



Review

Reviewed Work(s): *Crescent over Another Horizon: Islam in Latin America, the Caribbean, and Latino USA* by María del Mar Logroño Narbona, Paulo G. Pinto, and John Tofik Karam

Review by: Stacy D. Fahrenthold

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(*lub rooj hais xim*) at a funeral to ensure that her deceased brother gets a proper service and burial. She also has the power to bless or curse a family or lineage for generations.

Also absent are highlights of the places that Hmong women have claimed in American politics, public service, education, and medicine. Analyses of Hmong women like Mee Moua (former Minnesota state senator), Choua Lee (the first Hmong person elected to a public office in America), and Dia Cha (the first Hmong woman to receive a PhD) and others like them would provide further insights on the agency of Hmong women. If Hmong culture is so oppressive and Hmong men are responsible for women's subjugation, how did these individuals challenge, resist, and overcome those systems of oppression and strategies of patriarchal domination? Or is culture, in fact, a source of empowerment, an asset, and a form of capital for Hmong women, as some contributors to this volume, like Leena Her, Julie Keown-Bomar, and Ka Vang, have suggested? Future research will be needed to answer these questions.

Nengher N. Vang
University of Wisconsin-Whitewater

Crescent over Another Horizon: Islam in Latin America, the Caribbean, and Latino USA. Edited by María del Mar Logroño Narbona, Paulo G. Pinto, and John Tofik Karam. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2015. Index. 356 pp. Illustrations and index. \$60 (cloth); \$34.95 (paper).

Despite five centuries of Muslim settlement in the Americas, Islam is often depicted as a foreigner's faith. Challenging the notion that the Latin American and Islamic worlds are discrete and separate cultural spaces, *Crescent over Another Horizon* tracks Islam's historical indigenization in Latin America by migrants coming from Africa, the Middle East, and South Asia and the contemporary conversion of Latino/as, Brazilians, and African Americans. Editors Maria del Mar Logroño Narbona, Paulo G. Pinto, and John Tofik Karam employ Islam as an analytic that has the power to undo the Cold War-era area studies' assumption that cultures map neatly into territories. They fashion a fresh scholarly approach for examining the "Latino American architecture of a wider Islamic world" (p. 3), a world they define by a shared historical experience of colonialism, by the preoccupation of Latin American societies with Islam as the faith of the Other, and by the tension that exists between diverse Muslim communities and their desires for pan-Islamic unity: a Latin American *ummah*.

Crescent over Another Horizon has three parts, marking Islam's transition from an ethnic religion practiced by slaves, *moriscos*, and indentured workers, to the foundation of the first Islamic institutions in the early twentieth century, to the contemporary emergence of Latin American Islam through new conversions. Rejecting

the ethnic overtones of immigrant Islamic practice, Latino/a believers “advance a more universal definition and understanding of Islam” (pp. 8–9). Living in multi-ethnic societies, new believers are drawn to the universalist idea of the Muslim ummah while generating creolized variants resonant with the experience of being Muslim in overwhelmingly non-Muslim social contexts.

The volume’s first part, “Reconsidering History,” attends to the history of Iberian expansion in the New World and the place of Muslims at the margins of empire. Karoline Cook documents Islam’s clandestine presence through testimonies given in Spanish American Inquisition courts. Within the courts, ideas about how Catholics should comport themselves were defined against peninsular images of the Moor, and this tension, in turn, had an impact on the religiosity of Muslims who arrived in Spanish America. Examining the arrival of two million African Muslims as slaves, John Karam demonstrates that “Islam was used for both rebellion and refuge” in the Iberian Atlantic (pp. 46–47). Colonial powers simultaneously valued and feared Muslim slaves, and Islam became a rallying cry for slave rebellion. Karam’s discussion of the 1835 Salvador da Bahia revolt and the 1839 mutiny on *La Amistad* invites more sustained examination of Islamic solidarities within enslaved communities.

