

remains a significant part of the book. Ahmed unpacks the way Aslam's *Maps for Lost Lovers* works through conflicting discourses, (over-) aestheticized language and a circular structure to convey a sense of entrapment within the community; she illuminates the insights into the real (rather than idealized) lives of British Muslims in Ali's *Brick Lane* and in the novels of Kureishi; and she raises to consciousness more general themes of love, disharmony and human frailty with which the novels are concerned. Story-telling has a long history in South Asia, and it is good to see that the skills developed over the centuries are still flourishing despite the authors' resettlement in a context that remains in many ways alien and unwelcoming.

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Why Muslim Integration Fails in Christian-Heritage Societies

By CLAIRE L. ADIDA, DAVID D. LAITIN and MARIE-ANNE VALFORT
(Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 2016), xvii + 264 pp. Price HB £33.95. EAN 978-0674504929.

The starting point of the book is the assessment of discrimination against Muslim immigrants in French society. The first part presents the results from several surveys that illustrate the negative opinions as well as the discriminatory practices against Muslim immigrants. The second part reviews the characteristics of Muslim immigrants that fuel the discrimination and negative opinions, mainly their religious practices (which do not comply with the norms of the French public space), their gender relations, and their poor competence with the French language.

Although this kind of investigation is needed, it rests on two main ideological assumptions that severely weaken its relevance. First, why do the authors claim an investigation into Christian-heritage countries, when the focus is on France? The particularity of French laicity and its strict constraints on the public expression of religion in general, not only of Islam, are factors that have been discussed by many scholars to explain the rise of Islamophobia in France, but which are not seriously addressed in the book. In their conclusion, the authors make this startling assertion about their findings: 'They reveal a self sustaining process of discrimination in France despite a resolutely secular ideology that pervades French society' (p. 216). However, other studies have shown that the discriminatory practices against Islam are directly related to the secular culture, not in spite of it, as the authors claim. What then is the relevance of the 'Christian-heritage' qualifier, in respect of the discrimination process? The authors offer no answer to this question. The same religious practices like the Muslim dress code or gender relations here presented as factors for anti-Muslim

discrimination in France, do not (or very rarely) trigger the same level of hostility in other 'Christian-heritage countries' like the US, where secularism is less of an ideology, and more of a political pragmatism, pluralist, and oriented to inclusion under a common citizenship.

In this regard, comparison with discrimination against the religious practices of other groups (Christians or Jews) would have been welcomed. For example, studies have shown that discriminatory practices by European states against all religious groups have been on the rise in the last decade, Muslims being most targeted.

Second, the association of Islam and immigrant status is taken for granted throughout the book, mixing questions of integration of immigrants with the question of the status of religion in society. Obviously most of the Muslims in France are indeed of immigrant background, but Islamophobia is not therefore an expression of anti-immigrant sentiment. It has to do with culture war, clashes about values, in which Islam is seen as a threat, *even if* the targeted Muslims are not immigrants. Surveys by sociologists of religion have shown the rise of religiosity among converts who are subjected to the same discriminatory practices as immigrants and their descendants. Not questioning this Islam-immigration connection has led the authors implicitly to endorse the current ideological perception of Islam that pervades French political debate.

To conclude, despite the book's ideological assumptions and misunderstandings, there is one fringe benefit of it: it highlights *a contrario* the sheer need to take religion seriously when it comes to social cohesion and public space, instead of considering it as an afterthought, and hoping that it will all sort itself out in time, just through common sense.

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The Sociology of Islam: Knowledge, Power and Civility

By ARMANDO SALVATORE (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2016), xiv + 328 pp. Price PB £22.99. EAN 978-1119109976.

This book engages with the established scholarly tradition in sociology related to the study of Islam. Such engagement is required to clear the ground to make possible access to the lived reality of Islam in the contemporary world. A large part of the book is author's conversation with the tradition of scholarship around the study of Islam in its global and local context. This conversation consists of critical appraisals, methodological questions and useful distinctions that must inform a sociological venture into examining the 'Islamic ecumene' in the context of history and present frames of globalism.