

where the central government is pursuing repressive policies, is enough to eliminate the incentives for ethnic revolt. In this regard, Jenne's theory does much to add nuance to ethnic conflict models predicated on exclusively instrumental, emotional, or institutional grounds. Like many good theoretical perspectives, it does much to retain many of their basic tenets while capably pointing out precisely where they fall short.

In contrast to Birnir, who uses a mix of empirical approaches, Jenne relies on a series of case studies carefully drawn from contemporary central Europe. Of particular note is her excellent analysis of Sudeten Germans in Czechoslovakia who chose to radicalize in the face of a doggedly determined effort to appease them both politically and economically. Indeed, one wonders how Birnir might approach such a case given its tendency to counter her theory in key ways. For her, the credible effort on the part of majorities to protect minority interests, including preferential access to governing institutions, should be associated with low levels of antistate mobilization. For Jenne, such a scenario produces a sense of opportunity on the part of minority groups. Again, she notes the importance of an external sponsor capable of improving the likelihood of successful mobilization, something that Birnir understandably downplays given her interest in electoral incentives and party activity.

A key critique of Jenne's method lies in case selection. While she makes a strong argument in favor of her focus on central European cases, there is little doubt that contemporary issues of minority secessionism and irredentism tend to be located in the postcolonial world. Significantly, in many such contexts minority groups tend to be fragmented politically and beholden to ethno-communal entrepreneurs capable of crafting communal issues in very specific ways. The ways in which this intracommunal competition unfolds has much to do with the potential successes and failures of nation-building projects, often in decidedly nondemocratic ways. To this end, it might not always matter whether a minority group senses opportunity when a majority-dominated government concedes to communal demands. Again, Jenne is conscious of this issue and notes that any future inquiry into ethnic bargaining would do well to consider how it functions in procedural democracies as well as more authoritarian contexts. In terms of the theory's policy relevance, which is quite substantial, it is quite important to assess her triadic bargaining model in a variety of political environments.

Finally, the argument, implicit in both books, that ethnic violence is not ubiquitous is not entirely new. James Fearon and David Laitin made this claim quite forcefully in 1996, and their suggestion that academics should seek to explain ethnic peace, as well as ethnic war, has been recognized by most scholars in the ethnic politics field. That said, both books go much further than mere recognition of the phenomena of ethnic peace by creating test-

able theories that truly do seek to explain all potential outcomes of ethnic electoral behavior. Both texts thus represent wonderful contributions to political science.

Why the French Don't Like Headscarves: Islam, the State, and Public Space. By John R. Bowen. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007. 327p. \$27.95.

Integrating Islam: Political and Religious Challenges in Contemporary France. By Jonathan Laurence and Justin Vaisse. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2006. 342p. \$52.95 cloth, \$22.95 paper.
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— Joan Wallach Scott, *Institute for Advanced Study*

The specter that haunts Europe these days is not, as in Marx's time, the specter of class struggle, nor is it, as it was for much of the twentieth century, the specter of communism; instead it is the specter of Islam. How should these nominally secular, historically Christian states handle the millions of people now in their midst, many of them migrants from former colonies, who identify as Muslims? Are there helpful precedents in histories of immigration or of mutual accommodation between states and religions? What are the reasonable limits of such accommodation and what are legitimate grounds for questioning the limits? What are the political stakes involved in assessments of the limits? And what does racism have to do with it?

Although the question of Muslims in Europe long antedates the twenty-first century, it has become ever more volatile since September 11, 2001. And nowhere more volatile than in France. France has the largest minority Muslim population in Western Europe, the vast majority from the former French territories of Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia. They number around five million—an estimate, since, in the interests of preserving national unity, French law does not permit collecting statistics on race and ethnicity. Not only is this the largest immigrant population ever to arrive in France, but it is also depicted as the most recalcitrant. While others have accepted the requirement of acculturation as the only path to citizenship, Muslims seem reluctant or unable to relinquish the signs of their difference. At least this is how the matter is typically represented by politicians, intellectuals, and the media: The Muslim problem is one of "*communautarisme*" (communalism), group loyalty taking precedence over one's commitment as an individual citizen, undermining one's primary identity as French and thus the unity of the nation-state.

Most Americans will know of French efforts to stem the tide of communalism through the controversy surrounding a law passed in 2004 that outlawed the wearing of Islamic headscarves in public schools. From our more multiculturalist perspective, the law was either unfathomable—what harm could come of a few girls

following what they took to be religious precepts?—or the sign of real political trouble, a radical Islamist presence so dangerous that its influence had to be curbed by formal legislation. The two books under review here, both addressed to American audiences, seek to explain the French situation in more nuanced terms. They are full of details that enable readers to grasp the import of what is happening. Without sacrificing clarity, they insist on complexity, introducing readers in a measured, dispassionate way to the intricacies of French politics, political theory, and history.

