam came into view. Throughout Turkey, the Diyanet, a state institution that represents an organism under the administrative and financial control of the prime minister, embodies the state's political position to judge whether what actors in the religious field are doing is right or wrong. Simultaneously, by stressing its nature as a neutral organization and dealing with the governance of religious issues as serviceableness open to the public, the Diyanet benefits from the discursive option to remove political influence from its authoritative location in the religious field. Within the Diyanet, a basic character for religious officials is tracked by the role of academia in highlighting the importance and significance of a particular type of religious authority. However, the aspiration of the Justice and Development Party (AKP) to widen the range of Sunni

Islamic values within the Turkish public sphere has aggravated tensions not only with secularists but with other minorities as well. Proof of this was the 2016 failed coup and its aftermath.

Like in Turkey, the interactions between “official” and “unofficial” Islamic movements in Morocco during the twentieth century are also important to focus on in the sense that they have made use of Islam to defend and give reason for a broad range of opposite opinions. The colonial period played a significant role in changing the religious system in Morocco from a sphere dominated by power relations between the colonial administration and the provinces to a national integrated framework. In 1955, the French and the sultan agreed that Morocco would be a free kingdom under his authority. Few years later, the king announced the addition of “Islamic Affairs” to the Ministry of *Habous*. In the 1970s, state’s support of wahhabism to eradicate leftist ideas for the sake of underpinning national identity was very striking. However, due to Casablanca’s and Madrid’s terrorist attacks, feelings that the Makhzen had become unable to have power over the religious field, according to Bruce, came to the fore. As a result, promoting a nationalized view of Islam through ethnicity, language and culture is a better way for Turkey and Morocco to recreate national borders within international religious domains for Turkish and Moroccan communities in Europe.

The second half of the twentieth century saw a stunning migration of Moroccans and Turks to the lands of the Christians because of the labor shortages some European colonial powers had suffered from. Islamic religious organizations were scarce, an element which pushed Turkey and Morocco to control the problem outside their geographical boundaries focusing precisely on how to achieve religious authority over their human capital. When compared to the Turks abroad, migrants of the Moroccan contingent are not easily subject to division into separate religious and political associations. Which actors have been engaged by Turkey and Morocco in order to influence their religious diaspora strategies? While the Turks opt for appointing religious officials in the religious field abroad, the Moroccans employ diplomats of the ministry of foreign affairs to keep an eye on the religious field of the Moroccan migrants in Europe.

Turkey’s and Morocco’s interest in increasing their religious activities in Europe has pushed them to take up particular strategies to manage the religious field. Islam in France and Germany scarcely manifests itself as a separate religion from state control. In France, religious organizations are categorized as publicly declared associations. The French state’s view of the

religious field is entirely influenced by interior politics and foreign affairs allowing migrants' home states to interfere in affairs where the French authority cannot. Like France, Germany also adopts a strategy that organizes the religious groups in "registered associations" which benefit from an official recognition from the state. Through the assistance of the Diyanet and the Ministry of Habous, the federal state uses an oblique authority over the religious domain. Interestingly, the recognition of Islam as a national religion is perceived as a compromise approved by France and Germany if Muslim migrants shun their religious affiliation abroad. Can the institutionalization of Islam in France, for example, hasten with a foreign interference in the French Muslim field?

Budgets, agendas and logistics are significant factors for the integration of Islamic issues into Morocco's and Turkey's diplomatic and consular services in France and Germany. The religious bureaucracy thus controls the arrangements of religious activities for migrants abroad. Imams are the messengers dispatched from Turkey and Morocco to disseminate their national Islam in Europe, a difficult task which makes the home state's Islamic institutions follow a complicated procedure, from categories and selection to organizational support. However, Bruce's perception of employing and sending imams under such circumstances does not really denigrate their roles as active participants, but gives much more importance to the existence of intentions of institutional state's structures to restrict and control their ability to do something for particular reasons. Within the broad structure of diplomatic relations with receiving states, the Moroccan and the Turkish rationalization of the religious services results in guaranteeing a good treatment of imams.

The issue of religious radicalization and its impact on the state's intervention in the religious field, home state's efforts to run the making of "correct" Islamic knowledge, and the consequences of religious strategies for transnational Muslim fields are motivating interests for Turkey and Morocco to improve the religious field abroad. The home state's religious officials claim that non-state religious actors are suspicious and disobedient unlike state-approved actors whose task is to securitize Islam and enlighten migrants in Western Europe. The Moroccan initiative to send a considerable number of imams and the compromises between France and Turkey on the Diyanet imams reflect Morocco's and Turkey's capability of influencing their Muslim fields in Europe. Because of state-approved imams' attachment to Islamic legal expertise, they are contrasted with self-taught and charismatic speakers who are deprived of appropriate training. In the light of home states' attitudes to establish an appropriate cluster of religious authorities in Muslim domains

in Europe, receiving states' authority over religion does not go beyond their boundaries. In Muslim fields abroad, the permanent force of home state's disagreements is seriously manipulated by the use of national Islamic traditions and cultural identity.

Governing Islam is an invaluable study of a neglected issue that adds value to the presence and development of Islam in Europe. The book has tried to scrutinize the effects emanating from Morocco's and Turkey's religious guidelines on their approaches to govern Islam in France and Germany. The two Muslim countries seek to improve and sustain the relationships between Islam and national identity in a religiously different context. The idea of doing research about maintaining control over a foreign religion in Western Europe is well-proposed in this book in the sense that it provides a deep analysis to the strategies followed by the four interested countries by supporting interstate cooperation and dealing with religious matters within the range of foreign policy.

Otman Bychou

University Sultan Moulay Slimane, Beni Mellal