Sophie Gilliat-Ray, Mansur Ali, and Stephen Pattison, *Understanding Muslim Chaplaincy* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Co., 2013), 191 pp.

Understanding Muslim Chaplaincy is a critical analysis of the state of Muslims chaplains and chaplaincy through interviews with Muslim chaplains about their efforts to provide spiritual care services to the Muslim community in the United States and England. It demonstrates the development of chaplaincy among Muslims from being a "visiting minister" to working as a "Muslim chaplain" in various contexts.

The book is divided into eight chapters. It is a testimony to the progress and obstacles facing Muslim chaplains and to the services they provide in prisons, universities, and hospitals. The book explores two of the most important challenges to the progress of Muslim chaplaincy. First, the authors underscore the shortage of published scholarly material addressing Muslim chaplaincy. The limited number of scholarly articles and peer-reviewed publications impacts the discourse on Muslims and chaplaincy. Gilliat-Ray raises questions about what is involved in practicing spiritual care, religious support, and the kinds of resources Muslim chaplains actually draw upon.

Second, the authors accurately describe the bleak state of Islamic chaplaincy and claim that "there is no formal institutionalized tradition of pastoral care in Islam," which in turn has a negative effect on spiritual care services (p. 2). "To date, there has been no articulate written account of the way in which Islamic traditions and scriptural sources are accommodated within contemporary chaplaincy practice" (p. 3). This raises questions about how Muslim chaplains are addressing the challenges of providing services to and accommodating the diversity of religious and cultural Muslims. In addition, how do Muslim chaplains approach questions in Muslim public life ranging from gender roles to interpersonal relations?

The chapter on pastoral care in Islam includes a description of the basic beliefs of Islam, such as the five pillars of belief and worship, reflecting an approach that most authors prefer to adopt when describing Islam. However, the authors ignore the fact that despite the lack of a formal methodology, the practice of Muslim healthcare chaplaincy remains interdisciplinary, integrating legal and ethical Islamic theories in healthcare and biomedical ethics such as end-of-life care. In their examination of chaplaincy efforts in modern Muslim communities, the authors do acknowledge that there is insufficient data about the structure and nature of chaplaincy services. The

authors accurately describe the shortage of chaplaincy data in the Muslim world; however, they ignore the fact that there are hundreds of Saudi males and females who provide religious support in hospitals. These efforts provide an opportunity for further research on the Saudi understanding of the concept of religious support, scope of services offered, and the challenges faced. Additional research opportunities are in Malaysia and Indonesia, where Islamic hospitals are actively working to establish "worship friendly" hospitals; their efforts are organized through local chapters of the Federation of Islamic Medical Associations (FIMA).

The authors present a fair description of Muslim chaplaincy through exposing the work of chaplains in the United Kingdom and the United States. They highlight services such as communal prayers, efforts to introduce *halal* foods, and the organizing of community celebrations of Ramadan and Eid. In addition, the authors highlight the role of Muslim women in chaplaincy and address the opportunities and challenges facing female chaplains.

In conclusion, *Understanding Muslim Chaplaincy* provides a good beginning and opens the door for additional in-depth research. As an interdisciplinary field, it provides opportunities to understand how Islamic legal and ethical theories impact Islamic chaplaincy, as well as the link between Islamic chaplaincy and the "preservation of religion" according to the goals of Islamic jurisprudence. Furthermore, researching the scope of services of Muslim chaplains and how they are affected by Islamic legal maxims and the essentials of *Sharia* can help in the formation of Muslim chaplains and the demystification of Islamic chaplaincy.

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