In *The Revival of Islam in the Balkans*, editors Elbasani and Roy have attempted to reconceptualize the contemporary history of Muslims in the Balkans as the ‘historical stronghold of Muslims in Europe’, an ambitious, if problematic, attempt that abstracts complex contemporary histories of Muslims in the Balkans through area studies categories such as Europe/Eastern Europe/Balkans/Middle East and a socialist/post-socialist periodization. While the task the editors have set themselves is to foster a much-needed debate to reconsider Muslim histories in the Balkans outside the ‘mercy of nationalism and post-conflict’ paradigms, which they rightly argue have essentialized religion in line with ethno-national divisions (p. 1), most of the chapters examine Muslim communities in the context of their nation-states. In this regard, outside the introduction and conclusion and with the exception of Anna Zadrozná’s chapter on inter-faith and inter-ethnic relationships in Macedonia, there is no attempt to transgress the ethno-national markers. The more problematic framing of the argument, however, is the projection of Muslims in the Balkans as victims of aggressive Arab Islam that supposedly arrived in the Balkans after socialism (pp. 12-13, 231-233). To substantiate this argument, Elbasani cites a ‘substantial body of research’ (p. 12) that has documented these phenomena, yet the only source used to support this point is the American journalist Christopher Deliso’s (2007) infamous *The Coming of the Balkans Caliphate: The Threat of Radical Islam to Europe and the West*. Deliso’s book revolves around the concern of high birth rates among Muslims in the Balkans, their role in facilitating the Islamization of Europe, and the overall fear that it may be “too late” for the Christian populations to avoid
Editorial politics, however, should not cause us to dismiss the contributions themselves, as most of the chapters provide good in-depth analysis and insights into the Orientalist prism through which Muslims in the Balkans have been approached in academia and media in the last three decades. In this regard, Enis Sulstarova’s examination of the ways in which Orientalist tropes in Albanian public discourse, such as ‘escaping the East’ narratives, have worked to ‘naturalize the “hard” political borders of Europe’ (pp. 23-24) is noteworthy. His examination of the way post-socialist elites have engaged in civilizational discourses that seek to project Albanians as members of the European civilization, always guided by the desire to ‘return to Europe’ from the clutches of the Ottoman past and by extension, the Islamic present, is a much needed intervention into the unsuspecting reproduction of the ‘nominal’ Islam of Albanians. His critique of Ismail Kadare as the key interlocutor in propagating an Albanian orientation towards Christianity and Europe as a historical correction of the failure of Albanians to resist Islam (pp. 36-37) is important, particularly as Kadare has become a darling of prestigious European literary awards and circles willing to overlook his virulent Islamophobia (as was the case with Ivo Andric, whose well-documented proposal to expel Albanian Muslims from Yugoslavia in the wake of WWII were overlooked when he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1961).

Alexandros Sakellariou’s chapter on anti-Islamic public discourse in contemporary Greece provides a good overview of the role of the Greek Orthodox Church and the rise of Golden Dawn in targeting Islam as a danger to Christianity and Greece. While the empirical research provides an interesting perspective on public opinion and discourse about Islam in Greece, Sakellariou does not go into depth on the genealogy of Islamophobia in Greece and its manifestations in xenophobic debates, which have frequently ascribed the moral and economic crisis of the ‘nation’ to migrants and Muslims, or those perceived to be Muslim. In this regard, he would have benefited significantly from Tzanelli’s work on the convergence of old and new anti-Muslim discourses in Greece and their increased manifestation as racism towards Albanian migrants. This would have provided a new perspective on Islamophobia as organized hate not

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