

## American Islamophobia: Understanding the Roots and Rise of Fear

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claims he wants to deconstruct. Kant and his Western readers and critics are clearly the central figures of the book and of its critique. Thus, Islam as critique could be seen as an outbidding critique of the Enlightenment and the West in general and as a pretext for rejecting Western imperialism and its consequences in India and other parts of the world.

On the other hand, the author's sources are extensive enough to comprise a bibliography of 33 pages, although the list does not contain Robert Ackermann's *Religion as Critique*, published in 1985. The bibliography is especially astonishing for the number of Urdu sources it contains. One should also credit the author for addressing Maududi's thought in a dialogical way. After all, Islamism appears in the book as fragile, vulnerable and polemical as it could be.

This book is at once a challenging and exciting work; I strongly recommend it for students and researchers in social sciences, philosophy, Islamic Studies and history.

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**American Islamophobia: Understanding the Roots and Rise of Fear**, by Khaled A Beydoun. Oakland, CA, California University Press, 2017, xiii + 245 pp., \$29.95/£25.00 (hardback), 9780520297791, \$22.95/£18.99 (paperback), ISBN 9780520305533

Khaled Beydoun explores the causes of Islamophobia in the United States drawing on race theory, history and his legal expertise as a constitutional lawyer. Beydoun is Associate Professor of Law at the University of Arkansas Law School and Senior Affiliated Faculty with the University of California – Berkeley Islamophobia Research and Documentation Project. He is also a member of the US Commission on Civil Rights. Born in Cairo and raised in Detroit, he writes as an American Muslim. Biographical and autobiographical vignettes throughout the book illustrate how Islamophobia negatively impacts the lives of real people in the United States.

In his 'Introduction', Beydoun describes President Donald Trump's election and policies as 'marking a new phase ... in which explicit rhetorical Islamophobia aligned in language and spirit with the programs' that Trump 'was poised to implement' (13). Chapter 1, 'What Is Islamophobia?', redefines Islamophobia by collapsing the wall between private Islamophobia, which can be seen as 'deviant', and the state's role in advancing Islamophobia through policing and immigration policies. Chapter 2, 'The Roots of Modern Islamophobia', reveals that rather than being a new phenomenon Islamophobia is deeply rooted in America's political, legal and cultural spheres dating from the 1790 Naturalization Act; the act restricted citizenship to white people of good character, which excluded most Muslims. The law, says Beydoun, tethered Christianity and whiteness together and identified Islam with otherness. Even after the first Arab Christian won citizenship in 1915 as 'white by law' (65), Arab Muslims remained excluded until a Saudi Muslim was naturalized in 1944 'in the interest of not "disrupting friendlier relations between the US"' and its new, oil rich ally (65). Courts repeatedly ruled against the naturalization of Muslims on the grounds that Islam is incompatible with American values. In 1942, a Muslim from Yemen was denied citizenship when the judge ruled that Muslims 'as a class would not ... be assimilated into our civilization' (66). Pages 64 and 65

summarize key court cases involving the naturalization of immigrant petitioners from the Middle East.

Chapter 3, ‘A Reoriented “Clash of Civilizations”’, argues that the clash thesis proposed by Bernard Lewis and Samuel P. Huntington has fuelled anti-Muslim ideations. Beydoun, who admires Edward Said and is pictured with him opposite page 246, argues that the popular view of Muslims in America is an Orientalist construct created to promote a white, Christian vision of America. Beydoun describes the ‘clash of civilizations’ thesis as ‘a new Orientalism’ (78) because its paradigms build on and perpetuate tropes that had informed both the Cold War’s East versus West polarity and those that ‘Orientalists’ had ‘ingrained in the minds of Americans’ (79). Chapter 4, ‘War on Terror, War on Muslims’, describes how laws such as the PATRIOT Act, surveillance programmes post 9/11, and the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq have in fact targeted Muslims in general and not only terrorists: ‘Although the rhetoric coming out of the White House insisted that the target of the war was Al-Qaeda... The actions and injuries inflicted revealed that the war was also being waged against Muslim citizens and immigrants’ (101).

In Chapter 5, ‘A Radical or Imagined Threat?’, Beydoun challenges the assumption of Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) policing (which, as he points out, was instituted under President Obama) that Muslims who become more pious are automatically also prone to radicalization (128) and can therefore be targeted for surveillance. Police and Department of Homeland Security (DHS) programmes also divide the Muslim community through recruiting informants. Muslims, especially youth, are ‘either viewed as presumptive radicals or tapped by DHS as cogs in its machines’ rather than as ‘young people whose futures and talents deserve investment’ (151). Citing Hamid Dabashi, Beydoun argues that these DHS techniques have their roots in older imperial policies that relied on native collaborators to legitimize the colonial project. The apparent support of some Muslims for CVE and other polices ‘makes them seem reasonable, sanctioned by the idea that if a Muslim deems CVE policing to be legitimate, then the public at large should find no problem with it’ either (145).

