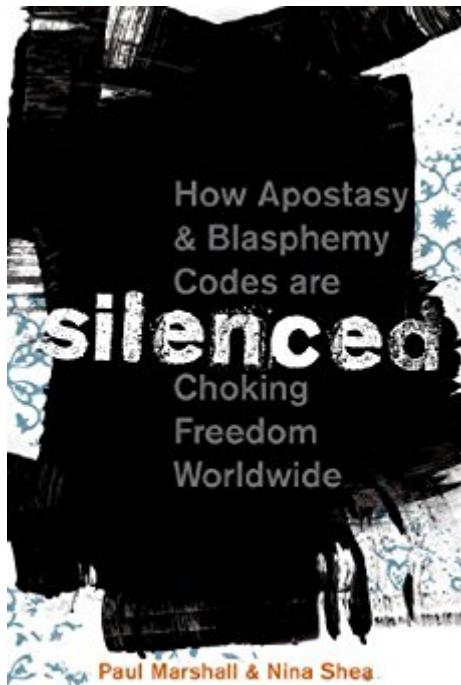


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Silenced: How Apostasy And Blasphemy Codes Are Choking Freedom Worldwide



Synopsis

Blasphemy accusations in the Muslim world are increasingly used as key tools by authoritarian governments and extremist forces to acquire and consolidate their power. These charges, which draw on disputed interpretations of Islamic law and carry a traditional punishment of death, have proved effective in crushing or intimidating not only converts and heterodox groups, but also political and religious reformers. This volume provides the first world survey of the range and effects of such accusations in the contemporary Muslim world, in international organizations, and in the West.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This book makes you think. Unfortunately, if you truly open your eyes, you see the findings that this book reports on played out every day. The book is well researched and fact based. It is quite troubling and disturbing.

My enthusiasm over the book is less than it should be because I find it difficult to feel positive energy over so grim a subject. The direct and indirect results of blasphemy law crept in as regulation of hate speech or of insult or denegation form an awful challenge to free speech. It

seems clear from the bulk of the material in this book those who say they only seek to address excesses of free speech intend to do so by ultimately cutting its throat. The need for citizens to be alert in defense of both free speech and separation of church/state are vital if the Western World is to remain vibrant and progressive.

I borrowed this from the library, as I am writing a thesis on sharia and international human rights law. My review is for those seeking substantive information on these topics. In short: The book is essentially a compilation of news clippings followed by more news clippings organized by country. These are sandwiched between recent Western concessions to Islamic demands for limits on personal freedoms. If you read the news, you know half the stories in this book. Google the keywords and you'll come up with a nice wiki article of recent cases and major players in the Sharia debates. Details: While this book endeavors to deliver an important message to naïve Westerners (e.g., Ben Affleck), it unfortunately falls really short: 1) It reads like an extended op. ed. - Marshall provides no data to support his claims that millions of Muslims and non-Muslims are killed/ tortured/ imprisoned/ forced to flee their countries due to violent mobs of sharia-enforcing vigilantes. 2) The dated news stories suggest Marshall had trouble finding cases to fit his narrative. His argument, however, indicates he should have had a plethora of recent cases from which to choose. I understand this book was published in 2011, but the examples are from the 90's up to 2006. 3) Redundancy renders the book about twice as long as it needs to be. I am terribly bummed, as this is such an important issue. Silenced just does not deliver the information Westerners will heed.

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