In Chapter 8, Reishley concludes with a return to the matter of religion's role in a free society, and attempts to answer this question both in general and in the American context. After discussing both the pros and cons of religious involvement in public life, he argues that its best, religion performs a very necessary function in a free society by fostering morality and guiding democracy in the proper direction. As for the American context, Reishley concludes: "From the beginning of American history, religion and the practice of democracy have been closely intertwined. This relationship, despite changes in its structure and recurring tensions, shows no sign of breaking. ... George Washington declared in his farewell address in 1796: 'Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports. Most Americans continue to believe that the founders were right" (p. 366).

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RELIGION AND IMMIGRATION: CHRISTIAN, JEWISH, AND MUSLIM EXPERIENCES IN THE UNITED STATES. Edited by Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad, Jane I. Smith, and John L. Esposito, Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press, 2003, vii + 296 pp. $69.00 cloth; $24.95 paper.

The literature on religion and post-1965 new immigrants is still limited, but rapidly increasing, and in this literature, Muslim immigrants are least often studied as one of many immigrant religious groups. Since the September 11, 2001 tragedy, however, the desire to know more about immigrant Muslims and their communities has risen to a new level. In light of these developments, this book is a welcome addition.

Although it is not exclusively about immigrant Muslims, the focus of this book seems to be evident: the editors are leading scholars in Muslim studies and most of the chapters were originally presented at a conference sponsored by the Center for Muslim Christian Understanding at Georgetown University on May 11–12, 2001. The chapters on Catholics and Jews are intended to provide historical lessons or references for new Muslim immigrants. To make the case for the importance of Muslims, the editors claim in the Introduction that Islam "is fast becoming the religion with the second-largest representation in the United States" (p. 12). This point was apparently made by collapsing all Protestants and Catholics together, which is questionable in discussing immigrant experiences. In addition, whether there are more Jews or more Muslims is a contested question. The estimates of the number of Muslims in the United States vary greatly, ranging from less than two million to eight million.
According to the editors and authors of three chapters focusing on Muslims, Islam in America can be traced to slaves brought from West Africa who had been under the influence of Islam; however, it is very hard to document their beliefs and practices. African-American Muslims such as those in the Nation of Islam, who some other Muslims do not consider as orthodox, account for about 25 to 30 percent of all Muslims in the United States today. Before the 1960s, a small number of Muslim immigrants came from Arab countries, but most of them assimilated rather fast without establishing Muslim communities. It was the post-1965 immigrants and foreign students who “began to build mosques, schools, and community centers in suburbs and major urban areas” (p. 13). Among immigrant Muslims, approximately one-third are from the Middle East and Africa and two-thirds from South Asia (p. 176).

Aminah Beverly McClendon discusses the divisions among Muslims along racial, class, and ethnic lines, and especially between immigrant Muslims and African-American Muslims. M. A. Mushtaq Khan analyzes two images of America held by immigrant Muslims—America the democracy (liberal, democratic, tolerant, and multicultural) and America the colonial power (an evil force, dominating and coercing other nations, and stealing resources). Khan believes that the latter image has become marginalized within the Muslim community. Nevertheless, “Muslim isolationists,” who regard the United States as an evil empire, persist. For them, participation in the American system “constitutes a violation of Qur’ an 5:45, which says that Muslims shall not rule by anything other than what Allah has decreed” (p. 190). Ingrid Mattson discusses the theological difficulties Islamic sacred laws (shari’ah) present for immigrant Muslims. Some Muslim juristic texts distinguish between “abodes of peace” (Islam dominant territories) and “abodes of disbelief” (non-Muslim dominant places) or “abodes of war” (states or regions that must be brought under Islamic sovereignty), and the United States falls in the latter category. Consequently, some Muslim extremists as well as critics advocate that “a real Muslim believer can never honestly express loyalty to the American Constitution” (p. 206). Some Muslim liberals, however, argue that the United States was founded on Islamic principles. Still others argue that beyond the abodes of peace and war there is also an “abode of treaty,” in which Muslims agree to respect the laws of a country if they are granted freedom and protection, and that the United States belongs to this category (p. 212). These analyses and assessments seem to have been completed before September 11, 2001, and the reader wonders to what extent they still hold or apply amid the dramatic developments since that tragic day.

The contributors to this volume are scholars in theology, religious studies, history, political science, and sociology. Other chapters focus on Catholics, evangelical Protestants, Jews, Hispanics, and African Americans, which are all excellent and full of historical insights for the study of immigrant religion. As an interdisciplinary collection, many of the chapters are more reflective than descriptive. One exception is the last chapter by Jasso, Massey, Rosenzweig, and Smith, which presents data on religious preferences among recent legal immigrants. Based on the New Immigrant Study—Pilot Study, they report that two out of three recent immigrants were Christian; Muslims ranked fourth (8 percent) after Catholics (42 percent), Protestants (19 percent), and no religion (15 percent), and are followed by Orthodox, Buddhists (each 4 percent), Hindus, and Jews (3 percent each).

This book makes a significant contribution to the literature on religion and immigration and I highly recommend it to scholars and students in the social scientific study of religion.

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