Chapter 6 focuses on ‘Anti-Black Racism and Islamophobia’, arguing that black American Muslims are double victims targeted for being both black and Muslim – and that some, who are poor, are triple victims – while at the same time many Arab and Asian Muslims view their Islamic bone fides with suspicion (169). The silencing of black Muslim voices – Beydoun calls this their ‘erasure’ – has its roots in how the religious identity of black Muslim slaves was erased and links with the common conflation of Muslim and Arab or South Asian identity (172). Discussing the Black Lives Matter movement, he notes how police and others see blackness and what they assume to be Muslim identity as reason enough to arrest, or shoot, individuals. Beydoun points out that non-Muslims have been mistaken for Muslims and attacked, detained or otherwise victimized. Chapter 7, ‘The Fire Next Time’, begins with the impact of the travel ban on families and individuals, arguing that the ban ‘ushered in a heightened form of structural Islamophobia’ that ties ‘Muslim identity directly to terror suspicion’ (176). In this chapter, Beydoun also draws attention to another intersection, that between Muslim and LGBTQ community members and their experiences of marginalization in American society. Consequently, instead of supporting the Islamophobic agenda, LGBTQ leaders have shown ‘great solidarity with Muslim Americans’ (184). Beydoun adds that LGBTQ Muslims are also stigmatized by the wider Muslim community. Many are devout, practising Muslims who struggle with their sexual and religious identities, since coming out is seen as *de facto* apostasy. Meanwhile, whenever American Muslims hear of a mass shooting or terrorist incident,

they unite in praying ‘please don’t be a Muslim, and brace for the structural and private Islamophobia that is sure to come whether the culprit is proved to be a Muslim or a non-Muslim white “lone wolf” (198). Beydoun points out that, even after white supremacist Timothy McVeigh was identified as the Oklahoma City bomber, and it was known that Muslims had not committed the atrocity, CNN’s Wolf Blitzer still speculated that Muslims might be connected with the event (74–75).

The ‘Epilogue’ expresses the hope that Muslim activism will ‘bring to life the civil liberties that, though enshrined in the Constitution, have been systematically denied them’ (208) in a country to which Muslims have contributed much. Even as his own father is buried in American soil, Beydoun’s hope is that Islamophobia will be buried ‘deep in the very soil that spawned it’ (208). This book is essential reading for anyone concerned with civil rights, justice and combatting racism in the USA. The University of California Press is to be congratulated for publishing a book that in many respects parts company from the style of most scholarly volumes by advancing an activist agenda. Beydoun tells us that his life’s work aims to bring about societal change because his mentor, Kimberlé Crenshaw, taught him that ‘innovative scholarship’ does not, ‘and should not, have to be confined to the world of ivory towers’ (ix).

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**Da’wa and Other Religions: Indian Muslims and the Modern Resurgence of Global Islamic Activism**, by Matthew J. Kuiper, London, Routledge, 2018, 296 pp., £110.00/\$155.00 (hardback), ISBN 9781138054134, £36.99/\$49.95 (paperback), ISBN 9780367265564

In *Da’wa and Other Religions*, Matthew Kuiper takes up a topic that appears to be rather neglected in scholarship on Islam and provides a detailed description of two lively examples of *da’wa* in the modern world. He sets these examples in the context of the historical development of *da’wa* from the origins of Islam until today. In doing so, he raises issues related to the propagation of religion that deserve discussion well beyond the covers of this important book.

Kuiper defines *da’wa* as efforts to spread Islam (or particular versions of Islam) and/or to encourage greater conformity with Islamic norms, explaining that the Arabic term means ‘inviting’ or ‘calling’. The first part of the book describes the meaning of *da’wa* in Muslim communities from the early Islamic sources through to what he calls its modern resurgence. The second part of the book then presents the particular manifestations of *da’wa* in the outreach activities of the Tablighī Jamā’at organization and in the polemical preaching of Zakir Naik. Kuiper chooses to approach the subject through the avenue of inter-religious relations.

The material on *da’wa* in the Qur’an and the sources of the *sunna* leads the author to the Muslim traditional division of ‘Mecca’ and ‘Medina’, where he finds substantial differences in the models of *da’wa* portrayed in this narrative, as well as unresolved tensions. The Arab conquests then extended what he calls the ‘gradual politicization of *da’wa*’ associated with Medina.