Islamophobia in America: The anatomy of intolerance. Edited by Carl W. Ernst. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013, pp. 212, ISBN: 978-1-137-32188-6.

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Islamophobia is a deep rooted and complex phenomenon that has impacted the global community, especially the lives and well-being of Muslims. After the events of 9/11, anti-Muslim rhetoric escalated, leading to questions on state legislations, domestic security and the citizenship of minority groups. In America, the perpetrators of Islamophobia have laboured to convince the public that Muslims are a serious threat to the existing political establishments in the West. Islamophobes and their compatriots, including bloggers, right-wing politicians, and conservative religious leaders, have united to inject the fear of Islam into their congregations.

The book under review offers significant insights into the phenomenon of Islamophobia from the perspective of an identity conflict which is structured by the recent spike in anti-Muslim sentiments in the United States of America (p. 3). The book begins with an introductory chapter by Ernst, who emphasises that the phenomenon of Islamophobia is intricate and, in order to comprehend its complexities, the issue is to be approached from a variety of different angles. He contends that the negative stereotypes of Islam were first nurtured by Christian clerics and, during the colonial era, the orientalist perception of civilising the other cultures was seen as a justification for the colonisation of the so-called ''inferior cultures''. In the first chapter, Peter Gottschalk and Gabriel Greenberg explore the British and American perception of Muslims between 1687 and 1947. For this purpose, they review British and American literature and focus on the works of prominent theologians and philosophers like Humphrey Pridaux and Voltaire, highlighting the orientalist views of bigotry and intolerance of Muslims towards other religions. While analysing the works of prominent orientalists, the authors reveal that the global transmission of orientalist ideas was stimulated through certain lines of communication. This flow of information continued throughout the nineteenth century and contributed to the spread of Islamophobia in North America. The authors

also point out that the lack of contact with Muslims drew Americans to rely on the British perception of Islam and in this way, the British and American aversion towards Muslims buttressed the ideological claim that Islam is a fanatical religion seeking world domination (p. 27). The exclusion of Muslims in the United States is discussed in the second chapter by Kambiz Ghanea Bassiri. According to him, most Americans have viewed Islam as a religion espousing intolerance, exclusivism and coercion (p. 53). He focuses on public opinion surveys, disclosing that the growing anti-Muslim propaganda in America has been largely nurtured through current events, media reports and political institutions bent on establishing a delusive nexus between Islam and violence. The author further argues that the rising anti-Muslim bigotry and racial prejudice have played a significant role in American politics as a means of controlling religious diversity and maintaining unity at the cost of people's civil liberties.

Focusing on the growing alienation of African-American Muslim groups, Edward E. Curtis states in chapter three that the isolationist policies towards Black Muslim populations have been quite repressive. He observes that after 9/11, the focus has shifted from Black American Muslims to brown foreigners. However, critics of US policies have been continuously stifled, leading to the surveillance of Muslim groups on an unprecedented level, with further measures such as the abatement of civil rights. He argues that Islamophobia in reality is not just the outcome of certain cultural or political interests, it is also the product of the government's legal and extra-legal efforts to subordinate and penalise Muslims and their organisations (p. 76). The author further divides the chapter into two sections. He first describes the manner in which Muslim organisations became targets of the FBI's RACON, which endeavoured to accumulate all the information related to analysing the role of Black Americans behind the foreign inspired agitation. In the final section, the author discusses the impact of wartime Islamophobia on the Black Muslim scare of the 1960s. Exploring the gendered perception of Islamophobia in chapter four, Juliane Hammer attempts to examine the objectified use of Muslim women in Islamophobic discourses (p. 112). She analyses the numerous examples and discloses that there are unmediated and global connections between the production and diffusion of media stereotypes of oppressed Muslim women in the United States. The author describes the use of Islamophobic hate speeches against Muslim

women, produced in conjunction with governmental and legal policy measures under the garb of "War on Terror" (p. 113). She concludes by providing a detailed analysis of media dimensions of Islamophobic discourses and how Muslim women have been at the centre of anti-Muslim discourses. In the final chapter, Andrew J. Shryock claims that Islamophobia has a long history in Western societies. Its ideas are derived heavily from a variety of hostile beliefs based on nationalism and problems with minority identities. He focuses on the impact of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, and offers a case study on the Arab and Muslim communities in Greater Detriot, showing that in spite of racial profiling the Arab/Muslim populations in America are rapidly mainstreaming (p. 149). Shryock points out that despite the war against Iraq and Afghanistan, and the pressures of Americanisation in Detroit since 9/11, the political assimilation of Muslims has increased systematically. The author further discusses the shortcomings of Islamophobia in the context of building a united society in the USA, demonstrating that this contradicts existing stereotypes that depict Muslims as not being fully American.

This volume explores the issue of Islamophobia with an aim to provide a series of well-informed critical reflections on the virulent anti-Islamic prejudice structured by a range of media outlets and political institutions. The chapters included in the volume attempt to address the phenomenon in a factually nuanced manner. Given the thoughtfulness of the chapters, one might be left wishing that a more systematic approach could have broadened the scope of the volume. This might have included, for instance, a thorough analysis of racism, class inequality and different forms of political oppression that create political cultures in which Muslims are alienated from the mainstream population. Similarly, the projection of Muslim women as a focal point of interest in the Islamophobic discourses has been critically examined by repudiating the symbolic mechanisms justifying certain Islamophobic ideas and practices. However, it appears that no step has been taken to demonstrate how the defence of women's rights was manipulated in the public debates and how the media and policymakers discounted the racist aspects of the law affecting Muslim communities and promoting division and discrimination. More attention to such points could have aided the book in making a more substantive contribution towards analysing the mechanics of Islamophobia behind the interlinking of sexism and racism from a discursive point of view. Overall, the book

has achieved its purpose by presenting Islamophobia as a phenomenon that stems from an identity conflict that promotes intense hatred for minorities and other religious groups. Therefore, the book would be useful for policymakers as well as those interested in knowing further about the rising anti-Muslim hatred in America.

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Singapore Malays: Being ethnic minority and Muslim in a global city-state. By Hussin Mutalib. Abingdon: Routledge, 2012, pp. 204, ISBN: 978-1-138-84453-7.

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Hussin Mutalib's depiction of the plight of Malay-Muslims in Singapore is as real as one can hope for; an august voice amongst the local Malay academics, having initiated and chaired the Association of Muslim Professionals (AMP) in Singapore, and tirelessly contributing to policy making with regards to the progress of the Malay community. The objectives the author has for *Singapore Malays: Being Ethnic Minority and Muslims in a Global City-State* were primarily to address the issue of the "Malay plight", and the community's progress (or lack thereof) in relation to the state's expectations; and to propound interventions at the community and state levels. In meeting its objectives, the book has succinctly outlined the malaise of the Malay community, bringing to the fore the two-fold quandary of their identity: the indigenous race (with constitutional recognition) but the minority in terms of population and relative progress vis-à-vis the other races, and Muslims in a city-state where secularism is enshrined as a state ideology. Recent events that call attention to increasing religiosity in Asia Pacific and concerns of Islamic radicalism to the national social fabric, point to the significance of Hussin's proposed recommendations and (regrettably) validity of the continuing "Malay plight".

The cogency of Hussin's premise that, "Singapore's Malay ethnic minority is still not progressing in tandem with the Republic's prosperity and … without state intervention the Malay plight will not only continue