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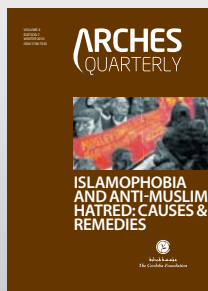
ISLAMOPHOBIA AND ANTI-MUSLIM HATRED: CAUSES & REMEDIES



مؤسسة قرطبة

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Cultures in Dialogue.

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Cover image: a segment of The Battle of Cable Street Mural in Muslim-concentrated Shadwell neighbourhood in East London, which was created by artist Dave Binnington. The mural stands as a powerful symbolic reminder of anti-fascism in the East End. On 4th October 1936, local people stopped Oswald Mosley and his British Union of Fascists marching through Cable Street, then a mainly Jewish area. A slogan from the Spanish Civil War, a popular anti-fascist cause of the time, was widely used: "They Shall Not Pass - No Pasaran!"

In June 2010, people of all faiths and none, unions and civil rights groups, young and old, marched passed Cable Street in a powerful stand against the racist, anti-Muslim English Defence League (EDL) who threatened to attack The East London Mosque, and create tensions in the community. The coalition, United East End, claimed this was the first time the EDL have been forced to call off a planned demonstration in the area.

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THE CORDOBA FOUNDATION

Cultures in Dialogue.

FOUNDED IN 2005, The Cordoba Foundation (TCF) is an independent Public Relations, Research and Training unit, which promotes dialogue and the culture of peaceful and positive coexistence among civilisations, ideas and people. We do this by working with decision-making circles, researchers, religious leaders, the media, and a host of other stakeholders of society for better understanding and clearer comprehension of inter-communal and inter-religious issues in Britain and beyond.

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The world today is replete with political issues. What some may see as an inevitable clash between the West and the East, the Cordoba Foundation (TCF) works to ensure that such a clash is neither inevitable, nor necessary.

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FROM THE EDITOR

IN this winter issue, Arches responds to the rising levels of anti-Muslim hatred across the globe. Commonly referred to as 'Islamophobia', the term is not without debate, as clearly discussion abounds with respect to its origins and definition. Contributors from multiple disciplines discuss, among other things, the conceptual challenges posed by Islamophobia as a term as well its origins and instrumentalisation; the location of Islamophobia in the racial imperial-colonial matrix, and the contrasting traits of this phenomenon with anti-Semitism and Hispanophobia, respectively.

Far from it being an abstract intellectual exercise, Islamophobia or anti-Muslimism is a reality today.

Insights from a number of European countries as well as America, Canada, India, Turkey and South Africa reinforce the incontrovertible fact that far from it being an abstract intellectual exercise, Islamophobia or anti-Muslimism is a reality today. Recent studies attest to the proliferation of this pervasive ideology of hate resulting in attacks on Muslims in the West at different levels of society.

Not wishing to overstate the problem, facts on the ground and statistics in this issue of Arches speak for themselves. In France, for example, a Muslim is said to be aggressed every three days whilst every three weeks, a mosque is profaned or vandalised. In Britain, British Muslims and an increasing number of mosques face a high level of threats and

intimidation – the example of a Muslim woman punched and called a “terrorist” in front of her petrified daughter is deeply alarming. In the Netherlands, the fascist Geert Wilder’s party won a considerable number of seats and signed an alliance with the Liberals, granting him legitimacy to seek actual power in the next election.

In Germany, Egyptian-born Muslim, Marwa El-Sherbani was brutally murdered in a Dresden courtroom while giving testimony against her neo-nazi abuser. More than one fourth of American Muslims surveyed by a number of public opinion polls reveal personal experiences of Islamophobia, or know someone who has experienced it. In Australia, over half of schoolchildren in Victoria viewed Muslims as terrorists, and two out of five regarded Muslims as “unclean”. In Sweden, Muslims who practice their faith are depicted as “radicals” thanks to the likes of Sweden Democrats party chairman Jimmie Akesson, who warned that Islam was “our biggest foreign threat since World War Two”. In Poland, the mainstream media and some politicians aggressively attack the small community of Muslims depicting them as the new ‘folk devil’. In Denmark, the Danish newspaper Jyllands-Posten published cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad depicting him as a terrorist, insulting Muslims the world over, then escalated further following the release of Dutch film *Fitna*, ridiculing the Qur’an. In India, violence and anti-Muslim policies such as the Ayodhya Judgement (which legitimised the Babri Mosque destruction) target and subjugate Indian Muslims.

France and Belgium introduced laws banning the wearing of the *burqa* and *niqab* in public spaces, and Switzerland banned the construction of new mosque minarets. The list can go on, but the picture emerging from

all this, as Liz Fekete, author of *A Suitable Enemy*, aptly surmises is we are witnessing a “new McCarthyism -- only today the ‘Islam scare’ is replacing the ‘red scare’.

Whilst some continue to debate the appropriateness of the term Islamophobia, and others conflate it with “Islamic extremism”, inferring that Islamophobia ‘hands a propaganda coup to Islamists’ or that it stifles legitimate criticism of Islam and Muslims, Chris Allen, author of *Islamophobia*, is right to reject this thesis as being extremely dangerous. This is because it indirectly legitimises indolent stereotypes such as equating all Muslims as terrorists, thus pandering to fascist groups and sections of the media who resort to this line of thinking in order to make deceitful attacks on Islam.

We are witnessing today a dramatic shift of racist and intolerant views from the far right nationalists to the mainstream parties throughout Europe. Views and rhetoric such as these no longer target racial groups but religious institutions, Islamic movements and their leaders in the pretext of freedom of speech, laïcité, and fighting extremism. As Nasar Meer and Tariq Modood highlight, Muslims who complain about Islamophobic attacks are frequently challenged, criticised and their status as victims denied. This is not helped by society that increasingly views anti-Muslim prejudice as a socially-acceptable norm; which co-chairman of the Conservative Party, Baroness Warsi lamented had “passed the dinner-table test” in Britain.

Conversely, the Muslim civil society has to accept responsibility for its part in contributing to the rise of Islamophobia by a) not engaging adequately with wider society in fighting extremism and injustices across the board rather than only those which concerns Muslims, and b) the reprehensible actions and rhetoric of extremists within the community who are equally guilty of Westernophobia. Although Europe is considered a bastion of Islamophobic racism, we should not lose sight of racism amongst Muslims and racist policies pedalled by Muslim governments. And by exaggerating the anti-Muslim hysteria and its relationship with colonialism and

imperialism, we risk giving credence to the ‘Clash of Civilisations’ thesis.

South African ambassador to the US, Ebrahim Rasool, cautions fellow Muslims not to always advance the victim mentality, because ‘it gives... the license for self-pity and passivity’. Citing difficulties suffered by South African Muslims in the past, such as when the practice of Islam was punishable and Islam considered a “false religion”, these attacks were part of the general yoke of intolerance and brutality, he explained. It is upon Muslims to realise and accept this reality, not meaning to accept the consequences of Islamophobia such as exclusionary and discriminatory practices, and become ‘agents in a struggle for human rights and dignity’ which is built on solidarity and co-operation with others.

The above are some afterthoughts from an excellent collection of contributions in this issue of *Arches*, drawing on the contributors’ expertise and experiences in relation to anti-Muslim hatred. The contributors further attempt to situate the problem of Islamophobia in its respective context, both geographical and conceptual, providing explanations as to the causes and most importantly offering remedies.

Thank you, and enjoy reading!

***Abdullah Faliq**
HEAD OF RESEARCH
THE CORDOBA FOUNDATION

*Abdullah Faliq, who helped set-up The Cordoba Foundation (TCF), edits *Arches* as Head of Research for the Foundation. In 2001, he helped launch the “Declarations of European Muslims” by the Grand Mufti of Bosnia Dr Mustafa Ceric. Faliq studied Arabic and conducted research in Egypt, Jordan, Sudan, Palestine & Bosnia as part of his MA and doctoral studies specialising in Arab political Islam and British Muslims. Active in the British Muslim scene since the 1980s, he is currently a trustee of the London Muslim Centre and Deputy Secretary-General of the Islamic Forum of Europe.



FOREWORD BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

ONE of the most contentious terms to have emerged in recent years is that of 'Islamophobia'. Literally translated as the irrational fear of Islam, many argue that no such phenomenon exists – and instead they accuse those who insist that it does, of playing victim and pleading for 'special treatment'.

Yet, as much as one can argue for or against, there is no escaping the reality that since the events of 9th September 2011 in New York, and particularly after the London bombings on the 7th of July 2005, Muslims throughout the United Kingdom, the United States of America, across Europe and in most countries where they exist as a minority group, have come under scrutiny and in some cases, blatant attacks.

A recent report published by the European Muslim Research Centre, titled *Islamophobia and Anti-Muslim Hate Crime: UK Case Studies* offers a disturbing coverage of recent attacks against Muslim individuals, their homes, mosques, Islamic centres and leaders. Meanwhile, a number of recent publications including *Islamophobia* authored by Birmingham University Research Fellow Chris Allen and *Islamophobia: The Challenge of Pluralism in the 21st Century*, edited by Professor John Esposito and Dr Ibrahim Kalin and a number of others, all confirm the bleak reality that however we wish to coin it, attacks against Muslims in Western countries are a reality.

Similar to virtually every incident of social, political, religious and cultural discrimination, the West has played host to over the past two centuries or so, this phenomenon is played out to the tune of numerous political, social and economic failures, for which scapegoats are required. In a recent conference held in London, Rabbi Lee Wax eloquently read out 100 year-old headlines of British newspapers

that at the time chose Britain's Jewish community as its favourite scapegoat, and alarmingly pointed out the striking similarities between Jews and today's headlines targeting the Muslim community.

As was then, the country is going through major political and economic advents and the advocates of the campaign re-assure themselves that it is not racist to quiz their target community on its religious features, on its loyalty, its identity, and to demand that it 'integrates' and proves itself worthy of equal footing in contributing towards the present and future of the country.

Across the Atlantic, the summer of 2010 proved an extremely hot season on more than one front. The public debate about whether an Islamic community centre should be allowed to stand a few blocks away from Ground Zero, as well as the Pastor Terry Jones 'Burn a Qur'an Day' story, spoke volumes of the problem American society, media and political leadership had in comprehending the reality of a modern society set-up of various races, ethnicities, faiths and creeds.

There is little doubt that global terrorism, the rise of far-right narratives and conflicts within and imposed upon the Muslim world add to the confusion and state of fear and apprehension faced by society as a whole. But matters are not helped by reactionary statements from political leaders declaring the faults and demise of multiculturalism. Repeating the old mantra that Europe was built upon a Judeo-Christian heritage and that it derives its legacy therefrom is far from helpful as much as it is far from the truth. To condemn Europe's 40 million or so Muslims as aliens and carriers of a foreign culture and mentality, and to deny centuries worth of glorious Muslim contribution to Europe's culture, art, innovation, science and

Islamophobia is a tragic reality and a test to the West's claim to upholding the most noble of human values.

philosophy fly in the face of calls to integrate and Europe's claims to equality, freedom and human rights.

Islamophobia is a tragic reality and a test to the West's claim to upholding the most noble of human values. Already, we have failed when allowing laws to pass prohibiting Muslim women from dressing as they wish in France and building their mosques in a particular aesthetic form similarly to other places of worship in Switzerland. It is a phenomenon that will, if allowed to spread unabated, leave none unaffected. It was true in the case of anti-Jewish and anti-Black attacks in the last century, and it will prove true if anti-Muslim sentiments are given free reign to expand today.

***Anas Altikriti**

CHIEF EXECUTIVE
THE CORDOBA FOUNDATION

*Anas Altikriti, CEO of The Cordoba Foundation, is an internationally accredited translator and interpreter by profession and a postgraduate lecturer in the same field. He was a leading figure of the British Anti-War Movement and Chair of the 2-million Iraq demonstration in February 2003. Altikriti helped successfully negotiate the release of Western Christian peacemakers taken hostage in Iraq in 2005. He is a media commentator and writer in Arabic and English, as well as an advisor and consultant to numerous UK and international organisations on Muslim politics, East-West relations, combating extremism, negotiations, and dialogue. He is former President of the Muslim Association of Britain, a founding member of the British Muslim Initiative and an advisor to the European Muslim Research Centre. Altikriti is also completing a PhD in Political Studies at the University of Westminster, London.



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The world of politics and lobbying is in flux. Political polls have not been so capricious since the mid-1990s. Britain has entered an almost-unheard of coalition government. Islamophobia is at a record high; and many Muslims remain confused as how best to 'represent' themselves on the political stage. Just who, and what, do you talk to if you want to effect and influence political change and development? This is the art of 'lobbying'. Whatever government or party is in power; whatever administration rules your local council; whoever is your MEP, you have to ensure they fight in your best interest. That is not just the preserve of expensive Westminster lobbying firms. There are many ways in which you, too, can influence politics.

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Islamophobia and Terrorism: Impediments to the Culture of Peace

*PROFESSOR EKMELEDDIN IHSANOGLU

THE phenomenon of Islamophobia has markedly surfaced at the beginning of the twenty first century, and has shown us how easily bigotry against minority groups can resurface to pit one part of the humanity against the other -- thus creating cultural fault-lines on a global scale. Recently, we all have witnessed how the unthoughtful or ill-mannered actions of only a few or even a single individual can stir up provocations across the

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globe. As a matter of fact, we are witnessing with distress and dismay the snowballing effects of sowing seeds of hatred by extremists across the board.

The increasing manifestations of Islamophobia bring to our attention a mutual realization of inadequate knowledge about nations and cultures. It also shows the dire need for forging a new relationship and understanding through respect for cultural diversity. Past experiences and history have taught us that the way we address the issues of "the other" determines the dynamic of relations between nations and can lead either to stability or confrontation, depending on the way we choose to tread. Not long ago, the fault-lines between nations used to be drawn on military pacts, political ideologies or geographical entities. Today, the confrontation lines are mainly drawn

on cultural considerations. This fact makes confrontations deeper and more intricate because cultures are profoundly embedded in the psyche of individuals. It also brings forth further the reality that as the technology advances and globalisation makes our world ever more smaller, the potential ability of an individual as well as of communities to do both good and evil exponentially increases. Naturally, it should be our common aim to channel such an increasing potential to fulfill the needs of humanity in a way that would sustain peace and security around the world.

The suggestion that Islam is a problem for humanity as it is claimed in the hateful discourse of Islamophobia is to negate Islam's sublime values of peace, compassion, and tolerance, and all the noble virtues that Islam has stood for throughout fourteen centuries of tolerant, brilliant and radiant civilisation. Suffice to say that the baseless accusations try to ascribe bad and vicious deeds committed by a handful of misguided and crime-prone individuals to the entire populations of the Muslim world. This line of thinking reflects and embodies irrational and vicious prejudices on the part of disseminators. For the rest who are attracted to this thinking, it reflects ignorance. The danger in this sort of labeling is that it renders Muslims who are one fourth of the world's population, suspects and outcasts, and tries to lump all Muslims into one category. Those very allegations in fact demonstrate how important it is to produce and spread the true knowledge about Islam and Muslim communities.

The Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC) is convinced and determined to work hard and continues to maintain its strong belief that diverse cultures should complement and enhance one another. Tolerance, stability and prosperity are nurtured only when nations and cultures communicate and respect each other. I should indicate that when the OIC

calls for joint action against Islamophobia, it does not negate the existence of hatred against

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other religions -- and it extends its hand of cooperation to counter other manifestations of religious intolerance, including anti-Semitism and Christianophobia. The OIC also believes that eliminating misperceptions about Western and other world cultures should also be considered as an important step in fostering a global culture of peace.

The steady rise of Islamophobia continues to threaten global as well as regional peace, security and stability by impeding efforts to promote a multicultural approach founded understanding, respect and tolerance of religious diversity. Muslims in the West are going through a difficult time wherein their fundamental rights are being violated and eroded in the wake of an upsurge in Islamophobia.

Deliberate and systematic denigration of Islam in the form of campaigns of incitement to religious hatred targeting Muslims entail negative consequences for every Muslim individual, be it in the West or elsewhere, starting from having adverse impact on their dignity and identity. However particularly for the Muslim communities and individuals in the West, the frequency of hate speech paves the way for manifestation of hatred towards them in various forms including verbal and physical attacks and leads to increased discrimination and isolation in the society. The negative context thus created makes it easier to raise questions even on aspects related to enjoyment of their most basic human rights, including freedom of religion. Therefore, the ongoing intensification of the

overall campaign of vilification of Islam is a matter of deep concern for the OIC.

I must admit that unfortunately we have been observing a kind of reluctance at the official level in the European Union institutions to cooperate with the OIC in order to jointly tackle the rising trend of intolerance and discrimination against Muslim individuals and communities. As for the position of the United States of America, we appreciate the visible concern of the US Administration and its principled position regarding the need to address the problems stemming from the rise of Islamophobia, even though the rhetoric of some US politicians is as alarming as some European ultra-rightist, xenophobic political personalities.

On the other hand, as the entire international community is fighting the scourge of radicalisation and terrorism, the OIC firmly believes that the effort to combat terrorism must be part of an overall endeavor premised on building a better world based on cultural diversity -- a world in which human dignity, human rights and fundamental freedoms are fully respected. It should be clear to all that terrorism has no religion because it aims to spread enmity and destruction throughout civilized societies.

We certainly offer our cooperation to all our partners in the fight against the scourge of extremism and terrorism. At the same time, the reasons of the prevailing aroused sentiments and discussions in Western societies are understandable to some extent when governments and societies have to deal with increasing attempts or actual occurrence of terrorist acts targeting their societies on their own soils. There is no doubt that criminal attacks of the terrorists have been and should be denounced by all Muslims as they are in total rejection and denial of the teachings of the noble Islamic faith. Actually those who are behind the heinous crimes that have been committed in the name of Islam are the enemies of Islam and true Muslims.

Yet, if hate-mongering of a small but growing minority against Muslims achieves cultivating a permanent hatred and negative attitude by the majority of the Western societies under the manipulations of an opportunist minority of politicians, who are trying hard to transform

the fears and concerns of their societies into lasting misperception and hatred of Islam and Muslims, then it would play only to the hands of the small minority of terrorists. These terrorists would in turn hijack the noble religion of Islam for their evil deeds and we would be in for a protracted plague. The political leadership of the OIC and Western States should not allow for such an eventuality to transpire.

The magnitude of the challenge certainly requires us to increase our cooperation and act in a more coordinated manner. This in turn certainly necessitates first empathy towards one another and a real mutual understanding about the root causes of the complex phenomenon that we are challenged by.

*Professor Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu of Turkey is the first by-vote-elected Secretary General of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC), who took office as the ninth Secretary General in January 2005. Since his association with the OIC from 1980 as founding Director General of the Research Centre for Islamic

History, Culture and Arts (IRCICA) in Istanbul, he has been instrumental in generating awareness about Islamic culture and civilization across the globe through research, publishing, and congresses in various fields, including history of arts and sciences, intercultural relations and dialogue.

Ihsanoglu received his B.S. at Ain Shams University (Egypt) in 1966 and a Master's degree in Chemistry in 1970. After completing his doctorate at Ankara University, Turkey in 1974, he completed post-doctoral research at the University of Exeter in 1977.

He was the professor and founding Head of the Department of History of Science of Istanbul University, later becoming the Founding Chairman of Turkish Society for History of Science and ISAR Foundation. Between 2001 and 2005, Ihsanoglu further served as President of International Union of History and Philosophy of Science (IUHPS).

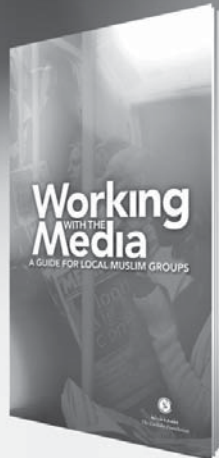
Ihsanoglu has a number of books to his name, including a 15-volume, *Science, Technology and Learning in the Ottoman Empire: Western Influence, Local Institutions, and the Transfer of Knowledge* (2004, Ashgate Variorum), which is the culmination of 25 years of work with colleagues.

For his outstanding work and contribution in different fields Ihsanoglu has received a plethora of awards – the UNESCO Koyré Medal, the Alexandre Koyré Medal (International Academy of History of Sciences, Paris), AMSS 2007 Building Bridges Award; conferred with high level state medals by Turkey, Egypt, Jordan, Azerbaijan, Russian Federation and Malaysia.

MEDIA GUIDE

Working with the Media is designed to help individuals and local groups better meet their media and communications needs. It introduces the media, outlines how journalists operate and offers practical advice for spearheading a proactive public relations (PR) strategy. The Guide is written for local Muslim groups and Mosques who are unfamiliar with working and dealing with the media.

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Contemporary Islamophobia Before 9/11: A Brief History

*DR CHRIS ALLEN

THERE is little doubt about the significance and impact of the events of 11 September 2001 (9/11) and the way in which they shaped and determined how Islam and Muslims have since been viewed. At whatever level – national, political, institutional, community – the legacy of 9/11 is never far from view. So too is there little doubt about the way in which the events of 9/11 have influenced, and to some degree, fed the growing spectre of Islamophobia and with it, the rising incidence and proliferation of anti-Muslim hate crimes. Routinely derided and far from being given the credence and seriousness of concern such a dangerous phenomenon clearly demands, Islamophobia is sometimes mistaken as consequential: consequential of events such as 9/11 and other terrorist atrocities. Perceiving it in this way allows detractors to make simplistic assumptions: stop the terrorism and the Islamophobia will stop also. Sadly, such simplistic views are far from helpful, not least because the thinking and rationale underpinning them is undeniably flawed.

Of course, Islamophobia existed as much on the 10 September 2001 as indeed it did on the 12 September 2001 also. As the *European Union Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia* (EUMC) noted in its report on Islamophobia across fifteen European states following the attacks on New York and Washington, “Much of what occurred post-September 11 drew heavily upon pre-existent manifestations of widespread Islamophobic and xenophobic attitudes”.¹ As it went on, 9/11 merely “gave a pre-existent prejudice a much greater credibility and validity”.² Using this as a starting point, this paper sets out a short history of contemporary Islamophobia prior to 9/11. Beginning with the evolution and development of Islamophobia both as a name – or neologism as some sources prefer – and as a concept, this paper offers a brief overview of contemporary Islamophobia,

mapping its birth, evolution and development, before considering how emergent theories and discourses have been subsequently shaped and determined.

Where and how then did ‘Islamophobia’ originate? Before addressing that question, it is worth explaining what is meant by the term ‘contemporary Islamophobia’. Put simply, this is Islamophobia as a phenomenon that is directed at *Muslims* by *non-Muslims* in the latter part of the twentieth century as it appeared and became understood and acknowledged in the European – primarily British – political spaces. Some, such as Ziauddin Sardar suggest that contemporary manifestations of Islamophobia are little more than a re-emergence of historical anti-Muslim, anti-Islamic phenomena.³ For him, “Islamophobia and prejudice against Muslims, has a long memory and still thrives...” where it “...resides so deeply in [the Western] historical consciousness”.⁴ Consequently, the term was both transitory and retrospective, functioning in much the same way as anti-Semitism: a descriptor that is able to be employed to refer to all historical and paradigmatic anti-Muslim, anti-Islamic phenomena. However, Sardar’s notion of Islamophobia is not widely recognised. Those such as Milton-Edwards suggest Islamophobia is historically constant and ever-present, seen today as it was at the time of the Crusades and at all other historical junctures. Most prominently, this can be evidenced through the ongoing dichotomous ‘Islam’ and ‘the West’ narratives.⁵ Others such as Dilwar Hussain⁶ have put forward the idea of a plurality of Islamophobias whilst others suggest that anti-Muslim, anti-Islamic phenomena are endemic in European and Western culture, functioning in cyclical periods of dormancy and intensification that reach epidemical levels following certain events, for example after 9/11, the events of the 7 July 2005 (7/7) or the train bombings

in Madrid.⁷

A more detailed theoretical interrogation of Islamophobia has recently shown that the phenomenon is neither consistent nor uniform and that whilst it may have a historical legacy, the nature and products of the phenomenon are shaped by the contemporary national, cultural, geographical and socio-economic conditions.⁸ With this as the preferred understanding, this article seeks to consider ‘contemporary Islamophobia’ – as an ideological phenomenon – that emerged in the latter decades of the twentieth century.

ROOTS OF THE PHENOMENON

It is widely believed that today’s ‘contemporary Islamophobia’ – as a concept and neologism – has its origins in Britain. This may not however be entirely true. Whilst the Oxford English Dictionary suggests that the term was first used in print in the American periodical, *Insight*, in 1991, it would now seem that the first usage was in France by Etienne Dinet and Slima Ben Ibrahim, when in 1925 they wrote, “accès de délire islamophobe”.⁹ Writing about the Prophet Muhammad, Dinet and Ibrahim did not necessarily employ the term in a way that reflects contemporary usage. Elsewhere, other competing claims also exist. Those such as Caroline Fourest and Fiammetta Venner claim that the term Islamophobia was used during the Iranian Revolution by the ‘Mullahs’ to describe Iranian women who refused to wear the *hijab* and less so, Muslim feminists and liberals: “‘islamophobie’ fut inventé – on ne le dit jamais – par des mollahs iraniens juste après la révolution islamique”.¹⁰ In addition to Fourest and Venner, Chahdortt Djavann¹¹ and Carla Amina Baghajati¹² offer similar affirmations, but as with the 1925 usage, here the concept of Islamophobia and the context within which it is being employed is different to how it is now. And most importantly, the way in which it is being investigated here. So whilst Fourest and Venner argue that this particular type of usage – as a means of describing *Muslims* frightened of Islam – was the premise from which it was re-contextualised by those such as al-Muhajiroun and the Islamic Human Rights Commission (IHRC) to name the fear of *non-Muslims* towards Islam and Muslims.

However, there is – aside from this single reference – little other evidence to suggest any interlinkage between the two.

Somewhat unsurprisingly, the coinage and origins of Islamophobia are also openly disagreed upon and so a number of competing stories are in circulation. Recorded in 1997 by the Hyde Park Christian Fellowship, the first theory suggests that Islamophobia as a term was first coined by a Muslim researcher at the Policy Studies Institute (PSI) in the late 1980s.¹³ At the same time though, rather more authoritative sources at the Runnymede Trust were claiming something quite different. Given that the term had already been used by the Runnymede Trust and had achieved some socio-political discursive resonance, the Hyde Park Christian Fellowship’s theory appears to have little credence. However, it is true that Tariq Modood worked for the PSI in the late 1980s. This is interesting because over half a decade later, a French source – via the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (‘EUMC’) – made a similar claim to that of the Hyde Park Christian Fellowship, specifically citing Modood rather than a mere ‘Muslim researcher’. Whilst Modood has used the term and was very close to being the first to use it in print, no evidence can be found to suggest whether he ever claimed coinage of the term himself. Attributing him with authorship therefore remains questionable.

Another theory about authorship is documented in the oral hearings of the House of Lords Select Committee on Religious Offences from October 2003. Here it states that Fuad Nahdi, one time editor of *Q News*, claims in his Curriculum Vitae that it was he who coined the term Islamophobia.¹⁴ It would appear that Nahdi allegedly passed the term onto the late Dr Zaki Badawi who,

The term Islamophobia most likely evolved out of the grassroots situation being faced by Muslims in the London Borough of Brent in the early 1980s.

as a co-opted member of the Commission on British Muslims and Islamophobia (‘the Commission’), subsequently suggested it to them thus culminating in the report of the same name. Somewhat contradictorily however, Badawi also claimed ownership in the same proceedings: “I am guilty because I am the one who coined the phrase”.¹⁵ From interviews and information gained about the Commission, it would seem that not all were aware of either Nahdi’s or Badawi’s claims.¹⁶

FROM ASIAN TO MUSLIM IDENTITIES

The term Islamophobia most likely evolved out of the grassroots situation being faced by Muslims in the London Borough of Brent in the early 1980s, where a distinct anti-Muslim prejudice was first being identified almost simultaneously with the emergence of a distinct ‘British Muslim’ identity.¹⁷ Such events do not however occur in a vacuum and so the socio-political context provides some explanation as to why this might have been so. As Yasmin Ali observes:

“At the beginning of the 1980s ‘communities originating in some of the countries of the old empire’ would have been expressed unselfconsciously as ‘black communities’...it was a usage predicated on the politics of anti-racism. As such ‘black’ became ‘hegemonic’ over other ethnic/ racial identities in the late seventies and eighties”.

Adding:

“The moment was not to last. From within marginalised communities and from without there was, in the 1980s, a steady assault upon this fragile hegemony”.

Since their arrival as one constituency of the mass migration to Britain from the West Indies, India, Pakistan and other Commonwealth countries following the Second World War, Muslim communities were, up until the 1980s at least, largely both politically and socially invisible not least because the first generation primarily defining themselves in terms of their country of origin albeit with a religious component. Initially therefore, Muslim communities both defined and described themselves largely in terms of their heritage, namely Pakistani, Bangladeshi,

Indian and so on -- a process that was reciprocated by wider society. Consequently, early Muslim communities became a part of the hegemonic collective that was known as the ‘Asian’ community.

As Muslim demographics grew larger and social and familial networks began to emerge, so a first generation of British-born Muslims duly emerged that grew up to identify themselves in quite different ways to their parents. For many, especially in the second and subsequent generations, the country of ancestral heritage was attributed much less emotional or cultural meaning. Increasingly important for these British-born Muslims therefore was the role and prominence of their religion: of Islam. Bhikhu Parekh voices this: “While the parents would have said that they were Muslims, their offspring say that they have a Muslim or Islamic *identity*...” adding, “...the difference is deep and striking”.¹⁸ Socially therefore, a transformation was occurring which saw a shift away from a homogenous ‘Asian’ identity to a newer and more prominent ‘Muslim’ equivalent.

LEGISLATING ‘RACE’, OVERLOOKING RELIGION

In parallel, so similar political processes and occurrences were also underway. As John Solomos writes, much of the political discourse that was associated with immigration and the newly established migrant communities had already undergone some shifting: from ‘colour’ in the 1950s and 1960s, to ‘race’ and ‘blackness’ in the 1970s and 1980s.¹⁹ From this backdrop, in the late 1960s and early 1970s an anti-racism movement began to develop that was largely based on the markers of race and colour that had come to dominate the political discourse which is not surprising. As Miles and Phizacklea argue, the anti-racism movement was a response to the underlying racism that was evident in the increasing legislative and political labelling that surrounded the control of immigration and the role of immigrant communities.²⁰ Because of the emphasis on colour, race and little else, so ‘Asians’ became politically overlooked and possibly even marginalised. As Modood has since written, it was the response to the enactment of the Race Relations Act

1976 (RRA76) that created and indeed insisted upon the consensus around the term 'black', first within a very specialist lobby but then in the wider socio-political spaces.²¹

Whilst this hegemonic term became integral to the discourse of race relations, for Modood it was a term that harmed and excluded Asians on the basis of what he describes as seven points of contention. First, that 'Asians' were sometimes black but also sometimes not; second, that the focus on 'colour' as equitable with 'blackness' meant that too narrow a conception of racial discrimination ensued that overlooked the cultural antipathy shown towards Asians and other 'non-black' ethnic communities. Thirdly, Modood argued that the term 'black' created a false essentialism where all non-whites are understood to have something in common. Robert Miles supports this by citing Paul Gilroy's *There ain't no black in the Union Jack* as a perfect example, where Asians were granted merely a 'walk-on' part.²² The term 'black', Modood also suggested, overlooked and obscured Asian needs despite them becoming an ever-growing population, adding that 'black' was also far too politicised that for Asians was little more than a 'political colour' that appealed only to a very limited aspect of their individual or community being. The final two arguments were that 'black' was non-conducive to ethnic pride and that there was a coerciveness by anti-racist advocates where the consent of Asians and others who were not culturally black became taken for granted and so negated their status and distinctive identity.

Resultantly, Modood put forward the argument that new identities were needed that broke the hegemonic grip of 'political blackness'. However, Modood did not suggest – at this time admittedly – the need for those included within the broad marker of 'Asian' to be further differentiated or indeed differentiable.

It is interesting that Modood identified how markers of 'Asian' – and much later 'Muslim' – became important at the same time that those communities began to identify themselves with their own political causes. Indeed, the situation may have been further exacerbated by the aforementioned RRA76 and the protection that it afforded on the grounds of

the statutory definition of 'racial group' which included race, colour, nationality and national or ethnic origin as markers of identification. However, neither religion nor belief was included as applicable markers and so those communities that were identified as or self identified as 'religious communities' were excluded. Case law under RRA76 did however extend the definition of 'racial group' in the early 1980s to include mono-ethnic religious groups but this only afforded protection to mono-ethnic religious groups, namely Jews and Sikhs.

Legislation therefore failed to afford protection to multi-ethnic religious groups such as Muslims and Christians, something that may have necessitated – legislatively at least – Muslims to begin to see themselves differently from 'black' and 'Asian' communities. It therefore became unlawful to discriminate against Blacks, Asians, Pakistanis, Bangladeshis, and so on, as well as Jews and Sikhs, but perfectly within the law to discriminate against someone on the basis of their being Muslim: a loophole that was exploited by far-right political groups following the attacks of 9/11. Legislatively therefore, Muslims were being earmarked as separate even if the communities themselves had not yet come to think about or perceive themselves in such ways. This was again furthered in civil anti-discrimination legislation when the first criminal offence was introduced on racial hatred in the Public Order Act 1986. Here, mono-ethnic religious communities were also protected from incitement of hatred. Consequently in a setting where a significant shift in prejudice and discrimination as well as emerging identities was underway, so an anomaly existed that made it legal to incite hatred against multi-ethnic religious groups such as Muslims.

NEW RACISM AND THE NEW 'OTHER'

To offer some underpinning, some explanation might be sought in terms of what Martin Barker has described as the emergence of 'new racism'.²³ Following the election of the Conservative government in the late 1970s, a shifting focus was identified in political discourse: one that moved away

from more traditional markers of race to newer and less legislatively protected markers based on cultural and religious difference. Unlike older forms of racism, 'new racism' was seen to exaggerate difference and the identification of difference in much less explicit ways, where the markers of difference were not seen to underpin explicit hatred and hostility but implicitly infer and establish direct challenges and threats: challenges and threats that were posed against 'our way of life'. Indeed, this demarcation of difference was firmly established on the basis that it had to be understood to be either unacceptable or incompatible with the 'norms' of society. That is, the norms relating to 'us' and definitely not 'them' and so reinforcing a somewhat necessary demarcation.

As such, in addition to the criticisms posited by Modood about Asians failing to be accommodated within the hegemonic concept of 'black', so too did the same anti-racism movement not only fail to recognise that there was a shift in identities becoming apparent within Muslim communities but they also failed to recognise a growing antipathy and hostility towards those communities that were increasingly being identified by markers of religious and cultural difference. The reality of such a shift towards religion and culture was either put to one side or outright rejected. Not only would it appear that the anti-racism movement overlooked the growing presence and significance of the Muslim community, but it also overlooked the subsequent political need for those communities to begin to self-identify more distinctly in order to address and tackle their own political causes and problems. In the context of this setting, it was only a mere handful of Muslim activists that recognised that a distinct anti-Muslim, anti-Islamic phenomenon was gaining ground and, more importantly, were responding to it. Whilst acknowledging some overlap with traditional racism clearly existed, a clear shift in markers of identification that exacerbated Muslim-ness was becoming increasingly apparent in the discrimination and hostility that was being identified at the grassroots level.

MUSLIMS MOBILISING

Acting as a grassroots catalyst, organisations

such as An-Nisa were duly established out of this process. Whilst the notion of a distinctive Islamophobia was rejected by many from within Muslim communities, some suggest that those such as Nahdi were at the forefront of grasping both the climate change and subsequent need to raise awareness.²⁴ At the same time, other groups such as the UK Action Committee on Islamic Affairs (UKACIA), that later spawned the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB), also began to discuss the phenomenon. Some commentators however suggest that organisations such as UKACIA and the MCB remained uncommitted to either openly acknowledge or refer to Islamophobia in the beginning for fear of any political implications both for themselves and Muslim communities. Nonetheless, this recognition of a distinct anti-Muslim, anti-Islamic phenomenon and the growing identification around a Muslim identity may also have been a catalyst for others too including the late Kalim Siddiqui's *The Muslim Manifesto: A Strategy for Survival*.²⁵ Published in 1990, the document's argument why such a manifesto was necessary was clearly set out:

"It is a matter of deep regret that the Government, all political parties and the mass media in Britain are now engaged in a relentless campaign to reduce Muslim citizens of this country to the status of a disparaged and oppressed minority. We have no alternative but to resist this invidious campaign. To do so Muslims in Britain must define their collective goals and move towards a consensus on major issues. The established network of 1,000 mosques and a wide range of organisations already serving the community must develop greater cohesion and dynamism. This manifesto attempts to provide a common text defining the Muslim situation in Britain. It also seeks to provide a framework for the healthy growth of all parts of the community as well as a common Muslim identity and purpose".²⁶

Acting as a precursor to the establishment of The Muslim Parliament a few years later, the manifesto was another measure against which the emergence of a distinct British Muslim identity – and voice – could be gauged. If the manifesto was correct, then because of the fact that Britain's Muslim communities

were feeling increasingly marginalised and under pressure, so it was vital that changes that were occurring were also subsequently responded to. Quite irrespective of whether the manifesto set out a convincing argument or not, both the document and the ensuing Muslim Parliament attracted extensive media coverage, the majority of which was overwhelmingly negative. Through this, the mediated form of Muslim identity was one that from the outset was overtly represented in negative frames and one that was highly politicised. Because it was also seen to go against the British establishment and the fabric upon which Britain's institutions and values were founded, so a Muslim identity in the public and political spaces not only acquired negative attributions from the start but so too did it appear to be against 'us'. Despite or indeed maybe because of the Parliament's controversial nature - seen by many to be mocking the laws and governance of the British state - its role and influence was limited, and by the time of Siddiqui's death in 1996, its intrigue and novelty value had significantly waned. Nonetheless, the impact it had at a time when the first recognition of British Muslim identities were becoming evident should be neither overlooked nor underestimated.

