I so enjoyed the inclusion and forthright discussion of so many of Heston's amazing cartoons. I was intrigued by the emergence and activities of the American Association for the Advancement of Atheism. I had no idea that Cecil B. DeMille made a movie in 1928, *The Godless Girl*, about a college atheist (which I immediately watched on YouTube). I was fascinated to learn about specific African American atheists who, though relatively ignored by their white comrades, played their honorable part in the history of American secularism. I was moved to read about a Baptist church that opened its doors to grieving atheist parents, allowing them to conduct a fully secular funeral for their six-month-old infant.

The history of religion in America is one of the most amply documented and heartily studied topics in academia. And yet the concomitant history of secularism in America has been virtually ignored. Fortunately, that is starting to change. And while Susan Jacoby's wonderful *Freethinkers: A History of American Secularism* (Metropolitan Books, 2004) offered a rich, sweeping overview of this neglected aspect of America's development, Leigh Eric Schmidt's *Village Atheists* offers a much more nitty-gritty, on-the-ground history that brings to life the personal and professional realities pioneering secularists navigated. It is vividly told, and more timely than ever—given the ongoing battles of church-state separation, and the unprecedented rise of the so-called "Nones."

For anyone interested in the birth, growth, and development of grass roots secularism in the United States—and the leading lights of American atheism long before Sam Harris or Madalyn Murray O'Hair—this book is an absolute must.

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The Making of Salafism: Islamic Reform in the Twentieth Century. By Henri Lauzière. Columbia University Press, 2015. 317 pages. $55.00 (hardcover), $54.99 (e-book).

It is easy to label religious phenomena and practices as Protestant, Catholic, evangelical, ṣūfī, Sunnī, or Shīʿa, conservative or reformed without saying anything of value. Often the very act of naming can cause a religious trend or tradition to lose all nuance. This insight could not be more applicable to the multiple forms of Islamic reform in the modern world, where fractures and fragments of traditions and social reality produces incoherence and incommensurable life worlds. The term salafi or salafism is frequently used in media-speak. By adopting this label, adherents signal that they view the first three generations of Islam as the authentic age, namely the period in which the "pious ancestors," the *salaf*, flourished and whose example is worthy of emulation without the help of humanly constructed theology. In no uncertain terms, they refuse to rely on the authority and interpretations of the canonical law schools formed a millennium ago within Sunnī Islam. Some people wear the salafi label proudly, while more orthodox Muslims often invoke the term salafi to dismiss their adversaries as

essentialists, if not fundamentalists of a particular type. "To many of its detractors Salafism is virtually synonymous with Wahhabism," writes Lauzière (6). (Wahhabism is a trend in Islam named after the eighteenth-century figure, Muḥammad bin ʿAbd al-Wahhāb (1703–1792) who initiated a transformative religious movement in Arabia that in media parlance bears his name.) Henri Lauzière is committed to deepening our understanding of Islamic reform, especially those groups and individual scholars who use the moniker salafi or are identified by others with this term. And he does so elegantly.

Lauzière identifies what he considers a problematic use of the terms salafi and salafism, and wishes to distinguish between what he calls "pure salafism" and "modernist salafism." Purist salafism is the most widespread version of salafism today. Salafis view themselves "as the most authentic and purist religious orientation" and enthusiastically engage in "intra-Islamic polemics because of their claim to follow the only true Islam that can lead to salvation" (6). Salafism especially denounces "all forms of speculative theology, known as *kalām*," and warns Muslims never to resort to philosophy (7). Muslims are required to revive the "originalist" approach to theology, a call that amounts to scripturalism. Every theological doctrine that emerged after the civil war among the early Muslims in the mid-seventh century should be avoided. That leaves salafis with only Hanbali theology to work with, devised by the scholar of ḥadīth or prophetic reports, Ahmad Ibn Hanbal (d. 855). But the story does not end there. The chief source and interpretation of contemporary salafism is the Hanbali doctrine as articulated by Ibn Taymiyya (d. 1328) and his students; it forms the fulcrum of scholarly pride for salafis. The paradox salafism faces, then, is this: they are dead against following human made authority, yet they almost deify the interpretations of Ibn Taymiyya, who lived many centuries after the "authentic age" of Islam with which salafis identify themselves.

This book is framed around two important figures: Muhammad Rashid Rida (1865–1935), the Lebanese disciple of the Egyptian Muhammad ʿAbduh, and Muhammad Taqi al-Din al-Hilali (1894–1987), from southeast Morocco. According to Lauzière, Rida gradually reinterpreted ʿAbduh's teachings within his own conservative reformist theological register (even though Lauzière describes him as an Islamic modernist). Rida was the main twentieth-century figure who rehabilitated Wahhabism in the eyes of the broader Muslim public outside of modern Saudi Arabia by cultivating networks of scholars inside Saudi Arabia and beyond via his influential publications. There was clearly an ideological overlap between Rida's ideas of Islamic reform and that of the eighteenth-century Arabian ʿAbd al-Wahhab: both felt that monotheism distinguished Islam from other creeds and that it also served as the dynamo for moral action in the world. Rida concurred with ʿAbd al-Wahhab that doctrinal corruption was the reason for the spiritual decay of Muslim societies. Yet Rida, as Lauzière points out, never adopted the dogmatic puritanism of Wahhabism, or, for that matter, salafism. He allowed for some theological interpretation and acknowledged the place of metaphor and figurative interpretation, all of which would be anathema to salafi and Wahhabi sensibilities.

