The Routledge International Handbook of Islamophobia

Edited by Irene Zempi and Imran Awan
Islamophobic hate crimes have increased significantly following the terrorist attacks of 9/11 and 7/7. More recently, the rhetoric surrounding Trump’s election and presidency, Brexit, the rise of far-right groups and ISIS-inspired terrorist attacks worldwide have promoted a climate where Islamophobia and anti-Muslim sentiments have become ‘legitimised’.

*The Routledge International Handbook of Islamophobia* provides a comprehensive single-volume collection of key readings in Islamophobia. Consisting of 32 chapters accessibly written by scholars, policy makers and practitioners, it seeks to examine the nature, extent, implications of, and responses to Islamophobic hate crime both nationally and internationally.

This volume will appeal to undergraduate and postgraduate students as well as postdoctoral researchers interested in fields such as Criminology, Victimology, Sociology, Social Policy, Religious Studies, Law and related Social Sciences subjects. It will also appeal to scholars, policy makers and practitioners working in and around the areas of Islamophobic hate crimes.

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Islamophobic hate crimes have increased significantly in the West following the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 (usually referred to as 9/11) in the US. As numerous commentators have argued in detail, since 9/11, a particular anxiety towards Muslim ‘others’ has led to suspicion and outright hostility towards Muslims in the West. Following the attacks on 7 July 2005 in the UK (usually referred to as 7/7) these anxieties intensified. Muslims in the UK faced significantly heightened levels of religious and racial hatred, manifested as hate crimes and incidents. More recently, the rhetoric surrounding Donald Trump’s election and presidency, Brexit, and the rise of far-right groups, both nationally and internationally, have promoted a climate where hate crime, and specifically Islamophobic hate crime, have become ‘legitimised’. Also, the rise in Islamophobic attacks following the recent ISIS-inspired terrorist attacks in the UK, France, Belgium and Germany means that it is now an opportune moment for us to turn our attentions to the ways in which this form of hate crime might be understood, measured and addressed at a national and international level.

The Routledge International Handbook of Islamophobia provides a comprehensive single-volume collection of key readings in Islamophobia. It consists of 32 chapters accessibly written by scholars, policy makers and practitioners, both established and up and coming. The fact that Islamophobic hate crime is now recognised as a growing social problem means that this type of hate crime is ripe for critical analysis. As such, this is an important and innovative collection that allows readers to understand this phenomenon. In particular, this book seeks to examine the nature, extent, implications of, and responses to Islamophobic hate crime both nationally and internationally. The book also seeks to examine policy responses and examine the effectiveness of policing this form of hate crime.

The book is divided into four parts. Part I provides chapters that seek to understand the nature and scope of Islamophobic hate crime. Leading national and international authors use philosophical, theological, sociological, psychological and criminological theories to explain how both the causes and consequences of Islamophobic hate should be understood, not just as a domestic issue but as a global phenomenon. Part II illustrates the dynamics of Islamophobic hate crime through the use of case examples in individual countries in the European context. Part III further illustrates the dynamics of Islamophobic hate crime in the US and in a global context. Finally, Part IV looks at ways in which Islamophobic hate crime can be addressed on
the national and international stage. Chapters in this part examine the potential use of internet regulation and policing.

In Chapter 1, Nathan C. Lean outlines the debates over the utility and precision of the term ‘Islamophobia’. The chapter invokes historical and contemporary examples in order to critically evaluate these debates. The chapter makes the case that persistent efforts to dismantle Islamophobia only serve to exacerbate the problem. It is argued that efforts to dismantle Islamophobia facilitate consequences that target the Muslim community, rendering it susceptible to more hostility on account of a nameless phenomenon of prejudice.

In Chapter 2, Nasar Meer and Tariq Modood examine the racialisation of Muslims as a form of Islamophobia. They argue that the implications of sources of hostility towards Muslims are best understood through registers of race and racialisation, an argument that the authors have pioneered within the Islamophobia studies field. Specifically, the first part of the chapter explores the theoretical and normative issues raised by the entanglements between race and religion in relation to Muslims, while the second half of the chapter draws on interview data with journalists and opinion formers. The chapter provides four-fold reasons as to why there may be little sympathy for the notion that Muslim minorities are subject to racism by virtue of their real or perceived ‘Muslimness’.