AN EMBRYONIC ISLAMOPHOBIA

In terms of the word Islamophobia being recorded in print, as mentioned previously, the Oxford English Dictionary suggests that it was first used in 1991 in the American periodical, *Insight*. Whilst this appears to be inaccurate by some 66 years, in its contemporary guise Modood also employed the term in 1991 despite having written about the issue of an anti-Muslim, anti-Islamic phenomenon a number of times in both 1990 and 1991. Unfortunately, he did not refer to it as Islamophobia on either occasion.²⁷ What is interesting though is that whilst Modood's usage referred to the socio-political British Muslim experience - 'a cultural sickness' as he put it²⁸ - for *Insight*, Islamophobia had a distinctly international context: "Islamophobia...accounts for Moscow's reluctance to relinquish its position in Afghanistan, despite the estimated \$300

million a month it takes to keep the Kabul regime going".²⁹ The journey from London grassroots Muslim experience to American publishing house internationalism remains a mysterious one, and no apparent explanations are available to explain any interlinkage between the two. In the British setting however, it is somewhat unsurprising that the first accredited use of Islamophobia in print reflected its socio-political origins.

BETWEEN CLOSED AND OPEN

A few years later in 1994, the first British non-Muslim acknowledgement of Islamophobia was made in the Runnymede Trust report, *A Very Light Sleeper: the Persistence and Dangers of Anti-Semitism*.³⁰ Incorporated under the heading, 'Anti-Semitism and other forms of racism', the report somewhat bizarrely preferred to overlook all 'other forms of racism' and focus solely on Islamophobia. It is worth noting that this report was the catalyst to establishing the *Commission on British Muslims and Islamophobia* (CBMI) - which was integral in the shaping of the definition and conceptualisation of Islamophobia in the public space. With the publication of its report in 1997, not only did the Runnymede Trust report significantly influence the way in which Islamophobia was understood but so too did it ensure that Islamophobia was afforded public and political recognition. Preceded by a consultation document in March 1997,³¹ it was the first source to posit a firm definition of Islamophobia: the "shorthand way of referring to dread or hatred of Islam - and, therefore, to fear or dislike all or most Muslims".³² Arguing that the report was necessitated by a new phenomenon that needed naming, it is without doubt that the report established the reality of Islamophobia in the political and public spaces.

At the heart of the report was the notion that Islamophobia could be understood through a series of 'closed' and 'open' views. So important were these views that the report changed its definition of what Islamophobia was: Islamophobia was the recurring characteristic of closed views that presented Islam as monolithic and static; as 'other' and separate from the West; as inferior; as enemy; as manipulative; discriminated

against; as having its criticisms of the West rejected; and where Islamophobia ultimately becomes natural. Whilst the closed views were useful in helping to identify Islamophobia in certain given situations, as for example in the media, they failed to explain how the

CBMI failed to offer a clear explanation... for a distinct and different Islamophobia... it preferred instead to focus on Pakistanis or Bangladeshis on the basis of 'race' or ethnicity.

phenomenon functioned and might in other equally important situations, for example in explaining how Muslims are discriminated against in the workplace, in education and in the provision of goods. With hindsight, this meant that the CBMI failed to offer a clear explanation and argument for a distinct and different Islamophobia. So instead of focusing on how Muslims were discriminated against, it preferred instead to focus on Pakistanis or Bangladeshis on the basis of 'race' or ethnicity.

So whilst the report established an understanding of Islamophobia – and indeed brought the term into the contemporary lexicon – it failed to gain the socio-political credence or credibility that was necessary. Consequently, those with influence saw the argument for a specific anti-Muslim anti-Islamic phenomenon as being weak resulting in there being no immediate legislative or other policy response ensuing. So the report also established a simple premise from which those who wanted to detract from or dismiss Islamophobia could easily do so by merely suggesting that if 'closed views' signified Islamophobia, then the 'open views' must signify Islamophilia.

CATALYSING MUSLIMS

In the wake of the CBMI report however, Muslim organisations became more proactive with the MCB beginning to voice its concern,

as did those others such as the IHRC. Potentially more relevant to mapping the history of Islamophobia was the establishment of Forum Against Islamophobia and Racism (FAIR) in 2001 and its niche remit of specifically tackling Islamophobia. A first of its kind in the British and possibly European settings, FAIR was initially set up to reflect the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) albeit with a greater emphasis on Islamophobia rather than relations.³³ Whilst the organisation had some initial success, many of its strategies were significantly disrupted following the events of 9/11, so soon after the organisation's launch. Because of this and a number of organisational factors, it must be said that the organisation struggled to identify a coherent direction, failing to fulfil its initial high expectations. Yet days before 9/11, both FAIR and the IHRC joined numerous other groups and non-governmental organisations in Durban at an event that has since become somewhat 'lost' in recent history. This 'lost' event included the formal recognition accredited to Islamophobia by the United Nations (UN), acknowledging it as a global phenomenon alongside racism and anti-Semitism not least because of its rapid proliferation in different parts of the world.³⁴ As the conference proceedings noted, Islamophobia was becoming increasingly normal,³⁵ a point reaffirmed by the British Member of Parliament, John Denham who denounced the cancer-like spread of 'normative' Islamophobia in British society days after.³⁶ In accrediting Islamophobia with international recognition, it might be expected that the UN would have afforded such an accreditation with some definition or meaning. Unfortunately, and like so many others before them, no definition or meaning of Islamophobia was put forward by the UN leaving Islamophobia once more open to interpretation and contestation.

APOCALYPSE

In the preface to *Culture of Fear: Risk-Taking and the Morality of Low Expectation*, Frank Furedi notes that following the attacks on the World Trade Centre in 2001, the *Los Angeles Times* wrote that the 'next big thing' was likely to be fear.³⁷ As he went on, in today's Western

societies the defining feature of this fear will be the “belief that humanity is confronted by powerful destructive forces that threaten our everyday existence”.³⁸ One of the consequences of this would be that any problem or challenge that subsequently emerged had the capability of being transformed into a matter of survival. Fear would continue to feed itself, creating the disposition to speculate and exaggerate about ever greater fears and threats that appear to be lurking just around the corner. Furedi goes on to illustrate the unquestioned acceptance that accompanies these processes of fear and threat by arguing that despite the fact that British newspapers were emblazoned with sensationalist headlines asking ‘Is this the end of the world?’ or declaring ‘Apocalypse’ a day after 9/11, few even thought about even the merest potential for exaggeration. On the contrary, the inference of fear and threat behind the headlines – and more so the wider discourse – were consumed as unquestionable realities.

These realities have catalysed Islamophobia in the past decade, making it more resonant and normalised across large swathes of contemporary society. But it is necessary to remember that these realities – informed by an ideological Islamophobia – did not magically appear as a result of these events alone. As this short history of contemporary Islamophobia has shown, these realities were already germinating in the fifteen years preceding these particularly spectacular atrocities. As the conclusion from the EUMC’s post-9/11 report noted, “...anti-Muslim sentiment has emanated from a vast array of sources and taken on a range of manifestations... built upon premises that were already pre-existent to the events of September 11”. Most pertinently, it added how that same pre-existent Islamophobia “...may even have been strengthened by them”. That 9/11 strengthened Islamophobia can surely be without question.

History, whether ‘short’ or long, ‘urgent’ or otherwise, clearly informs, shapes and provides a frame of reference for understanding. As Fred Halliday states, “the past provides a reserve of reference and symbol for the present”.³⁹ The pre-9/11 frame of reference is therefore important in trying to counter and

overcome the lazy assumptions that are today employed to dismiss and derogate the reality of Islamophobia. If the pre-existent forms of Islamophobia are forgotten, then attempts to combat and counter the reality of today’s post-

One of the biggest obstacles will be to overcome the widespread belief that Islamophobia is consequential of events such as 9/11.

9/11 Islamophobia will be made that much harder. This cannot be tolerated. As mentioned at the outset, this reality is routinely derided and is far from being given the credence and seriousness of concern that Islamophobia clearly demands. To do this, one of the biggest obstacles will be to overcome the widespread belief that Islamophobia is consequential of events such as 9/11. It is because of this that the ‘short history’ of contemporary Islamophobia is needed to be both reiterated and remembered. Perceiving Islamophobia as a mere post-9/11 phenomenon makes it easy for its detractors to make simplistic assumptions: stop the terrorism and the Islamophobia will stop also. Reiterating how Islamophobia preceded 9/11 – how it was already being recognised as a phenomenon that was extremely dangerous – will help to negate this lazy argument. Remembering this same short history will also serve as a timely reminder that – as the CBMI report put it some decade and a half ago – Islamophobia continues to remain ‘a challenge for us all’.

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With a book recently published entitled *Islamophobia* (Ashgate, 2010), Allen has published on that topic and other

key issues facing Muslim communities in Austria, Germany, the Netherlands, Spain and Switzerland. He was also the co-author of the seminal EUMC report into Islamophobia in Europe after 9/11.

Before taking up his current position, Allen held posts at the University of Wolverhampton, the Open University, and the Markfield Institute of Higher Education. He was also Director of Research and Policy for a charity that specialised in human rights and equalities issues.

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ISLAMOPHOBIA

CHRIS ALLEN



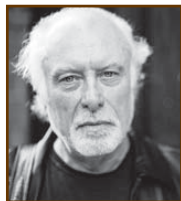
Islamophobia is the long awaited book that attempts to understand and contextualise one of the most dangerous prejudices in today's world.

British academic and writer, Chris Allen, explores the various attempts at defining and understanding Islamophobia as well as tracing its historical evolution to the present day, considering the impact of recent events and their aftermath especially in the wake of the events of September 11, before trying to understand and comprehend a wider conception of the phenomenon. A series of investigations thematically consider the role of the media, the contemporary positioning of Muslims throughout the world, and whether Islamophobia can be seen to be a continuum of historical anti-Muslimism or anti-Islamism, or whether Islamophobia is an entirely modern concept.

The book considers the issue of Islamophobia from the perspective of the local, regional, and global. The incidence of Islamophobia, and the magnitude of the phenomenon and its consequences, is one that warrants a greater investigation in the world today.

Islamophobia by Chris Allen.
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Islamophobia and Hispanophobia: How They Came Together in the Euro-American Imagination

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ISLAMOPHOBIA today is a consequence of coloniality and the racial classificatory logic whose historical foundation can be traced back to the end of the fifteenth century Spain and through the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Curiously enough, Hispanophobia today is also a consequence of coloniality and the same historical foundation. But today, it is not Spain who is calling the shots but the United States of America and the Western countries of the European Union, (France, Germany, England, Holland, Denmark, and Sweden). Islamophobia is projected toward both religious Muslims as well as to national Arabs, Indonesians and Maylasians while Hispanophobia is projected toward Latinos and Latinas in the U.S. Both phobias are not different and unrelated stories but they belong to the formation and transformations of coloniality, short hand for the colonial matrix of power, between 1500 and 2000.

To move ahead and to overcome the phobias that modernity needed to create in order to advance on the ideals of progress, development and homogeneity, it is necessary to engage in a global and multi-versal project of decoloniality. This is not a battle that will be won with guns, but through a radical transformation of knowledge and understanding. Islamophobia and Hispanophobia are possible because whoever controls knowledge can control the allocation of meaning and classify people in a hierarchical and moral order. Whoever controls knowledge today also controls money. Whoever is classified and does not control knowledge has to endure the consequences of being classified until the moment in which the rules of the game are laid bare and the epistemic injustices ruling hierarchical classifications are put to rest. Global decoloniality means to engage in epistemic endeavors to change the terms, not only the contents of the conversation. The task would

be difficult, however, while Muslims and the Hispanic world would continue to endorse an

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type of economy that needs phobias in order to subsist as such.

We have been invoked to respond to the increasing culture of fear and rejection of the specter of Islam that unfolded in recent years mainly in Europe and the U.S., but also in the Russian Federation. That is to say, in the regions of the world where the so-called Judeo-Christian spirit is entrenched in the government and in the media. There is no need to review the transformation of subjectivities and social consciousness in the West where Islamophobia is mainly located after 9/11. Literature, the mainstream media, independent media, etc., have responded profusely. Islamophobia—on the other hand—in the Russian Federation is not nourished so much by the collapse of the twin towers but by the conflict with Chechnya that precedes, of course, 9/11. We have here the traces of two interrelated and at the same time singular histories. And we shall treat them in their singularity rather than to subsume Islamophobia in Russia to “universal Western” history. Both histories, however—that of Christianity—Western Christians (Catholics and Protestants) and Eastern Orthodox Christianity in Russia—have a common origin and a moment of divergence. Although I am not familiar with

the particularities of Islamophobia in the Russian Federation¹, it think it is important to have it in mind to avoid the mirage that what happens in the West (that is, Western Europe and the U.S.) happens all over the world. Another story would be to take into account Islamophobia in South Asia and in East Asia, where Christianity made its inroad but it is not the dominant religion. I will limit my observations however to the locales where

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Christianity became increasingly hostile to Islam at the same time that it increased its complicity with Judaism and with the State of Israel.

In the United States, the spectre of Islam on a global scale has been accompanied by the rising spectre of Hispanophobia. Interestingly enough, Samuel Huntington has been the ideologue that connected both in two influential books timely published. The first one, that every one knows, *The Clash of Civilizations* (1995) was published after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The second one, *Who Are We? The Challenges of America's National Identity* (2004), was published after 9/11 which gave the US an excuse to intensify the politics of national security. A chapter of Huntington's second book was pre-published with the title of "The Hispanic Challenge." How are these two historical sequences and social imaginaries linked in the imperial global designs? Neither of the two historical sequences and social imaginaries is objective or a "natural happening" but invented and placed in a map of global designs. How then does the Western imperial imaginary manage to connect Islamophobia and Hispanophobia as a challenge (or a threat) to the West and to the U.S. respectively? I suggest some answers to these questions in the following pages.

There is a common history that links Western and Eastern Christians. The

division between Rome and Constantinople, between Western and Eastern Christians is well known in the history of Christianity and the division between them. Eastern Christianity unfolded collectively in Greece, in the Balkans and Eastern Europe. Western Christians (or Christendom) were located in the territory that would eventually become secular Europe. The differences between both were based in languages, theological principles and political projects. Religious divisions and distinctions were complemented by ethnicity. The Slavic peoples are defined by their linguistic attainment of the Slavic languages. They inhabited — since the 6th century, shortly after the emergence of Islam — what is today Central Europe, Eastern Europe and the Balkans. While in the West, the Latin language became the trademark of Christianity and with ethnicity. Anglo-Saxons occupied the territories to the West of Slavic peoples. For the people inhabiting the North East of the Mediterranean Sea (from Greece to Spain) there is not a single name: Hispania, Gaul, Italia (originally Vitalia). Thus, Western and Eastern Christians in religion and the variegated ethnicities that embraced Christianity in its various Eastern and Western versions all confronted the other religions of the book, Judaism and Islam.

The wide range of both Islam and Christianity defined a wide variety of interrelations, conflicts and cooperation, in the long stretch from India, to Central Asia, the Caucasus, Eastern and Western Europe, were people from Islamic or Christian persuasions and institutions founded on Christian or Islamic belief, interacted. All that began to change, radically, toward the end of the fifteenth century and the beginning of the sixteenth century. That change was introduced by Western Christians' expulsion of the Muslims from the lands of Christendom in Garnhata, in 1492. This singular event did not affect, immediately, the wide range of relations between Christians and Muslims from Spain to Central Asia and India. There was no CNN at the time to have simultaneous coverage of the immediate consequences of the events, as there was no photographer in Granada at the very moment that Christians raised the flag over the Alhambra!!

The conflict between Christianity and Islam became more focused in the Iberian Peninsula. The rapid rise of Castile from a Kingdom to a first world and capitalist empire, re-mapped the long history of conflicts between Muslims and Christians.



<http://www.stormfront.org/whitehistory/hwr23.htm>²

The conflict between Christianity and Islam became more focused in the Iberian Peninsula. The rapid rise of Castile from a Kingdom to a first world and capitalist empire, re-mapped the long history of conflicts between Muslims and Christians. It is to this radical qualitative transformation that I am now turning my attention.

Tariq Ali's opening of *The Shadows of the Pomegranate Tree*³ describes a week in early December of 1499, when Cardinal Francisco de Cisneros gathered in his house, in Toledo, a group of selected knights. A few days after that meeting, the knights with a few dozen soldiers began the ride to Garnhata. When the knights and soldiers arrived, they entered in the houses of the Muslim elites and confiscated their libraries. The next step was to make a pile of books in the central plaza except, as Cardinal Cisneros ordered a few books on medicine, astrology and architecture. At the end of the

day, when all the books were piled up, one of the soldiers ignited the fire. Toward the end of the opening chapter, a beggar jumps into the pile and immolates himself. "What is life without knowledge" are his last words. This opening chapter closes with Cardinal Cisneros walking around the ashes and celebrating the "final victory."

The novel tells the story of the increasing persecution of Muslim families in the next two decades. An additional aspect of the narrative relevant for my argument is one of the final chapters of the novel when a new character is introduced. An unnamed, red-headed, young and merciless Capitan leads one of the most violent scenes at this end of the novel, when the last Moors are expelled. The unnamed Capitan is described as a rootless soldier at the service of Cardinal Cisneros. The novel doesn't end here and has a closing chapter, parallel and symmetric with the opening one. In the closing chapter we guess that the rootless Capitan is some place else several years later, no longer in Garnhata, walking through hills of thick vegetation. He is not walking alone. An unnamed local guide is accompanying him. They stop at some point at the top of a hill, looking down and in admiration of the spectacle of an urban center, a majestic city built over and surrounded by water. "Do you know the name of this fabulous place", the Capitan asked to his assistant. The city is named Tenochtitlan and its King is Moctezuma... It is a very rich nation, Capitan Cortés" (Epilogue, 244), said the local guide.

Ali underlines, at the beginning and end of the novel, a structural and heterogeneous moment of history setting the stage for the foundation of the modern/colonial racial matrix. Islamophobia today, it is my contention, is the accumulation of meaning in building the rhetoric of modernity, from the expulsion of the Moors to the war in Iraq and the conflict with Iran. Isn't this too big of a claim, you may be wondering? However and paradoxically, the end of the novel pre-announces what cannot be predicted at that point: the emergence of Hispanophobia five hundred years later. Let's see.

In the sixteenth century, Christian theology offered a frame and a conception of the human

that took a particular turn in relation to co-existing civilizations (often called empires), like the Mughal and the Ottoman Sultanates; the Russian Tzarate; the Incanate in the New World. Christian theological classification overruled, with time, all the others and served as the basic structure for the secular classification of races in the late eighteenth and nineteenth century. In 1526, shortly after Charles I of Castile and V of the Holy Roman Empire came to power, Babar (one of the descendents of Genghis Khan) was on the road toward the foundation of the so-called Mughal Sultanate. His son Akbar was the Sultan of the Mughal Sultanate from 1556 to 1605, during almost the same years that Elizabeth I reigned in England, Philip II, son of Charles V, reigned in Spain (1556-1598). Suleiman the Magnificent extended his period of dominance and the pre-eminence of the Ottoman Sultanate (1520-1566), co-existing with the reign of Charles as Holy Roman Emperor (1519-1558) and King of Spain (1516-1556). While the Mughal and Ottoman Sultanates co-existed during the sixteenth century, with the emerging Spanish Empire, the Incanate in Tawantinsuyu and the Tlatoanate in Anahuac were destroyed. The former around 1548, twelve years after Francisco Pizarro set foot in the lands of Tawantinsuyu; and in 1520 the Tlatoanate, a few years after Hernán Cortés—the merciless read-head Capitan—moved from the coast of Veracruz to Tlaxcala and finally to Mexico Tenochtitlan.

Last but not least, the Russian Tzarate was on its way to imperial expansion, after Moscow was declared the Third Rome around 1520 and Muscovite Russia ended their tributary dependence with the Golden Horde. Thus, the point of departure of my argument is that current debates about whether “race” is an eighteenth and nineteenth-century discourse or whether in the sixteenth century “caste” was the proper system of classification, both assume that the classifications concocted by Renaissance men of letters or Enlightenment “philosophies” were universal. My point of departure is that the system of classification and hierarchies during the Renaissance or during the Enlightenment was a local one in this precise sense: people in India, China,

Ottoman, Tawantinsuyu, Anahuac, etc. certainly were part of the classification but none of them, except Christian theologians, had any say in the classification. The only possibility to those who did not participate in the imperial organization of knowledge, was either to accept how they were classified or to reclassify themselves for their own pride but

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with little effect in the organization of world power that was at stake. Let me explain.

Consequently, discourses of difference in the European Renaissance went hand in hand with discourses of fear.⁴ There is plenty of evidence of Christians in Spain but also in England. British travellers to the Hapsburg or Austro-Hungarian Empires expressed their strangeness and the discomfort vis-à-vis the Turks. The European Renaissance could be taken as a reference period in which several “empires” (a general name extended after the name of the Roman Emperor instead, for example, of Sultan or Tzar) coexisted although the discourses of Christianity and later on of political theory and political economy emerged as the dominant imperial discourses of Western capitalist empires. Racism went hand in hand with the historical foundation of capitalism as we know it today.

Take the Black Legend as a good and early example of the propagation of the Muslim “menace” from the Iberian Peninsula to the Atlantic countries, north of the Pyrenees. The Black Legend is, first and foremost, an internal conflict in Europe, and for that reason I will describe it as the imperial internal difference. But the Black Legend, initiated and propelled by England, shared with the Spaniards the Christian cosmology that distinguished itself from the Muslim, the Turks and the Russian Orthodox. That is, the Black Legend

contributed to the reinforcement of an imperial divide that was already carried out by the Spanish Kingdom of Charles I and the Spanish Empire under Philip II.

We all know it: in 1492, the Moors and the Jews were prosecuted in the Iberian Peninsula; Indians were “discovered” in the New World and massive contingents of African slaves were transported through the Atlantic. The “discovery” of the New World brought a different problem for Western Christians dealing with Muslims, Jews and Turks: if Jews and Moors were classified according to their belief in the wrong God, Indians (and later on Black Africans), had to be classified assuming that they had no-religions. Thus, the question of “purity of blood” acquired in the New World a meaning totally different from the one it had in the Iberian Peninsula. Nonetheless, the fact remains that with the double expulsion of Moors and Jews from the Iberian Peninsula, the New World brought a different dimension to the classificatory and hierarchical system. While in Spain Jews and Muslims identified themselves with those racialized labels, there were no “Indians” in the New World. To become “Indian” was a long and painful process for the diversity of people, the diversity of language, the diversity of memories and rituals from today’s Southern Chile to today’s Canada. And there were no “Blacks” either. Africans transported to the New World from different regions of the continent, had different languages, memories and religions, when all of them became Blacks in the New World. In other words, whatever the system of classification in the Iberian Peninsula and in the New World, that system of classification was controlled by Christian Theology as the overarching and hegemonic frame of knowledge. Neither the “Turks”, nor the Mughal or the Christian Orthodox in Russia had any say in it—even less, of course, Indians and Blacks.

Let’s take a closer look at this first drawing of the sixteenth century scenario in the Mediterranean and in the Atlantic. Three foundational articles for the logic of the articulation of “race” into “racism” at the end of the fifteenth and during the sixteenth century are: Anibal Quijano’s seminal article introducing the concept of

coloniality; (1992); Sylvia Wynter’s (1992); and the joint article by Anibal Quijano and Immanuel Wallerstein (1992).⁵ These three articles have shifted radically the perspective and conceptualization of race/racism from the internal history of European modernity (Foucault) to the interrelated histories of modernity/coloniality. Several common assumptions in all three arguments are: (a) the conceptual re-configuration of previous mutual conceptualizations between Christians, Moors and Jews; (b) the new configuration between Christians, Indians and Blacks in the New World; (c) the interrelations between (a) and (b); and — last but not least—(d) the translation of race into racism that took place in the sixteenth century that was—and still is—strictly related to the historical foundation of capitalism. The link between capital accumulation and a discourse of devaluation of human beings, was absent in co-existing sixteenth century empires like the Mughal, the Ottoman, the Aztec, the Inca, the Chinese and the emerging Russian one. The complicity between political economy and political theory, based on the racialization of human beings, languages, places, cultures, memories, knowledge, etc., is what characterizes modernity/coloniality. That is, the West and Eurocentrism. This was the “novelty” of the sixteenth century and the historical foundation of the racial colonial matrix whose logic is still at work

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today. The content has been changing but the logic remains quite the same. The Black Legend should be understood in this scenario as the historical foundation of a mild form of racism among European Christians and the North-South divide in Europe itself. But let's first explain the translation of race into racism and the historical foundation of modernity/coloniality.

"Race" was a concept that referred to a lineage, particularly applied to horses. Horses had, in Arabic history, a distinction they did not have among Christians. Thus, the fact that in Spanish dictionaries horses became the primary example of lineage — and still today, "pure blood" is an expression applied to horses with distinction that invaded the vocabulary in English and Spanish (*pura sangre inglesa*, *pura sangre española*)—is telling about the fact that animals were classified by "race" and people by "ethnicity" (Greek *nos*, Latin *natio*). "Ethnicity" refers to a lineage of people for whom blood is not the only factor (and I wonder when blood became a crucial factor to redefine ethnicity), but rather memories and common histories, languages, rituals, everyday practices, food, songs and music were elements connecting a community of people through history. However, when Spanish Christians defined "race" on the example of horses and added the slippage toward the human ("Race in [human] lineages is understood pejoratively, as having some Moorish or Jewish race..."), they planted the seed for the historical foundation of racism. Racism, in other words, is not a question of blood or skin color but of a discursive classification entrenched in the foundation of modern/colonial (and capitalist) imperial management. For racism is a managerial rather than a biological issue.

"Race" in the famous Spanish dictionary by Sebastian de Covarrubias, is synonymous with "blood" and implied "religion;" that is, the *wrong* religion. In the New World the situation was different. There were no people of the book. Christopher Columbus surmised that the people he met in the Caribbean were people with no-religions. Later on, Spanish missionaries in the powerful Inca and Aztec "empires" had difficulties in figuring out what kind of "religions" were those that were so different from the three religions of the book

they were so used to. They decided that indeed people in the Tawantinsuyu and Anahuac lived in spiritual idolatry and under guidance of the Devil. They assigned themselves the task of extirpating idolatry. Indians, therefore, were cast aside and placed in a different category from Jews and Moors. Thus, while in the Iberian Peninsula "conversos" and "moriscos" designated ex-Jews and ex-Moors converted to Christianity, in the New World the term "mestizo" was coined to identify an emerging population of mixed blood, Spanish (and Portuguese) and Indian. In the process, "Blacks" in the New World lost their European identification and relationship with the Moors. In fact, Moor was the identification of indigenous nomadic Berber people in North Africa that were converted to Islam around the 7th century. It came to mean Muslim people from Berber and Arab descent. The name itself, as is well known, comes from the Kingdom of Mauri (Mauritania), a province in the Roman Empire located in what is today North Africa and more specifically Morocco. Since the Mauri were dark-skinned people from Africa, Moor was extended to African populations beyond the North of Africa. As Fuche points out, in the growing vocabulary of the Black Legend, Spaniards were sometimes pejoratively designated as Moors and as Black. Shakespeare's "Moor of Venice" is indeed a Black person, a "blackamoor" (type this word in Google and click on <http://imageevent.com/bluboi/blackamoors>, and you will understand what I mean).⁶

Detached from that memory, Blacks in the New World became for European Christians (from the Spaniards to the British), relegated

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to slavery and as slaves their memories and spiritual belonging were not taken into account. In the New World, Blacks were not Moors but Ethiopians.⁷ In the Spanish and Portuguese colonies a new word was coined--“mulatto/a”--to designate people of new breed, a mixture of Spanish and Black.

Now we have the basic elements of the racial modern/colonial matrix. Christians placed themselves at the center—the epistemic privilege of Theology and the theo-politics of knowledge--both as members of the right religion and of the hegemonic theological discourse and as White Spaniards and Portuguese. On the one hand, we have Christians and confronted with them, Moors and Jews. On the other we have Spaniards and Portuguese and, confronted with them, Indians and Blacks. In between the first triad, we have “conversos/as” and “moriscos/as.” In between the second triad, we have “mestizos/as” and “mulattos/as”; the first presupposed religion. In the second religion is a non-existing entity and so Spaniards and Portuguese in the New World become the substitute of Christians in the Iberian Peninsula. When, in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, the concept of “race” is reconfigured, it is reconfigured in a secular frame. Thus, skin color began to replace blood as a racial marker. Consequently, the Peninsular triad is forgotten because it was based on religions and the second triad was forgotten because it happened in the colonies...and that was not part of European history! Thus, today, scholars revisiting the concept of race—most of them in England, the U.S., Germany and France-- start in the mid eighteenth century. H.F. Augstein’s edited volume *Race. The origins of an Idea, 1760-1850* (1996), has evidently no *idea* of what happened before 1760, as if the *idea* really emerged in the heart of Europe (England, France and Germany) without any relation to the European colonies since the sixteenth century. More to the point, and surprisingly funny, the first chapter from Buffon’s *Natural History* is on what? *On the natural history of the horse!* There is no indication, even for one second, that the *origin* of the modern/colonial *idea of race* emerged when the lineage of the horse was linked to Christian’s undesirable human beings, Moors

and Jews. This double blindness among intellectuals and scholars from and in the heart of Europe, are the (unintended) consequences of the Black Legend. How come?

What I have said up to this point was a sketchy summary of the idea of race/racism as it was articulated by Christians in the Iberian Peninsula. For them Theology was the master epistemic frame. Theology offered the tools to describe and classify people with the wrong religion and people without religion. Christianity was one among other world religions, but it was the right one. How was that decided? Because Christians made the classification on the basis of Theology as the supreme Archimedean point from which the entire world could be observed and classified. Christians who were also Castilians and Portuguese, in the New World, were among Indians and Blacks, but Castilians and Portuguese were superior to them. Thus, Theology allowed for a conceptualization of Humanity for which the Castilians and Portuguese were taken as the exemplars of what Human beings are supposed to be. But then came Elizabeth I, and with her the enactment of a discourse of race in England that was mainly directed toward the Spaniards. Of course British men of letters and officers of the State did not look at the Ottoman Empire with friendly eyes. The tribulations of Roger Ascham at the frontiers of Western Christians with the Ottoman Empire (*Reports and Discourse of the Affairs in Germany*, 1550) felt that the presence of The Turks was disturbingly felt are a telling sign of the fundamental self-inflicted fear to the difference. And with respect to the New World, England was more interested in following the Castilian example of empire building than in debating whether Indians and Blacks were Human beings. Thus, discourse of race in England, during the European Renaissance, does not contradict the Spaniards’ classification—on the contrary, they made the Spaniards the target, for Spaniards were the Moors, Jews, Indians and Blacks. In other words, the Black Legend is a racial discourse *internal* to Europe: the racialization of the Latin and Catholic South by the mouth and pen of the Anglo and Protestant North.

The logic underlining the discourses on

race during the European Renaissance went hand in hand with the historical foundation of capitalism as a new economic formation could then be summarized as follows. Bartolomé de Las Casas offered a blueprint of this logic in his classification of “barbarians.” An analysis of the logic of his classification shows a set of underlying principles. Long after the end of the Crusades, Christian Europe continued to be under pressure from the expanding Ottoman Empire. The Ottomans had impressive victories, including the capture of Constantinople, last outpost of the Roman Empire and spiritual center of Orthodox Christianity. Eventually Western Christians would mount effective counter-attacks and keep Ottoman forces out of central Europe, but for a long time the “Turkish Menace” would haunt European dreams. In the Iberian Peninsula, the racial difference between Christians, on the one hand, and Jews and Moors on the other, follow two different principles. The Turks and the Moors were not of course the same in any Christian mind. However, they knew that the Moors had an imperial Islamic past and the Turks an imperial and bright present. Thus, calling the Turk and the Moors barbarians was a way to construct the *external imperial difference*. By external, I mean that the difference was with non-Western non-Christians and therefore non-Europeans. And it was imperial

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because neither the Moors nor the Turks were colonized in the way Indians and Blacks slaves were. Moors were expelled from Europe and the Turks were already in what would become Eurasia. The Jews were expelled but most of them remained within Europe wherein, after the 16th century they would have a remarkable

presence and a tragic outcome: the Holocaust.

On the characterization of the Jews (people without an empire or state), Christian theologians constructed the *internal colonial difference*. As Aimé Césaire pointed out in his *Discourse on Colonialism*, Jews as the internal others (that is, marked by the internal colonial difference within European history itself—distinct from Indians and Blacks, defined by the external (to Europe’s own history and colonial difference) was one of the historical consequences of European discourse on race/racism during the Renaissance. What Western Europeans cannot forgive Hitler for—Césaire observed—are *not the crimes against man*, it is not *the humiliation of man as such*; but the crimes against the white man, the humiliation of the white man, and the fact that he applied European colonialist procedures which until then had been reserved exclusively for the Arabs of Algeria, the “coolies” of India and the “niggers” of Africa”;⁸ interestingly enough, to understand how coloniality of knowledge works, we should notice that even Césaire forgot about the Indians of the Americas).

Internal and external are not characterizations of an objective observer, from an Archimedean point of observation, who decides what is inside and what is outside in the objective reality of the world! Hegel’s dictum that the real is rational and the rational is real is an obvious imperial statement that remains in the history of philosophy as the intricate connection between a rationality that corresponds with one reality: the reality of the imperial logic of the Archimedean point from where races and racism were constructed and continued to survive. Both characterizations are a construction of Christian theological discourses that I am reporting in a free-indirect style. There is not, and cannot be, an Archimedean point at which the observer is not implied in the description of his or her observation. By describing the Christian point of view in a free-indirect style I am, at the same time, speaking from the perspective of those who have been “racialized”; and in doing so, I am attempting to de-colonize the structure and content of knowledge on race and racism that has been framed by Christian theology and by European secular science and philosophy. With this caveat in mind, let’s

then move to the construction of the *external colonial difference*. As you may have guessed, and that the example of Césaire makes clear, Indians and Blacks were “like” Jews (and as a matter of fact the comparison between Indians and Jews—made by Spaniards and Creoles from Spanish descent—abound in the sixteenth century. Indians and Blacks, like the Moors, were people alien to the sphere of Christianity. They were—in principle—*external* to Christianity. Thus, even if they were Black Christians coming to the New World and, during the sixteenth century Indians were converted to Christianity, nevertheless, Indian Christians and Black Christians were still considered “different” from Spanish or Portuguese Christians. Indians became stateless people, in Tawantinsuyu and Anahuac after the defeat of Atahualpa and Moctecuzoma. Indians and Blacks were the target for the construction of the *external colonial difference*.

And where shall we place the Black Legend in this scheme? We are back in the sixteenth century. Philip II became King of Spain in 1556 and he would transform the Kingdom he inherited from his father, Charles I, into the glorious moment of the Spanish Empire. The Hapsburg or Austro-Hungarian Empire changed its role and function, from the second half of the sixteenth century to its demise, during WWI. It became a buffer zone where the Ottoman Empire was stopped; and it became a marginal region of Western Christendom now that the center of the world economy moved to the Atlantic, from Spain and Portugal to Holland and England. Vienna and Munich still today conserve the garb and the magnificence of Imperial cities (while Moscow and Istanbul entered a process of visible decay). Elizabeth I became Queen of England in 1558; Ivan the Terrible was the Grand Prince over all the Rus since 1533 and the first Russian Tzar since 1547—Moscow as the Third Rome competes and complements Istanbul (the second Rome) and Rome proper. China and Beijing were far away, but were the center of attraction in a world that had no center. It was Columbus and Western Christians who dreamed of Cipango, not the Chinese who desired the land of Christendom. For Chinese scholars and officers of the

Ming Dynasty, Western Christendom was — if known at all — in the territory of the barbarians. It was in that scenario that Richard Eden travelled from England to the limits with the lands of “the Turk” toward the middle of the sixteenth century and wrote a report that could be considered a blueprint of the aforementioned Black Legend.

