

isabetli olurdu. Diğer taraftan, yazarın temel iddialarını belirleyebilmek için okurun belirli bir bilgi düzeyinde bulunması zorunluluğu, kitabın farklı okul profillerine ulaşmasını ya da yazarın farklı okur profilleri tarafından eşit şekilde anlaşılmasını engelleyecek bir husus gibi görünmektedir. Eserin çözümden ziyade öncelikli olarak sorunu belirlemeye çalışmış olması, bu noktada belki haklı bir gerekçe olarak ileri sürülebilir; fakat her halükarda, “Doğunun Batıya önceliği” gibi hayati bir iddianın ispatına yönelik beklentileri -en azından bundan sonraki yayınlarda- karşılamak artık yazarın mükellefiyetindedir.

Sonuç olarak, medeniyetlerin birbirinden hazzetmediği ve düşünsel yozlaşmanın had safhada olduğu bu dönemde böylesine ufuk açıcı bir eserin kaleme alınmış olmasını önyargı ve ayrılıkların değil de felsefenin ve özgür düşüncenin bir zaferi olarak görmek gerekir.

Nebi Mehdiyev

### **Islam in Transition: Muslim Perspectives**

John J. Donohue, John L. Esposito (eds.)

Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007 (second edition). xiii + 512 pages.

This book is a collection of writings by Muslims on the social, political, legal and cultural issues they have faced over the last two centuries. The collection aims to reflect the diversity of Muslim voices around the world, even though reflecting the wide diversity of thought in the Muslim world is quite a challenging task for a single book. Yet, the book is successful in having achieved this goal.

One of the striking features of the collection is that articles by Muslims from West, such as Tim Winter and Sherman Jackson, have also been included. It is significant that the editors have taken into account the contribution Western Muslim thinkers have made to the diversity of the Muslim discourse. These thinkers who live in the West, be they converts or Muslims from birth, are better positioned and equipped to express Islamic ideas to a Western audience. Their number and contributions are increasingly growing.

However, as a Turkish academic, I was struck by the absence of even a single essay authored by a Turkish Muslim thinker. In the West, Islam is usually associated with the Middle East and Arabs, who constitute only a minority in

the global Muslim world. This book has only partly overcome this misperception, although the place allocated to the writings of Arab thinkers is not proportionate with the percentage of the Arab population and their geographical location in the Muslim world. In particular, there are Turkish-speaking Muslim nations from Eastern Turkistan in China to the Anatolia and Balkans whose voices have not been reflected in this collection.

This lack of attention to Turkish Muslim thought after the foundation of the Republic of Turkey is excusable, as Turkey is commonly perceived as a strictly secularist state which disinherited Islam and the Ottoman legacy. Consequently, outside observers do not expect any contribution to be made to the Islamic discourse by modern Turks. Yet, this is a misconception. In contrast, Turkish Muslim thinkers have produced a great deal of literature during the Republican era. However, outsiders who are not familiar with Turkish language are not aware of these contributions.

However, what is inexcusable on the part of the editors is the complete absence of writings from the late Ottoman period up until 1920. Prior to the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, Turkish Muslim thinkers produced more works than thinkers in any other part of the Muslim world. In particular, the capital of the Empire, Istanbul, was intellectually more dynamic than other intellectual centers, such as Egypt, Iran and India.

From the *Tanzimat* (1839) to the collapse of the Ottoman Empire in 1920, Ottoman intellectuals tackled the same issues as their contemporaries in other parts of the Muslim world. These issues included modernization, identity, human rights, constitutionalism, democracy, science, nationalism and the re-interpretation of religion.

There are three generations of Ottoman intellectuals who were active in this period: the *Tanzimat* intellectuals, the Young Ottomans and the Young Turks. For example, Ahmet Cevdet Pasha was a *Tanzimat* intellectual. He was the head of the Mejlle commission that codified Islamic law for the first time in response to the Westernization of law. Similarly, a good example of Young Ottoman thinkers would be Namık Kemal, who was a defender of

Islamic law and constitutionalism. For the first time Şerif Mardin has drawn the attention of the English-speaking world to the importance of Young Ottoman thought. Similarly, Şerif Mardin has produced many other works on the thought of the Young Turks, in particular, the thought of Said Nursi, who was part of the Young Turk movement in the early part of his life. Therefore, I would suggest that one consult the works of Şerif Mardin to understand

Turkish Muslim thought during the late Ottoman era. In addition, there is a fast growing literature in Turkish and English on the thought of the Young Ottomans and the Young Turks.

Turkish Muslim thought during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries constitutes a major part of global Muslim thought and can only be ignored at a great price. I suggest that the editors should reflect the diversity that was added by Turkish Muslim thinkers from the *Tanzimat* period until today in the next edition of their book.

Another pertinent issue is related to the selection of essays. The essays in the book are not about Islam qua religion as embodied in morality and theology, but rather as politics. This is perhaps motivated by an effort to make the book appealing to the general public in the West. However, we should keep in mind that the political discussions in the Muslim world can be better understood as an extension or implication of theological and moral debates.

I should, however, conclude that the book is an exceptional survey of Muslim intellectual production over the past two centuries. The editors have grouped the essays into three chapters. The first chapter is about “Early Responses: Crisis and the Search for Identity”. The second chapter is on “Islam and the Modern State”, while the third chapter is on “Islam and Social Change”. The book is an extremely useful tool for students of Islam who are eager to get first hand information from the writings of prominent Muslim thinkers from different parts of the Muslim world and also from different ideological strands.

Recep řentürk

### **Avicenna’s Metaphysics in Context**

Robert Wisnovsky

New York: Cornell University Press, 2003. viii + 305 sayfa.

İbn Sina felsefesi alanında son dönemde Batı’da yapılan çalışmalar arasında önemli bir yeri olan Robert Wisnovsky’nin *Avicenna’s Metaphysics in Context* başlıklı eseri, İbn Sina metafiziğini hem kendi metinleri içindeki sıra ve bağlamı, hem de metinleri ortaya çıkaran bağlamı gözetmek suretiyle tahlil etmektedir. Bu çerçevede Wisnosky’nin kitaptaki amacı, İbn Sina metafizi-