In *Integrating Islam*, Jonathan Laurence, a political scientist, and Justin Vaisse, an historian, argue that—contrary to stereotyped representations both in the United States and in France—integration is proceeding apace. It is true, they admit, that Arab/Muslim populations are disproportionately poor, that their unemployment rates far exceed those of “native” French, and that vast numbers live clustered in suburban ghettos. But a series of indicators show that “substantial, if largely invisible progress [toward integration] is being made” (p. 31). Evidence of integration includes rising intermarriage, declining fertility, mastery of the French language, increases in the number of women working outside the home, a willingness to privatize religious practice, and polling data expressing a desire to integrate and an attachment to France. (The authors rely a great deal on polling data without ever questioning its accuracy or transparency.)

Laurence and Vaisse point out that there is no Muslim voting bloc; that “re-Islamization”—the discovery or rediscovery of their religious roots by young North Africans—is less a result of foreign political infiltration than it is a response to social and economic exclusion experienced in France; and that religion may be overemphasized as a factor in the lives of immigrants and their children because of government policy. By law and custom, the only groups that officials can deal with are representatives of religious organizations. And so, as the French have pursued a policy of “domestication” of Islam (with Nicolas Sarkozy, when he was Minister of the Interior), attention has focused on religion as if it were the concern of a majority of Muslims when that is, in fact, not the case. There are, as one chapter heading puts it, “1001 Ways of Being Muslim,” many of them more cultural than religious, some of them a direct response to discrimination. Indeed, it seems to me that the authors underestimate the extent to which negative attributions of identity often become the ground on which positive identity politics are constructed. An example of this is the way in which the descriptors “Arab,” “North African,” and “immigrant” are regularly conflated with “Muslim” in popular discourse, helping to create the image of a unified community out of many diverse strands.

Although state policy has institutionalized a representative Muslim council (alongside existing Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish councils) in order to address the need

for prayer spaces, chaplains in prisons and hospitals, the regulation of *halal* butcher shops, and the like, it insists on the primacy of its secular values. Laurence and Vaisse take the headscarf ban both as an assertion of those values (though they acknowledge the continuing influence of Catholicism after the 1905 law separating church and state) and as “a useful symbol of a robust state response, aimed to relieve the transnational pressure exerted on France’s youngest, female citizens” (p. 167). The evidence for this pressure is scant, although the belief in it was widespread, part of the hysterical response to terrorism that, the authors later conclude, added “another layer of negative stereotypes about Muslims” (p. 263). They do not discuss the headscarf ban in these terms, however, because they are more interested in arguing that it had no deleterious effect—there were few protests and many more compromises; integration, they say, proceeded despite (or even perhaps because of) the law.

John Bowen’s book, rich field notes from an anthropologist whose previous work was in Indonesia, offers a corrective to Laurence and Vaisse’s reading of the headscarf controversies. For Bowen, the headscarf points up the challenge France faces as it strives—inflexibly, it seems—to integrate these populations. To be sure, Laurence and Vaisse are sensitive to the tensions that exist between alienation (the result of socioeconomic discrimination) and acculturation (the stated policy of the government), and they say it is “too soon to know” about the long-term effects of some recent antidiscrimination measures. But their brief is for integration; without it there is disaffection, anti-Semitism, and terrorism (as the biography offered of Zacarias Moussaoui makes clear). Integration means reducing the differences between the Muslim community and the rest of the French population, making the former more like the latter, making “them” more like “us.” That this is happening, they suggest, gives the lie to a certain American caricature of France.

Why the French Don’t Like Headscarves explores the obstacles to this integration and also the racist premises on which it rests, although Bowen does not name them as such. As he tracks the reasons given for the headscarf law and the media campaign for its passage, he exposes the one-sidedness of those defending the republic and the silencing of voices that sought to present another point of view. Politicians insisted on the need to defend *laïcité* (secularism) while ignoring the economic and social discrimination faced by Muslims, as well as the deteriorating conditions in public schools—conditions that were not caused by Muslims. The commission that eventually recommended passage of a law had only one Muslim on it, heard no testimony from social scientists who had actually interviewed those wearing headscarves, and (with one exception) had no input from women and girls who wore them. Instead, they listened to self-declared refugees from Islamic theocracies, to anecdotal evidence offered by

disaffected teachers, and to various “experts” all of whom were critical of the “communalism” of Islam. Communalism was, moreover, attributed entirely to Muslims; there was little talk of the ways in which discrimination and a long history of colonial racism might have been factors in immigrants’ (or more typically the children of immigrants’) self-identification as members of a Muslim community.