The promoter of the Black Legend employed the troops already in place to describe and classify people in relation to a model or standard of Humanity and infringed upon Christian Spaniards, at the height of the crisis of the Church in the middle of the nineteenth Council of Trent⁹. By accusing Spaniards of being barbarians (for the atrocities they committed in the New World), and naming them Moors, Blacks and Sarracens, no British men or women of letters confused the Spaniards with the Moors or the Turks, much less with Blacks or Indians in the New World. The external imperial and colonial differences were maintained. And also the internal colonial difference: no Englishman or Englishwomen would fail in making the distinction between a Christian and a Jew. If the previous racial distinctions were maintained, what was added was *the internal imperial difference*. The Black Legend inaugurated a racialized discourse within, that is, internal to, Western and capitalist empires of the West. As is well known, the Black Legend was part of the political purpose of England to displace Spain from its imperial domination. What the Black Legend doesn't mention, is that the British were as brutal and greedy as the Spaniards. In fact, the Black Legend was part of an imperial conduct as well as discourse that we have seen at work since then in England to the present-day US.

The Black Legend is a piece of a larger puzzle that transcends the particular moment of its origin. Similar ideas filtered into the U.S. in the nineteenth century and informed very popular narratives like William Prescott's *History of the Conquest of Peru* (1847). Notice that the book was published one year before the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo that gave the U.S. possession of a vast territory previously belonging to Mexico. That is, the book was published at a moment in history when history repeats itself and the

U.S. of the nineteenth century, like England of the mid - sixteenth century, is affirming its imperial ambitions. Imperial ambitions that had already been mapped by the discourse on race/racism, during the European Renaissance, has given authority to imperial powers to reproduce themselves and to reproduce the sense of superiority of agents in an position of epistemic authority to classify the world. A few decades before Prescott, Hegel in Europe collected the legacies of the Black Legend and asserted the superiority of the heart of Europe (England, Germany and France), that is the three countries that in the nineteenth century consolidated and expanded Western capitalism and imperialism.

Hegel was clear in capturing the unfolding of this story when he stated, at the end of his introduction to *Lessons in the Philosophy of History*, “the three sections of Europe require therefore a different basis of classification” (pp. 102). And he went on to offer the following geo-political map:

- 1) The first part is Southern Europe—looking towards the Mediterranean [...] North of the Pyrenees, mountain chains running through France, connected with the Alps that separate and cut off Italy from France and Germany. Greece also belongs to this part of Europe.
- 2) The second portion is the heart of Europe [...] in this centre of Europe, France, Germany and England are the principal countries.
- 3) The third, said Hegel, consists of the north-eastern States of Europe—Poland, Russia and the Slavonic Kingdoms. They came late into the series of historical States, to form and perpetuate the connection with Asia. In contrast with the physical singularities of the earlier division, these are already noticed, not present in a remarkable degree, but counterbalance each other.

Hegel talks about States but neglected to mention that the States of the heart of Europe are the new imperialism. He claims that the States of the heart of Europe are pure and clean, have no connection with Africa, as in the case of Spain and Portugal (which is why it is important for him to highlight Italy and Greece), and no connections with Asia, like

the northeastern States. It was in 1853 (a few years after Prescott’s *History of the Conquest of Peru*), that Joseph Arthur, comte de Gobineau, published the new configuration of the discourse on race/racism, the discourse that would serve the purpose of the new Western empires. That treatise was titled *Essai sur l’inégalité des races humaines*.

The internal imperial difference that the Black Legend put in place had diminished its rhetoric, through time. In Europe, England, Germany and France are the strong players of the European Union. The Latin and Catholic South still form an imperial core. England and the U.S. had joined forces, in spite of their difference, since Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher opened the way to the fatal alliance of Tony Blair and George W. Bush. Five hundred years after the expulsion of the Moors from the Iberian Peninsula and five hundred years after the invasion and invention of America, Samuel Huntington identified the Moors as enemies of Western civilization and Hispanics (that is Latinos and Latinas) as a challenge to Anglo identity in the U.S. Racism dies hard and the spectre of the Black Legend is still alive and well, helping to diminish Spaniards in Europe and criminalize Latinos and Latinas in the U.S. If Indians were the victims of Spaniards that the Black Legend denounced, Black slaves were the victims of England that the Black Legend contributed to hide under Spanish barbarism.

However, none of the discourses on race/racism went uncontested. In the first modernity Waman Puma de Ayala in Perú in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century; Ottobah Cugoana in England, in the eighteenth century, after being enslaved in the Caribbean, contested imperial racialization. Before Gobineau and before Prescott, Frederick Douglas in the nineteenth century published (in the U.S.) *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave, Written By Himself* (1845). Haitian Anténor Firmin published in France a well-documented study against Gobineau. Firmin’s book was entitled *De l’égalité des races humaines* (1885). W.E.B DuBois and Frantz Fanon follow suit in the Americas; and Gloria Anzaldúa stood up, as Latina, to claim “for women of my race the Spirit shall speak.” These voices of dissent not

only contest the Black Legend but all imperial discourses on race and racism (including Spaniards), of which the Black Legend is one piece of the puzzle.

Let's return to the "White Lands" I showed at the beginning. As it is well known, the process of expelling the Moors from Western Christians' lands (and today "White Held Lands"), were supported by Papal Bulls authorizing the dispossession of pagan's lands and legitimizing Christian appropriation (see for example the edict of Pope Nicholas V, Jan 8, 1455). Thus, when Western Christians arrived to las Indias Occidentales on Columbus's map, they already had the experience of dispossessing people from their land and legitimizing Christian appropriation. The (in) famous *Requerimiento* remains as the signpost of a long process of massive land appropriation from the Indigenous population. As it is well known, the enormous diversity of the population in Tawantinsuyu and Anahuac (as well as the land in between both, named Abya-Yala) as well as the Islands renamed "the Caribbean", all became in spite of themselves, Indians. And all of them were constructed as people without religion and therefore victims of the Devil. There was an empty space in their souls that the Devil took advantage of, as they were empty lands that the Christians began to take advantage of. Theology and law came together in the Salamanca school, and in the pioneering work of Francisco de Vitoria, *Relectio de Indis* (1539), the justification of Christian land appropriation with the "recognition" Indians have to keep possessions of their "parcels", was discussed. In this regard, Francisco de Vitoria is the direct antecedent of John Locke. The difference between both is that Vitoria not only was concerned with the relationships between theology, law and land possession, but he charted the principles of international law that, from then on, will go hand in hand with Western imperial expansion. In that regard, Vitoria is also the antecessor of Hugo Grotius's (1583-1645) international law and Immanuel Kant's cosmopolitanism. While Vitoria devised a system of international law to legitimize land possession, Grotius extended it (during the first half of the seventeenth century) to the opening of the sea. In *Mare Liberum* (*Free*

Seas) he formulated the new principle that the sea was international territory and all nations were free to use it for seafaring trade. Grotius, by claiming "free seas", provided suitable ideological justification for the Dutch breaking up of various trade monopolies through its formidable naval power (and then establishing its own monopoly).

*El Requerimiento*¹⁰ was a double edged sword. On the one hand, it responded to the complaints of many theologians that protested the Spaniards' treatment of the Indians and the way they took possession of their land. On the other hand, it served as a legal-theological document to take possession of Indian's land whenever they did not comply with regulations imposed by the King and the Church. And we know how easy it is to fabricate violations of the rule and to criminalize the people that the dominant system needs to marginalize or dispose. The *Requerimiento*, read in Spanish and some times in Latin to the Indians, "offered" them the opportunity to surrender and obey or to be captive and dispossessed. At this initial moment of the consolidation of Western empires and capitalism, through the emergence of the Atlantic economy, land possession went together with theological and legal justifications. The sixteenth century was the turning point of what Carl Schmitt (1952) described as *the nomos of the earth* (we could invent the expression land-nomia in parallel to astro-nomia, the law of the stars): the appropriation of land (together with the exploitation of labor) to produce commodities for the global market. And what African political theorist, Siba N'Zatioula Govogui (1995) writing from the silenced half in Schmitt's narrative, describes as the complicity between racism, international law and justifications for the appropriation of land and exploitation of labor.¹¹

That switch is what Quijano described as the transformation of capital into capitalism (before the industrial revolution) and the role the invention of modern racism played in that transformation. Such a turning point took place more radically during the seventeenth century, when the Dutch, the French and the British intensified the slave trade and established the profitable Caribbean plantations. While the Spaniards and the Portuguese concentrated

on the extractions of gold and silver (from Zacatecas in New Spain to Potosi in Bolivia to Ouro Preto in Brazil), the northern Atlantic economy concentrated mainly on sugar, tobacco, coffee and cotton. This distinction in economic approaches is revealing of the chanting orientation of the economy and another explanation for the emergence of the Black Legend. However, what is important for my purposes here is that in both economic configurations (extraction of gold and silver and cultivation of sugar, coffee, cotton and tobacco), capitalism emerged—as Anibal Quijano explained on several occasions—as the happy complicity between several forms of labor (serfdom, slavery, hand-craft and small commodity production, and reciprocity) and capital (forms of economic control by currency or other means): that is, the conjunction of massive appropriation of land and massive exploitation of labor (e.g., mainly African slaves) occurred in the New World to produce commodities for the global capitalist market. From the *Requerimiento* in the early sixteenth century to the intensification of labor and massive production of “natural” commodities (e.g., sugar), from the *nomos* of the earth to the exploitation of the land, the racialization of the population in the New World (Indians and Blacks) was consolidated.¹²

And what happened to the Moors, in the meantime?

Let me jump three centuries and focus at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century and than go back to establish some landmarks in the late eighteenth and nineteenth century. Alfred Thayer Mahan (*The Influence of Sea Power upon History, 1660-1783*, published toward the end of the nineteenth century) is credited with the invention of the geo-political region today known as the Middle East. We also know that England was also very active in inventing the region. Roger Anderson described it in his book titled *London and the Invention of the Middle East Money, Power, and War, 1902-1922* (1995). Up to that point (and the collapse of the Ottoman Empire), the Moors of early Christian imaginary had been converted—since the late eighteenth century—in part of the Orient.

“Orientalism” as Moroccan philosopher

Abdelkebir Khatibbi taught us in the early seventies and Edward Said popularized in the late seventies, was an invention of the second modernity dominated by England, France and Germany both in the economic, political and epistemic domains. Orientals took the place, for the new imperial powers and their intellectuals of Occidentals for Spanish and Portuguese—a reminder that America was named *Indias Occidentales* in all Spanish and Portuguese documents. *Indias Occidentales* was the land of the Indians and African slaves. The Orient was the land of Arabs, Indians, Chinese, Japanese, and of course, Muslims. But at the time of secular nation states (in which Immanuel Kant and George W. Friedrich Hegel imagined a cosmopolitan world and a world history), ethnicity (e.g. the Arabs) took precedence over religion (e.g., Islam).

Another transformation relevant for my argument was the Industrial Revolution. The industrial revolution required “natural resources.” Capitalism at that point added to the production of “natural products” (everything related to agriculture for human consumption) to “natural resources” (everything related to feeding the machines, to machines’ consumption). The invention of the Middle East was an operation to mark a territory, within the larger picture of the Orientals, rich in natural resources, particularly oil. The history from the discovery of oil and the invention of the Middle East to the Gulf War and the invasion of Iraq has been told many times and it is well known in its general unfolding. Of interest for my argument are the transformations—in the imaginary created and propelled by Western capitalist empires—and the continuation of Christian Theologians in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries—of the ancient Moors into Arab nations controlling vast amounts of natural resources. And what is also of interest here is that after WWII it was not longer London (only) but Washington (mainly) who took the lead in public relations and wars with the Middle East. And the situation was further complicated by the existence of the Soviet Union.

Once again: we witnessed during the Cold War the transformation—within the colonial

matrix of power--of the role of the Russian (Orthodox) empire in the sixteenth century. "The Eisenhower Doctrine on the Middle East, A Message to Congress" (January 5, 1957) set the stage for the triangulation between the U.S., the Soviet Union and the Middle East. Then, the Soviet Union collapsed. Condoleezza Rice expressed her concern about lacking a reason for national security after the collapse. And then the events of 9/11 marked, by themselves as well as by the political consequences of the Western media, a turning point in the connection between economy and racism. Metaphorically, the collapse of the twin towers, as the symbol of a capitalist society, could be seen as closing a cycle that started with Cardinal Cisneros' burning of the books, as the symbol of Islamic society. Islamophobia today, it seems to me, unfolds in the blurry sphere of the production of fears between capitalist exploitation of natural resources and immigrations (mainly identified as Arabs and/or Islamics), to the core of capitalist imperial countries (England, France, Germany, Spain and the US—that is, the countries more heavily involved in the history of capitalism).

Let me close with two examples that, I hope, will bring together all that I have said up to this point.

In the U.S. neither Arabs nor Islamics were visible in what became known as Nixon's ethno-racial pentagon: that is, Whites, Hispanics, Asian-Americans, African-Americans and Native-Americans. In the ethno-racial pentagon, the grouping of people by religions (common in the sixteenth century Christian classification), was erased. The ethno-racial pentagon is the re-articulation of the secular imaginary of the late eighteenth and nineteenth century, when racial classifications became "scientific" instead of "religious"(!). Thus, declaring whether you are Christian, Islamic, Buddhist or Hinduist was not a requirement in official forms keeping track of nationals as well as foreigners. As far as I know, the Nixon ethno-racial pentagon has not been changed in official forms. But we all know that Arabs, Middle Easterns and Islamics are no longer invisible. Not only that, the racialization of the Middle East created an agency that is both visible and feared—

visible and feared as where Communists during the Cold War. For Condoleezza Rice, the events of 9/11 presented the opportunity to justify and intensify national security. For contractors and the oil industry, 9/11 offered an excuse to intensify and justify the control of authority (e.g., what happened to Saddam Hussein) the efforts of the U.S. to demonize Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. Thus, we make a general distinction between interacting spheres of the social, such as the control of the economy, the control of authority, and the control of civil society. We can understand how Western imperial configurations (e.g., political and economic complicities between the U.S., France, England and France, mainly), administers fear through the control of the media. Thus, the control of the civil society is the control of subjectivity by reinscribing, actively, a racial matrix of power that, since the sixteenth century, was an imperial instrument: control of authority, control of the economy, control of labor, and control of the population— of all those who have been integrated into the Christian, civilizing missions of the Market economy and those who become the rest, who cannot be integrated and that could rebel.

A global political society has always been on the making (sometimes through anti-imperial reactions, other times through clear de-colonial projects), from the Indigenous rebellions in the sixteenth century, to the Black Maroons fleeing from plantations, to Indian nationalists and different manifestations of uprisings in Africa. Today, multiple and diverse configurations of political societies (in their diverse local histories through the encounter with Western capitalism and racism), are coming together in pushing a common, although diverse (pluriversal and not universal) agenda: de-linking from the magic bubble of universal totalitarianism which means engaging in a relentless de-colonial process--de-colonizing authority, de-colonizing the economy, de-colonizing knowledge and being. Islamophobia is nothing else than the re-inscription of racial fears to generate racial hate among the sector of the population (civil society) that the empire needs as a buffer zone.

The second example brings us back, full

circle, to the sixteenth century on the common ground of Islamophobia and Hispanophobia. Samuel Huntington provided the new map of the two phobias that I indicated at the beginning. The imperial and colonial phobias, however, shall not make invisible the emergence of de-colonial forces.

There are indeed enormous historical and social differences in the imperial making of Islamophobia--the fear and the hate toward a powerful and wide spread religion--and Hispanophobia--the fear and hate toward secular subaltern forces with mixed religious beliefs that emerged in the seventies within the U.S. without the extended political connections or support from "Latin America." We need to understand how the imperial imaginary constructs phobias in the mind of civil society, but at the same time be aware that on the other side of the imperial/colonial phobias potent de-colonial forces are at work, within Islams and within Hispanics in the U.S., and Indians and Afros in South America (or the Latin America of the white population from European descent). There are enormous differences, but we have overcome the belief in abstract universalism and that the proletariat or the multitude, will provide one single solution for the wretched of the earth. It so happens that the wretched of the earth know that if they are proletarian or part of the multitude, they are also imperial/colonial wretched, that is, racialized beings; beings marked by the colonial wound, that is to say, the lower rank in the human scale of being that, built by Christian theology during the Renaissance, was reactivated and maintained

Islamophobia and Hispanophobia seem to be entrenched in the colonial horizon of modernity.

by Secular philosophy during and after the Enlightenment.

Islamophobia and Hispanophobia seem to be entrenched in the colonial horizon of modernity. However, de-colonial projects are at work, all over the world. Unveiling and

uncovering the imperial foundations and reproductions of phobias (Islamic or Hispanic) is a way of de-colonizing (and de-naturalizing) what imperial rationality convinced us is real; and that the real is accountable by only one rationality.

In sum, Tariq's Ali novel, *The Shadows of the Pomegranate Tree* is indeed prophetic. It reveals the underground of Samuel Huntington's fears. By linking, at the beginning and at the end of the novel, Cardinal Cisneros' hateful campaign to expel the Moors from the Iberian Peninsula with the conquest of Mexico (the expulsion of the Aztec from their own lands), Ali indeed connected two radical heterogeneous historico-structural moments—constitutive of the racial matrix holding together the modern/colonial world. This matrix is unfolding and updated in what we are witnessing today as Islamophobia and Hispanophobia.

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Among his recent publications are "The Darker Side of the Renaissance: Literacy, Territoriality and Colonization, Second Edition with a new afterword" (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2003) and "Local Histories/Global Designs: Coloniality, Subaltern Knowledges, and Border Thinking" (Book Series: Culture/Power/History, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000). He is editor and collaborator of the reader "Capitalismo y geopolítica del conocimiento: la filosofía de la liberación en el debate intelectual contemporáneo" (2001). His forthcoming book, *The Darker Side of Western Modernity: Global Futures, Decolonial Options*, is the third in his 'The Darker Side' trilogy (along with: *The Darker Side of the Renaissance*, and *Local Histories/Global Designs*)

Among his many international activities, he is International Board Member of the "Hong Kong Advanced Institute for Cross-Disciplinary Studies"; "College of Humanities and Social Sciences of City University of Hong Kong"; and International Board Member of the project Time, Memory and Representation (Department of Communication and Culture) Sodertorn University, Sweden.

ENDNOTES

1. See Madina Tlostanova in this volume. Originally printed in "Trans-Cultural Tricksters in Between Empires: Eurasian Islamic Borderlands in Modernity," in *Culture of the Difference in Eurasia: Azerbaijan-Past and Present in the Dialogue of Civilizations*. Baku, April 19-21, 2006, Texts the Reference. Academie de la Latinité. Edité by Cândido Mendes. Rio Janeiro: UNESCO/Universidade Candido Mendes,

2006, 217-253. Also relevant for my argument here is her "Post-Socialist Eurasia in Civilization of Fear: *Christianity and another Islam*." In *Hégémonie et Civilisation de la Peur*. 9eme Colloque International, Academie de la Latinité. Alexandria, Avriél 13-17, 2004. Textes de Reference edite par Candido Méndes. Rio de Janeiro: Unesco/ Universidad Cândido Méndes, 2004, 389-412. Much of what I say here about histories and cultures in Russia/Soviet Union, its colonies and relationships with Western capitalist empires, I owe to other publications and personal conversations with Madina Tlostanova.

2. The maps are taken from *The March of the Titans: A History of the White Race*. Chapter 23, from where the maps are taken, is prefaced by the following note: "The invasion of Western Europe by a non-White Muslim army after 711 AD, very nearly extinguished modern White Europe - certainly the threat was no less serious than the Hunnish invasion which had earlier created so much chaos. While the Huns were Asiatics, the Moors were a mixed race invasion - part Arabic, part Black and part mixed race, always easily distinguishable from the Visigothic Whites of Spain."

3. London: Verso, 1993.

4. The "fundamental fear" we are witnessing and experiencing today, is the latest manifestation of five hundred years logic of coloniality: defending the sites of power be it Christianity or the West. On current production of fear see Bobby S. Sayind, *A Fundamental Fear. Eurocentrism and the Emergence of Islamism*. London/New York: Zed Books, 1997 and Corey Robin, *Fear. The History of a Political Idea*. London: Oxford, 2004.

5. "Colonialidad y Modernidad/Racionalidad." En *Peru Indigena*, Vol. 13, No. 29, pp. 11-20. Lima, Perú. Reproducido en Heracilio Bonilla (comp.): "*Los Conquistados*." Flasco-Tercer Mundo, Bogotá, 1992. En *Inglés Coloniality and Modernity/Rationality*. En Goran Therborn, ed. *Globalizations And Modernities*. FRN, 1999. Stockholm, Sweden; with Immanuel Wallerstein; "Americana as a concept. Or The Americas in the Modern World-System". In *International Journal Of Social Sciences*, No. 134, Nov. 1992, UNESCO, Paris, Francia. Discutido en el Simposio Mundial por el 500o. Aniversario de América, organizado por UNESCO en París, en Octubre de 1992, ha sido traducido a todos los idiomas de África, Asia, Europa y del Medio Oriente, que forman parte del conjunto de idiomas de las Naciones Unidas; French translation, "De l'Americaneite comme concept, ou les Ameriques dans le systeme mondial moderne". In *Les Ameriques*: 1492-1992. *Revue Internationale des Sciences Sociales*, No. 134, pp. 617-627, Novembre. Paris, France; Sylvia Wynter "1492: a 'New World' View" (<http://muweb.millersville.edu/~columbus/data/ant/WYNTER01.ANT>)

6. In England, and in Shakespeare, the meaning of Moor was far from being precise. See Bartels, Emily C. "Making More of the Moor: Aaron, Othello, and Renaissance Refashioning of Race." *Shakespeare Quarterly*. 41.4 (1990): 433-452.

7. Alonso de Sandoval—a Creole in the Viceroyalty of Nueva Granada (today Colombia and Venezuela) published during the first half of the seventeenth century, *De instauranda Aethiopi salute: Naturaleza, policia sagrada i profana, costumbres i ritos, disciplina i catechismo evangelico de todos etiopes* (1627, 1647). I owe this information to Eduardo Restrepo (graduate students, Anthropology at UNC, writing his dissertation on this work). For a general overview of Sandoval's treatise, see M.E. Beer, <http://www.kislakfoundation.org/prize/199702.html>

8. Aimée Césaire, *Discourse sur le colonialisme* (1955). New edition, followed by *Discours sur la négritude*, has been published by Présence Africaine, Paris, in 2004.

9. The nineteenth ecumenical council opened at Trent on 13 December, 1545, and closed there on 4 December, 1563. Its main object was the definitive determination of the doctrines of the Church in answer to the heresies of the Protestants; a further object was the execution of a thorough reform of the inner life of the

Church by removing the numerous abuses that had developed in it. <http://www.ciudadseva.com/textos/otros/requeri.htm>

11. It is interesting to notice that a sector of the progressive and Marxist left is now taking Schmitt's book as the bible to tell the forgotten part of the modern/colonial world, that of Spain. But, still, this is half of the story, the story told from the perspective of modernity. Schmitt cannot be read, today, without reading the imperial and racist dimensions of international law. One can imagine that if a person, beyond being a political theorist trained in the West, takes seriously the inscription of his or her African body and the geo-politics behind it, (s he really doesn't need to read Schmitt to understand that law and land went hand in hand in the modern/colonial formation of capitalism, since the sixteenth century. See Siba N'Zatioula Grovogui, *Sovereigns, Quasi Sovereigns, and Africans*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995; Carl Schmitt, *Les nomos de la terre. Dans le droit des gens du jus publicum Europeum*. (1952). Traduit de l'allemand par Lilyane Deroche Gurcel. Paris: Press Universitaires de France, 1988.

12. The history of the Requerimiento is not just past history. It is very present. A recent event, reported in the publication Indian Country, on May 26, 2006, described an event in which Indian claims the devolution of the land. A May 18 event called "Papal Bulls, Manifest Destiny and American Empire" featured Oren Lyons, Faithkeeper of the Onondaga Nation (Haudenosaunee); Tonya Gonnella Frichner, Onondaga Nation; Esmeralda Brown, of Panama, chair of the Non-Governmental Organizations for Sustainable Development's southern caucus; and Yolanda Teran, Kichwa from Quito, Ecuador, and a member of Ecuador's National Council of Indigenous Women. In a similar vein, the so called nationalization of natural resources, by the government of Evo Morales, is part of the same history. Today the imperial struggle for the appropriation of land continues through the appropriation of natural resources. Iraq is a case in point, but also the Caucasus and Central Asia where Western imperial countries have to contend with the Russian Federation (the successor of second-class empires (Russia and Soviet Union) that is in the process of reconstitution; Tlostanova 2003, *Janus Faced Empire*) and China (an empire that went into recession during the period that the power of Western capitalist empires increased).



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Islamophobia & Anti-Semitism: History and Possibility

*RABBI REUVEN FIRESTONE

ISLAMOPHOBIA and anti-Semitism have much in common though they arose from nearly opposite historical circumstances. Both are expressions of racism. Both refer to irrational fears directed toward a specific human group. Both are deeply embedded into the very fabric of Western culture and society. And ironically, Muslims and Jews tend to be guilty of these prejudices against the other. To be precise, many Jews are Islamophobic and many Muslims are anti-Semitic, even while they share the role of being on the receiving end of a similar set of prejudices. But even sadder is the fact that both prejudices are so deeply ingrained in Western society that it is unlikely they will ever be completely eradicated.

TERMINOLOGICAL ORIGINS

Islamophobia and anti-Semitism developed largely for different reasons and are unrelated historically. The term, “anti-Semitism,” was actually coined only in the nineteenth century. That does not mean that racist hatred of Jews did not exist before then, but the term “Semite” was unknown until it was invented by German linguists in the nineteenth century working on identifying language families and examining their relationship. They discovered that the language groups we now call Latin, Germanic and Slavic were related to Persian and Hindi through a distant, theoretical antecedent they called an *Ursprache*, an ancestor tongue. The theoretical *Ursprache* for these languages is now referred to as “Proto-Indo-European.” Their sleuthing also revealed that certain collections of languages outside of the Proto-Indo-European group seemed to have their own extended family of tongues. One set of these is made up of Arabic, Hebrew, Aramaic, Syriac and some long-dead languages such as Akkadian and South Arabian. These they called “Semitic” languages because the lands in which they were spoken seemed to correspond

with the national communities listed as the “sons of Shem,” Noah’s oldest son whose family line is recorded in Genesis chapter 10.¹ The linguists were classifying language communities – not racial communities. But since the most obvious and only “Semitic” language actually employed in Europe was Hebrew used by the Jews, Semite and Jew were easily associated.

Jews in much of Western Europe had been freed from the ghetto and invited to participate equally in European society in the nineteenth century for the first time since the period of the Roman Empire. Some Gentiles, however, were staunchly against integration of Jews into the larger society. A German journalist named Wilhelm Marr wrote an article in 1880 attacking Jews for refusing to discard all aspects of their prior identity as they joined the mainstream of Europe. The article’s title was “The Way to Victory of the Germanic Spirit over the Jewish Spirit.” That same year he founded a German organisation committed specifically to combat Jewish engagement in German culture and to forcibly expel Jews from the country. The name of the organisation was *Antisemiten-Liga* – “League of anti-Semites”. As it later became clear, the name was simply a pseudo-scientific label, meaning “Association of Jew-Haters”.

Islamophobia is an even newer term than anti-Semitism. It begins to appear only in the 1980s, but became common after 9/11. In 2004, president of the United Nations Kofi Annan had the following to say about Islamophobia at a UN meeting in New York: “[W]hen the world is compelled to coin a new term to take account of increasingly widespread bigotry, that is a sad and troubling development. Such is the case with Islamophobia”.

A 2007 article in *Journal of Sociology* defines Islamophobia as anti-Muslim racism and a continuation of anti-Asian and anti-Arab

Islamophobia... refers to a long history of fear and hatred of Muslims in the West that, like anti-Semitism, has had a long time to become implanted into the collective Western psyche.

racism. And here is another parallel with anti-Semitism.² Although Islamophobia is a recently coined term, it refers to a long history of fear and hatred of Muslims in the West that, like anti-Semitism, has had a long time to become implanted into the collective Western psyche.

ANCIENT ROOTS OF PREJUDICE

Anti-Semitism has had a very long time to incubate. It developed gradually over many centuries, first as a simple prejudice that was nothing more than an expression of one civilisation's superiority over another. We can find the first writings expressing antipathy toward Jews and Judaism among the Greeks. The earliest writers, around 300 BCE, (the philosophers, Theophrastus, Megasthenes, Clearchus of Soli) actually considered the Jews a nation of philosophers and were quite positive.³ But later, when the Jews living in Judea fought back against Greek attempts to take over their lands and impose their culture, references became increasingly negative.

Like all peoples, the Greeks denigrated their enemies. In fact, however, Greek descriptions of Jews were not much different than their descriptions of other foreign peoples. They were all unfavorable, one way or another.

All human communities tend to consider themselves superior to other communities. In fact, there is a tendency within any human group, defined in virtually any way – sports teams, for example – to define itself as superior to all others. And when it is difficult to identify traits that set one's group apart from the rest, negative traits are created in what Freud called "the narcissism of minor differences".⁴

Group "othering" has been studied by evolutionary biologists as a basic and

instinctual behavior. It may have developed in order to ensure group survival when competing against other human groups for scarce resources. Tribal groups compete for scarce pasturage, kinship groups compete for geographical features that offer protection, and ethnic groups compete over fertile hunting areas. Any way in which human groups identify as groups bases that identity on the fact that there are other people who are identified as being *outside* the group. Those outside the group are inevitably defined as inferior.

Another worldwide phenomenon is scapegoating. Many hypotheses have been proffered to explain why human communities always seem to identify certain weaker persons or groups and treat them as scapegoats, and it seems to be a near-universal act.⁵ Minority communities, partially simply because they are numerically weaker in relation to the majority, are typically scapegoated. One need not look far to observe the phenomenon in social settings ranging from the classroom to the nation-state. Consider, for example, your own personal experience and observations, especially among children who have not yet learned to hide or rationalise their emotions. Who has not witnessed (or perpetrated) the act of picking on certain groups or individuals identified as weak or odd within a group?

Prejudice is normal. Not to be endorsed, to be sure, but common – and likely to be a natural product of human evolution. So also, it would appear, is the habit of choosing a "fall guy" to pick on. Anti-Semitism is a special term used specifically for prejudice against Jews and for scapegoating them as individuals or a community. It seems odd at first sight that there is a special word for this in relation to Jews. Why don't we have "anti-Irishism" or "anti-Japanism?"

There is an answer for this. Prejudice toward Jews became more acute than other expressions of prejudice. It became idiomatic within Western culture – so "normal" that Western civilisation now honors it with its own designation. The reason for this is not cosmic or theological. It is not because of the false myth that Jews had or still have secret control or inordinate power, or that they are hateful of others or have a natural antipathy

toward civilisation. Many other minority groups in history were assumed to have similar inexplicable advantages or misanthropic attitudes that aroused resentment, fear and hatred. Such fantasies are part of the psychology behind scapegoating and the rationalisation of bigotry. The reason that prejudice reached such a level in relation to Jews and persisted for so long is due simply to the long history and prolonged minority status of the Jewish people. Unlike most other minority groups that either disappeared or later had their own turn to dominate, Jews remained a distinct minority for thousands of years and within many cultures and civilisations. They therefore naturally accumulated numerous negative stereotypes over a very long period of time.

Most minority groups do not remain minorities for more than a few generations. They are either destroyed, assimilate into the majority, or eventually become the dominant group and lose their minority status. If they disappear or assimilate into the majority they lose their distinct status. When that occurs, the negative stereotypes and prejudice directed against them have no more purpose, so they fade away or are applied to a new group that takes their place. If the minority group becomes dominant it neutralises the stereotypes and prejudice or suppresses them. When that occurs, they either die out or are purposefully removed from the historical record when the group becomes ascendant. It is the winners, after all, who write history.

Because Jews survived as minority communities for so many centuries, the negative portrayals by the early Greeks never disappeared. They were read, commented on, and added to by later Greeks and then pagan Romans. With the Christianisation of the Roman Empire the old negativity was picked up and then augmented by Greek and

Latin Christians writers, and then medieval Europeans, and then modern atheist racial elitists. At each level, negative depictions were added or intensified, so over the generations and centuries the volume and distribution of anti-Jewish writings, sermons, speeches and discussions grew. The result was a notion ever more deeply rooted into Western culture and society that the Jews were different, somehow less civilised or even evil.

Anti-Semitic messages are embedded in some of the most inspiring and popular expressions of Western literature. Shakespeare incorporated repulsive anti-Jewish stereotypes in his *Shylock*, for example, though no Jews had lived in England for centuries and it is unlikely that he ever met a Jew. Anti-Jewish messages appear not only in literature and poetry such as Chaucer's *Prioress's Tale*, but also in the plastic arts. In medieval Europe Jews are portrayed in sculptures and frescos as deformed and diseased, in wood-cuts as scheming to torture the Holy Communion wafer so they could replay their role in the agony of Christ, and in stained-glass church windows as draining or even sucking out the blood of innocent Christian children.

Illiterate church-goers would naturally absorb the fantasy of Jewish evil from sermons, liturgical readings and simply from seeing the art decorating their places of worship. Not only are anti-Jewish messages found in the visual arts but also in music, including folk music and children's songs. Folktales include depictions of evil Jews who, like witches, will spirit children away and kill them. When Jews were shunted aside into ghettos and removed from the natural social interaction that would prove their humanity, it was natural for the fantasies to take over.⁶

So today, fear, repulsion, and even hatred of Jews have become a basic part of Western civilisation. So deep is it ingrained in the Western psyche that many who have no anger or resentment toward Jews nevertheless accept strange anti-Semitic notions as simple reality. When my wife was an undergraduate at Yale University in the 1970s, one of the most elite universities in the world, she was shocked when a *phi beta kappa* English honors student politely asked her why Jews used the blood of Christian children for religious ritual.

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When life is good, the economy is strong and people are optimistic, the deeply rooted anti-Semitism of Western civilisation remains latent.

When life is good, the economy is strong and people are optimistic, the deeply rooted anti-Semitism of Western civilisation remains latent. It is there, fixed in the most foundational aspects of culture, but not necessarily sensed in any conscious way, let alone acknowledged. Sometime it is expressed through jokes, side comments or unrecognised idiomatic phrases, but not through violence. But when life becomes difficult and people's hopes and dreams are frustrated, when there is a need to blow off steam or find scapegoats for serious disappointment and aggravation, the latent anti-Semitism becomes activated. Ancient slanders are re-discovered, old writings and complaints are renewed and stereotyped images revived. The result is the restoration of an old prejudice in new clothes, and the results can be tragic.

ROOTS OF ISLAMOPHOBIA

The origin of Islamophobia has some overlap with the origin of anti-Semitism. Like anti-Semitism, prejudice against Muslims derives from the core reality that humans identify with groups and tend to demean those outside their core identity group. As Prophet Muhammad began to attract people to his message in seventh century Arabia, his followers disassociated with the established religious communities, which naturally invited resistance. The establishment opposed them and branded them as deviants. Islamophobia has that in common with anti-Semitism and with prejudice against every new religious or sectarian movement, all of which are opposed by religious establishments. The new Muslim community was threatening to establishment groups in Arabia simply by virtue of being different, and difference tends to be disconcerting and arouses fear.

Aside from this basic parallel, anti-Semitism

and Islamophobia move in different directions and their histories, which intertwined, differ considerably. The major cause of Islamophobia is not a history of weakness and minority survival as is anti-Semitism, but rather a history of tremendous success, productivity and development.

Surprisingly, perhaps, the roots of Islamophobia were established centuries before the religion of Islam ever came into existence. The story begins with the well-known tension between Jews and Christians during the first centuries of the Common Era when they disputed with one another over which expression of monotheism was the true expression of God's will. Each argued, of course, that the other's was false.

This was not simply an intellectual exercise. A lot was at stake. Hundreds of thousands, and perhaps even millions of Greco-Roman pagans had become disaffected with their own traditional religion by the first century B.C.E. The great Greco-Roman myths of bickering gods involved in acts of deception, intrigue and immoral behaviors may have been entertaining, but they were not spiritually enlightening and hardly ethically edifying. Greeks and Romans were seeking more fulfilling religious identity with meaningful prayer, personal introspection, and moral-ethical guidance. They first became attracted to Judaism, and after the emergence of Christianity they became attracted to it as well. They began to join both Judaism and Christianity, and many individuals actually did exactly that: they joined *both* communities. The fourth century Church Father, John Chrysostom, was infuriated when he learned that the parishioners who attended his church on the Christian Sabbath had just attended synagogue the day before on the Jewish Sabbath.⁷

That caused increasing friction between Jews and Christians, and especially their religious leaders. The competition and argument began long before Chrysostom and went on for centuries, often at the same time that the leadership of the pagan Roman Empire was viciously persecuting both religions.⁸

Rome was wealthy, powerful, and preoccupied with maintaining an empire. Why would Roman authorities care enough

about Jews and Christians to persecute them? The simple reason is that both monotheistic religions posed a real threat to the power and authority of Rome. At the time, the Roman religion was the official religion of the empire, and making sacrifices to the Roman gods on behalf of the emperor was the recognised and obligatory statement of civic loyalty. This, of course, Jews and Christians refused to do. Eventually Roman subjects were obligated to make sacrifices *to* the emperor – which of course no Jew or Christian would ever perform.

