

## Foreigners, Minorities and Integration: The Muslim Immigrant Experience in Britain and Germany

By Sarah Hackett

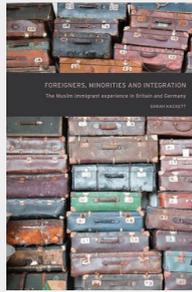
New York: Manchester University Press, 2014, 286 pages, £67.52 (Hardcover), ISBN: 9780719083174.

Reviewed by Erdem Dikici

IN *FOREIGNERS, MINORITIES AND INTEGRATION: The Muslim immigrant experience in Britain and Germany*, Sarah Hackett focuses on Muslim immigrants' experiences of migration and integration with an exclusive focus on employment, housing, and education at a local level. She focuses on Muslims of Newcastle and Bremen, yet she also examines the patterns of national histories of migration and integration of Germany and Britain in detail based on government archives and reports.

One of the main claims of the book is that despite the historical particularities "Newcastle and Bremen's Muslim ethnic minority populations demonstrated a growing similarity in behaviour, performance and attitude in employment, housing and education." (p. 9) In other words, even though Britain and Germany have different historical patterns of migration and policies of integration, these particularities did not create a vital impact on Muslims' integration, at least, at levels of employment, housing and education. Hackett, additionally, claims that her findings suggest that "Islam had little impact on the conduct and levels of integration of Muslim immigrants in Newcastle and Bremen." (p. 10)

According to Hackett, although relatively liberal immigration policies of Britain had played an important role in the *emergence* of



self-employed businesses among the Muslim immigrants, and the guest-worker system of Germany, to a large extent, slowed down the *emergence* of self-employed businesses among its Muslim immigrants, in fact, in Newcastle and Bremen it is observed that Muslims' *long-term* labor market activities

(e.g concentration on self-employed businesses) are very similar. Furthermore, Hackett argues that emergence of ethnic enclaves or spread of self-employed businesses among Muslim immigrants "should not automatically be equated with discrimination, disadvantage and lack of integration" (pp. 82-3); on the contrary, the businesses founded and run by Muslim immigrants are "the consequences of migrants' hard work and sacrifice, but also economic success and, most importantly, integration and commitment to their local surroundings." (p. 86)

As with the employment, as well as the housing patterns of Muslim immigrants of Newcastle and Bremen, Hackett concludes that Muslims in Britain were able to access the housing market in their immediate arrival, and hence, developed their own housing patterns in the way of self-sufficiency and independence in the housing sector. However, this was not the case with the Muslims of Germany mainly due to the guest-worker system. In their initial arrival, Muslims in Germany resided in places provided by their employers,

and thereby, it took more time for them to develop their own housing patterns (e.g. ownership). In consequence, despite the significant differences in migration history and structural opportunities/barriers Muslims of both Britain and Germany have developed similar patterns of housing. (pp. 125-143) And finally with regards to the education, Hackett argues that in the same manner with the employment and housing sectors despite the initial frameworks of immigration played significant role in the initial educational measures of Muslims in both Newcastle and Bremen, they “displayed increasing similarities in their performance and attitudes in all three areas [employment, housing and education] between 1960s and 1990s.” (p. 218) Finally, what Hackett asserts is that it wasn’t Muslims’ lived experiences of racialization, discrimination, lack of opportunities, etc., that determined their experiences, patterns and choices regarding employment, housing and education, and eventually integration; it was rather their “desire for self-determination and pursuit of independence.” (p. 33)

There are a number of issues in the book that need to be addressed, yet I will only focus on two of them. Firstly, the explanation of immigrants’ employment, housing, and education through the pursuit of independence and self-determination is certainly unconventional and challenging, nevertheless, it must be noted that it suffers from lack of evidence. By putting forward such an unconventional explanation, Hackett contrasts with the mainstream narrative about the emergence of ethnic enclaves and self-employed businesses among Muslim communities and causes of residential segregation. The vast literature that exist about labor migration and ethno-racial discrimination in the labor markets of Western Europe offers reasonably well documented empirical evidence about how racial

discrimination has pushed Muslim immigrants to set up self-employed businesses or led them to create residential segregation (see Castles, 2000; Modood, 2013). To this point, Hackett fails to offer counter evidence that might uncover the reason behind the unusual scale of self-employment among Muslims.

