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# Silence. How Apostasy and Blasphemy Codes Are Choking Freedom Worldwide

**Silence. How Apostasy and Blasphemy Codes Are Choking Freedom**

**Worldwide.** By Paul Marshall and Nina Shea. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011. 480pp. \$35.00.

[Maurits S. Berger](#) ✉

*Journal of Church and State*, Volume 55, Issue 1, 1 March 2013, Pages 134–136,  
<https://doi.org/10.1093/jcs/css118>

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...writing an issue on blasphemy and contempt as blasphemy or apostasy is quite a challenge. Paul Marshall and Nina Shea make a laudable effort by providing an elaborate survey of cases by country, but, for several reasons, they fail to map out the density of the topic. First, they do not discuss apostasy and blasphemy as such, as the title suggests, but instead discuss its accusations and threats as practiced in Muslim majority countries and by Muslims in the West. The book, therefore, is about Muslims and how they are “choking freedom,” in particular freedom of religion.

This is a recurring theme in Marshall's writing. Granted, it is indeed a serious problem, because many, if not most, Muslim societies are experiencing a...

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