At the same time that intense pressure was being placed on Jews and Christians to conform to paganism, large numbers of pagans were leaving their old religion and joining Jewish and Christian communities. More ended up joining the Christians because Christianity was more appealing to Greco-Romans than Judaism, but both communities grew substantially and drained ever more support away from the Roman imperial religious establishment and its associated political authority.

After centuries of tension and argument, the Christians “won” the competition with the Jews. The prize was the Roman Empire itself. In the fourth century, Emperor Constantine declared Christianity a legal religion, and within a generation it became the official religion of the Roman Empire.

This was considered by Christians to be a divine miracle, and it is understandable why they would think so. Not long before, under Constantine’s predecessor Diocletian, Christians had suffered their worst persecution ever as thousands and perhaps tens of thousands were cruelly executed for refusing to make offerings to the gods. Many were thrown to wild beasts in the arenas and stadiums in what was called *damnatio ad bestia*, where typically, lions or other wild animals would tear them apart. Only a few short years later Christianity was legalised – and then became the new imperial religion.

It made sense to describe this sea-change as a divinely-wrought miracle – and not only a miracle for Christians, but also a lesson to Jews. Christians naturally concluded that their success was proof of God’s unmitigated approval of Christianity as the one true faith

– the only true expression of the divine will. Why would the evil pagan Roman Empire become Christian if it was not God’s will? How else to explain such a wonder? History was considered God’s proof to the world of the truth of Christ, that Jesus is the son of God, that the Trinitarian nature of God is true, and that only those who accept these truths will be saved.

What does this have to do with Islamophobia? A lot, it turns out. The Christianisation of the Empire was taken by Church leaders and theologians as proof that history confirms theology, that historical success proves theological truth. A few centuries later, this same logic would be utilised by Muslims to prove that God actually favored Islam. How else to explain the extraordinary conquest by the Arab Muslims in the seventh century? Within twenty years of the death of Prophet Muhammad, Muslim armies controlled the Middle East and much of North Africa. After only two more generations the Muslim empire stretched from the Atlantic Ocean to India while the Christian emperors were forced into a rump empire confined to Anatolia and a few provinces west of the Bosphorus.

The success of the conquest was an existential shock to the Christian world. It defied what had become a theological given: that history had proven the truth of Christianity and Christian supremacy. Suddenly, this assumption was being challenged by the Muslims. How else could a force of uncivilised desert hordes succeed in defeating Byzantium and completely dismantle the great Persian Empire, the two greatest empires on earth?

Christian apologists of course explained Islam’s victory and Christianity’s defeat differently. One of the earliest explanations was given by an eighth century Byzantine monk named Theophanes who wrote a famous chronicle of the Christian Empire. He explained that Muhammad was a fraud, a poor but clever epileptic who rationalised his convulsive fits as periods in which the angel Gabriel would visit him and give him divine wisdom. Such visitations proved he was a prophet, Muhammad claimed, and his cleverness convinced many people to follow him. According to Theophanes, some Jews joined him as well, and fed him misinformation

and hatred toward Christians.⁹

The negative claims intensified. Islam's extraordinary success was eventually explained as the work of Satan. Riccolando da Monte di Croce, an Italian Dominican monk living in the 13th century wrote that Muhammad was chosen not by God but by the devil. Archbishop William of Tyre, who grew up in twelfth century Crusader Jerusalem, characterised the prophet as "first-born of Satan who seduced the Orient with his pestilent doctrine." Peter of Toledo, part of a team living in 12th century Spain that made the first translation of the Qur'an into Latin, considered the religion of Islam to be a result of satanic plotting.

According to these medieval thinkers, the so-called prophet who inspired his warriors to overwhelm the forces of Christ must be a satanic force working for the demons of hell. Muhammad could not possibly be a true prophet, but rather an impostor, a fraud. His scripture could not possibly be divine revelation, but merely a creation of an evil spirit, or at best, a human deception with no spiritual value.¹⁰

Jews did not have the same perspective because they had no political power or prestige to be crushed by the success of the Conquest. In fact, the Jews initially rejoiced that the source of much of their torment under Christian rule was overwhelmed by an army of monotheists whom they considered to be more like themselves. Some Jews even thought that the armies were harbingers of their own messiah, and we have some contemporary Hebrew texts that actually state this outright. One tells a story about the second century Jewish sage and mystic named Shimon bar Yochai whose enormous mystical power enabled him to converse with angels. The narrative is speculative and, as is common in such texts, includes a kind of code that would be understood by Jewish readers but not necessarily by others. In medieval Jewish sources, the biblical nation of Edom, which derived from Jacob's twin brother and enemy Esau according to the genealogies in Genesis 36, represents Christians and Christianity, while Ishmael represents Muslims and Islam.

"When [Shimon bar Yochai] saw the kingdom of Ishmael that was coming, he

began to say: 'Was it not enough, what the wicked kingdom of Edom did to us, but we must have the kingdom of Ishmael too?' At once, Metatron the prince of the [divine] countenance answered and said, 'Do not fear, son of man, for the Holy One only brings the kingdom of Ishmael in order to save you from this wickedness. He raises up over them a prophet according to his will and will conquer the land for them and they will come and restore it in greatness, and there will be great terror between them and the sons of Esau..... when he, the rider on the camel, goes forth the kingdom will arise through the rider on a donkey.'¹¹

The rider on the camel in this narrative is Muhammad, who according to this text will presage the arrival of the Jewish messiah riding into Jerusalem on a donkey (Zecharia 9:9). Of course, the Muslim conquest did not bring the Jewish messiah, and Jews were disappointed at their second-class status under Islam when it became a world empire and reserved citizenship with full privileges to Muslims only. But most did recognise that their treatment under Muslims was a significant improvement, on the whole, over life under Christian rule.

The Christian reaction to the great success of Islam, on the other hand, was to harbor a deep fear and resentment that became imbedded in the Christian self-concept and view of the Muslim "other." This is Islamophobia, even if no special word had yet been coined to describe the sentiment. It was articulated in theological treatises and tracts

Like anti-Semitism, Islamophobia became deeply embedded in Western civilisation through theological argument, folklore, art, music, and literature.

and, like Christianity's general perspective on Jews and Judaism, eventually it was infused into the very culture of Christendom. Like anti-Semitism, Islamophobia became deeply

embedded in Western civilisation through theological argument, folklore, art, music, and literature. This is not a wild accusation but an observation that is now becoming an issue of serious scholarly interest. Recently, the prestigious German Max Planck Institute in Florence organised a research conference to study the varied ways in which the Prophet Muhammad has been constructed and imagined through European eyes.¹² The resentment and distrust of Islam that has become so deeply infused into Western culture helped fuel the violent attitudes that resulted in the Crusades, the Spanish *reconquista*, and the expulsion of Muslims from Spain, Eastern Europe, and Southern Italy in the high and late Middle Ages.

Like anti-Semitism, Islamophobia can remain in “latent” form until it is triggered by economic, political or social stress. Islamophobia in the West has been activated in the last decades by economic and social problems and the increase in visibility of Western Muslims due to immigration, especially since the 1960s. Its biggest boost has been the appalling deadly attacks by Muslim extremists against the World Trade Center and the Pentagon in the US, the lethal bombings in London and Madrid, and the nature of reaction by key Western leaders to these events. These heinous acts, though extraordinarily shocking and horrific, are not the cause of Islamophobia. They are the most recent trigger.

ISLAMOPHOBIC JEWS AND ANTISEMITIC MUSLIMS

The foregoing analysis has treated the phenomenon of anti-Semitism and Islamophobia in Western societies that have emerged under the influence of Christianity. This does not relieve Jews or Muslims of their own prejudices and mistreatment of other groups, including Jewish antipathy toward Muslims and Muslim antipathy toward Jews. A number of factors have contributed to tension and even hostility between these two communities even as they have historically been singled out, and often together, for opprobrium in Western society.¹³ These include the phenomenon mentioned above regarding group self-definition, which

eventually and inevitably includes a hierarchy of relationship that privileges the in-group and denigrates others.

Another factor is the problem, also mentioned above, that new and emerging religions always suffer from the belligerence of establishment religions that inevitably consider them threatening. Because new religions typically record their resentment toward the establishment religions that opposed them in sacred texts, they retain ambivalence or even animosity toward establishment religions long after the original conflict has passed. This is the primary historical reason, for example, for the negative portrayals of Jews and pagan Romans in early Christian literatures, and for the negative portrayals of Jews and Christians and polytheist Arabs in early Islamic literature. Once the negative representation becomes established in sacred text it becomes embedded in the religious culture and is therefore mechanically and automatically conveyed to every new generation of believers.

A third factor behind current tensions between Jews and Muslims is the conflict raging in Israel/Palestine. This situation is one in which each of two competing expressions of modern nationalism believes that it has exclusive right to the same national territory. The core issue in the conflict is competing nationalisms and not religion, which is immediately apparent if one examines the history of the first three generations of activists and actions on both sides of that political divide. Only since the 1970s has the conflict been defined increasingly in religious terms, but the change in viewpoint has negatively affected Jewish and Muslim views of the other in most parts of the world.

While all these issues are important for untangling and improving the complex relationship between Muslims and Jews, I am concerned here with a fourth factor: the internalisation of majority prejudice within a minority community. This comes in two forms. One is called “ethnic self-hatred,” which is turning majority prejudice on one’s own self and community. It should not be surprising to learn that antipathy in the dominant culture is picked up and internalised by the very communities that suffer from the prejudice. Some Jews and Muslims thus

internalise antagonism directed against their communities, which can result in negative self-esteem and behaviors.¹⁴

Like other minorities, Jews and Muslims also internalise prejudice directed against other identified minorities that derive from the larger environment. While no formal studies of Jewish and Muslim views toward the other have been conducted to date, anecdotal evidence suggests a very substantial rise in Jewish antipathy toward Muslims in the past two decades.¹⁵ As noted above, Jews historically have had significantly less antipathy toward Islam than Christians. This can be explained by the factors mentioned above, namely that Jews were not threatened by the success of Islam as were Christians because the authority and value of Judaism were not based on historical domination or influence during the period of Islamic historical emergence.

Secondly, Islam did not exist as an organised religion during the emergence of Judaism, so the natural antipathy directed toward established religions was never directed against Islam (or Christianity). It was, rather, directed against the establishment religions of the ancient Near East, namely, Canaanite polytheism.¹⁶ The rise in Jewish fear and hostility directed against Muslims must therefore be explained by other means. The two most important factors would appear to be the "religionisation" of the struggle of competing nationalisms in Israel/Palestine and Jewish assimilation of and participation in the steep rise in Christian/Western cultural prejudice and Islamophobia.

Anecdotal evidence would suggest a recent rise in anti-Semitism among Muslims as well.¹⁷ The rise of Western-styled anti-Semitism in the Muslim world has been addressed elsewhere and need not occupy us here in detail.¹⁸ It must suffice here to note how colonial influence in the Muslim world by Western powers included the introduction of Christian anti-Semitism, which influenced Muslim attitudes toward indigenous Jews living in the Muslim world. One famous indication of the change in attitudes among Muslims is the famous Damascus Blood Libel of 1840, which occurred more than a generation before the rise of Zionism as a national movement

among Jews.¹⁹

Anti-Semitism among Arabs has caused some confusion because of the racial-linguistic association with the term. Some Arabs have claimed that by definition, they cannot be anti-Semites because they trace their ancient genealogy to a line also going back to Noah's son Shem. Because they are officially Semites, it is impossible for them to be anti-Semites. This is actually a spurious argument because anti-Semitism emerged as a term to describe the hatred of Jews specifically, and has rarely been applied to any other community. In any case, if an Arab or a Jew or anybody else hates somebody simply for being a member of a certain community, then that person is a racist. If the racism is directed against Jews, it is called anti-Semitism, no matter who the hating person is.²⁰

Islamic culture includes natural antipathy directed against Jews (as well as Christians and polytheists) that arose from the phenomena associated with the emergence of new religions discussed above. That antipathy is imbedded in the Qur'an, the Hadith, and most forms of traditional literature such as Tafsir and Hadith commentaries. But this aversion had neither the particular qualities nor the virulence of Christian antipathy toward Jews. The rise in anti-Semitism among Muslims is profoundly influenced by the Israel-Palestine conflict and by the increasing pressure of globalisation and recent Western military incursions into the Muslim world, but the nature of its rhetoric and caricatures indicates a direct relationship with anti-Semitic imagery and rhetoric directed against Jews in the West, and particularly in mid-20th century Europe. Current Muslim expressions of anti-Semitism quite clearly reflect the absorption of Western prejudice against Jews.

CONCLUSION

Muslims and Jews share the ignoble role of being singled out historically by the West as the archetypal "other". Hated and feared for centuries, fantasies of Jewish and Muslim barbarity and evil are deeply embedded in Western culture and remain at all times a latent influence on the perceptions and perspectives of Westerners. Because Islamophobia and anti-Semitism have become a core component of

Western civilisation, it is unlikely that these prejudices can ever be totally eradicated. Nevertheless, much can and must be done to prevent their latency from becoming activated, and to counter these forms of racism when they are active. While this is not the specific topic of this essay, it is a subject requiring urgent exploration and research.

The causes of strife in this complex world are many. They must never be reduced to the essentialist and false excuse of religion or racialised communities. It is not Muslims and Islam, or Jews and Judaism that have caused the problems we face in this complex modern world any more than it is “gypsies” or “heretics.” Our current problems derive from a complex set of economic, social, political and other factors. The primitive, medieval explanation of reducing all the world’s ills to a single cause or community will resolve no conflict, establish no justice, and bring no peace or understanding.

Muslims and Jews share the similar role of outlier in the West. They have much in common and can benefit from mutual understanding and cooperation, and it will be of enormous benefit for all parties when Muslims and Jews can work together consistently and reliably. But working together requires that both communities take stock of their own prejudice against the other and work to resolve it. Only then can they join forces successfully with progressive and affirmative people of all types to collaborate in building a world based on cooperation, dignity, and respect for people of all creeds and backgrounds.

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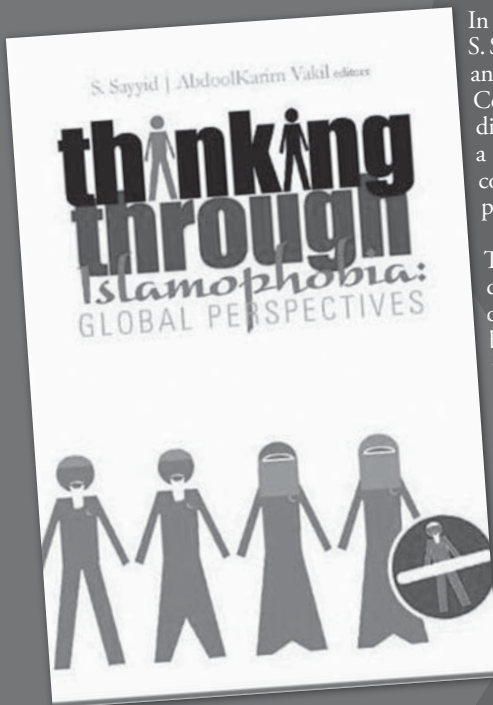
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BOOK PROMOTION

Thinking Through Islamophobia: Global Perspectives

S. SAYYID & ABDOOLKARIM VAKIL - EDITORS



In *Thinking Through Islamophobia*, edited by S. Sayyid (Reader in Rhetoric, Leeds University) and Abdoolkarim Vakil (Lecturer, Kings College London), the term Islamophobia is discussed and debated extensively. It offers a series of critical engagements with the concept, its history and deployment, and the phenomena that it seeks to marshal.

Twenty-eight contributors from diverse disciplinary and geographical backgrounds draw on their expertise to map out the tensions between the concept and the phenomena as they are played out across different contexts and continents. Extending the discussion of Islamophobia beyond its commonplace focus on the West and staking a claim for the continuing relevance and critical purchase of Islamophobia in struggles for justice, this new book locates the polemical debates on Islamophobia within wider cultural and political mobilisations engendered by the 'Muslim question'.

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Profile: Shaykh Michael Mumisa is a respected Muslim academic and theologian, and awarded his Alim al-Uloom (Islamic University graduate degree) in Egypt. He has also been awarded a PhD in Islamic Studies from the University of London. He is currently pursuing his PhD research in Islam and contemporary society at the University of Cambridge. He is a frequent speaker at Islamic conferences and seminars, and has been invited to speak at the University of Birmingham, University of Cambridge, University of Exeter, University of Hull, University of London, University of Manchester, University of Warwick, University of York, and many other institutions. He is also a frequent contributor to the media, and has been featured on BBC, Sky News, and other major news channels. He is the author of a number of books, including 'Islamic Law: Theory & Contemporary Issues', and 'Islamic Law: Theory & Contemporary Issues'. He is also a frequent contributor to the media, and has been featured on BBC, Sky News, and other major news channels. He is the author of a number of books, including 'Islamic Law: Theory & Contemporary Issues', and 'Islamic Law: Theory & Contemporary Issues'.


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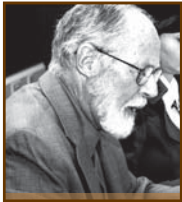
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Islamophobia, Mimetic Warfare and the Bugaboo of Shari'a Compliance: Counter-Strategies for Common Ground

*DR ROBERT D. CRANE

CONFLICT resolution and conflict management can be opposites. Discussing conflict resolution, the great Roman philosopher, Cicero, advised, "Before you discuss anything whatsoever, first agree on common terminology." Otherwise at best the discussants will talk past each other, because divergent premises will preclude convergent thought.

Conflict management may include conflict resolution, but usually it is used to promote conflict, not to remove or reduce it. If the objective is not agreement on anything whatsoever, but rather the opposite, then we have entered the realm of mimetic warfare. This form of management is designed to achieve victory over a perceived enemy by shaping the minds of the conflicting parties, both the enemy's and one's own.

The objective is deliberately to manipulate the minds of susceptible and unsuspecting persons subliminally by using mimes to channel their thoughts in the desired direction. Mimes are symbols, especially words that are psychologically loaded to produce the desired result.

Mimes are the ammunition of psycho-strategic warfare.¹ Shock-and-awe has always been a staple of military strategy, but manipulating the sub-conscious to produce the same result can be more powerful.

THE MIMES OF JUSTICE, FREEDOM, AND DEMOCRACY

Mimetic warfare can consist of statements designed to convince the opponent that one is mentally somewhat deranged or ideologically unbalanced in order to increase the deterrent effect of weapons of mass destruction. The Soviets tried to convince American strategists leading up the Cuban Missile Crisis that they would wage all-out "broken-back" nuclear war

if challenged. They failed.

The President of Iran, Ahmadinejad, appears to be happy that some of his statements are grossly misconstrued to suggest mental imbalance, because one must treat an armed crazy man with respect. His allies in Russia and China could exploit this as a tool of negotiation, but the verdict is still out on that one.

Mimetic warfare can also be used to brainwash one's own supporters by generating a boogeyman as a threat to the future of civilization. Once Communism imploded because of its internal contradictions, Islam became a handy enemy, especially after 9/11 served the purpose of proving that all Muslims are an existential threat to the free world.

Once the threat mentality, as distinct from an opportunity mentality, is established, as it was during most of the 20th century, the governing policy paradigm must be based on fear, especially of global chaos. The defense for one's own survival requires policies to stabilise the world by freezing the status quo, with all of its injustices.

Justice can always come later, so there is no point in talking about it now, especially since considerations of justice might constrain the necessary pursuit of global hegemony. One's enemies, after all, might use justice as a mimetic atom bomb. An astute mimetic warrior therefore might conclude that freedom and democracy are more appropriate as a global paradigm.

THE FUTURE OF JUSTICE

The next eighty years are the subject of an astute analysis and global forecast by John Hillen of the Foreign Policy Research Institute in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Published in September, 2010, this perceptive analysis has a glaring fault. Hillen conflates Islam with Muslim, whereas Islam is a religion, and

Muslims include people who commit crimes against humanity in the name of Islam.

We see references all the time to “Islamic” tyranny in various countries of the world, and even to “Islamic terrorists”. Both of these terms are perfect oxymorons. There is, in fact,

As long as we fail to distinguish the difference between Christianity and Christendom or between Islam and Islamdom, or between Judaism and Jews, the chances of civilisation surviving on earth for as long as eighty years is distinctly problematic.

not a single Islamic regime in the world. This means that there is certainly no Islamic world, though arguably there is a distinct Muslim world in which the majority of people in 57 different countries are Muslims.

As long as we fail to distinguish the difference between Christianity and Christendom or between Islam and Islamdom, or between Judaism and Jews, the chances of civilisation surviving on earth for as long as eighty years is distinctly problematic.

Hillen's most critical contention is that neither the United States nor Europe by themselves can do much about the global future. This is a defeatist approach to world affairs, because it suggests that justice as an American paradigm has no power to shape the future. Furthermore, his conclusion that we are mere flotsam in a raging river suggests that Islam, which is founded on the most sophisticated principles of justice, has no role to play in the pursuit of peace, prosperity, and freedom.

THE MIME OF SHARI'A COMPLIANCE

A hot-button term of political manipulation today is “shari'a compliance”. The former

Speaker of the House, Newt Gingrich, who *de facto* is a declared candidate for the U.S. presidency in the election of 2012, claims that this is an Islamic code-word for a totalitarian take-over of America.

The term “shari'a” has many different meanings. Some Muslim extremists use it for political purposes as a codeword to identify their own closed ideological system of thought in a global battle for supremacy. Some so-called Islamophobes support these perverters of all religion as truly representative of Islam.

Often cited as the leader of this extremism, Syed Qutb's,² doctrine half a century ago was embodied in his declaration that, “There is only one place on earth that can be called the House of Islam (Dar al-Islam), and it is that place where an Islamic state is established and the Shari'ah is the authority and God's laws are observed. ... The rest of the world is the House of War (Dar al-Harb)”.

Modern extremists may use different words, like *Dar al Zulm*, the land of evil, or *Dar al Kufr*, the land of those who are going to hell because they deliberately reject the truth. The substance of their war, however, is the same, namely, to invent and instigate a clash of civilisations and to declare a holy war with the slogan “No Substitute for Victory”. Such radical puritanical “reformers”, whether anti-establishment like the Salafis in Saudi Arabia, or pro-establishment like the fascist Wahhabis, claim to be Islamic, but their ultimate aim is to acquire absolute power here on earth, so that blowing up Jewish babies and oneself can be easily justified and even sanctified in the pursuit of a higher cause.

One of the most well-known and controversial Muslims in the world, Professor Tariq Ramadan, has an exactly opposite understanding of the Islamic shari'a. This approach is shared by the vanguard of Islamic intellectuals in the world today, including Imam Feisal Abdul-Rauf, the founder of Cordoba House near Ground Zero in New York. Ramadan explained his views in a long Q&A at the Pew Forum on April 27, 2010, entitled “Islam, the West, and the Challenges of Modernity”, which is the title of a book with the same title that appeared on Amazon four months later. He writes, “I'm trying to come up with a new framework for Islamic

We have a common ground, a common area, where the Christian ethics, the Jewish ethics, the Muslim ethics, the humanist ethics ... could provide reform for the better" -Tariq Ramadan.

applied ethics. ... Meaning what? That we have a common ground, a common area, where the Christian ethics, the Jewish ethics, the Muslim ethics, the humanist ethics ... could provide reform for the better".

What are the chances of his success? One important straw in the wind is Daniel Pipes' recent reversal of his approach to Islam as a religion. Most of the people associated with the Foreign Policy Research Institute (FPRI) ever since Pipes re-energised it in 1991 have preferred collective guilt as a means to demonise a religion, specifically Islam, and thereby in a vicious circle to demonise all Muslims as a means to demonise Islam.

In August and September, 2010, the all-time peak in the upsurge of collective guilt in America was achieved when Islamophobes exploited the opportunity to attack Imam Abdul-Ra'uf's Cordoba House inter-cultural center near Ground Zero in New York, for which I was an adviser during this period. Reacting to the viciousness of this extremism, Pipes reversed course and said that the greatest danger in trying to counter Muslim terrorism is to ascribe collective guilt to Islam as a religion and thereby to all Muslims in the world. This would eliminate Islam as the strongest and, in fact, the only effective counter to the growing extremism among Muslims and among a lot of people in the world.

WHAT IS SHARI'A COMPLIANCE?

Shari'a compliance is respect for the shari'a. But what is that?

Ramadan and Imam Abdul-Rauf develop an answer by representing a long tradition in Islamic thought. The greatest Islamic scholars for more than a millennium have endured oppression and imprisonment because of

their commitment to preserve the purity of Islam as a religion and of its enlightened jurisprudential expression from extremist revolutionaries, as well as from political oppression and perversion by tyrannical Muslim governments.

In traditional or classical Islamic thought the Shari'a is the high level framework of universal principles in Islamic jurisprudence derived through intellectual effort to understand the meaning and coherence (*nazm*) of the Qur'an and of the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad. This higher framework is the subject of *Usul al Fiqh* or the Principles (Roots) of the Fiqh. The system of specific laws, rules and regulations, which must reflect and conform to the highest principles, is called simply *Fiqh*.

The *fiqh* includes not only the set of punishments or *hudud* specifically mentioned in the Qur'an for deterrence and with strict evidentiary rules for application, but many man-made rules and punishments that have developed in various cultures to which Islam as a religion spread. For example, the contention of some Muslims that a husband may beat his wife, or that an adulterous should be stoned to death, or an enemy should have his throat slit have no solid basis in the Qur'an, Hadith, Sunnah, or Sirah. Such punishments are strongly condemned by Islamic jurisprudential scholars, but remnants of such cultural practices survive even today.

The higher guidance that should guide the understanding and applicability of the *fiqh* was spelled out by two of the greatest Islamic scholars, Shamsuddin ibn al-Qayyim (died in 748 A.H., 1347 A.C.) and his mentor Imam Ahmad ibn Taymiyah (d. 728). Ibn Qayyim wrote: "The Islamic law is all about wisdom and achieving people's welfare in this life and the afterlife. It is all about justice, mercy, wisdom, and good. Thus any ruling that replaces justice with injustice, mercy with its opposite, common good with mischief, or wisdom with nonsense, is a ruling that does not belong to the Islamic law."

Regardless of the various schools of *fiqh* or of the schools of thought (*madhab*) that have been established by leading Islamic scholars or Imams, namely, the Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi'i, Hanbali, Ja'fari, and Zaidi, the common

"constitutional" principles guiding the discussion of universal human responsibilities and rights derive from the essence of Islam and of every other world religion, namely, truth, love, and justice.

In classical Islamic thought of the third through seventh centuries, A.H., human responsibilities and the human rights that result from fulfilling them were systematised in what is known as normative law, that is, in norms or general principles. The entire field of Islamic normative law is a product of *ijtihad* or intellectual effort to understand the Qur'an and Sunnah. Over a period of four centuries, the greatest and wisest Islamic scholars engaged in this "third jihad", *Jihad al-Kabir*, which is called for in Surah al Furqan 25:52 (Qur'an), *wa jahidhum bihi jihadan kabiran*. The *ijtihad* or intellectual effort to strive for greater understanding in this Great Jihad produced the principles or *maqasid* that spell out precisely the human rights that some skeptics have asserted do not exist in Islam.

These principles are based on four premises of Islamic law or shari'a. The *first* is its holistic ontology embodied in the term *tawhid*, according to which the entire created order exists in unitary harmony. The things and forces we can observe are real, but their existence comes from God. They do not exist independently of His purpose.

**The flower in the desert
is beautiful even if no
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and necessarily therefore
Islamic law, consist of
unity, symmetry, harmony,
depth of meaning, and
breadth of applicability.**

The *second* premise is esthetic. The nature of transcendent reality, and of all being, is Beauty, which precedes and is independent of cognition. The flower in the desert is beautiful even if no person sees it. Beauty, and necessarily therefore Islamic law, consist of unity, symmetry, harmony, depth of

meaning, and breadth of applicability. The greatest beauty is the unitive principle of *tawhid* itself, because without it there could be no science and no human thought at all. This is of controlling importance in the shari'a, because it means that the ideal system of law should be simple, symmetrical, deep, and comprehensive.

The *third* premise is epistemological. All knowledge is merely a derivative and an affirmation of the unitary harmony inherent in everything that comes from God. All creation worships God because He is the Ultimate One and therefore the only one worthy of worship. Every person is created with a need and a corresponding intuitive capability to seek and to know transcendent reality and to submit lovingly to God in thought and action. This epistemological premise reinforces the first two, because it indicates that Islamic law serves to give meaning to everything man can observe. And meaning comes from God, Who gives purpose to everything He has created.

The *fourth* and most easily understood premise of Islamic law is its normative or purposive, goal-oriented nature. In their "Universal Principles of Human Rights," Islamic scholars over the centuries have identified several irreducibly highest principles. These are known as the *maqasid* or purposes, as the *kulliyat* or universals, and as the *dururiyat* or essentials of justice.

A normative framework of human responsibilities and human rights was developed by intellectual induction from the primary Islamic sources, the Qur'an and Sunnah, with the help of the primary research tools, the Ahadith and Sirah, in order to apply the details of *fiqh* within the coherent and comprehensive value system of divine revelation. Maqsudi jurisprudence expanded the discipline of *usul al-fiqh* or roots of the *fiqh* beyond the limited vision of textual literalists in order to explore the *Sunnat Allah* or natural law and divine paradigm of justice ('*adl* or '*adala*). The *Mujtahideen*, those who carry out *ijtihad*, of this normative jurisprudence sought out the higher *hikmah* or wisdom of this "natural law" in order to promote the general benefits (*maslaha*) of divine revelation for individuals and communities and to avoid

the general harm (*mafsadah*) from the pursuit of material power at the expense of justice.

The classical five *maqasid* (*al-dururiyat al-khamsah*) or *buquq* (sing. *haqq*) of Imam Al-Ghazali in the fourth Islamic century were the protection of *Din* (faith and religion), *Haya* (life), *Mal* (private property), *Karama* (dignity and honor), and *‘Ilm* (mind and knowledge). Later scholars, especially Al-Shatibi, added *Nasl* or *Nasab* (family and community) and *Hurriyah* (self-determination or political freedom). Some twenty-first century scholars have added an eighth *maqсад*, known as *haqq al-mahid* or respect for the physical environment.

While the Shari’a provides a broad framework of principles, the *qadi* or lower-level judge is responsible within the framework of his own school of law for applying the detailed rules and regulations in any particular time and place. The diversity of such applications is known as the *fiqh al-aqaliyat*, which is now at the forefront of scholarly discussion among Islamic scholars.

One representation of the irreducible normative principles of the shari’a identifies eight primary principles and their respective secondary and tertiary implications, along with examples of actions necessary to actualize the spirit of these principles of human rights in Islam. These eight are the following, as spelled out with extensive charts in the new textbook, *Islam and Muslims*, published in Basking Ridge, New Jersey, by The Center for Understanding Islam:

1. Respect for Divine Revelation and Freedom of Religion

The first principle, known as *Haq al-Din*, is the duty to respect divine revelation. Classical Islamic scholars interpret this to require freedom of religion, which means that each human has the right freely to seek truth. This primary belief in divine revelation requires freedom of religion and provides the framework for the following additional principles of human rights in Islam.

2. Respect for the Human Person and Life

The second principle, *Haq al-Nafi*,

necessary to sustain existence is the duty to respect the human person and the duty to respect life, *Haq al-Haya*. This principle provides guidelines for what in modern parlance is called the doctrine of just war.

3. Respect for Family and Community

The next principle is the duty to respect the family and the community at every level all the way to the community of humankind as an important expression of the person. This principle teaches that the sovereignty of the person, subject to the ultimate sovereignty of God, comes prior to and is superior to any alleged ultimate sovereignty of the secular invention known as the State. This is the opposite of the Western international law created by past empires, which is based on the simple principle of “might makes right.”

4. Respect for the Environment

This principle of the Sunnat Allah is *Haq al-Mahid* (from *wahada*) or respect for the physical environment. The issue of balance in the *maqсад* of *haq al-mahid* concerns the relative priorities in protecting the environment versus protecting the other essential purposes of human life. This is part of the broader problem of relating the spiritual and the social as foci in a single paradigm of *tawhid*.

5. Respect for Economic Justice with Broadened Capital Ownership

This requires respect for the rights of private property in the means of production, which is a universal human right of every human being. The essential purpose of Islamic monetary theory and practice is to promote such broadened capital ownership.

6. Respect for Political Justice with Self-Determination

This principle requires respect for self-determination of both persons and communities through political freedom, based on *khilafa*, *shurah*, *ijma’*, and an independent judiciary, including the concept that economic democracy is a

precondition for the political democracy of representative government.

7. Respect for Human Dignity with Gender Equity

This principle states that the most important requirement for individual human dignity is gender equity. In traditional Islamic thought, freedom and equality are not ultimate ends but essential means to pursue the higher purposes inherent in the divine design of the Creator for every person.

8. Respect for Knowledge and Dissemination of Thought

The last universal or essential purpose at the root of Islamic jurisprudence is respect for knowledge. This can be sustained only by observance of the first seven principles and also is essential to each of them. The second-order principles of this *maqsad* are freedom of thought, freedom for dissemination of thought, and freedom for assembly so that all persons can fulfill their purpose to seek knowledge wherever they can find it.

This framework of Islamic principles for human rights is at the very core of Islam as a religion. Fortunately, this paradigm of law in its broadest sense of moral theology is now being revived by courageous Muslims determined to fill the intellectual gap that has weakened the Muslim ummah for more than six hundred years. This renewed effort for a spiritual and intellectual renaissance in all faiths can transform the world for the good of all humankind.

These principles of the universal normative law are derived in every religion both from the text of scripture and from the context of both their origin and application throughout time and space. The shari'a therefore is primarily a form of ethics derived by human reason but rooted in transcendent truth and transcendent justice, in accordance with the Qur'anic verse, Surah al An'am 6:115, *wa tamaat kalimatu rabika sidqan wa 'adlan*, "The word of your Lord is fulfilled and perfected in truth and in justice".

These traditional principles are identical to the principles on which America was

founded. In the modern world many people have forgotten their traditionalist origins. This is why the wise people and scholars in every religion must work together in solidarity to revive the best of their past in the present in order to marginalize the extremists and build a better future for everyone.

A TRADITIONALIST STRATEGY FOR TRANSCENDENT JUSTICE

This common ground of human responsibilities and human rights, which we might call classical traditionalism, is the basis of Imam Abdul-Ra'uf's Cordoba House near Ground Zero. It is also the basis for Muslim cooperation in marginalising all forms of religious extremism both at home and abroad, because classical Islam and classical America together form the common ground of Islam and America in the world today.

Unfortunately, for most Muslims the term "classical traditionalism" is a synonym for backward ignorance. In contrast, for many Americans this term calls for return to the enlightened vision of America's Founders.

These semantic problems are the bread and butter of pollsters and communications consultants, such as Frank I. Luntz, who wrote the book, *Words that Work: It's Not What You Say; It's What People Hear*, on the Gingrich Revolution in 1994 and on politics in general. Referring to the commonalities of Islam and America based on their congruity and even identity requires a semantic or terminological revolution. This might require even elimination of such buzzwords as "Progressive Muslims", which for most boomer-age Americans smacks of Communism.

Classical American thought comes from the Scottish Renaissance, which was the opposite of the secularist, continental Renaissance and provided the religious and philosophical background of the minority Whig movement led by Edmund Burke in the English Parliament. Burke was the mentor of almost all of America's founders.

Burke warned against both the European secular "renaissance", reflected in the French Revolution, and the contract theorists (Locke, Hobbs, and Rousseau) as dangerous to a republican form of government. Posing man

as the center of reality and as the source of truth and legitimacy constitutes a polytheistic and dangerous denial of ontological and epistemological transcendence as the source of absolute truth and justice, which persons as individuals and as a community must discern for application in everyday life. Ramadan as a European with little understanding of America's origins understandably may not recognise that these origins are the opposite of the quite different mindset and governing principles of what has come to be regarded as European.

Ramadan, however, who is more familiar with European thought than with America's origins, rightly emphasises the "common ground" in the applied ethics of Islam and "the West". He stated in his Pew Forum Q&A that his major aim in all his books has been to advocate "radical reform". This, he says, consists of going beyond the "fiqhi issues of Islamic law and jurisprudence to the fundamentals", in order to "go from adaptational reform to transformational reform, which is not to adapt to the way things are, but to propose applied ethics to change them for the better". This, he says, requires "a shift in the center of authority in Islam" from "the scholars of the text" to the "scholars of the context".

This common ground, in fact, is what classical Islam has been all about for more than a thousand years, as well as what classical America was once all about and now can be so again.

Recognition of the near identity of classical Islamic and classical American thought is necessary for a new traditionalist movement based on it, which Ronald Reagan called a "Second American Revolution". Such recognition is necessary to introduce Islam in America as a constructive part of the national dialogue.

Influences from secular Europe have raised a false barrier between political governance and spiritual wisdom that was quite alien to America's founders. They based the "great American experiment" on opposition to "democracy", except as a technique of practical governance, and in favor of a republic, which by definition accepts divine authority through revelation and/or natural law as the source of all legitimacy in human life.

Recognition of what some scholars have called paleo-conservatism, as distinct from neo-conservatism, requires translation of the term shari'a, which linguistically means the path to water, holistically so that it is understandable in the traditionalist American context.