Accordingly, there is an ambiguity in explaining the extent to which the historical particularities have played a role in the employment, housing, and educational patterns and experiences of Muslims of Newcastle and Bremen since she occasionally notes that historical particularities played an important role in the *emergence* of the patterns of, to say, housing, *but* Muslims of the both cities ended up with similar patterns in housing. In other words, Hackett does not clearly indicate when and why historical particularities disappear, and how they impact Muslim immigrants’ patterns of employment, housing and education. What is lacking here is a clear and convincing conceptual discussion on why and when historical particularities become more or less important. I believe that it would be a more convincing argument if Hackett would offer a nuanced conceptual discussion on the role of historical particularities alongside providing up-to-date evidence regarding the so-called disconnection between Muslim immigrants’ employment, housing, and education measures and their lived experiences of racialization and discrimination.

The second issue that I would like to address is the depiction of integration in the book. It is a widespread belief that integration most certainly is a more complex phenomenon that cannot simply be explored through looking only at employment, housing, and education patterns as measures for integration. There are a number of markers and components of integration, including citizenship, identity,

political participation, social connections and networks, a sense of belonging, and other social-cultural aspects that must be taken into account. Therefore, it would be naïve to say that the book meets its promise stated in its title, *Foreigners, Minorities and Integration*.

Despite these shortcomings mentioned above, *Foreigner, Minorities and Integration*, overall, offers significant insights about Muslim immigrants' experiences of migration and their employment, housing, and education measures in Newcastle and Bremen by offering a well-worked analysis based on local archives. It also offers a local perspective, and

shows how important the local context is in immigrants' patterns of employment, housing, and education. I would recommend this book to undergraduate and postgraduate students as well as academics who are interested in the issue of Muslim immigrant integration in Britain and Germany, and those who are interested in local perspectives in integration studies.

## References

- Stephen Castle, *Ethnicity and Globalization* (London: SAGE, 2000).
- Tariq Modood, *Multiculturalism*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2013).

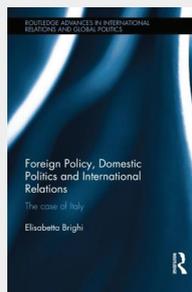
## Foreign Policy, Domestic Politics and International Relations: The Case of Italy

By Elisabetta Brighi

New York: Routledge, 2013, 193 pages, \$145.00, ISBN: 9780415835121.

Reviewed by Gökçen Yavaş

ELISABETTA BRIGHI'S BOOK *Foreign Policy, Domestic Politics and International Relations: The Case of Italy*, basically aspires to explain the question of how foreign policy interacts with domestic politics and international relations. Brighi depicts a theoretical framework to be applied to the field of Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA), namely, the "strategic-relational" approach based on critical realism at a dialectical level. Accordingly, the main assumption is that foreign policy is "reconceptualized" as a "product of dialectic interplay between actor and context, and discourses" as clearly illustrated in an empirical analysis of Italian foreign policy. (p. 37)



The book consists of five chapters: "The introduction" starts with a brief definition of foreign policy and the unit of analysis of the research, and reveals the key reasons for the case selection. Brighi (p. 2) aptly identifies foreign policy as "an actor's external relations, specifically, political relations," (cited in Hill 2003; pp. 3-5) and the unit of analysis in the study as "foreign policy process." Furthermore, in conjunction with an understanding of causality, according to Brighi's viewpoint Italian foreign policy is intentionally concentrated and highly represents a "specific" and "heuristically fecund" case with its domestic and foreign policy making processes. (p. 5)