In Chapter 3, Tahir Abbas discusses Islamophobia as the ‘hidden hand of structural and cultural racism’. This chapter outlines key areas where Islamophobia masks deeper structural concerns including education, employment, health and housing in Britain. The chapter provides an analysis of how elite actors use the biopolitical discourse of hyper-masculinity in order to construct a conflict narrative between far-right groups and ‘Muslim extremist’ groups in the UK context.

In Chapter 4, Saied Reza Ameli and Arzu Merali offer a typology of Islamophobia, and outline the Multidimensional Model of Understanding Islamophobia (MMUI), drawing on a secondary analysis of data related to Islamophobic behaviour against Muslims in the USA, Canada, UK and France. The MMUI model is discussed in relation to the Domination Hate Model of Intercultural Relations (DHMIR). The DHMIR Model demonstrates how an innocent citizen can turn into a hate crime offender. As the chapter points out, the DHMIR Model does not attempt to justify hate crime offending; rather, it draws attention to a complicated process in which the hate crime offender becomes a passive implementer.

In Chapter 5, Aurelien Mondon and Aaron Winter discuss the concepts of liberal and illiberal Islamophobia. They provide an overview of definitions of Islamophobia and debates in the field, and justify their use of the term Islamophobia over alternatives such as anti-Muslim racism. They also develop the two articulations of Islamophobia (that is, liberal and illiberal Islamophobia), which they propose are essential to providing a comprehensive picture of the current state of racism towards individuals perceived to be Muslim.

In Chapter 6, Jane Prince considers the psychology of hate crime offenders who target Muslims and raises the question of ‘who could be a hate crime offender?’ This chapter reviews the existing literature on the psychology of hate crime offenders, the implications of these for preventative and restorative interventions, and offers an analysis of the broader role of social groups in Islamophobic criminal behaviours. The difficulties of addressing and eliminating the causes of Islamophobic hate crime are also considered.

In Chapter 7, Jenny L. Paterson, Mark A. Walters and Rupert Brown examine the community impacts of Islamophobic hate crimes. Drawing on a large-scale survey, this chapter provides a quantitative examination of the indirect (community) impacts of hate crimes on members of UK Muslim communities. The study shows that the consequences of Islamophobic hate crime can be far-reaching. Islamophobic hate crimes not only traumatised direct victims but are likely to spread anxiety and anger throughout Muslim communities. Incidents are also likely to impact
upon individuals’ community involvement and avoidant behaviours, while also damaging their confidence in the police, the Crown Prosecution Service, and the government in tackling Islamophobic hate crime.

In Chapter 8, Olivier Esteves offers a historical perspective of French secularism, and explains how French laïcité began to be redefined in the late 1980s in light of the events of *The Satanic Verses* and the first headscarf affair in France. The chapter shows how public constructions of Islamophobia in France were shaped by these events. The chapter draws on Roubaix’s national labour archives, which helps readers to understand the experiences of Muslims in the labour market in France. The chapter also draws on some excerpts from fieldwork with Muslim social workers, imams and local figures on how they perceive misunderstandings of Islam and Muslims within the French context.

In Chapter 9, Timothy Peace discusses Islamophobia and the left in France. This chapter outlines some of the reasons as to why there is a political consensus in France about a ‘Muslim problem’ that needs to be addressed. Indeed, the chapter notes that key reasons include the rise of neo-republicanism and attempts by politicians to appear tough on ‘visible’ difference and multiculturalism in the face of increasing support for the far-right Front National. The chapter also discusses how French Muslims themselves respond to this not just through forms of protest, but also in the courts. The chapter pays attention to the legal framework and the work of NGOs such as the Collective Against Islamophobia in France, which fight to have acts of Islamophobia recognised as hate crimes.

In Chapter 10, Amina Easat-Daas examines Islamophobia in Belgium. Specifically, the chapter outlines the underlying mechanisms of the gendered dimensions of Islamophobia in Belgium and demonstrates how historically-rooted narratives contribute to modern-day ‘othering’ of Muslim women in Belgium. It illustrates both the direct and indirect forms of Islamophobia experienced by Belgian Muslim women in light of the national face veil ban, and the recent controversies surrounding wearing the headscarf in the workplace. The chapter concludes with an overview of the ways of tackling gendered Islamophobia as led by self-identified Belgian Muslim women themselves.

