

Some Recent Publications on Islam / Muslims

The Muslim Brotherhood : Evolution of an Islamist Movement by Carrie Rosefsky Wickham, 2013, Princeton University Press

The Muslim Brotherhood has achieved a level of influence nearly unimaginable before the Arab Spring. The brotherhood was the resounding victor in Egypt's 2011-2012 parliamentary elections, and six months later, a leader of the group was elected president. Yet the implications of the Brotherhood's rising power for the future of democratic governance, peace, and stability in the regions are open to dispute. Drawing on more than one hundred in depth interviews as well as Arabic language sources not previously accessed by Western researchers, Carrie Rosefsky Wickham traces the evolution of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt from its founding in 1928 to the fall of Mubarak and the watershed elections of 2011-2012. Further, she compares the Brotherhood's trajectory with those of mainstream Islamist groups in Jordan, Kuwait, and Morocco, revealing a wider pattern of change. Wickham highlights the internal division of such groups and explores the shifting balance of power among them. She shows that they are not proceeding along a linear path toward greater moderation. Rather, their course has been marked by profound tensions and contradictions; yielding hybrid agendas in which newly embraced themes of freedom and democracy coexist uneasily with illiberal concepts of Shari's carried over from the past. Highlighting elements of movement continuity and change, and demonstrating that shifts in Islamist worldviews, goals and strategies are not the result of a single strand of cause and effect, Wickham provides a systematic, fine-grained account of Islamist group evolution in Egypt and the wider Arab world.

Muslims Zion : Pakistan as a Political Idea by Faisd Devji , 2012, Harvard University Press

Pakistan, founded less than a decade after a homeland for India's Muslims was proposed, is both the embodiment of national ambitions fulfilled and, in the eyes of many observers, a failed state. Muslim Zion cuts to the core of the geopolitical paradoxes entangling Pakistan to argue that India's rival has never been a nation-state in the conventional sense. Pakistan is instead a distinct type of political geography, ungrounded in the historic

connections of lands and peoples, whose context is provided by the settler states of the New World but whose closest ideological parallel is the state of Israel.

A year before the 1948 establishment of Israel. Pakistan was founded on a philosophy that accords with Zionism in surprising ways. Faisal Devji understands Zion as a political form rather than a holy land, one that rejects hereditary linkages between ethnicity and soil in favor of membership based on nothing but an idea of belonging. Like Israel. Pakistan came into being through the migration of a minority population, inhabiting a vast subcontinent, who abandoned old lands in which they feared persecution to settle in a new homeland. Just as Israel in the world's sole Jewish state, Pakistan is the only country to be established in the name of Islam.

Revealing how Pakistan's troubled present continues to be shaped by its past, Muslim Zion is a penetrating critique of what comes of founding a country on an Unresolved desire both to Join and reject the world of modern nation-states.

Are Muslims Savages? Short Poems on their Faith and Feelings as viewed from the West by Rashid Osmani, 2013, Creek space Independent Publishing Platform.

Muslim constitute a fifth of the World's population and for a vast majority of the western world represent an unknown and menacing threat to freedom and liberty. Likewise, for a large number of Muslims, western culture represents the greatest threat to their faith and way of life. While there is some kernel of truth behind these widely held beliefs, an objective analysis shows that it is just not true. What is lacking is an understanding on both sides as to what each other's core beliefs are and why they are not totally incompatible. Poetry, as a vehicle for conveying feelings, is unmatched in the literary world. Short poems are particularly suitable for today's world of shorter attention spans. This book is a collection of short poems by Rashid Osmani on the faith and feelings of Muslims living in the west. Post 9/11, the world has witnessed major wars and a realignment of strategic interests around the world. Not unlike the harassment and internment faced by innocent Japanese citizens in the US, the entire Muslim community living in the west has experienced a negative spotlight on their culture and beliefs, in this collection, the author starts with poems that give voice to the silent victims of the so-called 'war on terror'. Later in the book, Islamic beliefs are described in a manner that is tuned to the western intellect and goes on to address aspects of western society viewed as hypocritical by Muslims. The last chapter is devoted to Sufi Philosophy. "Gushed of a Sufi Conscience", to highlight diversity of thought within Islam. Most poems are written

in free verse, with little emphasis on rhyming so as to not compromise the underlying message.

Plight of Indian Muslims After Partition by Habibur Rehman, 2012, Atlantic

The book attempts to present the plight of Indian Muslims after Partition and is based on the findings of Sachar Committee Report and perceptions of Muslim community. The Report convincingly proves that all is not well with the Muslims in India. Muslims feel that they could not reap the benefits of development vis-à-vis others during the last sixty years and they are struggling with several social, economic, political and cultural issues, affecting their identity, security, livelihood, status and dignity. Due to lack of equality of opportunities and transparency as well as the absence of inclusive approach, they could not be brought within the pluralistic mainstream of the country. Consequently, they are educationally worse than the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, economically behind the Backward Castes, socially isolated, politically divided and culturally suffocated.

A wide variety of policy initiatives have been taken by the government for the development of the minorities but the general feeling among most of the Muslims is that these are cosmetic in nature. Despite the process of accelerated growth, the development deficit between them and others is increasing. There is general perception among many Muslims that there seems to be some fears among various sections of the society that the consequences of empowerment of Muslims by giving them special benefits would strengthen communal politics in the country. This factor as well as the lack of necessary will on the parts of the Central and State Governments due to vote bank politics appears to have largely dented the development process among minorities in the country.

