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Edwy Plenel

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Edwy Plenel : For the Muslims: Islamophobia in France before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised For the Muslims: Islamophobia in France:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. More than just the titleBy A. GonzalezEdwy Plenel wrote the title "For the Muslims" in the style of Zola's "For the Jews", which was originally written in the era of the Dreyfus Affair and was then a warning to France at that time of their Otherizing and demonization of the minority Jews [who were

then accused of no really being French, harboring foreign allegiances, not being integrated, etc] and what that would lead to. Plenel writes this book in the same spirit, not so much as a defense only of French Muslims [or those of Muslim background] against racism, Otherism, etc, but as a call to defend the Republic from scapegoating and dividing itself. Plenel brilliantly points out the hypocrisies of state policies and public pressures for Muslims [and the Roma, et.al] to "assimilate". But by this it is meant that the Other must completely mask or deny their different roots and experiences. More than just the headscarf, any semblance of difference must be eradicated in this sense of "assimilation". But with the Other by default not seen as French anyway, even if they are 3rd or 4th generation French descendants of Algerians, for example, they lose either way: they will always be seen as foreign no matter how much they try to be "French". Plenel isn't writing in any postmodernist, cultural relativist fashion here. He instead makes the case that REAL French values, namely democracy, liberty, and real secularism [laicite, which per Plenel wasn't for the state to be anti-religious but to be religious NEUTRAL], etc., are the real targets of this new campaign to demonize the Other. Civil liberties are very much in danger with the growth of state surveillance, and the 1% continue to trash the country almost unabated. Yet whilst liberties erode and the 1% ruin the economy, education, and development of the middle and working classes, Muslims and other Others are being used to divert attention. As part of this includes the revival of the myth of the Clash of Civilizations which is now deemed top priority by both left and right governments, at the expense of unemployment, healthcare, and education initiatives. And whilst this clash of civilizations myth is perpetuated, the state continues to fund and aid the most reactionary and fundamentalist regimes in the Mideast, namely Saudi [which France supplies much weaponry to]. All of these contradictions lead to France being at war with itself, essentially. There is more to this book than just criticism of Islamophobia [which actually takes up little of the book]. In fact, Plenel says this book could have easily been called "For the French". That may have been a better title, but the book is worth the read. No, this isn't some Islamist-apologist book or tract by a Regressive Leftist. It is a call for real universalism, secularism, and for liberty.

A piercing denunciation of Islamophobia in France, in the tradition of Emile Zola At the beginning of the twenty-first century, leading intellectuals are claiming There is a problem with Islam in France, thus legitimising the discourse of the racist National Front. Such claims have been strengthened by the backlash since the terrorist attacks in Paris in January and November 2015, coming to represent a new common sense in the political landscape, and we have seen a similar logic play out in the United States and Europe. Edwy Plenel, former editorial director of Le Monde, essayist and founder of the investigative journalism website Mediapart tackles these claims head-on, taking the side of his compatriots of Muslim origin, culture or belief, against those who make them into scapegoats. He demonstrates how a form of Republican and secularist fundamentalism has become a mask to hide a new form of virulent Islamophobia. At stake for Plenel is not just solidarity but fidelity to the memory and heritage of emancipatory struggles and he writes in defence of the Muslims, just as Zola wrote in defence of the Jews and Sartre wrote in defence of the blacks. For if we are to be for the oppressed then we must be for the Muslims.

Thank goodness for this humane, civilized and morally brave book. It speaks important truths which these days are much too rarely heard. Peter Osborne A powerful call to address the empathy deficit and intellectual poverty which underlies the obsessive Islamophobia of much French public discourse. Noting that Islamophobia now performs the cultural function once assigned to anti-Semitism, For the Muslims is a polemic against indifference. Plenel resurrects France's heritage of critical thought to call on his fellow citizens and others to develop a competing imaginary to the one established by rampant xenophobia. Priyamvada Gopal An important book about one of the most pressing issues facing modern Europe. Insightful, historically grounded and detailed, its required reading. Murtaza Hussain An urgent and necessary warning cry against hatred and the politics of fear and indifference that fuels it. From the Dreyfus affair to the aftermath of the Paris attacks of 2015, Plenel shows how the normalization of a far-right narrative of rejection, exclusion and otherness will have consequences for us all. Simon Hooper About the Author Edwy Plenel is an award-winning radical journalist, former Editorial Director of Le Monde, essayist and founder of the independent journalism platform Mediapart. Known for his investigative work challenging the actions of the French state, he is the author of several books, including The Struggle for a Free Press.