Ramadan in another of his books, *Western Muslims and the Future of Islam*, recognised this basic principle of American civilisation by translating the term shari'a as faithfulness toward higher purposes, objectives, and aims, which one may take as translations, respectively, of the Islamic jurisprudential terms *maqasid*, *hajjiyat*, and *tahsiniyat*. He concludes, for example, that Muslims do not need a parallel legal system, because the flexibility of the Islamic legal system permits them to "abide by the common law", known in classical Islamic jurisprudence as *urf* and as part of the *fiqh al-'aqliyat*. He writes, "as to the objectives, we are closer to some of the Islamic ideals in Western countries than in the great majority of the Muslim-majority countries".

Ramadan explains, "I'm not speaking about Islamic finance. I'm not speaking about Islamic medicine. ... It's for me [as an Islamic scholar from within Islam] to break this perception that we have our sciences, Islamic sciences, Islamic finance - and that we have an alternative, which is wrong. It's not true. We don't have an alternative. ... In economy, for example, just to say that we have an Islamic economy by thinking with no riba, no interest, no usury - this is a dream; it's not working. In fact, we are changing the words, but we are doing exactly the same. In fact, we are seeing the same results with other names. And I think that this is hypocritical. ... The way we deal with justice ... has to do with our ethics, our applied ethics".

In still another book, *What I Believe*, which he wrote for a popular audience, Ramadan warns that when it "comes to being less formalistic, and comes to the deep essence of spirituality, this is where [the West] and Muslims are facing exactly the same crisis. This is where we need to reform our understanding of Islam: our educational processes and our educational methodology that we have within the Muslim communities in the West".

For Ramadan, the common challenge of extremism in religion generally throughout the world can be overcome only through education. This was a foundation for Thomas Jefferson, who drafted the American Declaration of Independence. Jefferson taught that no nation can remain free unless the people are properly educated, that education consists above all the knowledge of virtue, and that no nation can remain virtuous unless both personal and public life are infused with awareness and love of God.

The Preamble to the American Constitution stated the corollary of this principle by listing five purposes for establishing the United States of America. Of these, the first was justice, then order (domestic tranquility), national defense, and prosperity, and the last, the product of the others, was freedom.

This set of priorities is classically Islamic, as well as classically American, but this wisdom can be operationalised only when we recognise this fact as the basis for inter-faith understanding and cooperation in pursuit of peace, prosperity, and freedom through compassionate justice.

The praxis or actualisation of universal human rights is the true meaning of shari'a compliance.

Many Muslim scholars say that America is the most shari'a-compliant nation in the world, because it has maintained the vision of its founders as a model of justice, even though the practice has not always reflected

this vision. The task of Muslims therefore in helping to develop a global vision and grand strategy for America is to help maintain this vision and apply it both at home and abroad in the pursuit of peace, prosperity, and freedom.

*Dr Robert Dickinson Crane is the former adviser to the late President of the United States Richard Nixon, and is former Deputy Director (for Planning) of the United States National Security Council. He is also the former U.S. Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates (1981). In 1962 he became one of the four co-founders of the first Washington-based foreign-policy think-tank, the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS). In 1966, he left to become Director of Third World Studies at the first professional futures forecasting center, The Hudson Institute, led by Herman Kahn.

Crane is the Chairman of the Center for Understanding Islam, and President of the Center for Policy Research. Crane obtained a doctorate (J.D.) at Harvard Law School (1959) in International Investment and Comparative Legal Systems.

Crane was a religious instructor on Islam at the Islamic Center, Massachusetts Avenue, Washington, D.C. between 1983-86. He was the director of publications for the International Institute of Islamic Thought between 1986-1988; later becoming the founding member of The American Muslim Council and Director of its Legal Division, 1992-1994. Crane has authored a number of books and many professional articles on a range of issues.

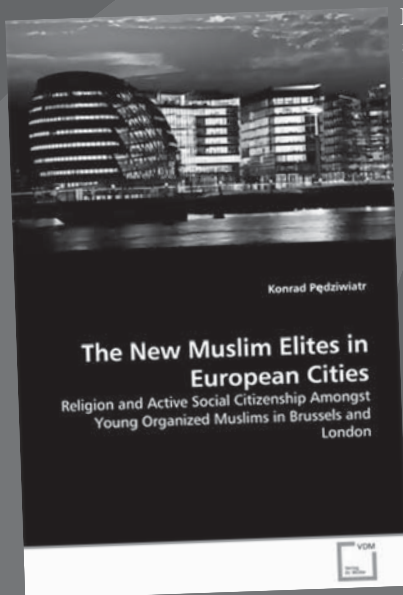
ENDNOTES

1. Crane, Robert D. (1966). "Psychostrategy: A New Concept", *The Military-Technical Revolution: Its Impact on Strategy and Foreign Policy*, ed. John Erickson, Frederick A. Praeger, Publishers, 1966, reprinted in condensed form in *Survival*, Journal of the Institute for Strategic Studies, London, March-April 1965, and in *The Journal of National Defense*, December 1967, Tokyo, Japan, pp. 89-98 (in Japanese, from a 60-page report of the Hudson Institute).
2. Syed Qutb was the Muslim Brotherhood's equivalent of Lenin or even of Trotsky, as described in my book, *The Natural Law of Compassionate Justice: An Islamic Perspective*.



THE NEW MUSLIM ELITES IN EUROPEAN CITIES: Religion and Active Social Citizenship Amongst Young Organized Muslims in Brussels and London

KONRAD PEDZIWIATR



In this book, Konrad Pedziwiatr, Assistant Professor at the Tischner European University, explains how Islam in Western Europe ceases to be a religion of immigrants but is emerging as a religion of European-born citizens. As a result of the acts of violence committed by some Muslims on the continent and elsewhere there has been increased focus on Muslims in Europe, however, very little attention has been paid to the exploration of various dimensions of citizenship of young European Muslims.

The New Muslim Elites in European Cities attempts to fill gaps by uncovering what the emerging Muslim religious brokers or members of the new Muslim elites mean when they describe themselves as 'Muslim citizens' and by exploring relations between Islam and citizenship in two urban/national settings: one in which Muslims are mostly perceived as individuals (Brussels/Belgium) and one in which they are usually viewed as members of religious, ethnic or other social groups (London/Britain). It argues that the shift in the mobilisation of Islam in Europe from a politics of Muslim

identity to the politics of Muslim citizenship is closely linked with the development of a civic consciousness among certain segments of the Muslim populations.

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AND CIVILIZATIONS



The New McCarthyism in Europe

*LIZ FEKETE

How can we best understand why a tide of Islamophobia is spreading across Europe and explain the unprecedented levels of hysteria against any visible sign of Islam?

France and Belgium have brought in laws that ban the wearing of the *burqa* and *niqab* in public spaces, and in November 2009, Switzerland became the first country in Europe to ban the construction of mosques with minarets when a referendum on the question was passed by a strong majority. In 2010, we witnessed the formation of a coalition government in the Netherlands that includes the notorious Islamophobe and mischief-maker, Geert Wilders, as well as an electoral breakthrough for the far-right Sweden Democrats on the basis of a general election campaign that targeted Muslims. There has also been a dramatic deterioration in the climate in Germany which began when Thilo Sarrazin, a former member of the Executive Board of the Deutsche Bundesbank, published *Deutschland schafft sich ab* (Germany abolishes itself) in which he argued that as Muslim immigrants were genetically of lower intelligence and of higher fertility this would eventually lead to Germany becoming 'a nation of dunces'. Then, in October, shortly before Chancellor Angela Merkel declared that multiculturalism had 'utterly failed', the president of Bavaria, Horst Seehofer, declared that '*Multi-kulti* is dead', that there was no more room in Germany for 'alien cultures', and that immigration from the Muslim world to Germany must end.

In this poisonous climate hostility spreads like an oil slick from one European country to the next, which makes it the more important to take stock and reflect on the roots of Islamophobia. We are, it seems, living in a world that is being shaped by a new McCarthyism - only today the 'Islam scare' is replacing the 'red scare'. Once Communists were treated as

a dangerous 'fifth column' subject to 'foreign allegiance', but today such ideas are being transferred onto those European citizens and residents who happen to be Muslim. Similar to the US media's own 'hunt for subversives', the media in Europe is now contributing to the 'Islam scare'. And the media frameworks for discussing issues of terrorism and integration (with migrant communities persistently treated as 'foreigners', or even 'enemy aliens') are contributing to the rise of far-right parties: the Sweden Democrats, the British National Party or the Golden Dawn in Greece.

THE WAR ON TERROR AND COUNTER-TERRORISM POLICY

In fact, this hysteria, much of it reflected from our media, is rooted in developments that arise from the so-called "war on terror". To uncover the roots of Islamophobia today we need to start with the underlying counter-terrorism policy. On surface, features of the emergency laws introduced post-September 11 - the suspension of *habeas corpus* (detention without trial), the undermining of the non-refoulement principle (no return to torture), house arrest (control orders), and the corroding effects of the use of secret evidence - are being opposed by a whole host of Muslim, civil liberty and campaigning organisations.

However there is much more to anti-terrorist laws. The creation of a separate criminal justice system for Muslims beyond the ordinary rule of law has arisen out of the expanded EU-wide definition of terrorism which no longer relates to just violent physical acts for political ends, but encompasses speech, thought, and even 'behaviour'. EU definitions of terrorism start from a position that Islam per se equals such a grave threat, that every young Muslim student in the country needs to be monitored for the tell-tale signs of 'radicalisation' - according to human rights lawyer Gareth Peirce, a 'condemnation as conveniently precise as

the label subversive used in the post-war McCarthyite witch-hunts in America'.¹

Peirce should know. She represents hundreds of young Muslims who have come under the scope of three little-discussed sections of the anti-terrorism laws: section 57 of the Terrorism Act 2000 (to be in possession of books or items for the purpose of terrorism); section 58 (collecting information useful to terrorism); and section 1 of the Terrorism Act 2006 (indirectly encouraging terrorism by glorification of terrorism).

It is laws such as these that justified the ridiculous instructions placed on British universities by former Education Secretary, Ruth Kelly. She urged university administrators to look out for symptoms of 'unacceptable behaviour' on campuses and to share information about suspicious students with the intelligence services. It was Paul Mackney, the then joint secretary of the University College Union who first warned that 'members may be sucked into an anti-Muslim McCarthyism which has serious consequences for civil liberties by blurring the boundaries of what is illegal and what is possibly undesirable.' His warning was prescient, in the light of the case involving Hicham Yezza and Rizwaan Sabir.

Sabir was an MA student at Nottingham University researching radical Islamic groups, while Yezza was a university staff administrator. If you are studying the rise of political Islam, it is obvious to investigate al-Qaida. A copy of al-Qaida's manual is freely available for download on a US government website. Sabir duly downloaded it and asked Yezza to print it off for him. But a university employee, on discovering this, got upset and reported Algerian Yezza to the university authorities. They, overcome with their responsibility to report suspicious behaviour to the state, called the police, with predictably catastrophic results, not just for Yezza and Sabir, who were immediately arrested as major terror suspects, but for the university as a whole. The campus was saturated by police and students and lecturers questioned, for instance, about their activities in the peace movement.

THE ROLE OF THE MEDIA

We now know about the Nottingham

students thanks to the work of some great investigative journalists. But the media as

The media have, wittingly or unwittingly, internalised counter-terror policy. The result is that in their coverage they both homogenise Islam and all Muslims, thus treating Islam per se as a threat.

a whole - especially television - does not challenge the law rather, reflects it. First, it gives far too much leeway to extreme-right columnists and 'thinkers to peddle the 'Islam scare'. Sections of the media have, wittingly or unwittingly, internalised counter-terror policy. The result is that in their coverage they both homogenise Islam and all Muslims, thus treating Islam per se as a threat.

It is in fact the media that provides the extreme-right the fuel of publicity. The Freedom Party (PvV) in the Netherlands, led by the arch Islamophobe Geert Wilders, may have fifteen seats in the European parliament but it is not a political party. It has no local branches and exists solely around the personality of its maverick leader and mischief-maker Wilders. The PvV is in many respects a media creation and would be confined to the dustbin of history if it weren't for the media constantly providing an arch racist free airtime with the questions he asks framing all news stories (incidentally, one of Wilders' latest gimmicks is to call for a tax on women who wear the hijab!)

Around much of Europe, the media is launching its own 'witch-hunts' of Muslims who display symptoms of 'unacceptable behaviour' as enunciated by terrorism laws. No other communities are so placed under the microscope, constantly questioned about their personal beliefs, their 'foreign allegiances, as the Muslim communities of Europe. It's former Tory minister, Norman Tebbit's cricket test gone mad. Even here in the UK - where our struggles against

racism and discrimination have led to some acceptance at least of a multicultural society - it feels as though history is being rolled back, with new arrivals once again being told to renounce their inappropriate pre-migration cultures - including inappropriate veils and inappropriate beards - in order to embrace the values, norms and behaviour of the so-called 'host' society. It is as though, in Sivanandan's words, there 'is one dominant culture, one unique set of values, one nativist loyalty'.²

LOYALTY DISCOURSES REFLECT COUNTER-TERRORISM POLICY

In media interviews Muslims are constantly being asked 'Where does your loyalty lie?' In fact, these 'loyalty discourses', in turn mirror the ways in which our counter-terrorist laws are now framing immigration legislations. In the UK, the deprivation of citizenship part of the UK Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act (2006) is similar to the notorious McCarran-Walter Immigration and Nationality Act of the McCarthyite period in the US that allowed for the deportation of immigrants or naturalised citizens engaged in subversive activities. It looks like naturalisation laws will be recast across Europe in order to cast a wider net, as European policymakers now want to also deprive naturalised citizens of their citizenship. Already, this is the case in France, as it is in Belgium where Laurent Louis, an MP for the Parti Populaire has called for the introduction of a kind of de-citizenship ladder for naturalised citizens and dual nationals.

Such second-class citizens will be given ten points; points will be deducted if found guilty of criminal offences, and once a citizen falls down the rungs of the ladder and reaches zero, citizenship will be revoked and they will be deported. In relation to this it is well worth remembering the words of the Immigration Law Practitioners' Association in the UK which warned that in a representative government (as opposed to the tyranny of the majority), 'it should remain the fundamental right of the citizenry to change their government, not the governments to change the composition of the citizenry by banishment of its awkward elements'.

In fact, what we are beginning to witness

now across Europe is an extension of the ways in which governments deal with its 'awkward elements', and the casting of an ever-wider net to hunt down so-called 'subversives'. Legitimate dissent is being re-classified as subversion and civil society actors derided as *Islamogauchistes* or terrorist sympathisers. The arbitrary dismissal of Luk Vervae from his position as a language teacher at Saint Gilles prison in Brussels, without the right to be heard, or even to hear the accusations against him, was a case in point. Vervae had been labelled an *Islamogauchiste* by sections of the media for writing against the anti-terrorist laws in newspapers like *La Libre*, *Le Soir*, *De Standaard* and *De Morgen*.

One example of 'loyalty discourses' in the media can be found in the 'undercover reporter infiltrating of the dangerous mosque' genre. In Britain we witnessed a number of complaints made against these hastily constructed, low budget programmes. But in many European countries the media have gone further than just 'expose' extremism and actually played an active role in seeking the deportation of imams on the basis of such programmes. And where no evidence could be found that the imams were encouraging terrorism, programme-makers merely shifted the goalposts to accuse them of threatening integration. A bizarre case in this respect was that of the Berlin cleric, Yakup Tasci, whom undercover reporters sought to expose as a 'preacher of hate'. What they actually filmed with the hidden cameras was Yakup Tasci criticising Germans for not being clean enough, because they did not shave under their armpits!

THE MEDIA AS GATEKEEPERS AND PROMOTERS OF 'SCARE SCENARIOS'

Third, the media also acts as the gatekeeper privileging those within the Muslim community whose views on Islam fit the dominant narrative. We see signs of this in the huge attention given to the Quilliam Foundation in the UK. The Netherlands had Ayan Hirsi Ali, who became a national celebrity after her derision of Islam as a 'backward culture' that subordinated women and stifled art, adding helpfully, that the Prophet was by Western standards a 'perverse man'.

Norwegian stand-up comedian Shabana Rehman... was photographed naked with a Norwegian flag painted across her body while dramatically throwing away her Pakistani clothes. We are constantly told that Muslim women who wear the *hijab* cannot be fully integrated.

Another somewhat amusing example is that of the Norwegian stand-up comedian Shabana Rehman, who was photographed naked with a Norwegian flag painted across her body while dramatically throwing away her Pakistani clothes. We are constantly told that Muslim women who wear the *hijab* cannot be fully integrated, but a Muslim woman like Shabana Rehman, who tears off her clothes in integration personified. She was voted by the media as one of the most powerful women in Norway.

Fourth, the media creates 'scare scenarios' through its choice and juxtaposition of images.³ Whenever a TV programme discusses issues such as terrorism or integration, a news presenter inevitably stands in front of an image of a woman wearing the *burqa*, or of a mosque, or of Muslim men at prayer. The media's choices of imagery pander to the fears and insecurities of the majority; they induce a kind of collective hysteria, and leave Muslim minorities vulnerable to racial violence.

However those who play with people's fears and insecurities, seldom care about the human costs. One tragic victim of this hysteria was Marwa El-Sherbini, an Egyptian woman living and working in Germany who was insulted in a playground on account of wearing the *hijab* by a neo-nazi sympathiser who called her, an Islamic whore and a terrorist. Unlike most women who wear the *hijab*, and suffer abuse, El-Sherbini gave evidence against her abuser. She was brutally murdered in a Dresden

courtroom while giving testimony. Her attacker stabbed her thirty times in the space of thirteen seconds while shouting 'you have no right to live'. In the melee that followed, a police security officer called to the scene shot El-Sherbini's husband, mistaking him for the perpetrator of this ghastly act. This awful case was initially reported in the German media as a neighbourhood dispute and 'murder over a quarrel over swing'.

One brave voice in Germany, attempted to raise critical questions about the institutionalised negligence of the courts and the possible impact of media scare scenarios about Muslims, on the police officer who shot El-Sherbini's husband. For raising these issues, Dr Sabine Schiffer, Director of the Institute of Media Responsibility in Erlangen, faced prosecution for libelling the police – an ordeal that was only ended recently. Schiffer, who suffers constant death threats that the police do not take seriously, recently spoke at the Institute of Race Relations conference 'End the Isolation: Building Solidarity Networks Against Racism and Islamophobia'. Schiffer pointed out that the murder of El-Sherbini revealed the extent to which the German authorities had totally underestimated the levels of Islamophobic hatred, an underestimate also revealed by the failure of the authorities to react to a letter that the murderer, Alexander Wiens, a German citizen of Russian descent had previously sent to the court. To quote Schiffer in full, 'in this letter, Alexander Wiens made clear that he had no understanding whatsoever as to why this prosecution was being brought against him as, in his view, Muslims had no right to exist, at least not in Germany. Their presence made him nervous, he explained, and, as such, he felt it incumbent upon him to do something, to act.

"Another thing he made clear in this letter, was that he considered that the headscarf El-Sherbini was wearing was a sign of oppression, on the one hand and radicalism, on the other. As he considered [El-Sherbini] an Islamist and a terrorist, he also considered it was entirely justifiable to attack her. What would the reaction of court officials have been if they had received such a letter from a Muslim? If a Muslim had written such a letter, wouldn't

the danger for a woman giving testimony against her assailant have been immediately acknowledged? And wouldn't appropriate measures have been undertaken to ensure her security in court?"

ISLAMOPHOBIA AND RACISM: DRAWING ON EARLIER STRUGGLES

The murder of El-Sherbini, the Swiss ban on minarets, the rise of extreme-right Islamophobic parties and the way terrorist laws erode democratic standards whilst creating 'enemy images', are among the most disturbing developments of 2009 and 2010. But in forging strategies to counter Islamophobia, it is important that we do not feel overwhelmed, or give way to the hysteria that surrounds us.

As part of the Institute of Race Relations' *Alternative Voices on Integration* project, I travel around Europe and have found encouragement in the way that many Muslims respond to the fear and stigmatisation that Islamophobia engenders - not by disengaging, but by drawing parallels and drawing on the lessons learnt from the long history of earlier struggles in Europe, against racism and imperialism.⁴ There is a new wave of exciting alternative news media developing. They take their role models from some of the great movers in Black history and are inspired by Black and Third World radical and anti-colonial traditions: *L'Indigène de la République* in France, which takes its perspective from the writings of Frantz Fanon, Aimé Césaire, Malcolm X, Angela Davis; *Der Wisch* in Austria, produced by the Kanafani inter-cultural initiative which takes its name from the great Palestinian novelist and pan-Arabist fighter, Ghassan Kanafani, who believed that students' education needed to relate to their immediate surroundings.

There is even a media website produced by young Muslims in Netherlands which takes its name 'We are Here to Stay' from the slogan thrown up by the British anti-racist movements' campaigns against the immigration laws. There is the IRR's Independent Race & Refugee News Service and last but not least, there is *Ceasefire*, an edition of which was entirely edited by Yezza from his cell in Canterbury prison (where he was fighting deportation

for so-called immigration irregularities). It is from such initiatives, often inter-cultural and inter-faith, that the new forms of resistance against Islamophobia, racism and the new McCarthyism will take shape.

> ADAPTED FROM A PAPER DELIVERED BY LIZ FEKETE AT THE EIGHTH CLAUDIA JONES MEMORIAL LECTURE IN OCTOBER 2009, LONDON.

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She is a consultant on refugee and immigration issues to a number of organisations and was an expert witness at the Baso Permanent Peoples Tribunal and the World Tribunal on Iraq.

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Sweden and Anti-Muslim Hysteria

*KRISTOFFER LARSSON

MALMÖ, in the southern part of the country, is Sweden's third largest city. Malmö -- and especially one part of it, called Rosengård -- is often mentioned in Islamophobic (and xenophobic) propaganda as a worrying example of what the future will bring unless we put an end to immigration -- violence, social unrest, etc. It is true that more than 80 per cent of Rosengård's inhabitants are immigrants, or born to immigrants. But also true as well is that the city district suffers from a high level of unemployment rate. Only 38 of people who are of working age have a job. Well-educated immigrants cannot find jobs because they do not have Swedish-sounding names.

Often, xenophobia is expressed through words and not through action. Every now and then there are assailants who want to take the matter into their own hands. This is what has happened in Sweden.

In the course of one year or so, fifteen suspicious shootings took place in Malmö, killing one and wounding eight people. The police concluded that the same weapon had been used in several of the shootings (including the lethal one). Another pattern quickly became obvious: all but one of the fifteen victims were of immigrant background.

The shooter became known as "the New Laser Man". His predecessor, a man named John Ausonius, ravaged Stockholm in 1991-1992. Initially equipped with a rifle and a laser sight -- which he later exchanged for a revolver -- Ausonius's profound hatred for immigrants drove him to shoot eleven people. One died. Ausonius, who himself had been bullied in school for his dark hair and appearance (his parents were immigrants from Germany and Switzerland), is serving a life sentence for his crime. A Swedish journalist of Assyrian origin recalled that as a pupil in Sweden of the early 1990s, some of her classmates would wear a t-shirt with the writing: "The Laser Man – A

Luminous Point in The Everyday Life".

So when shootings targeting immigrants started taking place in Malmö, it brought back some bad memories. People who matched the profile were afraid of going out in the evenings, worried that they would be randomly selected by the New Laser Man.

In November, a 38-year-old man was finally arrested on suspicion for the attacks. In court, Peter Mangs has thus far shown no sign of remorse. The case is still pending and the evidence brought against him seems to be strong.

This is a maniac who acted on his own, but in what context? His predecessor, John Ausonius was at work in the early 1990s when a right-wing populist party calling itself New Democracy managed to enter the Parliament on an anti-immigration platform (the party suffered from internal issues and it did not get to keep any seats in the following election). Coincidentally, as the New Laser Man haunted Malmö, the elections of 19 September, 2010 had an unpleasant outcome. The Sweden Democrats received more than the needed 4% of the vote and now holds the balance of power in the Parliament.

The Sweden Democrats party was founded in 1988 and several of its early leading members had a past in neo-Nazi and other types of extremist right-wing organisations.¹ One of them, Anders Klarström, who was the party's chairman between 1989 and 1995, was convicted in 1986 after threatening a famous TV personality, well-known for his anti-racism activism, with death by leaving a message on his answering-machine. Klarström's phone message read: "We're gonna burn you, you [f.....] Jew swine! Damn it, you disgusting little Jew swine! Be careful! We're gonna come and kill you!" But that was in 1980s.

Today the party stands removed from the most extreme elements. They have now reorganised and rebranded themselves. The

new image seems to be successful. But even if their outright hate rhetoric is rare these days, their racist outlook is not hard to locate. If Sweden Democrats are to be believed, virtually all of Sweden's problem can be traced to its liberal immigration policies. Party Chairman Jimmie Åkesson keeps reiterating that immigration costs Sweden "huge" sums of money, though Åkesson is careful to avoid an exact figure. Other party members claim that immigration costs 300 billion Swedish Krona, or 10% of GDP. Economists who have examined the issue on the other hand, give an estimate ranging between 20 and 40 billion kronor. Nonetheless, we need to choose, Åkesson and his party argue, between immigration or welfare.

In October of 2009, Åkesson was allowed to express his party's opinions in an article in Sweden's largest daily. While immigration is seen as the general problem, it is evident that a certain group is identified as the single biggest threat. Åkesson complained that "today's multi-cultural Swedish power elite is so completely blind of the dangers posed by Islam and Islamisation." Islam differs from Christianity, Åkesson went on explaining, "for example in terms of making a distinction between spiritual and worldly power, and in its view of the use of violence. Islam has no equivalence to the New Testament and no universal commandment of love." He continued that Islam is "our biggest foreign threat since World War Two".² In the election a year later the Sweden Democrats won 5.7% of the votes.

Sadly, Åkesson is not the most ardent Islamophobe among the party's prominent figures. The party's spokesperson for international affairs, Ekeröth, does not even pretend to cover his anti-Muslim prejudice. Last year, Ekeröth and his twin brother Kent Ekeröth launched "The Anti-Islamisation Fund". It was founded "as a part of the struggle against Islam" and collects money in order to stop the supposed "Islamisation" of Sweden.

Ekeröth first became known to the public a few years ago when a newspaper revealed that he, a leading figure within the Sweden Democrats party, was one of the 2006 recipients of the Herzl Award, handed out by the World Zionist Organisation. The

motivation read: "Each of these young people has shown outstanding leadership and devotion to Israel and Zionism through their exceptional volunteer efforts on behalf of Israel and the Zionist cause in their respective countries".³

The World Zionist Organisation is said to have regretted its decision after finding out about Ekeröth's party affiliation. The recipient, however, sees nothing contradictory in being Jewish and working for a Swedish nationalist party: "If you're a Zionist, then you're a Jewish nationalist. And in such a case you also need to respect Swedish nationalism". For Ekeröth, Israel and Sweden have a common enemy.

SAME OLD, SAME OLD

In many ways, Swedish Islamophobia resembles anti-Muslim prejudice in other parts of the Western world. The importance of the 9/11 attacks must not be underestimated. Sure, the Western audience did not have an all too positive image of Muslims prior to the attacks. What has changed is that even the world's only superpower has proven to be vulnerable to "the Muslim threat". The subsequent invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq have only led to higher tensions.

Muslims abiding by their religion are commonly framed as "radicals" whilst those... less interested in religious life are labelled "moderates".

Most dangerous however, is the attempt to equate pious Muslims with violence. Muslims abiding by their religion are commonly framed as "radicals" whilst those who are less interested in religious life are labelled "moderates". This is dangerous, because if religious Muslims are seen as posing a threat to the safety of others, then actions need to be taken to stop them.

Violence is not the only negative stereotype associated with Islam. A common argument used by Islamophobes is to point to human rights violations and repressive regimes in Muslims countries as proof of what domestic

Muslim populations would like to introduce in Sweden while at the same time choosing to ignore that many Muslims left their homelands precisely because of repressive regimes.

A way of “proving” that the Muslim minorities does not value democratic rights has been to use provocations. When the Danish newspaper published the disgraceful cartoons of prophet Muhammad in 2005, newspapers in different countries, including Sweden, responded by following Jyllands-Posten’s example and published similar defamatory cartoons which were further supported by, leading journalists, lawmakers and others, who quickly argued for the protection of freedom of speech.

Less known is the fact that Fleming Rose, the cultural editor at Jyllands-Posten who was responsible for publishing the cartoons, in the following year -- probably in an attempt not to be seen as being biased -- said that his newspaper planned on publishing cartoons from the “International Holocaust Cartoon Competition”, which had been announced by an Iranian newspaper in response to the Danish publication. Jyllands-Posten’s editor-in-chief, Carsten Juste, was not pleased with the idea and assured that such cartoons would never appear in his paper. The following day the cultural editor went on a leave for a few months. For a paper purporting to stand up for freedom of speech, Jyllands-Posten certainly failed.

IN A GLOBALISED WORLD, THE MIDDLE EAST IS NOT FAR AWAY

With a strong focus on the Middle East, tensions between Western countries and their

Many Muslim leaders have a limited understanding of Swedish society, and... have difficulty in countering Islamophobic propaganda. Most imams speak no or little Swedish.

Muslim minorities is understandable. The situation is not helped by the fact that many

Muslim leaders have a limited understanding of Swedish society, and therefore have difficulty in countering Islamophobic propaganda. Most imams speak no or little Swedish. Swedish authorities are working on establishing a programme for educating future imams. Religions always adjust to their environment to some extent, which gives hope to the possibility of seeing a more ‘Swedishised’ Muslim community in the future, which will be more successful in giving the community a better reputation.

As I write this, Stockholm has experienced its first suicide bombing. A car was set on fire in central Stockholm and shortly after a suicide bomber blew himself up three hundred metres away from the car. Fortunately, most of the explosives the man was carrying around his waist did not detonate, and he was the only one who died in the attacks.

Ten minutes before the attacks the media and the security police got an e-mail containing audio files in Swedish and Arabic with the name and picture of the suicide bomber, now identified as Taimour Abdulwahab. The files contained chilling messages such as: “Our actions will speak for themselves, as long as you do not end your war against Islam and humiliation of the Prophet and your stupid support to the pig Vilks” (who drew Muhammad cartoons) and encouraged other Muslims to join the fight.

The police said that the failed suicide bombing was “amateurish” and they were unsure whether he was operating on his own. But no matter if this turns out to be the acts of one disturbed Muslim individual or a small group, it will inevitably have very negatives consequences for the Muslim community. In the eyes of the ordinary Westerner, Abdulwahab blew himself up for Islam. Very few people are able to decipher that the bomber’s frustrations and grievances most likely emanate from a victim mentality seeing the daily attacks and killing of Muslims in countries like Iraq and Afghanistan. Furthermore, they justify attacks on Western targets on the basis of asymmetrical warfare, as was made articulated clearly by the Stockholm bomber: “Now your children, daughters and sisters will die like our brothers and sisters and children are dying”.⁴ I believe Abdulwahab

partly wanted to change the way we think about these wars, to make us understand that if we fight wars abroad it will strike us back at home. For too long we have lived with the illusion that the Swedish military presence in Afghanistan will not have any domestic consequences.

The general public has reacted to the Stockholm bombings with fear, which extends to the Muslim community too. For the latter, they know that more people will now look upon Muslims with greater suspicion. The imam of the grand mosque of Stockholm, Shaykh Hassan Mussa, was quick to denounce "all forms of attacks, violence, fears and threats against innocent people, whatever the motive or pretext". Other Swedish-Muslim leaders have joined him in condemnation of the attack. But will it have any affect?

Thankfully, the mainstream media in general have been responsible in reporting this incident, emphasising that a whole community cannot be held responsible for the actions of an individual. However, the same could not be said about the Internet, where many people are flooding sites with comments about how Islam encourages terrorism and that it must be stopped. The claim that Muslims support

suicide bombings is particularly ironic since the greater majority of the victims of such attacks are Muslims. But then again, fear is a powerful feeling that is seldom based on logical arguments. We can only hope that in the end common sense prevails.

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Larsson is a Director of Deir Yassin Remembered, an organisation campaigning for justice for victims of massacres, namely Palestinians. He has worked with the International Middle East Media Center based in Bethlehem, and is currently partaking in an integration project in Uppsala, Sweden where he resides.

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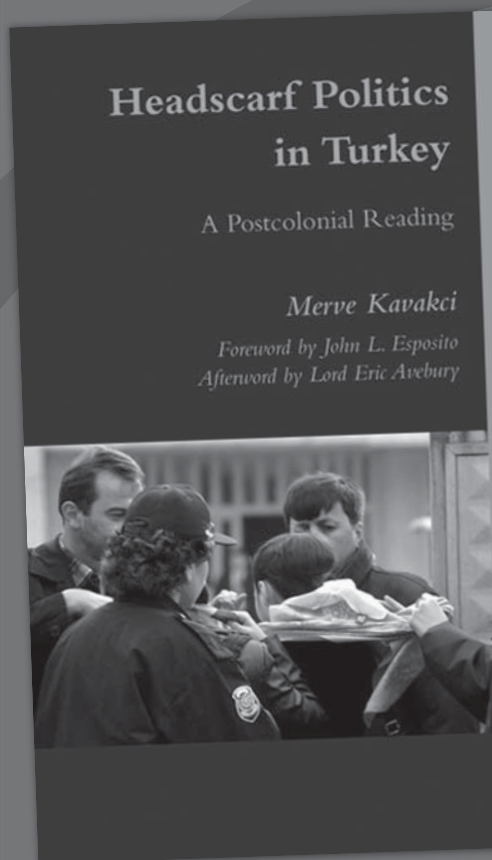
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MERVE KAVAKCI ISLAM



Headscarf Politics in Turkey: A Postcolonial Reading examines the “role model” status accorded to the Turkish Republic in terms of the advancement of female agency in a secular context by using the study of women with headscarves as a case in point

Author Merve Kavakci Islam, who was elected to the Turkish Parliament in 1999, was prevented from serving her term because of wearing the headscarf. Kavakci Islam’s political party was closed down and her Turkish citizenship was revoked, banning her from politics for a period of five years. She took her case to European Court of Human Rights and won in 2007.

In Headscarf Politics, Kavakci Islam provides an insider’s view of the many challenges and struggles faced by contemporary Muslim women in Turkey. In relating Turkish Muslim women’s quest for their niche in secular Turkey, Headscarf Politics provides an alternative perspective for the Western reader.

Headscarf Politics in Turkey:
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Sole Protector, of What? Unpacking Turkey's Anti-Muslim Policies

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At the outset of the last century, when the Turks established what would later be referred to as modern Turkey, they were set to become the symbol of abrupt and unpredictable change. At one moment, they were fighting against the West only to turn around the next and initiate a war “for” the West. The former was an external battle while the latter was internal. The former had mainly

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the British and the French with the help of the Italian and the Greek as the nemesis while the latter had the Turks themselves as the contenders. Looking at the current love and hate relationship between the European Union and the Turkish Republic, one might not grasp what has been said here. Yes, Europe and Turkey have a strained relationship symbolized by unremitting frays and maybe even worse, altercations. But they are also inextricably attached to one another. Neither can do without the other. From the perspective of the Turk this is about the very basis of their existentiality. Wishing not to confuse, when I say the Turks I mean the regime and the nation state ideology, not those comprising the population of Turkey. Indeed people are not homogenous and therefore do not all concur that accession to the European Union is all positive for their country. Nonetheless the regime is sure about it and set to pursue its

road to accession.

Much has changed since the Ottomans. The empire that governed a sizable amount of land in three different continents for around six centuries, espoused expansionist policies articulated within the *ummah*-hood discourse. Muslims were to take the Message wherever it might be. And so they did. Military conquest was the basis of their existentiality. Hence the military institution's clout reached all and beyond all citizens. The Ottomans, then different nations under one empire, were the first soldiers in the name of God. The very inextricable relationship between the weapon and the sacred text positioned the military at the heart of the Ottoman understanding of statehood. The nickname used even today for the Turkish military is self-explanatory: The hearth of the Prophet. Why? It is because he fought and now the Ottomans were fighting for the very same reason.

The tradition of focusing on military empowerment did not alter under the new republic either. On the contrary, the military elite founded the new nation-state and prepared a niche for it that was not open to contestation. They became the sole carriers and implementers of the Westernisation Project, a project which among other goals would aim at marginalizing religion to a large extent. Thus lay the irony. Yet the people of Turkey, just as those under the Ottoman reign, would revere this institution deeply. Wielding such deference, the military would claim ownership of the project without hesitation. Relatively speaking, the military elite did not face much dissent. As for where and when dissent emerged, they dealt with it head on through Independence Tribunals which were dubbed the face of the military in the judiciary body. Thus what needed to be done in the realm of jurisdiction was attempted by courts that had a civic façade on the outside but claimed a militaristic sole in spirit. What was

it that “they” were opposing - revolutionary reforms or as is referred to by the Turkish, *The Revolutions?* Borrowing from Robert Blackey and Clifford T. Paynton this process was “a political and/or social and/or economic and/or cultural upheaval which call[ed] for a fundamental change in the existing order; ... employ[ed] the use or threat of force;”¹ This was to persuade people who were trying to make sense of the recently demised empire of the new venture it was ushering to called Westernisation.

