Constructions of masculinity that can be observed among Muslims of Turkish descent in Western Europe and especially in Germany are the focus of this book. Katherine Pratt Ewing considers these constructions both as ascriptions, on the one hand, and as self-descriptions, on the other. On the basis of Foucaultian discourse theory, she traces the stigmatisation of Muslim men in Germany and points out their ‘abjection’ (in Judith Butler’s phrase). The author argues that these processes serve to affirm specific German political and cultural values and enforce the German national imaginary.

The double perspective, on men’s struggle with stigmatised representations of masculinity, and on the German national imaginary, structures the book into two parts. The first part addresses representations of masculinity that have been shaped by anthropological research on the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic, eighteenth- and nineteenth-century travel literature, films, and expert opinions of social advisors and scholars about the situation of Turkish immigrants in the Federal Republic of Germany. Pratt Ewing then examines how these stereotypes are handled in contemporary society by youths and families of immigrant descent, filmmakers of the so-called ‘neo-neo’ German film, and Islamic organisations. The author focuses on the concept of honour and the discourse on the oppression of women in Muslim and Turkish families. Utilising a variety of empirical data, she is able to draw interesting parallels between the work of Turkish scholars and modernisation as a political project in the Turkish Republic, on the one hand, and discursive practices in Germany, on the other, with respect to how both sides reify the traditional Turkish man. Furthermore, the study offers a convincing account of how what is stereotypically referred to as an “unbridgeable gap” between tradition and modernity (p. 67), and between Turkish manhood and the German gender order, affects stigmatised persons, and how it affects what she calls their ‘classifications’, their ‘misrecognitions’, and their ‘scripts’ for action. Pratt Ewing points out that this dichotomy between tradition and modernity is at times reproduced, but she also demonstrates efforts (for example by filmmakers or Islamic reformist circles) to resist and overcome the patterns of action linked to this ‘gap’, and she retraces micropolitics in families and their capacity to negotiate solutions in conflict situations. More-
over, she describes (on the basis of interviews) how young men struggle with their stigmatised masculinity and deal with issues of reputation and self-respect. Readers will discover the power that these stereotypes wield over actors, whether they are first or second-generation, and women or men of Turkish descent (though in different ways), but will also become aware of how these actors can contribute to shaping the meaning of stereotypes. In this context, the author highlights the fluid nature of the concept of honour and how it intertwines questions of self-respect, education, sexuality, consumption, reputation, respect for parents, and gender organisation.

The second part of the book focuses on public debates in Germany that, in the author’s opinion, contribute to the abjection of Turkish men and Islamic notions of gender. This section also includes a discussion of interpretations of universalistic principles that predominate in German society. Pratt Ewing retraces public debates about so-called honour killings, which emerged after a young woman was murdered by one of her brothers in Berlin in 2005. She describes the controversies over the so-called Muslim Test, which the government of Baden-Württemberg unsuccessfully tried to implement for applicants for German citizenship in 2006. She summarises the ongoing debate about and legislation against teachers wearing Islamic headscarves in the classroom, and public controversies over the exemption of Muslim girls from physical education classes (gym and swimming lessons), which began in the 1990s. The author also addresses hegemonic discourse on security in the context of Islamist terrorism and on protecting the constitution, German national identity, and collective memory. This last is mainly analysed on the basis of an interpretation of the so-called Leitkultur controversy. According to the author, analysis of debates which deal explicitly with the problems of youths of Turkish descent, or with Muslim religious practices, reveal that Muslims are constantly represented as a threat to constitutional and cultural values in Germany. Rather than perceiving Muslim concepts of gender relations and practices related to the body simply as culturally-shaped alternatives to those that are currently predominant in German society, they are constructed as violations of universal human rights and democratic principles. Pratt Ewing concludes therefore, that “‘Protection of the Constitution’ and ‘protection of the Muslim woman’ become rhetorical and institutional mechanisms for enforcing German cultural values” (p. 199). According to her analysis, German ideas of ‘good’ masculinity and bodies arise from an Enlightenment language that has