The book attempts to put the case history on the conditions of Muslims in India and their feelings and perceptions before the majority and minority communities as well as the Central and State Governments of the country and the people of India in general and the Muslims in particular, so that they may find a solution to this vex problem through peaceful, democratic, constitutional and humanitarian means in the interest of the people.

Islam and Gender Justice : Muslims' Gender Discrimination By Asghar Ali Enginner, 2013, Gyan Publishers

This book is a collection of essays written from time to time on common theme of gender justice in Islam. These essays and articles deal with various problems like fatwas issued on marriage, divorce, maintenance, custody of children etc and attempts critique of

these fatwas. The author maintains in these essays that Muslim practices deviate from Qur'anic pronouncements on gender equality and women's rights clearly spelt out in Qur'an. The rights of women in Muslim societies are mainly determined, not by Qur'anic pronouncements but by cultural practices and hence it appears that Islam suppresses women's rights which is not true. Dr. Engineer has shown quite clearly that not Islam but cultural practices which are mainly to be blamed for the wide gap between theory and practice. This book will be highly useful for those who want to understand the gender question in Islam in all its complexities.

Empowerment of the Indian Muslims : Perspectives, Planning and Road Ahead by (ed.) Mirza Asmer Beg and A. R. Kidwai, 2012, Concept Publishing House

As social exclusion and marginality studies have their bearing on our educational system, we felt the pressing need for addressing this important and topical issue. The contributors to this volume were requested, in particular, to look into the processes of marginalization and put forward specific suggestions and recommendations, which may help realize the dream of empowering the Muslims and of improving their lot. The effort here is to see how implementable proposals can be woven in the policy framework and their implementation monitored at the grass root level. Although these suggestions are directed at the Planning Commission, Ministry of Minorities Affairs and other government agencies, the scholars and students should find this volume of much interest and relevance. It should prompt the Muslims to do some soul searching and stock taking in terms of both conceiving and executing remedial actions.

Ibn Khaldun by Syed Farid Alatas, 2012, Oxford University Press, New Delhi

Ibn Khaldun (1332-1406) was one of the most remarkable Muslim scholars of the pre-modern period. He founded what he called the science of human society or social organization, as well as a new methodology for writing history and a new purpose for it, namely to understand the causes of events. While his ideas had little impact on the development of Muslim thought for several centuries, they hugely impressed European

thinkers from the nineteenth century on - some of them proclaimed Ibn Khaldun a progenitor of sociology and modern historiography. Alatas's essay introduces Ibn Khaldun's core ideas, focusing on his theory of the rise and decline of states. It connects the ups and downs of his political life and his character with the development of his ideas. The concept of *asabiyya* (group solidarity) and the factors that lead to its dilution are presented in detail, as also the method of testing (historical) reports for their plausibility. Alatas also devotes a chapter to Ibn Khaldun's ideas about education and knowledge and society. Thereafter, he recounts the reception of Ibn Khaldun in his own and modern times, in the Islamic world and in the West: the responses range from those who thought that he merely reworked ideas found in the works of al-Farabi and the Ikhwan al- Safa to those who compare him to the giants of Western political and sociological thought, from Machiavelli to Marx. Finally, a dense few pages review the best editions and translations of Ibn Khaldun's and pick out key works in the vast corpus of scholarship on Ibn Khaldun in Arabic, English and other Western languages.

Syed Farid Alatas teaches sociology at the National University of Singapore and is also head of its Department of Malay Studies. His publications include, as author: *Democracy and Authoritarianism in Indonesia and Malaysia: The Rise of the Post-Colonial State* (1997); *Alternative Discourses in Asian Social Science: Responses to Eurocentrism* (2006); as co-editor: *Asian Inter-Faith Dialogue: Perspectives on Religion, Education and Social Cohesion* (2003) and *Asian Anthropology* (2005). He has also contributed several articles on Ibn Khaldun to scholarly journals and essay collections, with emphasis on the application of Khaldunian concepts and methodology to contemporary issues in the social sciences, educational philosophy and culture.

Jihad or Ijtihad : Religious Orthodoxy and Modern Science in Contemporary Islam by S. Irfan Habib, 2012, Harper Collins India, New Delhi

While Europe was still stuck in the dark ages, scientists in the Islamic world were translating Aristotle, and making huge strides in astronomy, mathematics and philosophy. Two thousand years later, the idea of 'scientific progress' seems to be locked in a hopeless war with Islam. When and how did Islam lose its enthusiasm for the workings of the natural world?

S. Irfan Habib, one of the country's foremost historians, traces the trajectory of how 'mainstream' Islam came to question modern science – beginning with the reformers of the nineteenth century and ending with present-day ideologues. Through the lives of famous men like sir Syed Ahmed Khan and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, he demonstrates that the modern-

day promulgation of Islam and its followers as ‘anti-modern’ and ‘anti-science’ is a myth that leads, quite literally, to explosive consequences. Habib also channels his scholarship of both history and Islam to question the controversial idea of ‘Islamic Science’ as a category distinct from ‘modern’, ‘Eurocentric’ Science.

In an engaging, easy style that belies the weightiness of the questions it seeks to answer, jihad or Ijtihad challenges both stereotypes and propaganda. This book places in perspective the relationship between Islam and Science today.

