



Regarding Muslims: From Slavery to Postapartheid

Gabeba Baderoon

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How do Muslims fit into South Africa's well-known narrative of colonialism, apartheid, and postapartheid? South Africa is known for apartheid, but the country's foundation was laid by 176 years of slavery from 1658 to 1834, which formed a crucible of war, genocide, and systemic sexual violence that continues to shape the country today. Enslaved people from East Africa, India, and Southeast Asia, many of whom were Muslim, would eventually constitute the majority of the population of the colony. Drawing on an extensive popular and official archive, *Regarding Muslims* analyzes the role of Muslims from South Africa's founding moments to the contemporary period and points to the resonance of these discussions elsewhere. It argues that the 350-year archive of images documenting the presence of Muslims in South Africa is central to understanding the formation of concepts of race, sexuality, and belonging. In contrast to the themes of extremism and alienation that dominate Western portrayals of Muslims, *Regarding Muslims* explores an extensive repertoire of picturesque Muslim figures in South African popular culture, which oscillates with more disquieting images that occasionally burst into prominence during moments of crisis. This pattern is illustrated through analyses of etymology, popular culture, visual art, jokes, bodily practices, oral narratives, and literature. The book ends with the complex vision of Islam conveyed in the postapartheid period.

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