Lauzière's running polemic in the book is to repeatedly point out that even though Rida "extolled the pious ancestors" and urged modern Muslims to adopt the *salaf* as role models so that they could become "rational, flexible, strong, and united," one could not count Rida himself to be in the salafi camp. Designating him as a salafist, says Lauzière, was a mistaken analysis offered by the French orientalist Louis Massignon, and also another French orientalist, Henri Laoust, who repeated the same erroneous view for some time. Here Lauzière himself adheres to a certain form of methodological originalism and fails to see how attractive certain threads of Wahhabi salafism were to the reformist agenda of both ʿAbduh and Rida. These men might not have been dyed-in-the wool dogmatic salafists, but they made aspects of salafism respectable and could at least be viewed as pseudo-salafis if Lauzière would allow such a designation. So not everyone would agree with him that Rida was free from salafism, especially when Lauzière amply documents his elaborate network of ties to the Saudi-Wahhabi establishment. Here the notion of conceptual history as articulated by someone like Reinhart Koselleck would be helpful in theorizing the semantic and semiotic usages of terms like salafi in different historical moments.

The other figure that looms large in this book is the colorful portrait of the life and ideas of Muhammad Taqi al-Din al-Hilali. This must be one of the few, if not only, full accounts of the life of Hilali in English, and we are indebted to the author for this rigorous biography. Hilali, Lauzière tells us, was a true-blooded purist salafi who dabbled with modernist salafism but finally ended up with purist salafism. A restless and ambitious man, who had five marriages, including one to a German wife, and a doctoral degree from Bonn, Hilali traveled and worked in many countries from Iraq, India, Germany, and Morocco to Saudi Arabia. All these places served as short-, medium-, and long-term locales for his scholarship and career as an advocate of Salafism.

Hilali serves as the pretext for Lauzière to give us a wonderful account of how different strands of salafism intertwine with Arab nationalist causes during the colonial period, but then turn quietist in the post-independence period. In the account of the role of Hilali and his associates, one can see how a virtual international salafi network is birthed thanks to the influence and wealth provided by Saudi Arabia's salafi clerics. Saudi Arabia created many religious and transnational institutions that boosted and projected salafism around the world. Hilali was just one node in this growing network, albeit an influential one. With persuasive disciples and admirers, many of Hilali's ideas took shape in transnational Islamic networks, but his own doctrinal rigors prevented him from having influence beyond salafi circles. Hilali's brand of salafism frustrated many Moroccans since he railed against all forms of canonical authority, such as Morocco's predominant Maliki school, and he relentlessly criticized Sufism. Incidentally, Hilali's student and admirer, Abul Hasan Ali al-Nadwi from India, surpassed Hilali's influence in the Muslim world, because unlike Hilali, he did not abandon the canonical authority of the law schools and championed the cause of Sufism. Hopefully, a future study that captures a full and critical account of the reception of Hilali's ideas in India's clerical circles will provide us with a more complex picture of his work and persona.

Hilali was such a paradoxical figure that he got involved on all sides of a controversy over the rejection of heliocentrism on the part of some Wahhabi clerics. His love for order and discipline made him admire Germany's national socialism as a model for Muslim countries. His convictions about the triumphant truth of Islam emboldened him to energetically debate orientalists, modernizers, and defenders of secularism, often with such vigor and zeal that sometimes his audiences could no longer understand the significance of his labors.

There is more than an analysis of Rida and Hilali in this book. Large sections of *The Making of Salafism* cover the shape of salafism in Egypt in reference to the themes Lauzière has identified. Most significant is the influence of the Egyptian printing industry, peopled by writers and editors from that country who advanced the cause of salafism.

One, of course, understands why Lauzière strictly adheres to his definition of doctrinal salafism so that he can address a manageable number of groups and individuals who self-identified as salafi. Therefore, there is very little coverage in this book of militant groups, such as al-Qaeda, ISIS, and militant Egyptian groups of the 1980s who have also claimed to identify with many aspects of salafism, since they are excluded by his definition.

It is Lauzière's portrait of Hilali that captures the essential message of salafism. Hilali believed that Islamic primitivism is the true faith and that epistemological positivism, masquerading as scientific empiricism, will allow one to harvest the truth from the scriptural sources. It is a bold manifestation of religious essentialism on epistemological steroids that ironically serves as a lighthouse to its followers, whereas for most people who struggle with history and faith in a world crowded with complexity, ambiguity, and materialism, things are less clear.

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Innocent Ecstasy: How Christianity Gave America an Ethic of Sexual Pleasure. Updated edition. By Peter Gardella. Oxford University Press, 2016. 260 pages. $24.95 (paperback), $16.99 (e-book).

Christian theologians and communities have long been redefining sexual morality in light of their reflections on scripture, tradition, natural law, reason, and experience. While the New Testament texts offer no systematic treatises on sexual morality, early theologians and church leaders established particular frameworks for sexual ethics that would shape the contours of Christian sexual morality for centuries to come. The sexual ascetics from the second century onward would promote celibacy—some to the point of self-castration to become eunuchs for Christ. Other more permissive church teachers in the fourth and fifth centuries argued that sex had at least one worthy end: the procreation of a child through marital sex. What the ascetics and the advocates of procreation largely