that all citizens connect with equally. Consequently, there is nowhere for members of minority religious groups to exit to, leaving Palestinian-Arab women vulnerable to the patriarchal norms of family law in their communities, since the Israeli state has been less willing to intervene in decisions by Muslim religious courts than in those of Jewish ones. In the final chapter, "Localizing Religion in a Jewish State," Yishai Blank describes how localities in Israel have exercised their powers to benefit their own preferred religion, with the aid of Israeli Supreme Court decisions that have incentivized and even forced people to live within their own religious communities. The result has been religious residential segregation and an increase in religious homogeneity at the local level.

Mapping the Legal Boundaries of Belonging offers a host of finely detailed studies of the problems that arise for managing religious diversity through the frames of secularism, multiculturalism, and religious freedom. It will be of obvious and significant interest to scholars and policymakers engaged with the processes and conundrums of such management in Canada and Israel. The volume also provides valuable insights into contemporary difficulties of state-religion interaction more generally, and especially into the ways that legislative policies impact the negotiation of religious identities by their members.

Response to Sonia Sikka

René Provost
McGill University

During the 2015 Canadian federal electoral campaign, the issue of the appropriate boundary between the secular nature of the state and the governmental embrace of a policy of multiculturalism became a focal point of debate. The question arose regarding the permissibility for a woman to wear a nikab, covering her head and face entirely saves for a slit for the eyes, during the formal swearing in ceremony to become a Canadian citizen. The metaphor of citizenship and difference thus became embodied in the actual process whereby an individual legally acquires the quality of citizen, to confront the demand for conformity to a majoritarian conception of religious invisibility or, more accurately, non-ostentatiousness. The debate likewise straddled the legal and the political, with a mid-campaign court decision that invalidated a ministerial directive that nikabs be

banned, which triggered a division of opinion among the leaders of the main political parties and became a significant factor in the level of support given to each party by the electorate. Finally, the debate merged the private and the public, centering on one woman's desire to remain veiled throughout the citizenship ceremony and the generalized discussion in the media and the general population that ensued. Whether or not this entire debate was strategically planned and deployed by one political party, as some evidence suggests, the enormous reverberations it had in the campaign testifies to the weighty nature of the question for all ordinary citizens.

The fact was that there are extraordinarily few women in Canada that wear a nikab, fewer still that would be in the process of obtaining citizenship and thus possibly in a position to demand that they be sworn in while covered, and that it is difficult to imagine how that could conceivably have any direct impact on anyone save perhaps a handful who happen to be present at such a ceremony, all beg the question of how this question could come to occupy such a prominent place in a national political process. The conceptions of the role of the state, the proper place of religious convictions in the public sphere, and the varying degree of embrace of the idea of multiculturalism are poles of what Sikka refers to as the negotiation of religious identity. I would widen the claim, bearing in mind the very divergent articulation of these notions in Canada, India, and Israel, the three countries canvassed more fully in the two books reviewed here, to suggest that collective discussions about often local or individual practices capture an existential yearning to bond with our fellow human beings. Human rights, religion, the state, are all interacting frameworks that allow us to set parameters of belonging, mapping the differences that are deemed not to matter and those that are felt to be fundamental. Each country stands as a project aiming for a coherent and distinctive assemblage of these elements to project a certain identity to which every citizen is invited to subscribe.

Response to René Provost

Sonia Sikka
University of Ottawa

In his review, Dr. Provost considers the justification for bringing together studies of India and Canada, and in this brief response I would like to