The book’s second part, “Contemporary Cartographies,” documents the histories of Arab Muslim communities in Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, Cuba, Martinique, and Trinidad, creating an entirely new layer to a historiography that has long been dominated by studies of Arab Christian migrants. The authors tackle local histories of Islamic institutions and their impact on contemporary believers. Silvia Montenegro describes how Argentina’s Islamic Center built “a privileged relationship with the state” as an intercultural steward, but also drew criticism for maintaining a Sunni Arab profile despite the community’s communal and ethnic diversity (pp. 90–95). Paulo Pinto discusses both Islam’s institutionalization and creolization in Brazil, conditioned through successive waves of Arab immigration and the conversion of urban Brazilians. Pinto argues that Brazilian converts practice a modernist variant that conceives itself as “creating a Muslim religious life in a non-Muslim society” (pp. 119–20). A similar creolization is at work in Martinique, where Liliane Kuczynski argues that Islam’s message of social equality makes it a potent force for black converts who associate the religion with Africa and the possibility of return.

Missionaries also assist with Islam’s creolization. In Cuba, Luis Mesa Delmonte argues that laws forbidding Muslim associations stymied group cohesion until the 1990s, when the first Islamic missions arrived from the Middle East. Camila Pastor de Maria y Campos’s work on Mexico illustrates how Muslim missionaries localize the faith to make it resonate with the lower middle class. Pastor’s use of conversion narratives allows her to move from formal Islamic institutions like mosques to examine faith-based social media, which also function as sites for the prescription—and subversion—of proper Islamic conduct. Halima-Sa’adia Kassim similarly finds that Trinidadian Muslims use social networking sites as a virtual meeting space. Online debates around certain topics (gender equality, for instance)

serve the community with an extension to more acknowledged public spaces like the mosque.

The volume's third part, "Islam Latina/o" focuses on converts in the United States, where the experience of ethnic marginalization attracts believers to Islamic universalism. Hjamil Martínez-Vázquez describes Latino conversion not as a discovery but a recovery of faith. Through an Islamic retelling of Iberian colonial history, Latino Muslims describe themselves as "reverts" to the faith after a period of "spiritual anomie" and disenchantment with the Catholic Church (p. 262). The editors are keen to illustrate a certain unity of Islam across Latin American contexts, but there are also significant reminders that such solidarities do not emerge naturally. Discussing two Miami mosques—the African American Masjid al-Ansar and South Asian Flaglar Masjid—Mirsad Krijestorac argues that the mosques' institutional commitments inhibited pan-Islamic solidarities because "both native and immigrant Muslim communities don't want to carry the stigma that Hispanics in the United States face" (p. 295). Yesenia King and Michael Perez argue that Latina converts come to Islam by way of racial solidarities they feel with Muslim immigrants, only to struggle with ethnic and gendered hierarchies they encounter within the Muslim communities they join.

Along with its interdisciplinary approach, the volume's principal strength is its insistence on understanding the Latin American ummah's internal heterogeneity. The authors convincingly demonstrate that Islam and *latinidad* are mutually constitutive, fed by the experience of marginalization shared by immigrants, African Americans, and Latina/o reverts and by the power that Islamic idioms offer them. Narbona, Pinto, and Karam raise an important question that should inspire further research: To what extent can internal diversities within religious communities be evidence not of sectarian division, but of confessional plurality?

Stacy D. Fahrenthold
California State University, Fresno

Health in the City: Race, Poverty, and the Negotiation of Women's Health in New York City, 1915–1930. By Tanya Hart. New York: New York University Press, 2015. 329 pp. Illustrations, figures and tables, notes, bibliography, and index. \$55 (cloth).

Tanya Hart's *Health in the City: Race, Poverty, and the Negotiation of Women's Health in New York City, 1915–1930* successfully demonstrates that the effectiveness of public health programs depends upon the participation of client communities. This historical health study examines the construction, management, and modification of infant and maternal health care programs in New York City for disadvantaged women and children with specific focus on African American, British West Indian, and Southern Italian families. All three groups migrated to the city at the same