The nature of the new venture was coercive and assumed a top-down approach. Ankara, the new capital, home of the military elite was going to decide how to proceed with the process of nation building, to be emulated by the rest of society. Later the founding elite would realise that both the coercive nature of the process and the reservations people had about the ontological validation of the reforms would turn people away from the process leading to an outcast of the project. They would remain outside the process, if not dissent in uproar. The class of intelligentsia assumed ownership of the economic and intellectual enterprises and represented its own “interests as the common interest of all the members of the society.”² The clear demarcation that separated the ruling elite from the rest, particularly those on the periphery involved in agricultural activities having neither time nor the resources to contribute to the political machinery. This demarcation served to the advantage of the ruling elite in reifying itself as a distinct group with attributes not ascribed for others. They were smart, intelligent, economically empowered and therefore had greater say.

Furthermore this attested to the protest, albeit subtle, of the periphery to disagree with the military establishment on some of the changes brought about. The revocation of the Caliphate was a major blow to people of conservative origins. After all, those nations under Ottoman rule were striving to salvage their land from a possible imperial expedition that will render them ‘another’ colony. This was their own way of standing up for justice and what was right. For the majority, now that the new Turkey was established as a republic, it was time to ensure the preservation of

institutions that were under attack by colonial powers. This did not happen. In fact to the chagrin of some and awe of many, the new Turkey’s dismantling of the institution of caliphate averred that the new nation-state had a different take on the future of Turkey with a new direction towards the West. This would be one of the many issues forming the basis of a difference of opinion between the state elite and their proxies in the rapidly urbanizing cities. In the end a growing chasm would emerge between the modernizing military and the people of the periphery.

REVOLUTIONARY REFORMS

Changes in the alphabet and the coercive encouragement of women to adopt a Western style of living were among the revolutionary reforms that drew greatest attention. People, failing to see eye to eye with the government, construed these changes as attempts to purge religion from their lives. They either ostracized themselves advertently or succumbed to the process, becoming part and parcel of the establishment. Sometimes the changes were gradual while at other times they came one

[1925] saw the introduction of the Hat Law for men, which banned Fezzes and turbans, but permitted Western-style hats. This stressed the significance of the Western appearance in the Westernisation Project.

after another as part of a larger series. In 1924 came the educational reforms, with the closure of religious educational institutions. The following year saw the introduction of the Hat Law for men, which banned Fezzes and turbans, but permitted Western-style hats. This stressed the significance of the Western appearance in the Westernisation Project.

Adoption of the Christian calendar and the

Latin alphabet also took place in 1925. Passage of the civil code which is an amalgamation of the Swiss and French codes took place the same year as well. The word "Islam" was removed from the constitution in 1925. The protection of the aforementioned reforms would become such a major area of concern for the military establishment in the decades to come that it would render itself responsible to oversee the implementation of reforms while other duties took a back seat. Among all, secularism would rise above all else as the cohesive needed to hold the revolutionary reforms package intact.

At this point it is crucial to expand on the ideal of *laïc* state within the Turkish context. The Turkish take on the separation of religion from state affairs is far from the way in which, say, the American people understand and exercise that separation. From the Turkish perspective the United States appears as a mere religious establishment. The Turkish case however is closer to French secularism, only "better" for some and "worse" for many. Take the French *laïcité* and take it up a notch, you will get the Turkish *laïc* state. That is to say the state would oversee religious affairs, teach religion to people and control the extent to which religion can play a role in one's life. That is Turkish secularism. The French pry into the public school realm banning the wearing of any ostentatious religious symbols leaving the higher education out of the scope of this regulation. The Turks ban them in private educational institutions and in higher education. The federal office spaces and military realms are also included in this ban. The scope of rearranging religion's place is far beyond the French experience. It is an indispensable component of the social engineering conducted by the regime to serve the Westernization Project. This is the reason why the republic created the Directorate of Religious Affairs as a federal institution under which all imams i.e. chaplains serve. The fear was to leave any lacuna that would need filling by other actors in society such as Muslim scholars. In fact to eliminate such a possibility, the state raised its own scholars. This was a process of remaking religion with the state's hand.

THE FIRST, AND PAINFUL ENCOUNTER WITH THE MILITARY

The Turkish military, having assumed the position of the sole protector of Turkish secularism, did not have to justify its meddlesome stance. The first encounter came after Turkey ushered into a multiparty system in politics. Adnan Menderes became the Prime Minister in 1950. He addressed the needs of the Muslims until 1960, when he was toppled by the military establishment. The nation was in jubilation in having a leader who was not callous to their concerns. Menderes was not a religious person per se but was equipped with democratic values. One major concern prevalently voiced was the Turkification of the call to prayer, namely, the *adhan*. Between 1932 and 1950 the *adhan* was called in Turkish from all minarets. This was an integral part of the modernisation project and also served the purpose of the new republic distancing itself both from its past, social and political proximity to other Muslim nations. Through such efforts, modern Turkey would in time claim a unique positioning within the Muslim world. It would take pride in being a secular nation-state with a Muslim population.

As soon as Menderes assumed office he revived the calling of the *adhan* in Arabic. People were ecstatic. They could not believe their ears:

"After about 25 years of excessive secularism, the people wanted to return to traditional values that had played a major role in their daily life in earlier times. Religious belief among the people at large had never ceased to exist. It is only the expression of religion in public that was affected. Moreover, illegal religious instruction and traditions had continued in certain places".³

Menderes was also cognizant of this fact that there was a large population which wanted its children to receive an Islamic education. He went ahead and opened public schools funded by the state to provide religious education. These schools would be called the *Imam Hatip* schools. This was in line with the state's project of arranging and rearranging religious affairs as it saw fit. Hence it was not perceived to be antithetical to the secular values of the Turkish state. On the contrary, this would strengthen the state's hand over religion,

providing it with further space for operation. *Imam Hatip* schools were originally intended to educate youngsters who were supposed to become religious chaplains and preachers. The name originates from this ideal. However, over time it became clear that it was not only those people who thought their children should become religious officials that sent their children to these schools, rather those who

Menderes's approach to meet the needs of the practicing Muslims helped him bring different factions of society to the same platform.

simply wanted their children to be exposed to religious education also sent theirs. Initially, these schools only admitted boys. In the 1970s they started accepting females. Menderes's approach to meet the needs of the practicing Muslims helped him bring different factions of society to the same platform:

"By establishing new links between the center and the periphery, bringing the views and aspirations of the periphery closer to the center, the *DP* presented politics for the first time as having deliberative aspects rather than being simply an administrative means to implement an elitist-defined civilizational project".⁴

Menderes's attempts to open space for religion in the public realm worked as an incendiary in the eyes of the military establishment. The military intervened in 1960 toppling Menderes government:

"The movement was really spurred by the progressive intelligentsia, which consisted of government officials, university professors, and students and part of the armed forces, especially the younger officers".⁵

Media was utilised to justify the military-led preemptive strike against Menderes government:

"In 1958 *Ulus* [a national newspaper] had headlined Ataturk's remarks, made in an exasperated moment after a riot by religious reactionaries in Bursa in 1937, to the effect

that the youth of Turkey must be prepared to take direct action to protect his reforms, even if it led to clashes with the authorities".⁶

This turn of events would conclude with a tragic page of Turkish Republican history, the execution by hanging of the Prime Minister Menderes. This was the first of many periodic interventions of the Turkish military based on ideals of protecting the Turkish *laïc* state edifice.

Here it became clear that the state's 'welfare' was prioritized over the welfare of the nation, and that the Turkish regime was assuming a life of its own, independent of its citizens, in utter disregard of its responsibility to serve its subjects. This would become the basis of a legitimization of ample actions on the part of the military taken against practicing Muslims of modern Turkey. These actions would be buttressed by court decrees, which serve as the extremities of the military establishment in the legal system.

1980 COUP

A second such intervention would come in 1980, leading to the imprisonment of many of the religious figures in political and social life. This was carried out by General Kenan Evren. Practicing Muslims were not at the center of the conflict of this intervention. Nonetheless, they had their share of troubles inflicted by the regime. A meeting in support of the Palestinian cause was used as a pretext.⁷ In the subsequent days men with religious symbols such as the *fez* and *sarik* were arraigned.⁸ General Evren assumed presidency. He was the son of an imam and wielded this to his advantage to change the public discourse about religion. He took the matter into his own hands and became the teacher of religion. He would talk about religious affairs and why he thought that many of the practices were not in fact part of the Islamic credo. In this way he tried to bring a change from within. It is possible that, realizing that the military's distanced stance with respect to religion was increasing the growing chasm between itself and the religious people in the country, he knew that he needed to bring an insider voice -- his own voice as the son of an imam. This would be called "Evren's Islam".⁹ According to him, for instance, there was no *tesettür*,

covering of Muslim women in Islam. He discussed the matter extensively in his public addresses. That was the way, he surmised, he could win the hearts and minds of people, by convincing them that what they believed was in fact a fallacy. To support his position on the matter he established the Supreme Education Council (YOK).

Without respite, YOK passed a provision banning the headscarf at federal institutions and universities. This was the onset of a long-lasting (as of today, one can argue that it is rather ever-lasting) war against the religious women of Turkey. On the dissidents of the system, Evren had no mercy: "We said let us hang one from the right and one from the left,"^{9,10} he would later say, demonstrating his sarcastic take on fairness.

AN INTERVENTION, POST MODERN IN NATURE

The next coup orchestrated by the Turkish Military targeted the religious people overtly. This was the post-modern coup of 1997 which toppled the Islamist government after eleven months in office. The process had severe consequences for Muslims. The military announced a set of directives to quash religious activities:

- 1) There must be no compromise against actions that target the republican, *laïc*, social democratic regime of the Turkish Republic. The laws of the revolution [Ataturk's reforms] must be implemented.
- 2) Prosecutors must be mobilised to take action against behavior that violates the laws of the revolution.
- 3) Promotion of *sarik* (hat worn by religious authorities in the Ottoman period) and *cuppe* (a gown that was worn by the religious authorities in the Ottoman time) was seen.
- 4) A legal vacuum emerged from the repeal of Article 163 of the Constitution, which led to the strengthening of reactionary and anti-*laïc* activities. Regulations that will fill that vacuum must be made.
- 5) In the educational policies a return to the spirit of *Tevhid-i Tedrisat* [Ataturk's reform to secularize the educational system] must be elicited.
- 6) Compulsory education must be increased to eight years.

7) *Imam Hatips* were originally established to meet a need. The excessive *Imam Hatips* must be transformed into professional schools. Qur'anic courses under the control of fundamentalists must be closed down and courses must be given at classes of the Ministry of National Education.

8) There is an entrenchment of fundamentalists employed at the federal offices, and municipalities. The government must prevent this.

9) All behavior to exploit religion for political gain, such as the building of mosques must cease and desist.

10) Pompali (semi-automatic) weapons must be taken under control.

11) Iran's attempt to push the regime into instability must be kept under scrutiny.

12) Regulations must be made to enable the independent work of the judiciary and to secure its independence.

13) Recently there has been an enormous increase in provocations targeting members of the Turkish Armed Forces (TSK), causing discomfort in the TSK.

14) The hiring of the military officers, who are discharged from the TSK due to the involvement of *irtica* (reactionarism), by the local municipalities, must be thwarted.

15) Speeches of mayors, party officials at cities and towns, must be regulated under the *Siyasi Partiler Kanunu* (Law of Political Parties).

16) Religious sects becoming an economic power with the support of endowments and financial institutions, must be watched closely.

17) Television and radio messages known to espouse an anti-*laïc* path, must be monitored..

18) Illegal monetary transfer from *Milli Gorus Vakfi* (National View Endowment)¹¹ to municipalities must be stopped.¹²

The constrictive nature of Turkish secularism became evident in the treatment of Muslims in the aftermath of the coup. The military went as far as to announce the names of companies that were owned or managed by practicing Muslims, waging campaigns against them and dissuading people from engaging in business with them. The headscarf ban was

implemented with no exception. Its scope was expanded to cover many facets of public life as well as the private realm. This spill-over effect would lead to further stifling of women in *tesettur* and their families in the decade to come.¹³ *Imam Hatip* schools were put out of the system, practically facing closure due to the coefficient provision introduced in the aftermath of the coup. In the central university entrance examination, unlike the scores of other students, scores received by Muslim graduates of these schools were to be multiplied by 0.8 rather than 1. As a result thousands of *Imam Hatip* school graduates were victimised despite attaining high scores in the examination.¹⁴

Another area where the implications of the fight against religious Muslims were ostentatious was in the area of the military itself. The organisation that assumed the position of protecting Turkish secularism took all measures to purge religious people from its system. The process of espionage was introduced to report on who was religious and who was not. This included the surveillance of family members, their life style, and their friends as well. Religious military men were discharged without explanation. If a military man had a wife in *tesettur*, measures as intrusive as to suggest a divorce were introduced. To have a wife who wears a headscarf or to be praying five times a day were seen as sufficient reasons for immediate discharge under the discipline code. YOK employed similar espionage mechanisms concerning members of academia as well. The judiciary body followed suit. After each military intervention, parties would be closed down by the Constitutional Court and their leading members would be thrown out of the political system via measures such as imprisonment, house arrest and political ban.

In 1998... a new law in parliament... banned the teaching of... the Qur'an to children under... twelve in public or private except through state regulated summer courses.

On the ground one of the ways in which people felt the implications of this period was through the ban on the learning and teaching of Qur'an. The government that assumed office next, with the support of the coup organisers, took on the responsibility of carrying out the aforementioned orders. In 1998 they introduced a new law in parliament that banned the teaching of reading the Qur'an to children under the age of twelve in public or private except through state regulated summer courses. The ban did not have the Old or the New Testament under its scope. Thus a Christian or a Jewish family could very well study their holy books with their children, within the privacy of their home, but this privilege did not extend to Muslims.

THE E-COUP

Today it is difficult to argue that the plight of the Muslims has improved in all facets of life. Yes, there is a general betterment of the plight of the masses. Yes, now some Muslims are wealthier and they have a share in the power game. After two Islamist parties were closed down in a decade due to the intransigent stance of the military establishment, Turkish people, with a mandate, voted in a party, namely the AKP, that emerged from the demise of these two parties. They kept them in power for an astonishing period of eight years. The AKP brought stability to the country both in the economic and political realm. The economic development worked to the advantage of an emerging new class, the Muslim elite. Political changes brought about the democratisation packages within the context of the EU accession process.

The AKP succeeded to a large extent in pushing the military away from the power-holding position back to where it was supposed to be i.e. the garrison. That is not to say that the military did not attempt to overthrow the government. As late as 2009 there were factions in the institution who were ready to carry out another coup. They only had the ability to introduce a manifesto on the website of the Office of the Chief in early 2007. Since it utilised the virtual world as the mediator, it was dubbed the electronic coup. The reason for the military's wrath? Elementary school students doing a presentation on stage about

the birthday of the Prophet in an Anatolian city.

Today Turkish people are more informed about the plots carried out against various governments or individuals by the hand of the military establishment. After the recent referendum where 58 % of the nation voted for constitutional amendments to establish an open society with more democratic values things will never be the same. The military officers will now be tried in the civilian courts. More transparency will bring more accountability. The general sentiment that sweeps Turkish streets is that one day, sooner or later; all those involved in coups will be brought to justice.

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An international figure, recognised among the World's Most Influential 500 Muslims and "Women of Excellence" (NAACP and GWU in 2004), Kavakci Islam has been the recipient of a number of awards, including the Public Service Award in Tribute and in Recognition of Efforts for the Advancement of Human Rights and Muslim Women's Empowerment (by International Association for Women and Children in 2000); and the Service to Humanity Award (by Haus Der Kulturellen Aktivitat und Toleranz in Vienna -1999).

Kavakci Islam holds a doctorate in Political Science from Howard University, an MPA from Harvard University and a BS in Software Engineering from University of Texas at Dallas. Prior to attending the Medical School of Ankara University, she was prevented from continuing her studies due to the headscarf ban.

Today, she works as a consultant for US Congress on the Muslim World and a columnist for Turkish daily Yeni Akit. She is a member of the Editorial Board of the *Mediterranean Quarterly* and the author of a number of books, the latest of which is *Headscarf Politics in Turkey: A Postcolonial Reading* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).

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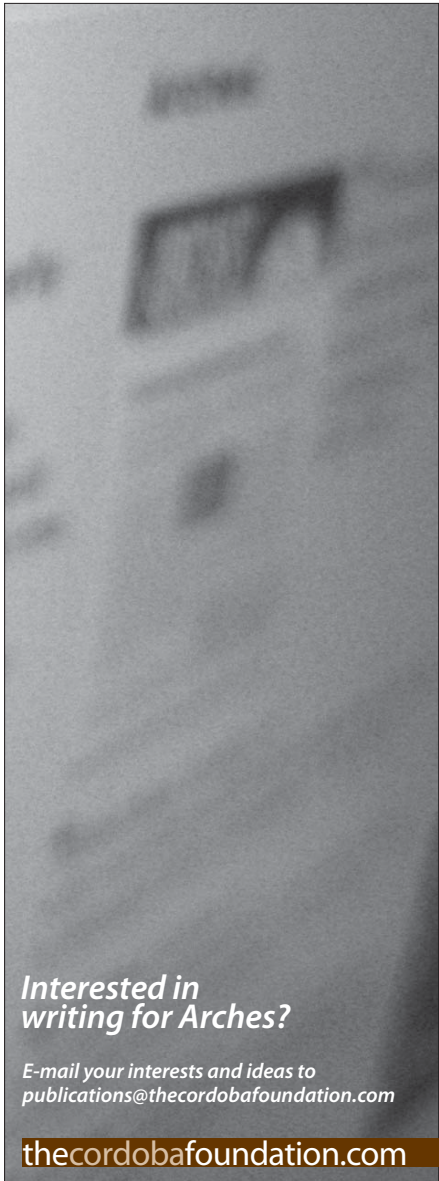
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Will Europe Surrender to Selective Racism? *An Interpretative Model of a Worsening Phenomenon*

*HOSSAM SHAKER

WHAT can we deduce from the Danish cartoon controversy, the election campaigns in Austria, a short film in Holland, a set of legislative and policy measures in France, and successive referenda in Switzerland? Perhaps the deduction would be that within a democratic system, the facts of discrimination may well develop, and that even in a law-abiding state, violations of human rights, restrictions on essential liberties, and disregard for fundamental values may well be expected. However, how could this happen? To unravel some of the aforementioned issues, in what follows is an interpretative model derived from the actuality of the European experience.

The proposed interpretative model, “selective discrimination/selective racism”, is based on a gradual build up over three successive levels. The first level involves being interpreted (or represented and projected) as an exception; the second comprises defamation, demonisation, and incitement whilst the third level relates to action in terms of violations, restrictions, and discriminatory practices.

FIRST LEVEL: INTERPRETATION (REPRESENTATION/PROJECTION) AS AN EXCEPTION

There are many problems, dilemmas, and issues that begin in the realm of perceptions and definitions. This becomes clear, for example, when some human group is portrayed as an exception from society. It is a logic that may interact dangerously, yet in reality, it represents pure discrimination.

It is this selection, and this exception, that is the problem. The question arises: why is that group selected, and considered the exception rather than others? Why are specific persons, objects, or topics, uniquely, removed from their contexts, while other elements (constituents) are not subjected to the same?

In this regard, we may deduce that the

incorrect or distorted interpretation, despite being a gross breach, is in fact only a secondary problem. The fundamental problem lies right at the beginning, in the fact of selection and exception. It is customary that multiple interpretations exist, as issues are typically open to diverse understandings that may be correct, incorrect, or a combination of both. However, making a specific part the focus of interpretations, while ignoring the other parts of the whole, is the intractable problem that has consequences.

SECOND LEVEL: DEFAMATION, DEMONISATION, AND INCITEMENT

The interpretation as exception has its consequences and repercussions. Individuals viewed as being the exception find themselves quite easily in the firing line. In simple terms, the process of demonisation and dehumanisation directed against specific persons, cultures or religions is intimately linked to the definition (and projection) of those persons, or those cultures and religions, as an “exception”. Thus, providing justification for denial of rights and liberties that are fundamentally universal. It follows therefore, that those who have been made an exception must then be subjected to special measures that easily escalates the situation to a third level.

THIRD LEVEL: ACTIONS: VIOLATIONS, RESTRICTIONS, AND DISCRIMINATORY PRACTICES

At this level, negative developments and repercussions arise, and take the form of measures and implementations, or even legislation; laws that are directed specifically at particular sections of society, or a specific class or constituents within the wider scene in society.

DO EXAMPLES EXIST?

The first example, a specific tower structure found at various places of worship is interpreted as being an exception, which leads to the next step that the building is no longer considered a place for prayer, unlike those belonging to other religions. This is because the interpretation as “exception” proposes that the structure associated with this place of worship is quite simply, a “political and military symbol”. This is precisely what was alleged in Switzerland, i.e. “minarets are a symbol of control over territory”.

In all cases, this interpretation as exception is fertile ground for feverish misrepresentation. In this regard, the climate prevailing among the public may possibly develop under specific conditions, to the point of fomenting hate and spreading malice. In such cases, there is a typical rediscovery of the old stereotypes and a recall of those distasteful images ingrained in collective memory, which are then revived to take on new old forms. The matter then further escalates, occasionally spontaneously, to the level of action. In this instance, the public was summoned to the ballot box and viola, a perpetual ban on minarets secured. This actually occurred in 21st century Europe.

The second example relates to specific items of clothing which are interpreted as being an exception. Therefore, these pieces of textile are not as they seem rather, they are food for debate and discussion – sometimes heated and angry – in the public space. Moreover, they may be converted into defining slogans in electoral battle and politicians’ statements. The distortion then becomes part of the daily political, social, and media routine. The situation escalates into adoption of specific measures, such as considering a ban, or enforcing a punishment regime – the path chosen by a number of European states, with France at the forefront. The beginning was the selectivity in dealing with the issue of a Muslim girl’s head cover, and singling it out as the exception from the diverse choices of dress as a whole; then interpreting it, using distorted and erroneous interpretations, followed by the predictable controversy and reaction, bringing the matter into parliamentary and government debate and consequently, inspection and controls at school gates as well as involvement

of State’s law enforcement apparatus.

INTERPRETATIONS OF EXCEPTION ARE CURRENTLY POPULAR IN EUROPE

The person interprets “others” as being the exception, and thus opens the door to exclusion. For example, the minaret is interpreted as resembling a rocket, specific items of dress are projected as being a threat or even degrading, and Muslim imams are viewed differently to their counterparts conducting rituals in the places of worship. Further examples include questions raised about funds given in charity by the followers of a specific culture or religion, where such donations are seen as suspect. A specific culture is linked to terrorism (as though “today’s terrorists” are the “barbarians of yesteryear”), and a specific religion is described as an “ideology”.

Indicators of this phenomenon accumulate rapidly, and with the aim of “preserving the city’s image”, the construction of mosque is hampered. It may be claimed that mosques are buildings with “strange or unusual architecture”. However, this does not apply to all buildings with “strange or unusual architecture” and such interpretation conveniently ignores those unique examples by many innovative architects, including Gaudi in Spain, Hundertwasser in Germany and Austria, and Zaha Hadeed in her works scattered across Europe.

We also find in the crimes committed daily in various societies, a clear example

It is customary in some popular European media quarters to refer to the perpetrator of a crime to [ones] ethnic identity, if he/she is not a member of the “native population”.

of the exception. It is customary in some popular European media quarters to refer to the perpetrator of a crime to his ethnic identity, if he/she is not a member of the “native population”. However, what is more

provocative is the use of terms such as “cultural crime” only when specific crimes are detected among the ranks of specific sections of the wider society. The attempt to interpret horrific crimes committed by individuals by linking their appalling actions to their ethnic, cultural, or religious identity is in contrast to an emphasis on isolating crime from the cultural or social context, when the matter involves those individuals from the majority in society. In the latter case, the matter is assigned to an individual’s behaviour, or delinquency, which can only be interpreted in the specifics related exclusively to that particular individual.

Therefore, there is a cumulative relationship binding these three levels: interpretation as exception, then distortion and misrepresentation, followed by the adoption of measures, invoking a special but negative status, or enforcing exclusions in the area of rights and liberties.

Populists and alarmists are quite skilful, or indeed experts, on the matter of interpretation. They begin by invoking interpretations of exception after which, they practice distortion and misrepresentation, followed by rallying to the ballot box at the expense of universal rights and fundamental values, which are meant to be assured for all persons.

WHO IS THE VICTIM IN THIS CASE?

The victims are simply not those persons directly targeted, but the fundamental values of society are the victim. Thus, everyone in society is a victim and the whole society loses, when discrimination is legitimised because it damages and undermines the fundamental values of a democratic society.

In response, citizens and their partners in society must act early. One who acts late, loses. This not only relates to the importance of a show of solidarity between the various sections of society, or the value of adopting brave stances but the necessity of defending fundamental values. Sadly, this aspect remains neglected in the debate on values witnessed in a number of European countries over the years.

IS DEMOCRACY IN DANGER?

From time to time, attempts are made to

apply restrictive measures and bans. These affect particular minorities on issues such as tall structures in religious buildings, items of women’s and girls’ clothing, and some aspects of religious ritual, perhaps relating to religious guidance and instruction. In this steadily worsening and negative climate in Europe, democratic systems pay from their ethical capital, and lose the moral high ground. For example, Switzerland now represents a “country with limited religious freedom”, as foretold in warnings by some political actors in that country, ahead of the vote on the so-called “ban on minarets”.

As for France, most likely, it is no longer seen as the “nation of (freedom and) liberty” by the Muslim world since passing laws that prohibit and ban women and young girls choice of clothes. Worse still, politics around Europe barely takes responsibility for these trends in selective racism, the accompanying retreat in rights and liberties, and violation of the values of justice, equality, and equal opportunities. It is clear that the political class is occupied in the first instance with the results of rounds of voting, and rarely shows courage in adopting positions that, for example, embody the spirit of solidarity, or assume the consequent burden of responsibility.

REVIVAL OF THE “BAN” CULTURE

In recent years, the culture of the ban has enjoyed resurgence in Europe. However, this is not without precedent, for example, in Munich, it was forbidden until the beginning of the 20th century to build an Anglican church within the city walls. Moreover, it was almost impossible in some European cities to build a Jewish synagogue, and if that were allowed, it would perhaps be hampered by restrictions, such as a prohibition on building a dome. Today however, selective discrimination has succeeded. It seems to have transformed itself into an entrenched phenomenon in several European regions and instances. The matter is no longer about “foreigners” or “strangers”, or those with “different colour of skin”, rather the phenomenon of racism has focused on the followers of a specific culture or religion. This focus seems more effective, and indeed “more workable”, especially in the time of “war on terror” or under the guise of what some may

call the “clash of civilisations”.

ANXIETY AND FEAR IN THE POPULATION AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

Many people, in times of economic, political, or security crisis, are overwhelmed by anxiety and unease. Moreover, the increasingly rapid pace of change, in the various aspects of daily life, makes many people worried for the loss of their moral anchors. The food one consumes has become different. Language used in daily conversation has changed, and work methods have altered. Change has extended (to all aspects of) one's daily consumption. In more specific terms, the changes in the general public scene reflected on the street and its constituents may be observed every morning from one's own doorway.

People lacking stability and peace of mind but perturbed by the rapid pace of change, find it difficult to accept diversity as richness. In fact, they may view it as a threat. Therefore, we may hear expressions like, “our identity is in danger” and so, to protect “our identity” and define it, the masses need “the other” or the “opposite”. This would be appalling if in reality it is understood to mean the real “opposite”. In this way, through a logic that sees only “black-or-white”, a temporary feeling of relief is generated, i.e. “we still exist” as articulated by Marten Buber, “I do not exist, if you did not exist; and you do not exist if you do not exist”. In the saying of the ancient Arabs, “In their opposites, things are defined”. Defining oneself seems easier by defining “the other”, and perhaps isolating them within the confines of a stereotype.

In search of the satisfying feeling of “us”, those to be put in the position of “them” must be found. This is what threatens to take societies in Europe today, many steps or stages backwards. Under the guise of identity and values, one begins to look backward rather than forward. In this context, “values” are deployed and (simultaneously) reinterpreted while being used in heated debates as protective cover or superficial justification for the new forms of violation of fundamental values. Indeed, this is widely applied in Europe today under the banner of women's rights, the rights of women and girls are restricted.

In the name of values, values are ignored. In the name of combating hate, the slogans of hate are spread everywhere. As for election time, when democracy is supposed to be reinvigorated, on the contrary, it is taken to the gutter with campaigns that incite hate and concoct a climate of poison against Muslims.

FEAR AND MANIPULATED INTERPRETATIONS LEAD TO DISCRIMINATION

When we talk about fear, we should not forget that some repressive laws — like the Patriot Act in the United States immediately after 9/11, and the bundle of security laws in Europe enabling surveillance that invaded the private sphere of individuals, and violated confidentiality of information — or controversial measures were passed in extraordinary circumstances. The public that is gripped with fear was always ready to surrender some rights and fundamental liberties.

It is no exaggeration to estimate that Europe faces the danger of sliding into deep moral

Europe faces the danger of sliding into deep moral crisis, if it surrenders itself to these fears and manipulated interpretations.

crisis, if it surrenders itself to these fears and manipulated interpretations. Those concerned may, sooner or later, save the economy deep in crisis in the Euro-zone, however, how can fundamental values be saved from erosion in reality? What is seen today in parts of Europe is a trend to revive the culture of banning, prohibiting, and excluding, with the matter requiring only the necessary excuses. One must not forget the lessons and morals of history because then as now, justifications were well formulated. As for now, in 21st century Europe, the majority is being summoned to the ballot box to decide what fundamental rights, minorities may enjoy.

HOW DOES THE FUTURE OF SOCIAL COEXISTENCE APPEAR IN EUROPE?

This is a timely question, whose answer, is surely in the hands of society's influential actors comprising institutions and opinion leaders. When partners in society act correctly, and when they wish to continue advancing the democratic experience, and when rights, liberties, and fundamental principles are safeguarded, equal opportunities and mutual respect in particular, then it would be possible to show optimism regarding the future.

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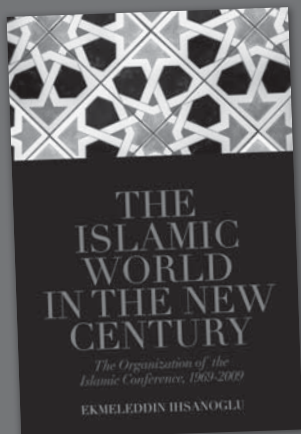
He has collaborated with a number of research centres and specialist organisations, and has an interest in analysis of European affairs, with several works and research contributions in this field.

BOOK PROMOTION

THE ISLAMIC WORLD IN THE NEW CENTURY

THE ORGANIZATION OF ISLAMIC CONFERENCE, 1969-2009

EKMELEDDIN IHSANOGLU



The Organization of the Islamic Conference is the Muslim world's only intergovernmental body—the largest such system operating outside of the United Nations. Based in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, the OIC was founded forty years ago to respond to the Palestinian crisis and counts fiftyseven Muslim countries among its members. It has since branched out into economic development, education, culture, science, technology, conflict resolution, and countering Islamophobia. Sharing the history of the OIC with Western readers, this book details the achievements, successes, and failures of a singular political body and why modernization is so central to the development of Islamic society.

The Islamic World in the New Century by Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu.
Published by Columbia University Press, 2010

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Muslims in the Polish Media – the New Folk Devil?

*KONRAD PEDZIWIATR

FROM a religious angle Poland is rather a homogenous country with 96% of its citizens declaring their adherence to the Roman Catholic Church, out of which 43% are regular churchgoers (Diagnoza Społeczna 2009). Muslims constitute approximately 20000, which is split between allochthons (roughly about 75% of the Muslim population), autochthonous Tatars (about 75%) who migrated to the Polish borders more than six centuries ago, and a small percentage of Poles who have recently embraced Islam (Kubicki 2006: 129). Although this religious minority makes up only around 0.06% of the entire Polish population (circa 38 million), it is one which is viewed by the public with a great deal of suspicion.

According to polls carried out in 2005, on a representative sample, Arabs (the category which for most Poles is synonymous with “Muslims” – OBOP 2001¹) are ‘the most disliked national group’. In 2005, research into the attitudes of Polish citizens towards other nations found that 70% of respondents disliked Arabs, whereas the antipathy towards Russians and Jews (the two groups traditionally most disliked in Poland), was felt by respectively 61% and 50% of respondents (CBOS 2005). In 2010 this negative attitude towards Arabs seems to have decreased (43% respondents disliking them), however the Arabs still (this time together with the Romas) received the highest score on the scale of ‘lack of sympathy with’ (CBOS 2010). In addition to this, the European Values Survey of 2000 showed that the anti-Muslim sentiment among Poles is much stronger than amongst other European nations where Muslims make up significantly larger groups within the total populations.² This is why, some Polish scholars whilst describing the attitudes of Poles towards Muslims talk about a peculiar

‘platonic Islamophobia’, that is a strong anti-Muslim sentiment in the situation of actual absence of significant Muslim community (Górak-Sosnowska 2006).

CAUSES OF WIDESPREAD ANTI-MUSLIM SENTIMENT IN POLAND?

Revisiting the history of Polish relations with the Muslim world and in particular the legacy of the idea of Poland as ‘the Christian bulwark of Europe’ (*Polonia Antemurale Christianis* – Tazbir 1987) is a useful starting point in explaining the deep roots of this sentiment³. One may also try to explain it by the ambiguous images of Muslims and their religion in the Polish school textbooks where the facts are mixed with value judgments (Górak-Sosnowska 2006, Zagórski 2006).

Both these strategies, however do not explain the current antipathy towards Muslims. In order to explore this phenomenon more adequately in a dynamic context based on the contemporary social reality, one will need to examine the role that the Polish media is playing in reporting issues around Islam, Muslims and the Muslim world to the wider Polish society. A careful analysis of the media reports reveals a very strong tendency to standardise and simplify opinions in such a way that they fit into existing stereotypes. Thus, instead of providing the public with balanced and highly informative reports, the mainstream Polish media appear instead to be reinforcing anti-Muslim prejudices and thus contribute to the creation of a new folk devil (Cohen 1972) -- a Muslim terrorist that seems to be replacing the old one, a Jewish crooked financier.⁴

This paper seeks to shed light on how the mainstream Polish media⁵ report on Muslims and in particular on Muslims in Western Europe. The paper demonstrates how through the choice of subjects,

unbalanced reporting and misinformation it has been contributing to a rise in the levels of anti-Muslim sentiment of Polish society. It will also briefly describe the examples of the mainstreaming of openly anti-Muslim discourses through the major Polish radio station and the weekly magazine and show how in the quasi absence of Muslim intellectuals and leadership, such biased discourses become easily accepted and stable points of reference in the 'mediated reality'.

NEW MEDIA AND NEW FOLK DEVILS

Although Poland played a prominent part in European geo-politics during the Second World War, it was not until 1989 when it became a fully independent country stepping out of the shackles of communism that it would have an international significance. During the period of communism there were no private newspapers, magazines, radio stations or TV channels in the country and journalists could not freely express their opinions. As most of the Muslim countries were part of the 'befriended socialist nations', it was forbidden to present them in an unfavourable light (Skowron-Nalborczyk 2004). Thus critical opinions about the Muslim world had little chances of passing through the censors control. This situation changed dramatically with the censorship office (Główny Urząd Kontroli Prasy, Publikacji i Widowisk) closing and the creation of new private newspapers, magazines, radio and TV stations from the beginning of the 1990s.

With the birth of private 'free' media, the markets became competitive and news had to be informative, interesting, sharp and catchy. This meant that with the diversification of opinions expressed in the public debates, Muslims and the Muslim world were no longer spared from grounded, as well as, ungrounded criticism, so much so, that five years after the re-emergence of the free Polish media, one of the leading Polish Arabists, Professor Janusz Danecki complained that 'neither in Germany nor in Britain, where there are bigger problems with immigrants and the Muslim world, the press is that sharp' (Rzeczpospolita 1994).

So it seems that the Polish media intent on constructing a new folk devil have focussed on presenting the Muslim world as a homogeneous monolith (thereby intimating that its deficiencies are as a result of Islam) and the propensity for Muslims towards violence (Skowron-Nalborczyk 2002). Though this was done many years, before the attacks of 9/11 in the USA (and subsequent ones in Madrid and London), these tragic events served to strengthen the perception of the Muslim 'Other'.

Poland joining the US-led "Coalition of the Willing" that toppled Saddam Hussein and subsequently heading the multinational division in south-central Iraq did not help matters as almost daily news about the attacks on the coalition forces and the

Fear of Muslims and Islam among the Polish population stems primarily from ignorance and misinformation [which] has led to the construction of the 'other' in the form of a new 'folk devil' such as was done in the past to the Jews.

escalation of violence served to reinforce the negative stereotypes.

