
This slender volume is the outcome of a 1989 conference held by the Indian Muslim Relief Community on "North Americans in Support of Indian Muslims," which explains the misleading title. At least five of the twelve pieces are chiefly concerned with how Indian Muslims in the United States should assist Muslims in India. Thus Ahmad Anisurrahman calls for Indian Muslims to pressure the U.S. government to stop "the persecution of Muslims in India"; Muhammad Mazhar Husaini calls for fund raising in America for Indian Muslim causes; and Syed Shabbuddin, an Indian politician and the only contributor not based in the U.S., calls for a worldwide collection of funds from emigrant Indian Muslims for Muslim causes in India.

Aslam Hamid, from the Committee for the Defense of Human Rights in India, calls for Indian community support for all minority groups (not just Muslims) in India. Theodore P. Wright, Jr., like those above concerned with problems of the Muslim minority in India, takes the view that outside pressure on India might not be the best strategy; it might produce a backlash within India against Muslims. Suggesting that North Indian and Hyderabadi Muslims still suffer from a "hangup" caused by their historic displacement as the ruling elite, he seems to advocate greater Muslim accommodation to the dominant society in India. And he backs this up by stating that Indian Muslims in America have preserved the essentials of Islam while making accommodations, without complaint, in the areas of language and uniform civil law.

Thus Wright also speaks to the issues treated at greater length in this book, those concerning the lives of Indian Muslims in America and their goals. Here too, there are differences of opinion. Omar Afzal gives some historical background on Indian Muslim immigrants and suggests a broad division of the community according to generation and time of migration. He remarks perceptively on the differences between his four groups, conceding that identities are contextually formed and have changed distinctively in the U.S.; yet the thrust of his message is to resist change. He believes that Indian Muslims may not have to make accommodations in the West, that their numbers and pan-Islamic vision, coupled with the lack of constraints, may allow them to create an "Islamic identity" which is not, in his view, to be "American" (pp. 11-12). Here he is rejecting Raymond Williams' 1988 formulations.

Raymond Williams, a scholar of religion, reviews the process of individual and group identity formation among immigrants and focuses on the role of religion in that process. He suggests that emphasizing the ecumenical aspect of Islam is one strategy of adaptation in a plural society, while other strategies emphasize national, ethnic, or sectarian identities. He very nicely shows the complementarities and tensions between these strategies and asserts that Indian Muslims in the U.S. will certainly wear a "made
in the U.S.A.” label. Mohammed Ahrari reviews the American political scene and previous lack of engagement in it by Indian Muslims. He urges politicization of the community, the development of a Muslim agenda which uses American symbols and moderate language, and the making of alliances with other groups such as Arab and African Americans. Mohammed Siddiqi too briefly delineates the Indian Muslim ethnic press. Usama Khalidi, in a piece not presented at the conference but responding to the other pieces in the volume, asserts that the best tack for Indian Muslims to take is not to attack India but to participate in politics as nationalist Indians, both in the U.S. and in India. To me, this was a breath of fresh air in the volume, infused with realism and a sophisticated view of the American political scene; to others, it will be highly provocative. He flays the “myths” of pan-Islamism and church and state fusion and suggests that symbolic controversies such as those over the Shah Bano affair, the Babari Masjid, and Salman Rushdie’s book are not crucial to the survival of Muslims in India. (That “Islam does not allow for the separation of church and state” is seen by Ahrari as an “advantage” for Muslims in the U.S. [p. 30] as it will help “enable Muslim point of view to prevail.” The latter phrase is Omar Khalidi’s in his introductory description of Ahrari’s contribution, p. vi.) Finally, Omar Khalidi and Richard Eaton discuss Indian Muslims in terms of academic research and research agendas. Khalidi explains why more has not been done and provides a thorough bibliography of what has been done; Eaton reviews the decadal trends in Indo-Muslim scholarship in the U.S. and the institutions and individuals involved with it.

In sum, the book provides an initial exploration of an important immigrant group. South Asian Muslims are the leaders of the American Muslim community in important ways and by about 2010, Muslims will be the second largest religious community in the U.S. (pp. 17-18, 26).

University of California, Irvine, U.S.A.  
Karen Leonard


This first English language collection of stories by Mo Yan, known for the prize-winning film Red Sorghum, contains six works written between 1985 and 1987. Unfortunately it does not contain the title story of his first Chinese anthology, “Touming de hong luobo” [The crystal carrot], but it does contain Mo’s personal favorite, “The Yellowhaired Baby,” a novella that remains one of the most telling explorations of the relationship between repressed sexuality and political repression in the People’s Republic. The protagonist, PLA Political Instructor Sun Tianqiu, has an “unreasonable aversion” to his beautiful young peasant wife, Zijing, but becomes obsessed with the “pure white, naked statue” of a peasant girl recently erected in the