

## Jihad, Radicalism, and the New Atheism

Is Islam fundamentally violent? For influential New Atheists such as Sam Harris, Ayaan Hirsi Ali, and Richard Dawkins, the answer is an emphatic yes, largely because of the Islamic doctrine of jihad. According to this view, when al-Qaeda plotted 9/11 or ISIS planned any one of its recent terrorist attacks, they were acting in accord with Islamic scripture. *Jihad, Radicalism, and the New Atheism* scrutinizes this claim by comparing the conflicting interpretations of jihad offered by mainstream Muslim scholars, violent Muslim radicals, and New Atheists. Mohammad Hassan Khalil considers contemporary Muslim terrorism to be a grave problem that we must now confront. He shows, however, that the explanations offered for this phenomenon by the New Atheists are highly problematic and that their own interpretations of the role of violence in Islam exceed those of even radicals such as Osama bin Laden. In showing all this, Khalil offers critical insights on a most pressing issue.

Mohammad Hassan Khalil is Associate Professor of Religious Studies, Adjunct Professor of Law, and Director of the Muslim Studies Program at his hometown institution, Michigan State University. He is the author of *Islam and the Fate of Others: The Salvation Question* (2012) and editor of *Between Heaven and Hell: Islam, Salvation, and the Fate of Others* (2013). He serves on multiple editorial boards and on the board of directors of the Society for the Study of Muslim Ethics. In 2015, he received the Michigan State University Teacher-Scholar Award.

# Jihad, Radicalism, and the New Atheism

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*To my teachers*

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