The growing fear of Muslims and Islam among the Polish population stems primarily from ignorance and misinformation but it has led to the construction of the 'other' in the form of a new 'folk devil' such as was done in the past to the Jews. The term 'folk devil' has been popularised in social science by Stanley Cohen who used it to refer to groups perceived by the mainstream society as deviants, delinquents, wrong-doers, who disturb social order causing anxiety among the public (1972). Here, however, the term is used as "the personification of evil (...) that is stripped of all favourable characteristics and imparted with exclusively negative ones"

(Goode and Ben-Yehuda, 1994). When the pursuit of folk devils intensifies the situation of moral panic arise. The key features of such panic according to Goode and Ben-Yehuda who systematized the concept coined by Cohen are: a strong concern over the behaviour of a certain group or category and the consequences which this behaviour presumably causes to the rest of society; an increased level of hostility towards that particular group implying a division between 'us' and 'them'; a remarkable consensus between stakeholders who usually hold widely divergent views (such as journalists, politicians, scientists, and security forces); and an exaggerated representation of the

We should not overstate the level of the anti-Muslim sentiments in Poland to warrant a moral panic, although there may be signs of such a panic developing in the future.

threats and a disproportionate reaction to them, and a certain volatility.

Having said that, we should not overstate the level of the anti-Muslim sentiments in Poland to warrant a moral panic, although there may be signs of such a panic developing in the future.⁶ The high level of unification of negative opinions about Muslims and the exaggeration of the potential Muslim threat are probably the two key features that are the most visible.

REPORTING AND MISINFORMATION

A short glance at the Polish media coverage on Islam and Muslims is sufficient to see that the vast majority of the articles, radio and television programmes make a direct link between Islam and violence, terrorism, forced conversion, backwardness, aggressiveness, irrationality, etc (Marek 2004). This kind of portrayal of Islam is above all a consequence of a number of structural factors related to reporters and the methods that are applied to

news gathering.⁷

Firstly, the negative portrayal of Islam and Muslims is a result of the prejudices reporters nurture as members of a given society. For example a journalist implicitly referred to the results of the ICM survey from February 2006 in which '500 respondents were asked inter alia if they would support the introduction of shari'a law in the areas of Britain which are pre-dominantly Muslim'. Whilst 40% of the respondents answered positively, and 4% said they would oppose such a move (ICM 2006), the quantitative survey did not specify what was meant by shari'a law, yet the Polish journalist interpreted this results in the following way: '... more than half of almost 2 million British Muslims want the destruction of the Western societies, and one third wishes the introduction of the shari'a order with, for example, death penalty for women dressed too frivolously' (GW 11.08.2006).

Thus, the survey data was interpreted in a manner that would send a strong message of strong weight suggesting that it was about punishing women for wearing frivolous clothes' (ICM 2006).⁸ Similarly in another article the following was presented: 'when the controversy around cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad broke out, Muslims organised a large demonstration during which they were calling for the death for the cartoonists, destruction of Europe and extolled the 'great four' - perpetrators of the attacks on 7th July' (GW 11.08.2006). What is not clarified though is that this 'large demonstration' of a few dozen people was organised by the members of a tiny fringe radical Muslim group al-Ghurabaa (a front of al-Muhajiroun in the UK) and it also fails to mention that within the following two weeks there were two other demonstration of several thousand people called by the leading Muslim organisations in Britain during which not a single person was calling for the death of the cartoonists.

These examples prove the concept of communications theory which suggest that opinion leaders are inclined to present the news in a way that corresponds to their own views and to the norms and values of the society to which they belong. In practice

it means that reporters tend to refrain from searching for a second opinion on a certain subject, mainly because the information gathered and the negative statements by significant persons correspond largely with their own perception of the groups concerned (Shadid & van Koningsveld 2001). This is in line with the point made by Vincent Geisser who has aptly noticed that the essence of Islamophobia displayed by the media is not in fact a demonisation of Muslims per se, since no professional journalist tries *a priori* to paint a negative image of Islam and its believers, but it lies in a tendency to standardise and simplify opinions in a way to conform to existing ideas and images (Geisser 2003). According to the author of *La nouvelle islamophobie* (Geisser 2003) the mass media have not been creating a new type of Islamophobia, but rather strengthening and re-creating the existing concepts of Islamophobia by extrapolating the existing narrative on Islam and Islamism.

To render a higher 'news value'... reporters are inclined to lay a heavy emphasis on the differences between Islam and Muslims, on the one hand, and Christianity and Western society, on the other.

Secondly, an important structural shortcoming of the media that results in the negative image of Islam and Muslims, has to do with 'news value', that is the extent to which the message can be made more attractive and different to what is currently prevailing in the society. This is done by emphasising messages of strong 'social weight', or even more common, exaggerating the scale of the phenomenon depicted. For example, in order to render a higher 'news value' to messages so as to attract the attention of the consumers, reporters are inclined to lay

a heavy emphasis on the differences between Islam and Muslims, on the one hand, and Christianity and Western society, on the other (Shadid & van Koningsveld).

Thirdly, the media depiction of Muslims as a personification of evil has been exaggerated mainly by stressing their inclination towards violence and aggressiveness. In recent years, numerous articles in the Polish press and the Internet argue that Muslims have almost a 'natural' tendency to be violent and that terrorism is somewhat a 'normal' path to be pursued. Illustrating the point, take the opinion carried in a major Polish quality paper, *Rzeczpospolita*:

"Muslims living in Europe are not only not assimilating but what is more they might be striving for the abolishment of the existing legal order. If a certain religious group is more susceptible to create environments which are breeding ground of terrorism, why should not we make this group a subject of a special control?" (*Rzeczpospolita* 2005)

This statement in this paper not only suggests that Muslims have certain inclination towards violence, but special measures need to be put in place fight such inclinations.

Thus one of the consequences is that Islam is publicised mainly through exceptional cases. These exceptional cases which constitute all kinds of controversies around Islam and Muslims (from the headscarves and Satanic Verses Affairs to the more recent ones around Danish cartoons and the Pope's speech in Regensburg) become the forms of 'hermeneutical incidents' (Allievi 2001) which do not only have short term consequences, as examples of 'clashes of civilization', but also durable ones, as they become stable points of reference

The construction of the Muslim folk devil by the Polish media has also been made possible because of a clear lack of vocal Muslim leadership.

in interpretations of Muslims and Islam. Thus, these ‘media events’ as Dayan and Katz have pointed out become historical monuments in the collective memory: an instrument through which the social memory remembers itself. The fact that this memory is usually made up of recollections of conflicts and clashes and in general of extra-ordinary events, does not prevent most people to apply it to ‘ordinary’ Muslims and ‘non-sensational’ Islam with predictable consequences.

ABSENCE OF MUSLIM LEADERSHIP AND INTELLECTUALS

The construction of the Muslim folk devil by the Polish media has also been made possible because of a clear lack of vocal Muslim leadership and intellectuals in Poland. Whilst in France, Germany or Britain there exists appropriate infrastructure and mechanism to challenge the negative portrayal of Muslims and Islam in the media, in Poland in most of the cases there is hardly any reaction from Muslims. Where reactions are heard they are characteristically so weak in content and style, that the message does not even reach the intended recipients.

The weakness of the Muslim leadership in Poland was especially apparent during the controversy around the caricatures of Prophet Muhammad. At the beginning of February 2006 *Rzeczpospolita* newspaper, decided to answer to the call of the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung to reprint the Danish cartoons ‘in the name of the European-wide solidarity against the religious fanatics who are not able to make a difference between a joke and a blasphemy’. The editor-in-chief of *Rzeczpospolita*, then Grzegorz Gauden, justified the decision to re-publication the cartoons saying it was his duty defend and safeguard freedom of expression (*Rzeczpospolita* 04.02.2006). Polish Muslim cleric, Mufti Tomasz Miśkiewicz demanded an official apology in a letter to the editor of the newspaper (Miśkiewicz 2006); apologies followed shortly after from the paper and some politicians (IAR 2006). However if civil society, intellectuals and leaders had been pragmatic, they could have worked

to advise the newspaper not to print the cartoons in the first place, to avoid adverse effects such as Polish soldiers in Iraq being targeted, for example.

The weakness of the Muslim leadership in Poland has become even more apparent in a post-publication period animated by lively debates about the limits of the freedom of expression. During these debates Muslim contributors were afforded an excellent opportunity to inform the public about Muslim reverence towards the Prophet Muhammad and explain the absence of the iconographic representations of the Prophets in Islam, as well as other issues current at the time. The opportunity was missed as only rare Muslim voices from abroad were heard whilst Polish Muslims remained silent.

MAINSTREAMING THE NARRATIVES

Finally, some in the Polish media have contributed to increasing levels of anti-Muslim sentiment among the members of the Polish society by mainstreaming, in the name of enriching public debates, voices of prejudice and xenophobia.⁹ The promotion of such opinions on the Internet is not surprising, but surprisingly such websites are promoted by the mainstream Polish weekly newspapers and the national radio stations. In 2005, the *eurojihad.org* was nominated for the prestigious title of Golden Website of the Week by *Wprost*, a quality weekly magazine. The weekly’s jury that awarded *eurojihad.org* the title, praised it for opening up “a forum of content-related discussions on issues important for the contemporary world”.¹⁰ Despite objections highlighting breaking the law¹¹ such as incitement to hatred and violence against Muslims, namely a complaint from the Association *Arabia.pl*, the weekly’s jury did not reverse the decision.

A few months later the notorious website received further support from another mainstream media outlet, the Polish National Radio. The Polish National Radio website, again in the name of enriching public debate, launched a new webpage entitled “media” and invited editors and sympathisers of *eurojihad.pl* to contribute to it. At the same time *eurojihad.org* (now

with a new name europa21.pl) was placed together with another website reinforcing an image of Islam as violent and deviant religion - arabia.alleluja.pl.¹² In the quasi absence of any challenge to such flagrant caricature of Muslims and attacks on the Islamic faith, such negative portrayals are increasingly reinforced.

CONCLUSION

Despite the many examples cited in this paper of anti-Islamic sentiments and the negative portrayal of Muslims in Poland, Muslims have not yet become the new folk devil. This is as a result of the work of some journalists and reporters who have been going against the grain to delve into the complexity and diversity of the Muslim populations in Europe and elsewhere. Late Beata Pawlak (killed in the 2002 Bali attacks whilst researching for a paper on the Muslim world) and late Ryszard Kapuściński (whose writings have always characterised a profound multicultural sensitivity) were just two emblematic figures of the Polish journalism that had very successfully fought negative Muslim stereotypes.

The negative portrayal of Muslims in the Polish media has also been partially restrained thanks to the efforts of organisations such like Association Arabia.pl¹³ and projects specifically targeted at Polish journalists such as the campaign, 'Do not be afraid of Islam', launched by the Catholic Monthly/Society Więź.¹⁴

Will these organisations and projects succeed in countering the demonization of Polish Muslims? They have a fair chance of succeeding; however, more support is needed from the Muslim community to work in partnership as they do in other parts of Europe on issues affecting not just Muslims but the wider society. The process of creation of the new folk devil can be restrained only when the two groups work hand in hand to prevent it.

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ENDNOTES

1. For further details about 'Arabization' of the perceptions of Islam by Polish society see Górak-Sosnowska 2006: 239-240.
2. For instance in Germany and the Netherlands, 10% of respondents declared that they would not like to have a Muslim as a neighbour; this group of respondents in Poland was 3 times larger.
3. Here it is worth mentioning that this legacy might be in the near future revived as a consequence of the production of a film about the siege of Vienna (1683) with Mel Gibson as a main character and director. A Polish businessman, Mariusz Bialek, who intends to produce such a film claimed in the newspaper interview that *'the clash of Islamic and Christian civilizations, which took place during the Battle of Vienna, is a very hot and topical issue. Today's Europe has difficulties with founding the common denominator. This film would show that Christianity is this common denominator'* (Gazeta Wyborcza 05.10.2006).
4. According to the large longitudinal research on Polish anti-Semitism carried out in recent years, the level of anti-Jewish sentiment among Poles remains fairly stable (at around 12%), however there is a decreasing number of young people who would hold anti-Semitic views; and there is a significant increase in anti-Semites (from 8% in 1992 to 16% in 2002), see Krzeminski 2004. The decreasing levels of anti-Semitism among young Poles has been also detected by Kucia conducting research on perceptions of *Konzentrationslager Auschwitz* among the Polish youth (Kucia 2005, 2007).
5. In analyzing the Polish media portrayal Muslims, I have concentrated on published material of the major quality newspapers: *Gazeta Wyborcza*, *Rzeczpospolita*, *Życie Warszawy* and on web portals such as that of the Polish Radio from 2001 and 2008.
6. Social scientists have pointed out also symptoms of other moral panics in contemporary Polish society, one such example is the 'gay' panic (Zielińska 2005).
7. See Said (1981) for more information about media coverage of Islam and Muslims.
8. 7% of the ICM respondents agreed with the statement 'Western society is decadent and immoral and Muslims should seek to bring it to an end, if necessary by violent means' (ICM 2006).
9. Such voices are found on eurojihad.org (recently changed name to europa21.pl). One may find such views explicitly expressed on the portal *inter alia* by its creator who is hiding under a nickname Marcuss Crassus, who also calls for a ban Muslim preaching, and that *"Islam should be treated as some paranoid sect"*. (<http://www.eurojihad.org/index.php?name=PNphpBB2&file=viewtopic&t=547> (accessed 10.02.2007) <http://www.eurojihad.org/index.php?name=PNphpBB2&file=viewtopic&t=279&start=0> (accessed 10.02.2007)
10. http://zloteostrony.wprost.pl/strona_tygodnia/?zst=2005_5 (accessed 15.12.2010)
11. Polish law (art. 196 and 257 of the Criminal Code and art. 13 of the Polish Constitution)
12. <http://www.polskieradio.pl/media/> (accessed 10.02.2007)
13. Further details - www.arabia.pl
14. Further details about Society Więż - www.wiez.com.pl/index.php?s=english





Islamophobia: A Deep-Rooted Phenomenon

*MARWAN MUHAMMAD

A woman, stabbed to death in a German courthouse.

A child, excluded from school for showing religious observance.

A vulnerable community targeted by intellectuals and politicians.

THE above are not fictitious tales but facts in modern Europe. These are a consequence of the anti-Muslim hatred, or Islamophobia permeating our communities across Europe, and especially France.

Islamophobia is a type of offence where the victim is considered guilty. “You had it coming” a Muslim woman in France would often be reprimanded for attempting to report an attack on her at the local police station.

When analysing the phenomenon of Islamophobia at a systemic level, one can find both structural and contextual causes to this growing problem.

STRUCTURAL CAUSES

In France, there has been a long-term trend of anti-religious movements, which can be traced back to the Age of Enlightenment. Religions are often depicted as backward ideologies used to control the masses, supposedly prone to hysteria and extremism. This comes in contrast to the highly praised rational approach of modern secularism which is the cornerstone of French thought. As Islam today is visible through symbols, dressing codes and other physical manifestations, it appears to trigger long-lived anti-religious hatred in Europe.

In Europe, two forms of racism have survived as products of the colonial era. The *first* is based on considering human races at different levels, with specific physical and mental characteristics. This vision was partly used to legitimise the colonial project as a whole, by depicting the local colonised

population as not being “fully human”. Taking away their humanity made it easier to justify the spoils of the conquest, along with unequal treatment of indigenous populations.

The *second* type is built around a civilising myth. It consists of presenting the target group in need of assistance and reformation: “We are going to help you become like us” is the main idea at work. These offers of assistance, for example, often relate to “helping African countries develop” and to “free the local populations” from their myths and superstitions; and to “free Muslim women” (against their will) from archaic social/religious/family anachronism.

Both these forms of racism are manifested today in different ways. The former is one of the main themes of far right extremist parties, who paint African/Asian countries as backward, with a lower civilisation level. The latter is widespread in the West and has been used, for instance, to legitimise the war in Iraq to “free Iraq”, or to justify the banning of the veil in some Western European countries.

THE “OTHERS”

Since the beginning of time, the definition of “us” as a group has come to be materialised in a rather complex form. As an ethnic/cultural/national community, it is sometimes easier to define ourselves based on what we are not, rather than what actually qualifies us. Hence “Others” is the mirror group we construct and identify for the sole purpose of differentiating ourselves.

In the period preceding the Crusades, a series of French and Italian thinkers had conceptualised “Others” as those living on the other side of the Mediterranean sea. They were of another ethnic background; they did not have Latin as a lingua franca; they had a different religion. Thus presenting this group as an alien homogenous body, helped shape the idea of a European People!

To achieve this objective, fighters and preachers would circulate freely all throughout Europe “Today, with the effort of zealous hate-preachers, Europeans can unite together as a supra-national group, standing against Islam and the Muslims”, claimed the pro-crusaders of that time. The Catholic Church, led by Pope John VIII and later on by Urbain II, would promise forgiveness to those fighting the Saracens. Popular speakers like Pierre

The ideology of anti-Muslim hatred was first established by thinkers and missionaries, the likes of Riccoldo di Montecroce.

L'Ermite would go across Christian lands to pass on the Call for the first Crusade, which started in 1095.

The ideology of anti-Muslim hatred was first established by thinkers and missionaries, the likes of Riccoldo di Montecroce. Then it would be diffused into popular culture through songs and poems, such as the *Chanson de Roland*, written by Turold during the 11th century, which presented a counter-historic interpretation of how Roland¹ and his small band of courageous followers were supposed to have beaten the mighty Moors, in Roncevaux. It is now widely established by historians that Roland's battle was against a reasonably-sized Basque militia.²

Using original sources from the pro-crusade thinkers, British historian Norman Daniel, in his invaluable *Islam and the West*, analyses the strategies at work at the time, to construct the myth of an evil force coming from the Islamic world threatening the very essence of European identity. Daniel documents the medieval misconceptions and shows how they still exist in today's popular culture and in modern scholarship.³

Among the themes developed in this mythology, are ideas such as “the enemy within”, “Muslim barbarians”, “Christian martyrdom in Islamic states” and “persecuted Muslim women”.

Astonishingly most of these themes are

current today, following the same two-step process: first introduced by thinkers and controversial intellectuals; then being diffused into popular culture through songs, novels, TV series and movies.

CONTEXTUAL CAUSES

The attacks of 9/11, 7/7, 11/3 and the fight between “the Good” and the “Axis of Evil” -- the West being the former, and Islam and/or with Socialist traditional thought perceived as the latter-- represent the first contextual cause invoked to explain Islamophobia.

In analysing such events, it is important to keep in mind that any proposed explanations and comments fall under the category of what can be termed as “Post-Event Analysis”.

Post-Event Analysis introduces a bias which makes explanations more obvious than they actually are. Not wishing to downplay the severity of the impact and effects of these terrorist attacks, the course of events that led to these human disasters is of a highly complex nature involving timing, resources, locations, conflicting interests and unstable state of human emotions.

Yet, most explanatory scenarios follow the same line, that “a highly skilled Islamist group successfully planned and executed a series of terrorist actions in a Western city, with high casualty rates among civilians”.⁴

Because of the simplicity of this explanation, it chimes with most people and the explanation is easily absorbed by the masses confirming the myths about Islam such as “Islamic” terrorism. Due to the enormity and timing of the attacks, people's emotional response and fears overtake rational reading of the events, such as forfeiting any in-depth analysis of the facts. This in turn opens the way for two streams of thought, *Conspiracy Theories* and the *Apology of Suspicion*. In the case of the former, the official version of the actual event is so flawed and has the appearance of being a complete set-up to legitimise the political/military agenda of the government. It further allows anyone to form their own account of what had transpired, say in the case of the New York or Madrid attacks. The governments' lack of transparency when it comes to “terrorism” renders any conspiracy theory plausible. This destroys the most elementary foundations of

a democracy and legitimises aggressive forms of power.

The second stream of thought is the *Apology of Suspicion*. Following events of 9/11 and 7/7, a series of counter-terrorist measures were introduced, including very pervasive ones like x-ray scans, personal investigations and random checks. This approach relies on the fact that somewhere in the public opinion is the idea of there being a link between these terrorist actions and Muslims as a suspect group or community, thus framing Muslims as the suspect community or group because of the actions of a fringe few who are often taken to represent the whole community, or even the Muslim faith as a whole. This thus raises a number of questions, for example, where is the 'randomness' when most individuals interrogated by airport police have a beard or wear a headscarf? Why are even good Arab neighbours portrayed as ruthless assassins on television? How do Muslims internalise such a state of suspicion that they need to overplay politeness and civil awareness?

Some politicians and sections of the media have tried to legitimise the *Apology of Suspicion* – using it as a pretext to fight Muslim extremism and terrorism.

It goes without saying that zealous academics, some politicians and sections of the media have tried to legitimise the *Apology of Suspicion* – using it as a pretext to fight Muslim extremism and terrorism.

In *Why Should Suicide Bombers Buy Life Insurance*, economist Steven Levitt and journalist Stephen Dubner teamed up with a banking data analyst to build an algorithm that would detect “highly probable” terrorist suspects.⁵ The “highly probable” qualification means that from a system perspective, we accept the fact that most (if not all) people we are going to suspect are in fact innocent.

The algorithm consists of a series of statistical indicators that are supposed to define risky

behaviours, based on banking research. The banking database is scanned and, whenever an individual shows most of these indicators as positive, he/she is considered a suspect. To elucidate further, the following banking practices, amongst others, can maximise ones chances of being suspected: (1) using cash rather than a credit card, (2) renting a flat rather than paying a mortgage; (3) sending/receiving money from abroad; and (4) not buying life insurance.⁶

The problem with these indicators is that none of these are specifically designed to detect potential terrorists. Rather they are designed to find potential Muslims. In fact, the indicators are mostly identifying the practice of Islam, not using a credit card and not purchasing life insurance are common amongst Muslims – the latter is seen as prohibited in Islam. Using international bank transfers, because many Muslim immigrants in Europe send money to families and relatives in their countries of origin.

If we look at the indicators from a socio-economic perspective, the individuals involved in 9/11 and 7/7 were completely different in terms of age, education, dress, and interaction with the wider society. Therefore, this type of algorithm would be ineffective in detecting potential terrorists such as those involved in the 9/11 attacks. The second flaw in this algorithm is that it assumes a regular and stable pattern in the act of terrorism, which is completely wrong. Over the last ten years, terrorism by Muslims accounted for only 1% of all terrorist actions and every attack involved individuals of highly different socio-economic backgrounds.⁷

With respect to counter-terrorism measures, one might ask whether we are trying to reinforce security or just our perception of it? Institutionalised suspicion of Muslim citizens is one of the most critical aspects of a systemic form of Islamophobia. The consequence of this is that all citizens give up part of their freedom in exchange for a higher feeling of visible security.

THE COLLAPSE OF SOCIAL STRUCTURES

We suffer as a people everyday, not only as religious people but people in general.

This suffering is present because we live in an interconnected and interdependent society -- and in close proximity to one another. Strikingly the same can not always be said about our closeness, because when it concerns our social interaction, we tend to be socially distant from one another.

Social conversations and 'small talks' do not happen because simply we do not have time. There is no time because we are occupied with the need to work and provide for our families. We work hard to pay back the mortgage. We take a mortgage because we want to own. We want to own because we want to *be*. In a society where individuals are defined by their business cards and their material possessions, we spend most of our energy trying to accomplish an idea of life that will never make us happy.

Some people without jobs are often made to feel they do not have a place in society. Some are nostalgic about the country where they have spent their childhood and want their memories to live on forever and never change. Others have an urge for domination and want to force their vision on the rest of the world, whatever the consequences.

With the attendant frustrations and problems in our own lives, we often find it necessary to blame someone. This is why local nationalists focus so much on finding scapegoats for the problems we face as a society, whether it is crime, housing and security problems. They provide us with simplistic reasons and blame Muslim immigrants.

POLITICAL STRATEGIES OF DIVERSION

For decades in Europe, we have been observing the rise of nationalism as an alien phenomenon. Something we do not seem to want to talk about as much and keep it out of our lives. But denial does not amount to solutions – the problem merely festers and grows with greater magnitude. Traditional parties, such as Parti Socialiste (Labour) or Union pour un Mouvement Populaire (Conservative), exploit these problems to further their cause and win elections.

Mainstream political figures, like Nicolas Sarkozy, would even claim that they have won the fight against far right extremists. This seems to contradict the ideas and rhetoric of

amongst others, Jean Marie Le Pen, which are prevalent in the political scene. This is partly because extremism was personalised in the figure of Jean Marie Le Pen, most of the effort was concentrated on demonising and fighting the individual and not his ideas. Le Pen's party, the Front National, has been the main provider of extremist ideas during the last 30 years. Over the years, they have dramatically influenced the political game in France.

To date, no major political figure in France has been challenged with the aim of confronting and defeating the key claims advocated by the Front National, which include, a link between immigration and unemployment; the amalgam between ethnic groups and social groups; and the ideological definition of a French identity.

Not only do these ideas survive today, they have crept into the rest of society changing forms and arguments, but also targeting the same groups and leading to the same consequences.

SITUATION ON THE GROUND

Islamophobic speech and actions are spreading widely in Europe today. In Britain, the English Defence League is becoming bolder and more aggressive; in the Netherlands Geert Wilder's party won 24 seats and has signed an alliance with the liberals, thus granting him legitimacy to seek actual power in the forthcoming elections. Right wing extremists maintain 20 seats in Sweden and 46 in Hungary (which represents 16.7%). In Denmark, the nationalists have been participating in the government since 2007, and in Italy, Roberto Moroni, from the Liga del Norte, is Berlusconi's Interior Minister. In France, the Hijab was banned in March 2004 and in 2010, the Parliament banned the Niqab.

The Paris-based National Committee for Human Rights (CNCDDH) found a proportion of 18% French who say they have no problem with immigrants but have strong negative feelings about the practice of Islam. This group, typically, is more on the left side of the political landscape.

Islamophobia in France involves people of the Right who depict Islam as an inferior

culture/religion and try to minimise the impact of colonisation. As for the people of the Left, they tend to depict Islam and religion as a backward ideology and call for the need to 'liberate' Muslim women from their male family members.⁸

Such claims and perceptions often translate into a series of Islamophobic actions on the ground. In France, every three days a Muslim is attacked on the streets; every three weeks, a Mosque is profaned or damaged; some 41% of Islamophobic acts are done by civil servants: police, schools, universities, etc.⁹

The proliferation of eschewed labels like "extremist" and "moderate" is used to dismiss and disregard arguments of opponents we disagree with.

Finally, there is the institutionalisation of the semantics around Islam to support a political agenda, both in domestic and foreign policy. For example, the proliferation of eschewed labels like "extremist" and "moderate" is used to dismiss and disregard arguments of opponents we disagree with.

In similar fashion, various themes are promoted such as "our country being overtaken or invaded by foreigners". This theme is proffered to exaggerate the Muslim demographic presence in a given country. In this respect Muslims are likened to the idea of an alien force bent on converting others to Islam and who seek to implement 'draconian' shari'a laws such as the amputation of hands, etc. This fear tactic is often referred to as Eurabia – where apparently Arabs are overtaking society. Such negative characterisation instates fear in the audience and a feeling of being threatened.

"The enemy within" is another myth which strengthens the invading myth, by reviving a thematic speech that was widely used during colonial wars. The enemy within is the indigenous rebel who infiltrates the troops. Thus, by using such terminology, it helps to

cast doubt on the allegiance and loyalty of Muslims in European society.

As mentioned earlier, the idea of a "Poor Muslim woman" is commonly used to underscore the need for women's liberation. Forced marriage, women forced to dress in certain ways, their alleged inferior rights to men in Islam, are some of the issues put forward to support the claim that Muslim women suffer in Islam.

WAY FORWARD

From field experience through the Committee Against Islamophobia in France, we have been able to identify key action points that are implementable in our respective contexts. Of these, the first pertains to the definition of Islamophobia. In the absence of a full-proof definition, there needs to be working definition for anti-Muslim hatred and Islamophobia which is accepted broadly.

The second is to gather data including detailed statistics on each and every act of Islamophobia reported in different countries. This will help provide the necessary statistical and primary data needed to understand and analyse the problem of anti-Muslim hatred. Taking legal action against perpetrators of hate crimes and having court proceedings covered in the media is also a useful activity.

Conducting field work to convince victims to report Islamophobic acts by working with the police -- although for many people the police is one of main agents for Islamophobia. Lobbying politicians and working with the media to raise concerns and clarify issues is important. In addition to fighting the discourse that depicts Islam as the problem, there needs to be a cultural angle whereby we produce artistic content to ridicule anti-Muslim clichés to show the grotesqueness of the Islamophobic rhetoric.

Finally, there needs to be greater coordination between different campaigns and organisations at the European level and using supra-national organisations to convey concerns and needs through such channels as the OSCE (Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe) and the United Nations.

Whilst not all of the aforementioned would be accomplished in the short term, it is imperative that we work together more if

we are serious about stopping Islamophobia in Europe.

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ENDNOTES

1. Roland, a Frankish military leader under Charlemagne, became one of the principal figures in the literary cycle known as the Matter of France.
2. See Laradji, Aline (2008). *La Légende de Roland*, L'Harmattan.
3. Daniel, Norman (2000). *Islam and the West: The Making of an Image*, OneWorld Publications.
4. For detailed stories and archives on 9/11, see <http://911digitalarchive.org/> or the US official report available at <http://www.9-11commission.gov/>
5. Dubner, J. Stephen & Levitt, D. Steven (2010). *Superfreakonomics: Global Cooling, Patriotic Prostitutes and Why Suicide Bombers Should Buy Life Insurance*, (Penguin).
6. Ibid, chapter 2.
7. See Europol's EU Terrorism Situation and Trend Report TE-SAT available at <http://www.europol.europa.eu>
8. See book by former state secretary Fadela Amara, "Ni putes ni soumises".
9. "The report of the Collective Against Islamophobia in France for the year 2009/2010" - http://islamophobie.net/art_read.php?ai=446



The world of politics and lobbying is in flux. Political polls have not been so capricious since the mid-1990s. Britain has entered an almost-unheard

of coalition government.

Islamophobia is at a record high; and many Muslims remain confused as how best to 'represent' themselves on the political stage. Just who, and what, do you talk to if you want to effect and influence political change and development? This is the art of 'lobbying'. Whatever government or party is in power; whatever administration rules your local council; whoever is your MEP, you have to ensure they fight in your best interest. That is not just the preserve of expensive Westminster lobbying firms. There are many ways in which you, too, can influence politics.

SOUNDS INTERESTING?

Watch this space for The Cordoba Foundation's **MANUAL FOR EFFECTIVE LOBBYING**



Situating Anti-Muslim Hatred in Contemporary Indian Society

*RAM PUNIYANI

THE Ayodhya Judgment¹ has brought to the fore the nature of polity which has been developing in India for past last three decades. This judgment in a way symbolises the process of communalization that has taken place in post independence India. This process of communalization has not just resulted in the strengthening of the main Hindu Nationalist Party, the BJP (Bharatiya Janata party) but overall has seeped into the confines of the Indian state and the civic apparatus of society. The driving force of this communalism which has aimed to legitimise the politics of India as an extension of the identity of Hinduism, Hindutva, is spearheaded by the RSS (Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh known also as Sangh) and its offshoots and informal branches, who have demonized the Muslim community and asserted a politics which is based on the birth based hierarchy of caste and gender.

The most superficial part of this iceberg like phenomenon of Hindutva politics of the RSS has been the creation of a *Social Common Sense*, a set of understandings to be held by most sections of society which has been largely an anti-minority tirade, in particular targeting and demonizing the Muslim community. This has formed the basis of communal violence which has tormented the nation on a regular basis such as the anti-Muslim violence which took place in Mumbai (1992-93) and Gujarat (2002).

UNDERSTANDING THE DEMONIZATION OF INDIAN MUSLIMS

In order to understand how Muslims in India have been demonized, it is important to understand the roots of these problems and to shift through the various myths and misconceptions that abound the Indian Muslim, including medieval history, the tragedy of partition in 1947, family life,

The legacy of the British Raj's "divide and rule" policy was communal historiography, which was a way of looking at history through the prism of religion.

literacy and most recently, terrorism. These myths are pure concoctions that have been constructed and popularised for political gain.

The legacy of the British Raj's "divide and rule" policy was *communal historiography*, which was a way of looking at history through the prism of religion. This was coupled with a decline in class as a social conditioning of society, which enabled politics in the name of religion to emerge, leading to the formation of the Muslim League and the RSS on opposite sides of the spectrum.

These organisations in their own way picked up the communal historiography narrative, using painful episodes from the past to develop a narrative of targeting the 'other'. The RSS in particular, propagated that the Muslim rule in the past was the bane for Hindu society, and the hatred that was manufactured for the past Muslim kings was transferred to the Muslims of today. To these historical aspects were added contemporary issues related to poverty, illiteracy and other lacunas suffered by society.

From 1990 onwards, and more so after 9/11 the demonisation myth was intensified with the popularisation of the word 'Islamic terror', which became a focus for propaganda which transformed into the myth that Muslims are terrorists and that Islam a faith of violence.

THE HISTORY OF THE KINGS

Over a period of time these myths, fed by

The myth about temple destructions by Muslim kings... was one of the driving forces in the demolition of the Babri Mosque in 1992.

large sections of the media, have become part of the narrative and have become normalised in the social common sense such as in their replication in school books. One such example is the myth about temple destructions by Muslim kings. This was one of the driving forces in the demolition of the Babri Mosque in 1992 and the subsequent Ayodhya Judgment. However, temple destructions were historically carried out for the sake of plundering of wealth² and humiliating defeated rivals with an ideological veneer drawn from religion.³

Similarly the battle between different kings, which were primarily for power and wealth have been translated into inter-religious conflict in order to stoke the flames of communalism. Whilst all the Hindu kings (such as Shivaji, Rana Pratap, Guru Govind Singh)⁴ who fought for “their” kingdoms against the Muslim empire, are projected as ‘national heroes’, not much is said about the alliances between Hindu and Muslim kings (e.g. Rana Pratap’s son Amar Singh developed friendship with Jahangir, in later period Guru Gobind Singh came to an agreement with the Mughal ruler).

SPREAD OF ISLAM IN INDIA

Another myth which abounds Indian society relates to how Islam as a faith was spread in India. A popular notion is that Islam is a violent religion and was spread by force, which is historically incorrect. In fact in India, there is only one king in history who expanded his administration for the spread of a religion. The Emperor Ashok, who after the Kalinga war, had embraced Buddhism, sent most of his officials to spread the message of Buddhism.⁵

Islam however spread in India by many mechanisms, the majority (over 90%) conversions taking place as a result of the humanistic influence of Sufi saints.⁶ The

main influence of Islam came in the regions far off from the centers of Mughal rule, such as Kerala and the Bengal.

LARGE FAMILIES AND POLYGAMY

Poverty and illiteracy are common amongst most Indian Muslims. This is attributed to the large family sizes in the Muslim community. In addition there is a widespread belief about the issue of polygamy where Muslims are believed to marry on average four times. However if one was to go by the numbers, from the 2001 census⁷ there are only 932 females for every 1000 males, which makes polygamy virtually impossible.

POSITIVE DISCRIMINATION OF MUSLIMS

One of the charges is that under the directive principal of India’s Constitution which calls for affirmative action regarding the weaker sections of society, Muslims are being appeased and are benefitting.⁸ However the truth of the matter is that Muslims are the victims of discrimination at all levels and they often live in pathetic conditions. For example nearly 40% of Indians live below the poverty line but amongst Muslims this figure is 66%.

The percentage of Indian Muslims is around 13% of the total figure but their representation in the job sector is much lower. As such the economic and social condition of Muslims is comparatively worse off.

TERRORISM, ISLAM AND MUSLIMS

The latest addition to this list of misconceptions against Muslims relates to the phenomenon of terrorism. This is despite the fact that for the past three decades, people belonging to many religions have resorted to violence and terrorism such as the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam (LTTE) in Sri Lanka (in which majority of its members were Hindus and Christians); a group of Sikhs who resorted to terrorism during the Khalistani movement, the violence in Northern Ireland claiming countless lives, and the Basque separatists in Spain.

However the consequence of this misconception is that in India hundreds of innocent Muslim youth have been

apprehended and made to rot in jail, especially after every act of terror.

The consequence of this has been that many a Muslim youth arrested often in the middle of their education or at the start of their professional lives and subsequently being proved innocent, face numerous obstacles trying to overcome social stigmas that arise after such incidents.

Thus all these myths which support the demonisation of Muslims effectively reduces them to the status of second class citizens.

AGGRESSIVE HINDUTVA

The spearhead of communal-sectarian politics in India today is the RSS which aims to create a Hindu nation, though it has nothing to do with the moral values of Hinduism, rather preferring to be based on the Brahmanical values of caste and gender hierarchy at social and political levels -- a sort of super race akin to Hitler's nationalism policies. It thus accords the status of second class citizens to minorities.

Despite its formation in 1925, it had kept aloof from the Freedom Movement of 1947 as it did not believe in secular democratic nationalism, as envisaged by the national movement led by Mahatma Gandhi. In addition to this, the Freedom Movement brought in a sense of equity to people which sat uncomfortably with the elites of society - and who were subsequently drawn to the RSS.

RSS began to re-teach history which promoted India as a Hindu state and Muslims as foreigners, occupiers and aggressors. It was this version that led to a justification for killing Ghandi, who in their opinion was 'responsible for the appeasement of Muslims'.

