nicknamed the ‘new ikhwan’ (p. 47), as the author cited in support used the term _ikhwan_ with reference not to the Muslim Brotherhood but to the Bedouin _ikhwan_ forces of Ibn Saud. The author oddly finds it noteworthy “that the Prophet himself is called Al-Ma’sum, without fault, by Hassan Al-Banna” (p. 101, n. 23), although it is elementary Islamic knowledge that this is indeed an epithet of the Prophet. Marginal though these points may be to the central topics of Maréchal’s account, they do mount up.

Such concerns aside, the author and her work deserved a better translation into English. The original French is often followed word by word, and the book does not seem to have undergone proper language editing (or even a basic spell check in some parts). Some frequently used terms such as “militants” and “partisans”, which seem to mean respectively “activists” and “members” of the MB, carry the clearly unintended connotations of an armed movement. The reader must substitute “body” for “organism”, “talks” or “lectures” for “conferences”, and so on. Some French spellings are kept (CEFR for ECFR, Sadate for Sadat, etc.). One expects better from Brill.

This pioneering monograph on the MB in Europe will be of interest to a wide academic audience, and it will be a central reference for researchers in the field. For the reasons pointed out, however, it needs to be critically read and used.

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_Penser l’islam dans la laïcité_ (Understanding Islam in Laicity) is the result of about fifteen years of research on the question of Islam, laicity (laïcité), and Muslim law in France by one of the country’s leading experts.

Frégosi states his main interest as being to demonstrating that “beyond the tensions between Islam and the idea of laicity in the

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2 Al-Rasheed, Madawi, _A History of Saudi Arabia_ (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 145 uses the term ‘neo-ikhwan’ for “…the successors of those who staged the rebellion against Ibn Sa’ud between 1927 and 1929”.
French context, we can see that an agreement is coming” and that French Islam is “plural, i.e. composed of a plurality of trends, and that the interpretation of laicity by the Muslims is manifold” (p. 12). These questions are investigated in the first part of the book. The second part deals with the stance of Islam vis à vis secularisation in general, and in the French context in particular, including the organisation of Islam in the country. The third part deals with the policy of the French state toward Islam. The fourth and last part focuses on the contemporary challenges faced by French Muslim institutions and the divisions and dialogue between its various trends.

**Islam and Laicity: The Quest for a Harmony**

The first chapter inquires into some stereotypes concerning Islam and laicity: the “political character of the Quran”, holy war (jihad), the relation between politics and religion in Islam, and the status of the Shari’a. Fréгosi argues that Shari’a originates in two complementary sources: revelation and jurisprudence, of which only the former is considered divine, while the latter is based on human construction. Hence the political implementation of the Shari’a, as defended by Muslim radicals, is questionable.

Fréгosi considers four interpretations of the relations between Islam and laicity in the Muslim world: an adamant rejection of laicity, seen as opposed to Islam and as the historical consequence of the struggle against a hegemonic and authoritarian Church; a ‘neo-laicist’ interpretation of laicity as a universal principle and a political necessity, postulating an ‘Arabic laicity’ linked to an ‘Arabic reason’ inspired by philosophy and Mu’tazilite theology; a radical reformism seeking a laicity compatible with Muslim teachings; and a modernist advocacy of a democratic and secular state which is respectful of religious values. These various attitudes to laicity indicate the problems of the organisation of such communities in a state where laicity is established by law. Fréгosi says that the major challenge faced by French Muslims is “understanding Islam in laicity rather than laicity in Islam” (penser l’islam dans la laïcité plutôt que la laïcité dans l’islam, p. 85).

Fréгosi considers three major attitudes of religious Muslim intellectuals to the social role of their religion: concentrating on its inner dimension and promoting faith rather than law (citing Leïla Babès); developing an Islamic normality which guarantees a minimal orthodoxy