The role of the media was even more one-sided. I was particularly impressed by Bowen’s long account of several television programs (pp. 232–41) during which those trying to explain why they wore a headscarf or why others might wear one were repeatedly interrupted and finally silenced by the anger and scorn of those supporting the law. The smugness and arrogance of defenders of the republic is stunning to contemplate; they not only refused to listen to views that might contradict their own but also treated those who held opposing ideas as dupes of imams, pawns of terrorists, and victims of their own naïveté. In Bowen’s pages, despite his own stated commitment to impartiality, the racist face of those pushing integration is revealed and one wonders if there is not more complexity to the process than either he or Laurence and Vaisse are willing to admit.

In fact, Bowen does take a position at the very end of the book when he suggests it might be wiser to acknowledge and recognize difference (ethnic, religious, racial) than to suppress it. Something other than integration as assimilation is needed, he suggests: “To take this policy route would be to make France’s visible public differences into ‘speaking’ differences, characteristics of citizens and residents of which the state should take account” (p. 248). Having shown throughout the book the extent to which French Muslims want to insist on both of those words (French and Muslim) to describe themselves, he concludes this way: Muslims who demand the right to be visibly different defy older cultural notions of France, not the political and legal framework of the Republic. When Muslim women in headscarves say that it is with *these* clothes and *this* religion that they choose to abide by the rule of the Republic . . . they are challenging the conditions for belonging to the nation. This challenge creates anxieties about sociability and allegiance, but anxieties can lead to new self-understanding. The Republic is based not on a shared faith, but on a faith in the possibilities of living a shared life together, despite vast differences in appearance, history, and religious ideas. That faith is worth retaining. Properly understood, it liberates citizens to explore their differences, not to conceal them (p. 249).

These two books at once complement each other in the sheer range and variety of information about France that they present, and they reproduce different positions in the ongoing debate about Muslims in France. Laurence and Vaisse take integration (understood as assimilation) to be a desirable goal, and they do not question the premises on

which it is based, premises that duplicate mainstream French republican belief. Bowen, in contrast, shows us what underlies the republican insistence on assimilation: a belief in the inferiority of those (Muslims) who are different, rooted in colonialist attitudes about the superiority of French civilization, its equation with modernity, enlightenment, and secularism. If, as Laurence and Vaisse suggest, integration is an inevitable process, well underway, we can ask, with Bowen, what its costs are and whether they are desirable, not only for those whose difference is being erased but also for those insisting on its erasure.

Memories of State: Politics, History, and Collective Identity in Modern Iraq. By Eric Davis. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005. 385p. \$60.00 cloth, \$27.50 paper.

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What is the relationship between state power and historical memory? Eric Davis argues that the focus on overt state repression that has dominated studies of Iraq overlooks the state’s use of historical memory as a mechanism of control. Employing a Gramscian model, he examines how successive Iraqi regimes have sought to use historical memory to claim legitimacy and authenticity and thus undermine political challengers. Yet these state-initiated projects remain incomplete, and Davis concludes that the political and social instability of Iraq is in large part due to “the inability of Iraqis to construct a viable model for political community” through a shared vision of historical memory (p. 2). His two main themes—the efforts of successive regimes to put historical memories to political use and the diverse ways in which the intelligentsia support or challenge these projects—are documented in impressive detail. After an introductory theoretical chapter, the argument unfolds largely in chronological fashion, beginning with the formation of the Iraqi intelligentsia and competing visions of modern Iraqi historical memory. The majority of the book is then devoted to a systematic examination of these themes from the early twentieth century through fall of Saddam Hussein in 2003.

The first central thesis is that states seek to utilize historical memory to bolster their power, which, Davis argues, can “assume causal properties. For example, historical memory helped legitimate existing hierarchies of power by providing justifications for the continued domination of the Iraqi state by a tribally based minority of the Sunni Arab community through invalidating the history and culture of non-elite groups” (p. 10). This example does not necessarily demonstrate causality, however, as questions of justification and legitimacy depend on whether the proffered arguments are embraced by the populace. The author asserts that the state’s narrative bolstered its power, but he does not demonstrate it. Nevertheless, the book does illustrate beyond doubt that regimes do engage in a range of