

Adil Ozdemir and Kenneth Frank. *Visible Islam in Modern Turkey*. New York: Macmillan Press, 2000. Pp. 280. Hardcover. ISBN: 0 3122 3479 1. Price: US \$ 79.95.

Only a handful of important books have been written on Islam in Turkey. Those who can write on this issue are rarer than hen's teeth. So far, mainly scholars of Political Science have written on the subject. Despite some drawbacks, Adil Ozdemir and Kenneth Frank's work is a well-documented account of Islam in Turkey. *Visible Islam in Modern Turkey* offers an account of the Hanafī school of law as practiced in Turkish society. It uses *al-Ikhtiyār li Ta'īl al-Mukhtār*, the work of the twelfth century Hanafī scholar 'Abd Allāh ibn Maḥmūd b. Mawdūd al-Mawṣilī (d. 683/1284), as the main textual source on religious practices throughout the book.

This well-written book, aimed at informing non-Muslims about the Islamic practices of Turks, is not intended to be solely an academic work. On the one hand it provides journalistic observations, but on the other, it reflects translation of the relevant chapters of *al-Ikhtiyār*. The book is especially recommended to those who would like to have a general information about the practices of Muslims in Turkey based on the Hanafī school of law.

Forwarded by Annemarie Schimmel, a well-known German scholar of Islamic Studies, the book is composed of two parts. The chapters are ordered according to the "intensity and popularity" of the religious practices in Turkey. Part one, comprised of four chapters, includes an introduction, authors' notes and methods, a short analysis of the context for Islamic practices of Muslims in Turkey, and a short presentation of the history of the Muslim faith.

The second part of the book consists of eleven chapters which form the bulk of the book. It examines, in well-documented detail, the principles of Islam in Turkey, including some religious and cultural traditions such as circumcision (chapter 5), religious orders (chapter 6), fasting and the breaking of the fast holiday (chapter 7), funeral prayer and burial (chapter 8), the call to prayer (chapter 9), the pilgrimage (chapter 10), almsgiving and animal offerings (chapter 11), the sacrament of prayer (chapter 12), cleanliness and purity (chapter 13), mosques and architecture (chapter 14), and religious functionaries (chapter 15). Each chapter ends with a useful evaluation and general assessment section.

Unlike traditional Western scholars, the authors describe their findings in an uncritical and objective way. They also cite religious principles referred to

in the aforementioned canonical book of the Hanafi school of law. Throughout the book one finds descriptive details of the deep religious roots of and practices prevalent in modern Turkey.

Each chapter presents an accurate and rich account of its subject. For example, chapter 9 presents very important details on *ezan* [*adhān*] or the call to prayer. It is highly recommended to those who are interested in this Islamic practice which every foreigner will observe when visiting any Islamic country.

After the discussion of the call to the prayer, the authors take the reader all the way to Makkah in order to see and experience the pilgrimage (*hajj*) (chapter 10, pp. 115–125). Summarizing the religious practice of the pilgrimage, the authors make an excellent and fascinating illustration: "Hearts are beating fast. Tears are flowing. Lips are singing praises. It is an extraordinary time of answering Allah's call" (p. 124).

Chapter 11, on almsgiving (*zakāt*), offers valuable information especially for those who are not familiar with the religion of Islam. It addresses the issue in a detailed and well-documented manner to the extent that someone who has no background on Islamic traditions will also benefit.

In the final chapter, attention is shifted to the relations between the state and religion. The authors focus on how *imāms* and *muftis* in Turkey are educated in secular institutions and appointed by the government. They also present the paradox of an extremely secular country that still pays the salary of clerics (*muezzins*, *imāms*, and *muftis*).

Despite the many positive elements of the book, this review would be incomplete if I didn't call attention to a few weaknesses that are worth mentioning.

Religious practices are cited according to the Hanafi version of the Islamic law, which is shared by the majority of Muslims in Turkey. However, there are people in Turkey who belong to the Shāfi'i school in eastern and southeastern Turkey. Yet, there is no mention of this population in the book. As to the order of the chapters, I would argue that the most visible Islamic theme to the non-Muslims when they visit any countries of the Muslim world is *ezan* — the call to prayer. Therefore, since the order of the chapters is supposed to be based on the intensity and popularity of the subjects (see p. 10), chapter 9, "The Call to Prayer" deserves to be placed before chapter 6, "Religious Orders".

In chapter 3, the authors state that, "the constitution of the Republic of Turkey does not name any religion as the religion of the state" (p. 19). In fact, the constitution of 1924 had acknowledged that the religion of the state was

scholars of Islamic and Turkish studies as much as it deserves. The authors conclude with excellent and comprehensive appendices, illustrated by charts and diagrams, and a helpful glossary of Turkish terms.

Zeki Saritoprak



Bruce B. Lawrence. *Shattering the Myth — Islam Beyond Violence*. Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2000. Pp. 237. Hardbound. ISBN 0-19-579386-2. Price: Rs. 495 [Pakistani].

Although the Arabic term "Islam" translates as "peace", ironically Islam and terror seem to have become synonymous for many non-Muslims today. The word "Muslim" conjures up the most lurid images of a blood-thirsty fanatic, with the Qur'ān in one hand and a sword or AK-47 in the other, baying for "infidel" blood. That this is a crude caricature that has little substance to it is what this timely book seeks to argue. Lawrence's basic contention is that Islam, like all other religions, can be interpreted in various ways, sometimes even mutually contradictory. It is in the nature of a text to be amenable to a variety of different interpretations. The Qur'ān, as the fundamental Islamic text, has been open to a multiplicity of understandings. Since unlike Roman Catholicism there is no official priesthood or church in Islam, there is no institution that can adjudicate on the orthodoxy of any particular understanding of the text. Thus, while some Muslims might find sanction from their own reading of the Qur'ān for an unending and relentless offensive war against people of other faiths, other, equally committed Muslims might understand the same Qur'ānic verses as enjoining universal love and harmony and as sanctioning recourse to violence only in self-defence as a last recourse after all methods of peaceful negotiation of conflict have been tried and failed. Indeed, this is the position that many modern-day Muslim scholars of any standing have actually taken.

This book is divided into three broad sections. The first discusses the phenomenon of what is commonly, though mistakenly, referred to as "Islamic fundamentalism". Critically examining the emergence and development of Islamist movements in six Muslim majority countries — Pakistan, Iran, Egypt, Tunisia, Syria and Saudi Arabia, Lawrence contends that any explanation that