e-Islami, a movement for religious reform in South Asia that is deeply enmeshed with the nationalist project of the Pakistani state. Where our analyses diverge is the overly state-centric approach of Al-Rasheed's text. In the attempt to identify the state rather than religion as the cause of women's oppression, Al-Rasheed does not analytically separate "Islam" from those subjects who claim the monopoly to speak for "Islam" and thus may have their own political aspirations vis-a vis the modern state. For example, my study demonstrates that the Jamaat's religious discourses were not simply co-opted by the state, but that control of the state was central to the political Islamic vision of the movement. Engaging the political dimensions of Wahhabism would take Al-Rasheed's analysis beyond the state-versus-religion framework and allow a more richly-textured account of social and cultural power, in addition to the structural factor, in the oppression of women. Further, if, as I understand, the text seeks to disrupt the religious/secular dichotomy in relation to Muslim women's emancipation, its objective would be boosted by a more robust account of the political investments of modern Islamist movements in the post-colonial Muslim state. In treating the state as "the political" and *ulema* as "the religious" and therefore external to one another, the religion-political dichotomy is analytically re-inscribed rather than dismantled. Furthermore, in this process "the state" acquires a unitary character, despite the author's stated intention to avoid such a conceptualization.

Response to Madawi al-Rasheed

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Amina Jamal

I am indebted to Professor Al-Rasheed for her insightful reading and eloquent elaboration of the key arguments that I attempt to make in my book. Indeed this exchange has been a valuable opportunity that I would like to see develop into a fuller dialogue among Muslim women scholars who situate their struggles for women's rights against hegemonic Eurocentrism, some forms of cosmopolitan feminism, global militarisms, and abstracted Islamism.

Dr. Al Rasheed's suggestion to expand this book's analysis beyond Muslim women by a discussion of women in right-wing Hindu, Jewish,

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and Christian movement is worthy of consideration since it would establish that it is not only modern Muslim women who are drawn to religious and political movements in the contemporary era. Two reasons held me back from a comparative approach. However, before expanding on these reasons it is important to note the disciplinary differences between our approaches as well; that is, history and feminist theory, which are reflected in the differences between our analyses and narratives of women's experiences. While a comparative approach is considered to be useful for historians, feminist scholars warn that such an approach may flatten out the heterogeneities within colonial projects for "gender reforms" in various cultural/religious communities, such as the unique representational significance of the "Muslim woman" to global secularism. Jamaat women's Islamic appropriation of modernity is an unanticipated outcome of the Islam-versus-West encounter and their responses, while in some ways similar to other right-wing women, call for a different analysis given the contemporary geopolitical conditions.

Another reason for eschewing a comparative approach in this book relates to my stated intent to draw out the specificity of the South Asian Muslim subjectivity as a contingent outcome of historical and religious conditions. Jamaat women's self-cultivation may be much more than a response to hard-line secularism as in other Muslim majority societies such as Iran, Egypt, or Turkey. In South Asian Muslim experience, including post-partition Pakistan, secularism was never constitutionally imposed and Islam as faith/national identity and Islamist politics were always part and parcel of nationalist and electoral politics. Thus, while modern Muslim women may turn to Islam as a response to the conditions of modernity, the issue for me is to explicate the conditions that facilitated the emergence of a particular subjectivity among a group of middle class South Asian Muslim women: the embracing of a puritanical and punitive interpretation of Islam, on the one hand, and on the other, the appropriation of feminist projects of gender and development.

Madawi al-Rasheed decline to offer a response.

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