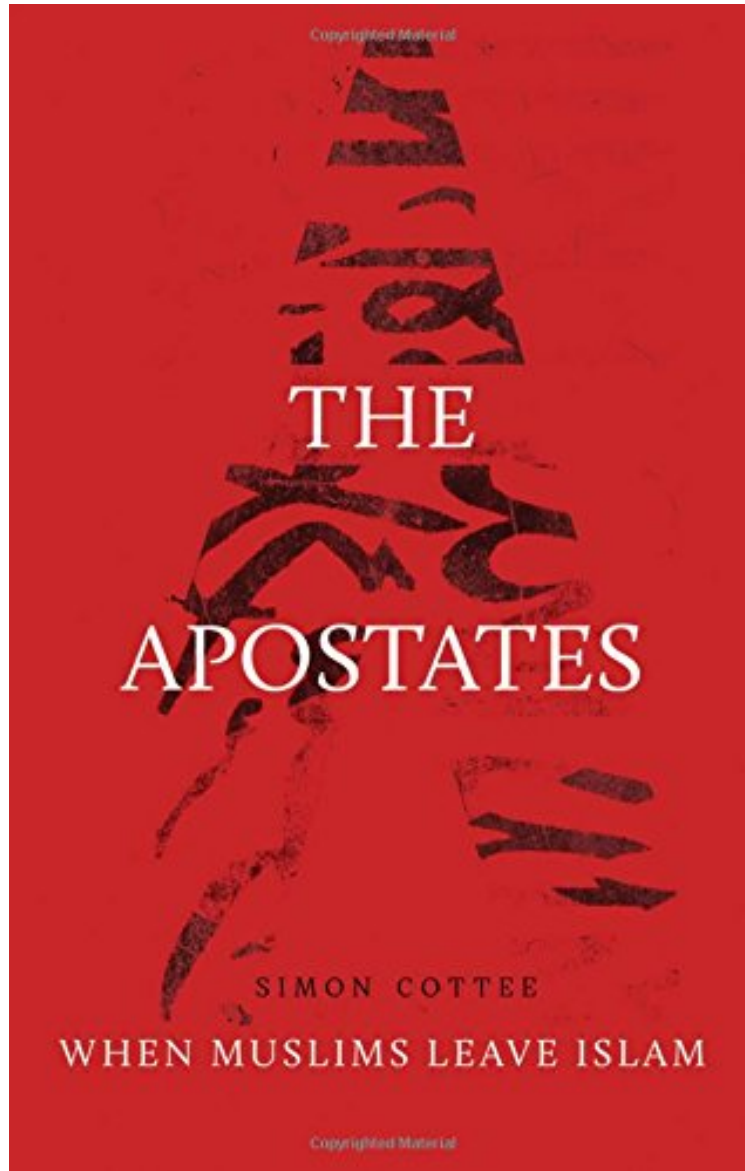


(Ebook free) The Apostates: When Muslims Leave Islam

## The Apostates: When Muslims Leave Islam

*Simon Cottee*

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**Simon Cottee : The Apostates: When Muslims Leave Islam** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Apostates: When Muslims Leave Islam:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Feeling the emotions and trials of breaking free from IslamBy ChrisL AThis book provides important insight into how Muslims cope with their decision to abandon the faith. There were 35 ex-Muslims in the study, and they volunteered for two to three hour interviews about their experiences. The

subjects of the study were self-professed atheists or agnostics from England and Canada, so their views may not reflect the experiences of ex-Muslims like Rifqa Bary (Hiding in the Light) or Nonie Darwish (Wholly Different) who embraced Christianity. Nor does the study delve into WHY the subjects left Islam. While the author claims that none was threatened with the Sharia sanction of "death for apostasy," only about half were courageous enough to "out" themselves with any family members. The deep family/community rejection of apostasy was apparent in all of the interviews. The pain of being cut off (either voluntarily or involuntarily) from those loved ones and the traditions of the Islamic community left the respondents high and dry without cultural roots and norms. The author calls these apostasy decisions "moral" decisions because the subjects could not live the lie of pretending to be religious when they were not. However, this academic interpretation ignores the reality that the ideology of Islam requires simultaneous acceptance of diametrically opposed beliefs -- a violation of reason or common sense. Examples: 1) no religious compulsion (Surah 3:83) vs. unwilling submission (Surah 2:256); 2) a god that dispenses both good and evil (Surah 4:78); and 3) citing abrogation (naskh) to explain contradictions in the eternal statements from god (Surahs 2:106 and 16:101). Doubting Muslims will find encouragement in the perseverance of these study subjects to break free from the constraints of Islam. Non-Muslims will appreciate the need ex-Muslims have for a sense of community, respect, and love in their new world outside the Islamic hold.

The Apostates is the first major study of apostasy from Islam in the western secular context. Drawing on life-history interviews with ex-Muslims from the UK and Canada, Simon Cottee explores how and with what consequences Muslims leave Islam and become irreligious. Apostasy in Islam is a deeply controversial issue and features prominently in current debates over the expansion of Islam in the West and what this means. Yet it remains poorly understood, in large part because it has become so politicized-with protagonists on either side of the debate selectively invoking Islamic theology to make claims about the 'true' face of Islam. The Apostates charts a different course by examining the social situation and experiences of ex-Muslims. Cottee suggests that Islamic apostasy in the West is best understood not as a legal or political problem, but as a moral issue within Muslim families and communities. Outside of Muslim-majority societies, ex-Muslims are not living in fear for their lives. But they face and must manage the stigma attached to leaving the faith from among their own families and the wider Muslim community.

"The Apostates is not about religious freedom or religion that poisons. It is about some 'ordinary' British and Canadian ex-Muslims who struggle to find themselves. They ask others to respect, as also mirror, their anxieties, their hesitant belongings, and their irrepressible longings. If there are pathways to empathy, an affirmation of humanity as the largest circle of belonging, then The Apostates is that bridge to a brighter future, hazy but still discernible, that makes us all prisoners of hope." -- Bruce B. Lawrence, Nancy and Jeffrey Marcus Humanities Professor of Religion, Duke University, and author of Who is Allah?"Exiting any social group is typically costly and traumatic. Quitting religious groups of whatever persuasion is even more so. In recent years there has been much critical attention towards Muslim apostates, but the debate is characteristically prejudicial and ill informed. Simon Cottee's carefully researched empirical study will do much to inform, clarify and correct public opinion. Proper sociological knowledge is the first step towards better understanding." -- Bryan S. Turner, The Graduate Center, CUNY; author of The Religious and the Political: A Comparative Sociology of Religion"Free people should be able to abandon their religion without being punished. Simon Cottee brings us the stories of British and Canadian ex-Muslims who live in the shadow of stigma and with the threat of ostracism. Wider society has ignored them, and the most disgraceful elements of the Left have denounced them, but here they can speak for themselves. Books are too often described as 'important' or 'original' when they are neither. The Apostates is both." -- Nick Cohen, columnist and author of You Can't Read This Book: Censorship in an Age of Freedom"Full of touching stories, The Apostates is a passionate and powerfully rendered account of what it's like to leave Islam and how this fateful transformation impacts on the lives of those who experience it." -- Ziauddin Sardar, Chair of the Muslim Institute and author of Mecca: The Sacred City"an excellent new study .... The Apostates shows how elements in the left and academia are happy to denounce Muslims who exercise their freedom to abandon their religion as 'native informers' who have gone over to the side of western imperialism." -- Nick Cohen, The SpectatorAbout the AuthorSimon Cottee is a senior lecturer in criminology at Kent University.