In Chapter 11, James Carr draws on empirical evidence in order to examine Islamophobia in Ireland. In doing so, the chapter draws on two key studies. Study 1 provides statistical and qualitative insights into anti-Muslim racism in Ireland. Study 2, which was undertaken in partnership with two civil society organisations: the Immigrant Council of Ireland and the Open Society Foundations, also provides insights into experiences of anti-Muslim hostility and discrimination in Ireland. The chapter concludes with a section outlining how Muslim communities in Ireland feel this pernicious phenomenon can be challenged, namely, recognition; inclusion; support and protection.

In Chapter 12, Waqas Tufail discusses the racialised and Islamophobic framing of the Rotherham and Rochdale child sexual abuse scandals. It is argued that popular discourses about these scandals have been dominated by representations focusing on race, ethnicity and the dangerous masculinities of Muslim men. The chapter compares and contrasts the representations and discourses of racialised and non-racialised reporting of child sexual abuse and situates the grooming scandals in the context of anti-Muslim racism.

In Chapter 13, Stefano Bonino examines discrimination towards Muslims in Scotland. This chapter explores the realities and perceptions of ethno-religious discrimination among Muslims in Scotland with respect to their everyday social interactions with the indigenous Scottish community, contact with police and security officers. It traces the history of discrimination against ethnic minorities in Scotland and particularly focuses on the multifaceted manifestations of anti-Muslim sentiments within a post-9/11 global climate of distrust towards Islam.
It concludes by arguing that the overall life experiences of Muslims in Scotland are more positive than those of their fellow correligionists in England due to a number of political, social and cultural factors.

In Chapter 14, Tania Saeed considers how educational institutions, including universities, have been implicated in a counter terrorism agenda, under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, that has placed a ‘statutory’ responsibility on such institutions to report on students perceived to be vulnerable to radicalisation. To this end, the chapter examines how Islamophobia disciplines the Muslim body and mind, where Muslim students are increasingly conscious of their speech and behaviour, engaging in self-censorship. Drawing on a narrative study of 40 Muslim female university students conducted in 2010–2012, and recent reports of Islamophobia in educational institutions, this chapter illustrates how such self-regulation makes Islamophobia more dangerous, where Muslim students are constantly under pressure to appear ‘normal’ and not be misunderstood.

In Chapter 15, Hareem Ghani and Ilyas Nagdee discuss Islamophobia in Higher Education drawing on the findings from the research report entitled The Experience of Muslim Students in 2017–18, published by the National Union of Students. This comprehensive piece of work captures Muslim students’ and sabbatical officers’ experiences in colleges and universities throughout the UK. The findings demonstrate that experiences of hate-motivated incidents and crimes are widespread, yet under-reported.

In Chapter 16, Alexandros Sakellariou discusses Islamophobia in Greece. Specifically, this chapter examines the main channels through which Islamophobia and anti-Muslim attitudes are being re-produced in the Greek context. In this respect, the chapter also outlines the reasons for Islamophobia in Greece. It also considers whether the recent refugee crisis has influenced the rise of anti-Muslim and Islamophobic attitudes. Drawing on the concepts of moral panics and politics of fear, this chapter argues that Islamophobia has serious implications for religious freedom and equality within the Greek society.

In Chapter 17, Konrad Pędzwiwatr examines the religious dimension of Islamophobia in Poland. Specifically, this chapter demonstrates that the processes of Muslim ‘Othering’ have been closely linked in Poland with wider socio-political transformations in Polish society. In Chapter 18, Katarzyna Górk-Sosnowska and Marta Pachocka also examine Islamophobia in Poland but from a different perspective, that of Poland’s membership in the EU.

In Chapter 19, Louise Cainkar examines Islamophobia in the US. Specifically, this chapter discusses how Islamophobia is increasingly being treated as a form of racism in scholarship on its ideological and structural patterns in the West. The chapter argues that anti-Muslim actions are ideologically supported through claims that American values are superior to those of Muslims, fabricated claims of an inherent global Muslim hatred of Americans, and persistent suggestions that Muslims are morally inferior human beings. Rising hate crimes and recent government policies provide strong evidence that Islamophobia has reached new heights in the United States on both ideological and structural levels.

