STEFANO BONINO, *Muslims in Scotland: The Making of Community in a Post-9/11 World* **(Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2016). Pp. 240. $130.00, hardback, $34.95 paperback. ISBN 9781474408035.**

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Scotland does not need to get "put on the map." Its distinctive location in people's imagination has been assured for as long as people have been putting on terrible accents and draping themselves in what they are assured is the family tartan. Nonetheless, social researchers are only lately discovering that Scotland could be an interesting place to examine, not only for its Scottishness, but for how that Scottishness intersects with other elements of society.

The independence referendum of 2014 was a significant catalyst for this. The vote telescoped attention on Scotland as a vibrant region within the strangely nonfederalist United Kingdom. Scholars needed to understand and explain what was particular about Scotland in relation to domestic policy, European relations, and global issues. Among those issues was the big-tent nationalism of the Scottish National Party—how true it was and whether it extended to Scotland itself. Muslims compose a sizeable, visible minority community within the polity, and for other reasons—concern about terrorism and global migration—they present a pressing case for public and scholarly interest.

However, social research on Muslims in Britain has been dominated by English contexts, with only scattershot, one-off studies set in Scotland. Perhaps that is fair enough: Muslims living in Scotland comprise just 3 percent of all the Muslims in Britain; they are tinier as a proportion of the Scottish population than that of the British. Peter Hopkins has for many years been a lone wolf, building a consistent publishing profile on identity and masculinity among young Muslims

in Edinburgh and Glasgow. The recent uptick in interest has driven more scholarship, including a growing center of expertise at the University of Edinburgh's Alwaleed Center. With the time lag between proposing research, conducting it, and pushing it through to publication, we are only now catching up—ironically, just as the UK's national conversation moves on to its relationship with Europe.

2017 has received three broad examinations of the subject: Hopkins's edited volume, *Scotland's Muslims*; a demographic report from Khadijah Elshayyal; and Stefano Bonino's *Muslims in Scotland*.[1] Bonino's monograph, drawing on original research in Edinburgh and synthesizing the small pockets of existing research on Scotland, aims both to disturb intuitive readings of Scotland's conditions in which it is "romanticised as a social justice paradise" (5) and to valorize its apparent successes at avoiding dysfunctions seen south of the border.

Bonino begins with a history of migration and settlement, relying on Humayun Ansari's UK-wide survey of British Muslims, the armchair historical contributions of Bashir Maan, and Tom Devine's study of Scotland's religious history. This story resembles the general picture of the UK and does not explain the development of a distinctive community emerging. However, Maan identifies significant "in-migration" from England to Scotland in the 1970s, driven by financial opportunity and "the perception of a more tolerant and less prejudicial Scottish environment" (22). From Devine, Bonino highlights the egalitarian structure of the Scottish schooling system as an ingredient for Scotland's social distinctiveness. These give us early indications of a unique arrangement developing.

Bonino then moves to more conventional sociological examinations of identity politics among Muslims. This includes chapters on the experiences of first-generation immigrants and of those born and raised in Scotland. References to the national upset over the publication of Salman Rushdie's novel *The Satanic Verses* and the unsettling impact of the 9/11 attacks in the United States reveal little that distinguishes Scotland from Britain as a whole. Likewise, social problems such as after-work drinks need interrogation: Is the phenomenon so Scottish, or does pub culture in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland also present a barrier to engagement? Cultural representations set in England, such as the film *East Is East* and the BBC comedy *Citizen Khan*, also point to generic complaints. Ken Loach's film *Ae Fond Kiss*, located in Scotland and confronting Christian sectarianism and the social place of Catholicism, reveals specifically Scottish tensions, and Bonino could make more use of it in the text.

It seems the experiences that Muslims mark as troubling or even discriminatory are common ones across the union, whereas the positive interactions are uniquely Scottish. Bonino describes Scotland's Muslims as "a self-conscious minority within a supportive Scottish environment" (170). The terrorist attack on Glasgow Airport in 2007 has low purchase on public consciousness, and non-Muslim Scots have mobilized at rallies associated with issues dear to many Muslims: opposing the Scottish Defence League (itself only a dim echo of its English counterpart) and supporting immigrants and Palestinians. Bonino offers a sophisticated observation that flattering the public myth of Scottishness as an inclusive identity creates space for Muslims to settle into their society while celebrating their distinctiveness.

This is the case, at least, for the untroublesome identity markers. Support for "Muslim causes" among non-Muslim Scots is selective (160). The Forced Marriage Task Force indicates that Scotland polices aspects of life that some Muslims find unproblematic or even desirable. The Muslim Council of Scotland spoke against same-sex marriage legislation at a committee of the Scottish Parliament. However, this submission was supported by various Christian groups, a point Bonino does not emphasize. Although this mobilization pitted these Muslim voices against the general trend of progressivism that marks current Scottish politics, it also showed intersectional alliances that mark a healthy engagement in civic life.

Largely, Bonino finds that everyday existence for Muslims in Scotland is, if not unproblematic, at least less problematic than in other Muslim-minority contexts. Part of that is a response to what Olivier Roy calls the deterritorialization of Islam. Unhooking one's religious identification from one's ethnicity does not automatically lead to a sense of comfort and belonging, but the Scottishness that Bonino discusses has made this a determined project. In many ways, then, this study is not about Muslims living in Scotland but Scotland itself. Is it inclusive, to the point of ethnicity not mattering? Though he insists the suggestion is only an ideal, his own preferences are evident. Bonino puts the idea of Edinburgh as a "promised land" in scare quotes, yet he aims not to dispel it but to temper and moderate it:

> A key theme that emerges from various pieces of research conducted in Scotland is that perceptions, as much as realities, of the country as a distinctive "land of tolerance"—often in opposition to a less tolerant and welcoming England—have

entered the public imagination and have shaped Muslims' positive feelings of social belonging (174).

In other words, so long as Muslim and non-Muslim Scots believe it to be true and act as though it were true, Scotland can get along as an open nation. Bonino goes further, suggesting it can be an example to other nations of how to accommodate a Muslim minority.

NOTES

[1] For reference, see Peter Hopkins, ed., *Scotland's Muslims: Society, Politics and Identity* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2017) and Khadijah Elshayyal, *Scottish Muslims in Numbers: Understanding Scotland's Muslim Population through the 2011 Census* (Edinburgh: The Alwaleed Center for the Study of Islam in the Contemporary World, University of Edinburgh, 2017).