

Samar Habib, ed., *Islam and Homosexuality volume 1. Praeger, 2010*

Chapter 1 : Islam and the Politics of Homophobia: The Persecution of Homosexuals in Islamic Malaysia Compared to Secular China by Walter L. Williams pp. 1-22

In her Introduction to the book, Editor Samar Habib wrote that pp.xxv-xxvi

Walter Williams' chapter provides "a passionate first person narrative of life where academic theory takes a back seat to the life-or-death questions facing people persecuted on the basis of their sexual and/or gender preferences. Williams discusses a significant number of cases of immigrants seeking asylum in the United States on the basis of persecution in Malaysia and China. Williams also chronicles the intertwining relationship between homosexuality and Malaysian politics. As Williams shows, homosexuality is constructed in the masculinist and nationalist rhetoric of the Malaysian state as a threat from outside, falsely representing homosexuality as something without a local habitation. Williams also fears that, in the urge to be polite and culturally sensitive, we tend to sweep Islamic homophobia under the rug, and he rightly although indirectly addresses a current trend in leftist critique that, in its almost exclusive focus on the misgivings and human rights abuses of the West (and these are many), find themselves turning a blind eye to major human rights problems caused by the current forms of sharia law adopted in Islamic nations. For Williams, the specificities of distinctions ... are nowhere as relevant as doing something practical to alleviate the real and lived suffering of people he comes into contact with through the U.S. Immigration Courts.... [His focus is] on the lives of those who are suffering persecution and misery."

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