In Chapter 20, Sunaina Maira outlines the ways interfaith activism is produced as a response to Islamophobia and the limits of religious multiculturalism. Drawing on an ethnographic study, conducted in Silicon Valley in northern California between 2007 and 2011, in the South Bay Area and in the nearby cities of Fremont/Hayward that have a large Afghan population, the study explores the political subject-hood of young people targeted in the War on Terror and in the context of neoliberal multiculturalism. The larger project focuses on how these youth turned to rights – especially civil rights and human rights – to respond to Islamophobia, racism, and the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, and how they simultaneously grappled with the limits of rights-based activism.
In Chapter 21, Shakira Hussein, Scheherazade Bloul and Scott Poynting discuss the issue of the burkini affair in France and Australia. It is argued that continental Europe provides a dystopia for Australian Muslims and Islamophobes alike. The chapter also discusses how the far-right and anti-Muslim populists of both nations blame the accommodation of cultural diversity and the entry of ‘too many Muslims’ for purported corrosion of the national culture.

In Chapter 22, Barbara Perry examines Islamophobia in Canada. Specifically, the chapter describes xenophobia and racism, in an era of Donald Trump and far-right French politician Marine Le Pen. The chapter unpacks the ways in which global and ‘home-grown’ xenophobia and anti-Muslim hatred coalesced to provide the climate for elevated rates of anti-Muslim violence. It shows how Trump’s campaign rhetoric and subsequent policy directives have provided one level of influence. It also considers the ways in which conservative politics at the national level in Canada and provincial level in Quebec have provided fertile ground for xenophobia and Islamophobia to take root there. The manifestations of culturally embedded Islamophobia are revealed in consistently negative polling around Islam, and high – and increasing – rates of anti-Muslim hate crime.

In Chapter 23, Mohamed Nawab Mohamed Osman examines Islamophobia in Southeast Asia. Specifically, this chapter argues that Islamophobia in Thailand and Philippines is rooted in Muslim insurgencies, which could be traced to an early colonial policy. First, the chapter examines the current literature on Islamophobia and proposes a conceptual framework from which Islamophobia in the Asian contexts can be understood. Second, the chapter analyses the historical factors for the rise of Islamophobia and the contemporary manifestations of Islamophobia in these societies. Third, the chapter examines the impact of this analysis as a framework in understanding Islamophobia in conflictual areas. It is concluded that the challenge of Islamophobia in both Thailand and Philippines is likely to continue to grow especially in light of the growth of Islamophobia internationally.

In Chapter 24, Shabana Mir and Loukia Sarroub examine Islamophobia in US education. In the first part of the chapter they explain how ‘Islamophobia’ has become a social fact of school life for many young people in US public schools. They then present an analysis of the Islamophobia as politically situated in higher education settings. Throughout the chapter, they highlight the ways in which Islamophobia is manifested in US education, the multi-layered damage that this inflicts on educational participants, and the strategies that generate hope for fighting Islamophobia and racism.

In Chapter 25, Fatima Khan and Gabe Mythen discuss micro-level management of Islamophobia. This chapter addresses the issue of anti-Muslim victimisation and the intensification of an Islamophobic climate in Britain over the last two decades. Drawing on an empirical study conducted in the northwest of England, this chapter elucidates the multiple ways in which British Muslim identities are negotiated and managed in environments in which their beliefs, values and aspirations are routinely questioned. This chapter also examines how micro level strategies of interactional negotiation allow participants to benefit from hybridity, circumvent potentially risky interactions and resist stereotyping and misperceptions.

In Chapter 26, Amir Saeed discusses Muslim responses to Islamophobia in the media. The paper presents empirical evidence from media educators in the UK that implies journalists do not deliberately write racist material. However, it is suggested that this argument does not account for the cultural and ideological factors that influence media coverage of Islam that also echoes how the Western media have routinely represented non-white minority groups historically. The chapter argues that journalists must acknowledge the influence of ‘hidden agendas’ that impact on their reporting of Islam and Muslims.

