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Aims and Scope

Contemporary Islam: Dynamics of Muslim Life

- is the first peer-reviewed socio-scientific journal  
focused on Muslim life
- closes the existing gap within the range of journals  
focusing on Islam
- focuses on contemporary issues of Islam, providing  
an international forum of discussion
- is multidisciplinary and multicultural

Rationale

The importance to study and understand Islam and contemporary Muslim life from a socio-scientific perspective seems more relevant than ever. Currently, there is no specific journal that offers a platform for discussion on contemporary aspects of Islam and Muslims. Indeed, the historical, political and comparative approach to Islam has been preferred over social scientific research and themes.

*Contemporary Islam: Dynamics of Muslim Life* aims to fill this gap by providing an active forum for the discussion of new ideas, fieldwork experiences, challenging views, and methodological and theoretical approaches to Muslim life.

Topical and interdisciplinary

*Contemporary Islam: Dynamics of Muslim Life* focuses on topical issues and takes an interdisciplinary approach that benefits from a cross-cultural perspective: articles will explore the relationship between Islam and its contemporary cultural, material, gender, economic, political, and religious expressions from different socio-scientific perspectives, such as anthropology, sociology, education, politics, international relations, ethnomusicology, arts, film studies, economics, human rights, international law, diaspora minority studies, demography, and ethics.

Focus

The journal provides insights into the contemporary dynamics of Muslim life by focusing on questions concerning ordinary aspects of everyday life of Muslims as well as more systemic concerns. The journal focuses on what Muslims actually do rather than what one reading or another of the texts suggest that they should do. Papers on the lived experiences of Muslim in both Muslim minority and Muslim majority contexts are encouraged. *Contemporary Islam: Dynamics of Muslim Life* regards Islam as a modern religion in today's global societies.

Readership and Editorial Board

As the first socio-scientific journal to focus on Muslim life, *Contemporary Islam: Dynamics of Muslim Life* will be of interest to scholars and students in various academic fields related to the world of Islam. The editorial board reflects the multidisciplinary approach of the journal.

Blasphemy of Salman Rushdie and shifting legal  
discourse in India

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Abstract

The domain of religion is thought to be rapidly losing significance in the age of secularization. But in contemporaneity, pertinent is the fact that religion has not been wiped away completely or even become any less significant. The religious laws are constantly under process of revision to be in consonant to social and political change. The case of Salman Rushdie in this regard is very well known. He was accused of blasphemy and a fatwa of death was pronounced against him from Iran. This article attempts to evaluate the reasons as to why this fatwa which is just a legal opinion became so important and generated reactions from every part of the world irrespective of sectarian divides in Islam. It also analyses the opinions of the two Islamic schools of thought in the Indian subcontinent – Deoband and Bareilvi on the issue of blasphemy and the negotiations they make within their legal discourses to arrive at conclusions with regard the conflictual Islamic and secular laws. Despite emanating from the same Islamic school of jurisprudence – Hanafi but still varying in important aspects of religion, they adopt divergence with regard to the issue of blasphemy.

**Keywords** Blasphemy · Fatwa · Deoband · Bareilvi · Rushdie

Introduction

On 14 February 1989, Imam Khomeini (1902–1989), the spiritual leader of the Iranian revolution, issued a fatwa (legal opinion) on Tehran Radio, which declared Salman Rushdie be murdered for the blasphemy he committed in his novel, *The Satanic Verses* (Sebastian 1989: 449 and Khan 1997: 28). On the charge of blasphemy, the Iranian government declared bounty against him. Khomeini had also said in the fatwa that even if he repents the punishment will stay and it is the moral duty of every Muslim to kill

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