From Fatwa to Jihad – The Rushdie Affair and its Legacy by Kenan Malik.
Atlantic Books 2009.

Those of us who recall the furore that erupted around Salman Rushdie's novel The Satanic Verses will recall their shock at its public burning in Bradford, and the sense of disbelief shared by many that anyone could get worked up about the content of a book! But worked up many Muslims did get, either genuinely or as a result of some sustained and careful rabble-rousing, and the fatwa of the late Ayatollah Khomeini served to enshrine the incident in popular memory, change Rushdie's life forever, and irrevocably alter the way secular and religious non-Muslims began to view the Abrahamic faith with which they shared their countries and their lives.

From Fatwa to Jihad tells the story of the 'Rushdie Affair' in minute detail and then proceeds to look at the effect of The Satanic Verses on the Islamic World as a catalyst to extremism and radicalism, changing individual Muslim communities and their leadership irrevocably and setting a new and dangerous path for disaffected Muslim youth to follow.

Kenan Malik, who is a broadcaster and academic as well an author, interviews many involved at the time with the Rushdie affair, some of whom maintain their views of twenty years ago and others who believe that in its reaction to the book the Muslim community harmed itself and achieved nothing that was positive.

From Fatwa to Jihad is divided into 6 chapters: Satanic delusions, from street-fighters to book-burners, The rage of Islam, Bargains, resentments and hatreds, God's word and human freedom and Monsters and Myths. There is an introduction entitled How Salman Rushdie changed my life as well as notes and an excellent bibliography.

This is an essential read for anyone who seeks to understand the transformation in Islam that has taken place in the last 20 years, and especially the role that the publication of The Satanic Verses played in it. It is also extremely well written, pacy and highly informative.

Rabbi Dr Charles H Middleburgh