In Chapter 27, Leda Blackwood discusses Islamophobia at the airport drawing on research conducted with airport authorities and British Muslims as well as wider reportage of Muslim
experiences. The chapter argues that the expression ‘flying while Muslim’ is now widely used to capture a set of intimidating and humiliating experiences Muslims report having when travelling in non-Muslim countries. The chapter presents a social psychological analysis of how airport authorities and Muslims themselves understand the nature of Muslims experiences of Islamophobia in the airport; and the consequences for Muslim-authority relations both inside the airport and beyond.

In Chapter 28, Matthew Feldman and Paul Stocker examine the nature of anti-Muslim prejudice by different far-right groups, before turning to the issue of their manifestation as hate attacks. The chapter outlines the diverse nature in which ‘Islamoprejudice’ is presented by the far-right, including both conspiratorial anti-Muslim prejudice and the linking of Islam with terrorism. Drawing on the Tell MAMA data, this chapter argues that rather than being mere ‘rhetoric’, far-right Islamophobia has been an important factor in the rise of new forms of far-right extremism.

In Chapter 29, Aristotle Kallis examines the relationship between Islamophobia and the radical right in Europe, and considers whether this is nationalist nostalgia or transnational anti-utopia. The chapter argues that Islamophobia has functioned as a powerful node of a wider call to radical action that is both anti-utopian (averting a perceived unfolding catastrophe by projecting as a warning an extreme version of the present) and utopian in its own right (unlocking an alternative actionable blueprint and path to a better future). Therefore, the chapter makes the point that, in order to understand the dynamics of the radical right’s embrace of Islamophobia, ‘utopia’ is a far more accurate and useful conceptual category than regressive nostalgia for a mono-cultural, territorially rooted, and politically inward-looking alternative vision.

In Chapter 30, Mark Littler and Kathy Kondor discuss terrorism, hate speech and ‘cumulative extremism’ on Facebook. Drawing on the results of analyses conducted using social media data from both the English Defence League and Britain First in the period immediately before and after the terrorist attacks in Paris in November 2015, the chapter examines how far orthodox cumulative extremism theory can be applied to the online space. The findings show that rather than magnifying extremist attitudes and triggering calls to action that result in online attacks, there is comparably little evidence of a change in activity in the posts of either group following the terror attacks. This challenges the ideas of orthodox cumulative extremism theory, suggesting that the perceived threat of radical Islam will not automatically mobilise right wing extremist groups. The reasons for this are discussed, alongside the possible policy implications this may have.

In Chapter 31, Paul Giannasi outlines police challenges in responding to Islamophobic hate crime. The chapter explores the nature of contemporary hostility towards Muslims and the unique challenges of meeting the needs of Muslim victims, including the conflation of race and religious identities in the minds of perpetrators, the issue of intra-group hostilities and the task of building the confidence of victims to come forward to report their attacks. The chapter outlines some of the key policy and legislative developments and explores the progress made by criminal justice organisations.

In Chapter 32, Chris Allen considers governmental responses to Islamophobia in the UK. As the chapter notes, it is just over two decades since Islamophobia was afforded political recognition in the UK, prompted by the publication of the 1997 Runnymede Trust report on behalf of the Commission on British Muslims and Islamophobia. In light of this, the chapter reflects on the past two decades in the UK to consider how successive British governments have responded to Islamophobia since the publication of the CBMI report in 1997. Beginning with a short overview that affords some context about the issue of religious-based
discrimination in the UK, it proceeds by first considering the New Labour government of 1997–2010, before then considering the Conservative-led Coalition and Conservative governments from 2010 through to 2017. In conclusion, some comparisons between the different approaches are provided.

Definition of Islamophobia

We welcome the definition of Islamophobia released in November 2018 by the All Party Parliamentary Group on British Muslims following its year-long consultation across the UK:

Islamophobia is rooted in racism and is a type of racism that targets expressions of Muslimness or perceived Muslimness.  

(All Party Parliamentary Group on British Muslims 2018, p. 11)

We are pleased the definition fits with our own definition, which is based on Islamophobia as a form of racism and perceived Muslim identities.

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Introduction


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