



Being Human in Islam: The Impact of the Evolutionary Worldview (Culture and Civilization in the Middle East)

Damian Howard

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Islamic anthropology is relatively seldom treated as a particular concern even though much of the contemporary debate on the modernisation of Islam, its acceptance of human rights and democracy, makes implicit assumptions about the way Muslims conceive of the human being. This book explores how the spread of evolutionary theory has affected the beliefs of contemporary Muslims regarding human identity, capacity and destiny.

In his systematic treatment of the impact of evolutionary ideas on modern Islam, Damian Howard surveys several branches of Muslim thought. Muslim responses to the crisis of the religious imagination presented by the evolutionary worldview fall into four different forms, incorporating traditional and modern notions. The book evaluates the content, influence and success of these four forms, asking how Muslims might now proceed to address the profound challenges which evolutionary theory poses to the effective reconstruction of their religious thought.

Drawing fascinating parallels with developments in the world of Christian theology which will help understanding between people of the two religions, the author reflects on the question of how Muslims can come to terms with the modern world. A valuable addition to the literature on contemporary Islamic thought, this book will also interest students and scholars of religion and modernity, the history and philosophy of science, and evolutionary theory.

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