Despite this, since the 1950s, the RSS has been silently infiltrating all parts of state and society, bureaucracy, police, education, media, judiciary and army, spreading ideas against minorities mainly against Muslims and Christians.

The eighties and nineties saw increased activity by the RSS against the minorities particularly the Christians. For example in 1997, in order to frighten Christian missionaries from poor Adivasi areas, they burnt Pastor Graham Stewart Staines. After 9/11, the RSS intensified its campaign

of demonisation of Muslims saying that all terrorists are Muslims.

INDIA TODAY

Thus it is in this context that the consequences of the Ayodhya Judgment of September, 2010 needs to be viewed. The verdict given by the Lucknow bench of Allahabad High Court legitimises the demolition of the Babri Mosque in 1992 despite there being no guidance from the directive and principles of the Indian Constitution, nor any grounding in the law of the land. However despite this, there was mute opposition to the ruling with all parties considering it as a 'balanced' option. Both the Hindu and Muslim community were apprehensive about the dangers of communal violence if any visible opposition to the ruling was displayed. The Muslim community in particular though, feel particularly hard done by, as they feel that the ruling is symptomatic of a wider problem as explained above.

So the judgment and the reaction to it is a matter of serious and severe concern for those who think that the Indian Constitution and not the concept of the Hindu nation has to be the basis of the society with serious implications for minorities such as the Muslim community.

INDIAN MUSLIMS: CURRENT DILEMMAS

Currently Indian democracy is under severe attack from the politics influenced by the RSS and its affiliates. While it targets religious minorities, such as Muslims, it has a deeper goal to also subjugate people of lower classes as well as women and other ethnic and social minorities.

However the violence against the Muslims has led them to a feeling of insecurity, leading in turn to look inwards, become more insular, develop ghettos and keep away from the social process of development.

The trajectory of last three decades has been very adverse for Muslims in India. The problems faced by Muslims have unearthed real questions related to identity, security and equity. However it would be a terrible loss, if the community was to withdraw in the face of these challenges, rather it should be more proactive and join forces with other

like-minded groups and communities to boost the democratic secular constitution of the country.

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Puniyani is the recipient of Maharashtra Foundation (Communal harmony) 2002; Association for Communal Harmony, Star Award 2003; Indira Gandhi National Integration Award 2006 and National Communal Harmony Award 2007.

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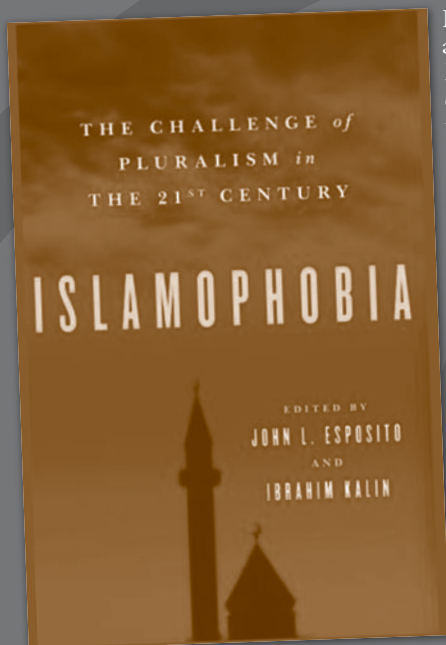
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ENDNOTES

1. This is a judgement that was made in September 2010 that a disputed holy site in Ayodhya (where an ancient mosque was torn down in 1992 sparking off some of the worst intercommunal riots in India) should be split between Hindus and Muslims.
2. Temples were often the repositories of wealth.
3. Temples were plundered by Marathas in Tipu's sultanate. The Shrirangapatnam temple was destroyed by Maratha armies and was repaired by Tipu Sultan. The famous temple of Somnath was looted by Muhammed Gazani. His main aim in this was to loot the gold kept in the temple. On his way to Somnath he first had to fight with Abdul Fath Dawood and in the process the mosque of Multan was damaged. Further on he allied with Anadpal the ruler of Thaneshwar, before attacking the temple. Many of his army generals; Tilak, Sondhi, Rai, Hind and Harzan were Hindus and a substantial part of his army was constituted by Hindu soldiers. Later his son sent his army to destroy a mosque in central Asia. Temples were also looted by King Harsha (Kashmir), 11th century Kashmir. The mention of this is found in Kalhan's book "Rajatarangini", which says that he appointed a special officer to uproot the gold idols from the temples. This officer was designated as Devotpatan Nayak (officer who uproots the Gods). Parmar Kings destroyed Jain temples. Similarly Auragazeb not only destroyed some temples and mosques, he also gave Jagirs to many a temples.
4. It is interesting to note that these versions of history do not acknowledge that most Muslim kinds had Hindu allies and vice versa for example, Akbar had Raja Todarmal on his side and Shivaji had Ibrahim Gardi on his.
5. Seneviratna, Anuradha ed. (1994). *King Asoka and Buddhism: Historical and Literary Studies*, (Buddhist Publications Society), Sri Lanka. - http://www.buddhanet.net/pdf_file/king_asoka.pdf
6. Some of the lower caste Hindus such as the Shudras embraced Islam in the hope of getting social equality to escape the tyranny of the Landlords and Brahmins. The major conversion in the subcontinent was that of Dr. Ambedkar in 1956, and again the reason, which was operative, was to escape the clutches of Brahmanism and allied vested interests.
7. http://censusindia.gov.in/Census_Data_2001/India_at_glance/reigion.aspx
8. This is a charge that has been there from the beginning against Mahatma Gandhi who fought to ensure that the freedom movement was a real representative of India as a whole and not primarily for the Hindu community.

ISLAMOPHOBIA: The Challenge of Pluralism in the 21st Century

JOHN L. ESPOSITO AND IBRAHIM KALIN – EDITORS



Islamophobia has been on the rise since September 11, as seen in countless cases of discrimination, racism, hate speeches, physical attacks, and anti-Muslim campaigns. The 2006 Danish cartoon crisis and the controversy surrounding Pope Benedict XVI's Regensburg speech have underscored the urgency of such issues as image-making, multiculturalism, freedom of expression, respect for religious symbols, and interfaith relations.

The 1997 Runnymede Report defines Islamophobia as “dread, hatred, and hostility towards Islam and Muslims perpetuated by a series of closed views that imply and attribute negative and derogatory stereotypes and beliefs to Muslims”.

Editors John Esposito and Ibrahim Kalin in this new book explain how violating the basic principles of human rights civil liberties, and religious freedom, Islamophobic acts take many different forms. In some cases, mosques, Islamic centers, and Muslim properties are attacked and desecrated. In the workplace, schools, and housing, it takes the form of suspicion, staring, hazing, mockery, rejection, stigmatizing and outright discrimination. In public

places, it occurs as indirect discrimination, hate speech, and denial of access to goods and services.

This collection of essays takes a multidisciplinary approach to Islamophobia, bringing together the expertise and experience of Muslim, American, and European scholars. Analysis is combined with policy recommendations. Contributors discuss and evaluate good practices already in place and offer new methods for dealing with discrimination, hatred, and racism.

Islamophobia: The Challenge of Pluralism in the 21st Century
by John L. Esposito and Ibrahim Kalin (editors).
Published by Oxford University Press, 2011

Available in all good bookshops

His Royal Highness **Raja Nazrin Shah**
PRO CHANCELLOR, UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA.

His Royal Highness Dr Raja Nazrin Shah is the Raja Muda (Crown Prince) of the state of Perak Darul Ridzuan, Malaysia. He served as the Pemangku Raja of Perak (Regent) from 1989 to 1994 when his father, His Royal Highness Sultan Azlan Shah, became the 9th King of Malaysia.

Dr Shah holds a B.A. degree in Philosophy, Politics and Economics from Oxford University, a Master in Public Administration from the Kennedy School of Government and a Ph.D. in Political Economy and Government from the University of Cambridge. He has worked in the area of economic development in Southeast Asia, historical growth in developing countries.

Dr Shah has written widely on the role of government in building, education, infrastructure and economic development.

He recently assumed the role of Malaysian International Relations Advisor to the Perak Council on Islamic Affairs, the Perak State Islamic Religious Council, the Board of Government of the Board of Government of the President of the Outer Islands.

Dr Shah was conferred the title of Knight Commander of the Order of the Crown of Perak (1993), an honorary doctorate from Soka University, Japan (2005). Dr Shah is also a Fellow of the International Studies, University of Malaya.



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HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS RAJA NAZRIN SHAH
CROWN PRINCE OF PERAK, MALAYSIA

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The Defence of Omar Khadr in the Age of Islamophobia

*DENNIS EDNEY

IN the wake of the September 11, 2001 attacks in the United States, many States, responding to United Nations Security resolutions and public anxiety, began to adopt an increasing array of counter terrorism measures. While the Security Council failed to immediately refer to each States' duty to respect human rights in their response to terrorism, it subsequently made it clear in a 2003 declaration that all "States must ensure that any measure taken to combat terrorism must comply with all their obligations under international law, in particular international human rights law, refugee and humanitarian law".

Certain liberal democracies began claiming that the rules had changed and dismissed the observance of certain basic human rights in confronting the new global terror.

Despite this guidance, government officials and policy-makers in certain liberal democracies began claiming that the rules had changed and dismissed the observance of certain basic human rights in confronting the new global terror. As a result these states began violating human rights in the name of counter-terrorism.

For some states that routinely abused human rights in the past, counter-terrorism was simply the newest excuse behind which to hide; for other states, counter-terrorism was claimed to be the justification for departing from long-cherished norms. Ironically, it is those liberal democratic states – states which lauded the importance of the rule of

law and the protection of human rights that are now responsible for undermining those very protections. These include States such as, Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States.

In departing from previously accepted norms of behaviour, governments argue that individuals suspected of involvement in terrorist acts fall outside the protection of certain human rights due to their status as "enemy combatants".

As a result the international consensus reflected in the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* and the *Charter of the United Nations*, that no one in the future would fall outside the protection of the law, has been overridden and supplanted by lawlessness.

It is difficult to exaggerate the risk to society as a whole, when our governments depart from their obligation to uphold the rule of law. And what is meant by that lofty phrase the rule of law. Many people see the rule of law in negative terms: as a constraint upon freedom and creativity; as a series of traps for the unwary; as a set of rules designed to stifle initiative and enterprise. They see the Constitution as a means of enabling courts to frustrate the will of elected parliaments. To some, the rule of law is thought to require police to investigate, and bring to prosecution every aspect of the rule book, no matter how harmless or incidental it might be.

This is not what law is about. The rule of law is meant to be a safeguard, not a menace. One of the ways in which the rule of law seeks to promote justice and individual liberty is in its function as a restraint upon the exercise of power, whether it is restraining individuals or corporations, or whether it is restraining the excess power of governments.

Law is not the enemy of liberty; it is its partner. The political philosopher Edmund Burke described civil society "as a partnership between those who are living, those who are

dead, and those who are yet to be born.” We would never have envisaged that the history of the new century would encompass the destruction and distortion of fundamental legal and constitutional principles that have been in place since the 17th century.

We are witnesses to disturbing events with *Habeas corpus* being abandoned; secret courts being created to hear secret evidence; guilt inferred by association; torture and rendition nakedly justified and vital international conventions consolidated in the aftermath of the Second World War – the *Geneva Conventions*, the *Refugee Convention*, the *Torture Convention*, and more, have been deliberately avoided or ignored in the War on Terror.

We appear to have forgotten the lessons of the Star Chamber, where the accused were submitted to torture, to accusations based on secret evidence, heard by a secret court, while being shackled and in extremes of isolation. The worst excesses of the last nine years should have sounded loud alarms, not the least because of that precise historic parallel to the Star Chamber.

The War on Terror has come to be viewed as an extension of Islamophobia, where Muslims tend to be viewed as the suspect community.

To many, the War on Terror has come to be viewed as an extension of Islamophobia, where Muslims tend to be viewed as the suspect community whereby their rights are denied and the rule of law ignored.

The 9/11 terrorist attack on New York and the Pentagon have had revelations far beyond the initial shock to peoples psyches. Because fifteen of the nineteen hijackers had grown up in Saudi Arabia, worldwide attention has been focused on “Arabs and the Muslim world”.

In response to the attacks, both the

Canadian Federal government and almost certainly the U.S. federal government has engaged in a sweeping anti-terror campaign focused almost exclusively on individuals who are of Arab or South Asian descent, Muslim, or Sikhs. Many of the tactics in this campaign amount to racial profiling - that is, they involve the use of racial, religious or ethnic stereotypes by law enforcement officials in determining who to target as part of the anti-terrorism effort. Much of the support for post-September 11 profiling against Arabs, South Asians, Muslims, and Sikhs, is motivated by the confusion and anxiety that has gripped the U.S. since the terrorist attacks.

Americans are unaccustomed to living under siege and the threat of continuing terrorist attacks by al-Qaeda and others has caused inappropriate and unfair action by the state (and also by private citizens) toward those perceived to pose the threat. Arabs, Muslims, South Asians, and Sikhs are now subjected to traffic stops and searches based in whole or in part on their race, ethnicity, or religion due to law enforcement perceptions that they are likely participants in extremist or terrorist activities.

A particularly disturbing form of terrorism profiling has been the U.S Federal government's use of race as a basis for the detention without due process of Arabs, Muslims and South Asians and its subsequent use of the anti-terrorism investigation as a vehicle for the disproportionate application of U.S. immigration laws against detainees who are found to be innocent of any terrorist activity. In the wake of September 11, the United States detained hundreds - perhaps thousands - of Arabs, South Asians and Muslims on suspicion of terrorist activity. Almost none of these individuals were ultimately found to have been in any way involved in terrorism. Yet many continued to be held without being formally charged with any crime or immigration violation.

Since September 11, race, ethnicity and religion have become proxies for suspected terrorist activity, which in turn has become a pretext for the application of immigration laws in an unequal manner toward Arabs, South Asians, and Muslims. Race, ethnicity

and religion have become proxies for suspected terrorist activity, which in turn has become a pretext for the application of immigration laws in an unequal manner toward Arabs, South Asians, and Muslims, conduct that would not have been tolerated before September 11.

One has only to consider the case of my client Omar Khadr, a young Canadian who has languished in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, since he was fifteen years old. He is presently 24 years of age. Khadr recently marked his 24th birthday in Guantanamo Bay, having now spent a third of his life there, in conditions that have raised international condemnation from nations, human rights organisations, jurists, the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child and so on, but not by Canada.

Guantanamo is a place without rules and it is a place that Khadr has spent eight years of his life.

Khadr's story touches upon so many issues from the human to the inhuman; from the legal to the illegal. Guantanamo is a place without rules and it is a place that Khadr has spent eight years of his life, having been arbitrarily detained, suffered unjust imprisonment, prolonged solitary confinement, torture and abuse.

Khadr was 15 years old, in the company of hardened militants who were alleged to be associates of his father who is now dead. At that time, the United States had invaded Afghanistan and unleashed a massive bombing campaign. Soldiers came knocking on the door of the compound and demanded entry. The men around Khadr at the time refused entry to the soldiers and a fire fight ensued, culminating in an U.S. aerial bombardment of the compound, killing everyone but Khadr.

Khadr had been wounded in his head, eye and leg by shrapnel, presumably from aerial bombardment or perhaps from a U.S. grenade. He was eventually loaded onto a military helicopter and regained

consciousness several days later, in a hospital, at the in U.S. Internment Facility, Bagram in Afghanistan.

Little did Omar know that his ordeal had only begun.

At the Bagram hospital, Omar's interrogators could hardly wait until he had regained consciousness. He was repeatedly brought into interrogation rooms on a stretcher, in great pain as pain medication was regularly denied prior to and during his interrogations. He was subjected to barking dogs while wearing a bag over his head. He was threatened with rape, and denied bathroom privileges. Sometimes Khadr was kept chained in an interrogation room for so long he urinated on himself. His head would then be used as a cleaning mop to clean up the urine on the floor. He was singled out for all – night cleaning of floors on his hands and knees long before his wounds had even healed. He was also hung up by his wrists in doorways for hours at a time.

Khadr tells the story of a particular soldier who liked to flatulate in his face, while he lay lying in his hospital bed, and the guards and nurses would simply laugh at this conduct.

During his three months in the Bagram hospital prison, Khadr was interrogated repeatedly by a military interrogation team under the control of a Sgt. Clause who was later charged and convicted of the death of a Muslim detainee and the severe injury of two other detainees using the same interrogation techniques that he had used on Khadr.

In mitigation before a military court, Sgt. Clause stated he felt pressured to get results for which he received a six month sentence for the death and injuries caused through his interrogation techniques. Such is the value placed on the torture; abuse and killing of detainees.

It goes against the very core of humanity that torture and abuse of a fifteen year old Omar Khadr and other detainees would take place in a hospital, when people are at their most vulnerable.

Whatever abuse and torture suffered by Khadr in Bagram, continued in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

Guantanamo has been called everything from an off-shore concentration camp to a

legal black hole. It has become a symbol of much that is wrong with our society. It is a complex of brutal prisons where hundreds of men and children from all over the world, have been held by the U.S. government under incredibly inhuman conditions and incessant interrogation. The vast majority of detainees have not been charged with any crime nor provided with access to the courts. Instead of complying with International law, U.S. military regulations, and longstanding U.S. practice, the Bush administration has made a blanket determination that all persons held at Guantanamo Bay were “unlawful combatants” and were not entitled to the protections due prisoners of war or protected persons under the Geneva Conventions.

The Bush administration coined the term “enemy combatants” and that phrase has been bandied about so freely and with such authority by most senior government officials, one would have imagined that the term has been in use since time immemorial. The fact is it hasn’t. Indeed, it has no basis in the American constitution, the laws of war,

Guantanamo Bay is a symbol of the disdain with which the Bush administration and now the Obama administration brushed aside long-standing precepts of international law and human rights conduct. Yet, successive Canadian governments have failed to criticise Guantanamo Bay as being outside the Rule of Law.

domestic criminal justice or military law. Nor does it have for that matter the definition assigned to it by the U.S. government under international humanitarian or human rights law.

The U.S. government’s use of the term “enemy combatant” is unprecedented in U.S. legal history. It represents a repudiation or refutation of the Geneva Convention, laws agreed to by the world to ensure that fundamental principles of humanity remain intact in the time of war. The designation “enemy combatant” undermines the core constitutional principle of the separation of powers between the legislative and the judiciary branches; a principle incorporated by the framers of the U.S. constitution so as to ensure each branch of government is checked by the other. More importantly, however, the executive’s adoption of the term “enemy combatant” constitutes a complete abandonment of governance in accordance with the rule of law.

Guantanamo Bay is a symbol of the disdain with which the Bush administration and now the Obama administration brushed aside long-standing precepts of international law and human rights conduct.

Yet, successive Canadian governments have failed to criticise Guantanamo Bay as being outside the Rule of Law. Prime Minister Harper and his representatives have persisted in telling the Canadian public that they have been assured Khadr is being treated humanely and would take the United States at its word when other Western countries have been less accepting of U.S. assurances. They have demanded and were granted the return home of their detainees.

Lurking behind all of this is the Canadian government’s obdurate refusal, in Parliament, and in the courts, to request Khadr’s repatriation to Canada.

The Canadian Government was not the least reluctant to come to the assistance of Brenda Martin, a Caucasian female Canadian convicted by the Mexican government for criminal conspiracy and money laundering. Prime Minister Stephen Harper requested the Mexican President Felipe Calderon to assist in Martin’s case. Shortly thereafter, a prisoner transfer agreement was arranged and flew Martin back to Canada in a private government plane.

The principle that not all Canadians are treated equally was reflected by the response of the Canadian government, when we

initially applied and were granted standing in 2004 to file an *amicus curiae* brief before the U.S. Supreme Court in the landmark case of *Rasul v. Bush*. We limited our submissions to two general subjects relating to Khadr's status as a child and as a Canadian. We emphasised Khadr's status both under the *Geneva Conventions* and the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* and we requested the U.S. Supreme Court to interpret its Constitution in a manner consistent with these fundamental principles of international law.

We requested the Federal Government to also file an *amicus* brief, but it refused. Yet, five years earlier, the Canadian Government had filed an *amicus* brief before the U.S.S.C. on behalf of Stan Faulder, a male Caucasian Canadian, from Jasper, Alberta, who was convicted of the killing of a 75 year old Texas woman and was facing the death penalty.

Our legal representations on behalf of Khadr has led to two consecutive judicial rulings by the Supreme Court of Canada.

In a major rebuke, the Canadian Supreme Court ruled in *Khadr* (1) that the U.S. treatment of Khadr in Guantanamo Bay contravened the *International Convention on Torture* and the *Geneva Conventions*, and that Canada was complicit in that conduct.

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Clearly, any government found to have been complicit in torture, particularly involving a youth, has no moral authority to govern. Many Canadian civil institutions, however, from law societies to religious

organisations, remained mute in their criticism of their government's conduct.

In *Khadr* (2), the Supreme Court of Canada confirmed that the government of Canada violated Khadr's rights under the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* that those violations were ongoing, and they contributed to his ongoing detention. The Supreme Court then set aside the order of the Federal Court of Canada compelling the Prime Minister, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Commissioner of the RCMP, and the Director of CSIS "to request that the United States return Mr. Khadr to Canada as soon as [is] practicable." A few days after the Supreme Court's decision, on February 3rd 2010, the government of Canada announced its decision not to request the repatriation of Khadr.

Canada is also one of the drafters and first signatories of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child -- an instrument to protect children from prosecution. It has, however, refused to recognise Khadr as a child soldier.

Former Canadian General and now Senator, Romeo Dallaire, in his recent book on Child Soldiers, described the stance of the Canadian government with regards to Khadr as a "black mark on Canada's international reputation and standing in the fight for the Child's Rights and Human Rights as a whole".

The Canadian government, by its actions, has demonstrated a shocking, reckless and ruthless disregard for those moral and legal laws that give effect to the idea of fairness. In doing so, it has shown the fragility of the laws and their application, from which we assume protection when faced with a government determined to follow a contrary path. The apathy of the Canadian government towards Omar's plight has sent a resounding message to U.S. authorities that they can do as they wish with this Canadian citizen.

On the very day the Supreme Court of Canada heard arguments over whether Prime Minister Harper should intervene on behalf of Omar Khadr, the U.S. Attorney General, Eric Holder announced that that Khadr would go before the internationally condemned U.S. military commission

tribunal in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. It is simply inexplicable that Khadr, who is entitled to all manners of international legal protection, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child, to which Canada is a signatory, was to be tried before a kangaroo court in Guantanamo Bay without a single word of protest from the Canadian government.

It was Lt. Col. Darrel Vandeveld, a former military commission prosecutor, who on appearing before a U.S. congressional committee labelled the military commission process as a kangaroo court. Recently, in a letter to the *Washington Post*, he stated these military commissions were designed “to secure convictions where prisoner mistreatment... would otherwise preclude them”.

The President of the American Civil Liberties Union reiterated that same sentiment. He said: “The only conceivable basis for prosecuting cases in the discredited military commission system is that the administration lacks the confidence that it can obtain a conviction in the legitimate courts”.

One has only to read recent statements made by senior U.S. Congressmen, with regards to the Ghailana court decision in New York, to dispel any notion that a lack of fairness in the military commission proceedings has been overstated.

At the heart of the rule of law, lies the principle of an independent and impartial judiciary. An independent judiciary enforces the law without fear or favour. Nothing less will ensure the proper separation of powers with the assurance that everyone from the accused to the public can be confident that his/her case will be dealt with in accordance with the law.

Military Commission judges are military officers, appointed by the executive, and subordinate to their superiors in the military hierarchy. The military is a closed, hierarchical institution and it stresses loyalty to the institution. Accordingly, there has been a growing consensus at the international level that military courts should be used only for trying members of armed forces for offences of a military nature.

Historically, serious human rights violations have arisen from the practice of using military courts to try civilians in many countries such as Chile, Argentina, Turkey and Nigeria, to name a few. Countries such as Argentina, Columbia, and Guatemala have even introduced constitutional provisions explicitly prohibiting the trial of civilians by military courts.

However, the United States has chosen not to follow this trend by employing military commissions to try suspected terrorists characterised as “enemy combatants”.

In Khadr’s case, this has led to serious violations of the right to a fair trial, and departures from accepted legal procedures and safeguards. His trial lacked independence and impartiality, limited access to evidence and witnesses, and represented by inexperienced and inept military defence counsel imposed upon him.

Ahmed Ghailani is the only Guantanamo detainee approved for trial in the U.S. Federal Court. The jury dismissed all but one of the 279 terrorism related charges. The jury also convicted him of one charge of conspiracy to destroy U.S. government buildings and property, for which he will serve a sentence of no less than 20 years. In the course of his trial, the trial judge threw out tainted evidence derived from his abuse and torture in an outlaw CIA prison and Guantanamo Bay. The former Republican presidential nominee, Senator,

Is it surprising that Khadr chose to enter into a plea bargain when the opportunity arose that allowed him to be released from Guantanamo Bay within one year by pleading guilty as opposed to persisting in an obviously discredited judicial system.

John McCain, described the jury verdict as a “travesty” and proclaimed that the verdict proved that all terrorism cases should be tried in military commissions, which he said “were set up to get the job done”. Clearly, these comments by Senator McCain raise grave concerns as to impartiality both in principle and in practice.

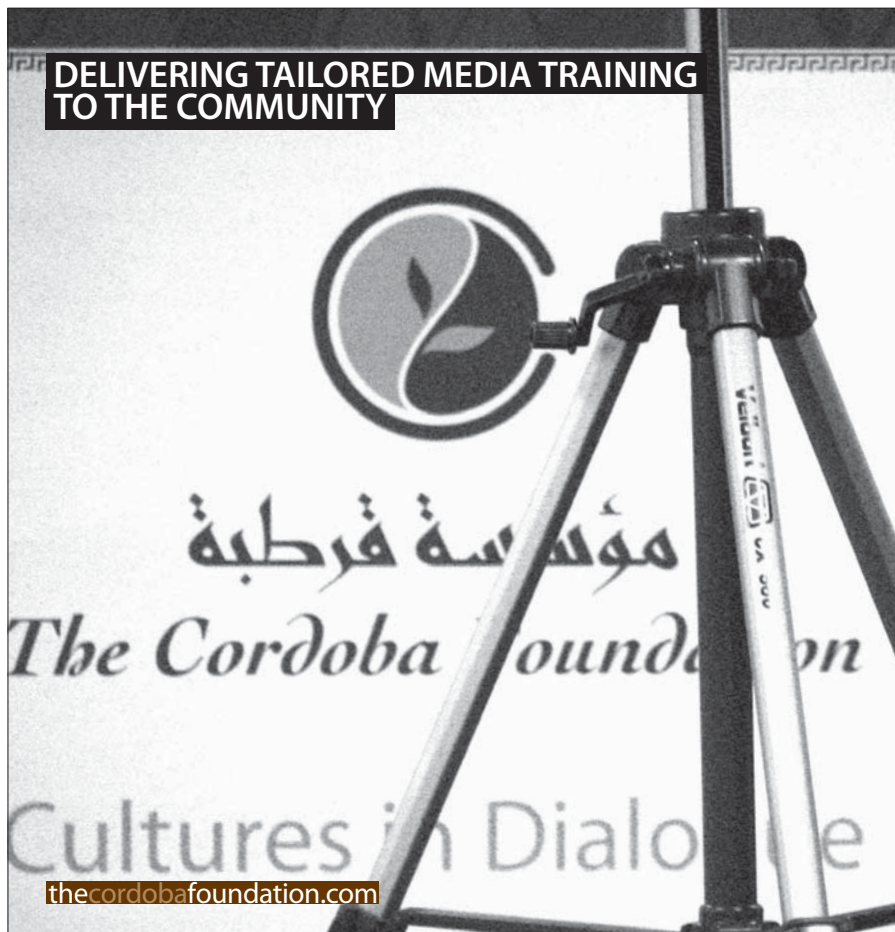
Is it surprising that Khadr chose to enter into a plea bargain when the opportunity arose that allowed him to be released from Guantanamo Bay within one year by pleading guilty as opposed to persisting in an obviously discredited judicial system.

Who amongst us would not have done the same?

*Dennis Edney is a Defense attorney and lecturer, based in Alberta in Canada. He is originally from Dundee, Scotland. Having initially begun his career in general law, in 1989, he specialises now in Human Rights and International Law. A member of the Law Society of Alberta and the Canadian Bar Association respectively, Edney plays an active role in the community, both in advisory groups and various societies.

Edney's legal experience includes his involvement in a range of Guantanamo Bay cases, especially that of Abdullah Khadr in the matter of his extradition to the USA. He also acted as the foreign attorney consultant in Guantanamo Bay for Omar Khadr.

Edney has been a recipient of a number of awards, including the prestigious 2008 National Pro Bono Award, the 2009 Human Rights Medal (awarded by the Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia), and named by Alberta Venture magazine as one of Alberta's 50 most influential people for 2008.



Islamophobia and Anti-Muslim Hate Crime: UK Case Studies

ROBERT LAMBERT AND JONATHAN GITHENS-MAZER

Islamophobia and Anti-Muslim Hate Crime: UK Case Studies highlights the success of The East London Mosque in Whitechapel, the Masjid al-Ghuraaba in Luton, the North London Central Mosque in Finsbury Park and other British mosques tackling political violence of two types: arson attacks and intimidation by far right thugs against mosques and Muslims, on the other; tackling al-Qaeda inspired violent extremism.

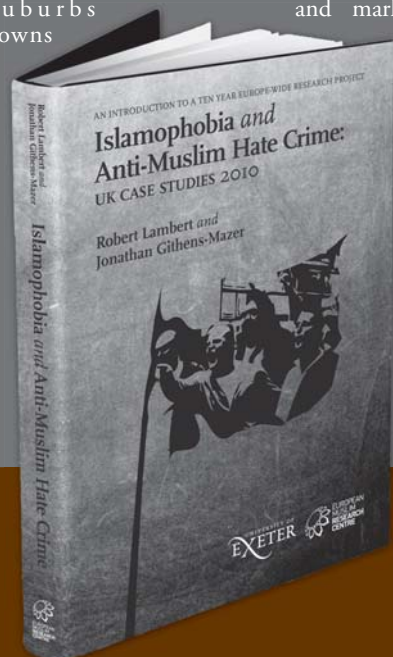
Authors, Robert Lambert and Jonathan Githens-Mazer, also highlight Muslims and increasing number of mosques face a higher level of threats and intimidation in UK sub urban and market towns

than in big cities. Case studies reveal that examples such as a Muslim woman who was punched and called a “terrorist” in front of her petrified daughter are not uncommon. Such attacks often go unreported, and in this case the woman was too scared to inform the police.

Findings show that since the 9/11 terrorist attacks, arson, criminal damage, violence and intimidation against mosques has increased dramatically and smaller or isolated Muslim communities in places like Colchester, Bishop Stortford and Boston have become especially vulnerable. It also analyses the local activity by the British National Party, English Defence League and sister organisations.

The report is part of a ten year academic research project led by the University of Exeter’s European Muslim Research Centre (EMRC). It captures a snapshot of these experiences which are often unrecognised by the media, politicians and wider British society.

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Islamophobia and Anti-Muslim Hate Crime: UK Case Studies, co-authored by Robert Lambert and Jonathan Githens-Mazer. Published by European Muslim Research Centre, University of Exeter, 2010.

Supported by The Cordoba Foundation



***DR NASAR MEER AND **PROFESSOR TARIQ MODOOD**

Analysing the Growing Scepticism Towards the Idea of Islamophobia¹

A FREQUENT complaint made by some Muslims is that while they are increasingly the subject of hostility and discrimination, as well as governmental racial profiling, surveillance and targeting by intelligence agencies,² their status as victims

can be the object of racism by virtue of their real of perceived 'Jewishness'. After setting out our argument and drawing upon primary interviews, we conclude that taken together, our data is instructive in illustrating how an anxiety over the 'Muslim question' informs a hesitancy to name anti-Muslim sentiment as racism.

The complaint of anti-Muslim racism and Islamophobia has often invited criticism upon Muslims themselves.

of racism is frequently challenged or denied. Indeed, it would be no exaggeration to suggest that instead of highlighting and alleviating anti-Muslim discrimination, the complaint of anti-Muslim racism and Islamophobia has often invited criticism upon Muslims themselves (Meer, 2008; 2007; 2006).

The recent announcement of an All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Islamophobia in Britain marks a welcome development in seriousness with which anti-Muslim sentiment is treated. It is however much too early to say whether the APPG will form part of a broader change in how anti-Muslim sentiment has long been viewed by many otherwise self-avowedly anti-racist intellectuals or legislators who either remain sceptical over the scale of the problem (Malik, 2005; Hansen, 2006; Joppke, 2007), and/or, indeed, of its racialised character (cf Toynbee, 1997, 2005; Abbot, 2005; Davis, 2005; Marshall-Andrews, 2005).

In this paper we explore some of the reasons why there may be less sympathy for the notion that Muslim minorities could be subject to racism by virtue of their real or perceived 'Muslimness' (in the way that it is rightly accepted that Jewish minorities in Europe

RELIGION AND RACIALIZATION

The interactions between racial and religious antipathy can be helpfully drawn out through Modood's description of anti-Semitism as "a form of [ethno-]religious persecution [which] became, over a long, complicated, evolving but contingent history, not just a form of cultural racism but one with highly systematic biological formulations" (2005: 9–10). He continues:

"[C]enturies before those modern ideas we have come to call 'racism'...the move from religious antipathy to racism may perhaps be witnessed in post-Reconquista Spain when Jews and Muslims were forced to convert to Christianity or be expelled. At this stage, the oppression can perhaps be characterised as religious. Soon afterward, converted Jews and Muslims and their offspring began to be suspected of not being true Christian believers, a doctrine developed amongst some Spaniards that this was because their old religion was in their blood. In short, because of their biology, conversion was impossible. Centuries later, these views about race became quite detached from religion and in Nazi and related doctrines were given a thoroughly scientific-biologic cast and constitute a paradigmatic and extreme version of modern racism" (ibid).

Now this should not be read as an endorsement of the view that all racism can be reduced to biological inferences. Biological determinism may be the classical form that racism took in Europe in the nineteenth

century and later but it should not be equated with racism per se. Indeed, in the example above, modern biological racism has roots in pre-modern religious antipathy – an argument that is also made by Rana (2007). Moreover, while racism in modern Europe took a biologicistic form, what is critical to racialisation of a group is not the invocation of a biology but a radical ‘otherness’ and the perception and treatment of individuals in terms of physical appearance and descent. The implication is that non-Christian religious minorities in Europe can undergo processes of racialization, where the ‘otherness’ or ‘groupness’ that is appealed to is connected to a cultural and racial otherness which relates to European peoples’ historical and contemporary perceptions of those people that they perceive to be non-European (Goldberg, 2006).

This means that how Muslims in Europe are perceived today is not un-connected to how they have been perceived and treated by European empires and their racial hierarchies, as well as by Christian Islamophobia and the Crusades in earlier centuries (Gottschalk and Greenberg, 2008). This is because their perception and treatment clearly has a religious *and* cultural dimension but, equally clearly, a phenotypical component. For a while it is true that ‘Muslim’ is not a (putative) biological category in the way that ‘black’ or ‘south Asian’, aka ‘Paki’, or Chinese is, neither was ‘Jew’. It took a long, non-linear history of racialisation to turn an ethno-religious group into a race (Modood, 2006). More precisely, the latter did not so much as replace the former but superimposed itself because even though no one denied

that Jews were a religious community, with a distinctive language(s), culture(s) and religion, Jews still came to be seen as a race, and with horrific consequences (see also Rattansi, 2007; Meer and Noorani, 2008). Similarly, Bosnian Muslims were ‘ethnically cleansed’ because they came to be identified as a ‘racial’ group by people who were phenotypically, linguistically and culturally the same as themselves. The ethnic cleanser, unlike an Inquisitor, wasted no time in finding out what people believed, if and how often they went to a mosque and so on: their victims were *racially* identified as Muslims.

BIOLOGICAL AND CULTURAL RACISM

So race is not just about biology or even ‘colour’, for while racialization has to pick on some features of a people related to physical appearance and ancestry (otherwise racism cannot be distinguished from other forms of groupism), it need only be a marker and not necessarily denote a form of determinism. This is illustrated in the conceptualisation of cultural racism as a two step process (Modood, 1997).

While biological racism is the antipathy, exclusion and unequal treatment of people on the basis of their physical appearance or other imputed physical differences, saliently in Britain their non ‘whiteness’, cultural racism builds on biological racism a further discourse which evokes cultural differences from an alleged British ‘civilised’ norm, to vilify, marginalise or demand cultural assimilation from groups who also suffer from biological racism. Post-war racism in Britain has been simultaneously culturalist and biological, and while the latter is essential to the racism in question, it is, in fact, the less explanatory aspect of a complex phenomenon. Biological interpretations have not governed what white British people, including racists, have thought or done; how they have stereotyped, treated and related to non-whites; and biological ideas have had increasingly less force both in the context of personal relationships and in the conceptualisation of groups. As white people’s interactions with non-white individuals increased, they did not become necessarily less conscious of group differences but they were

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far more likely to ascribe group differences to upbringing, customs, forms of socialisation and self-identity than to biological heredity.

The interesting question arises as to whether it could be a one-step to racism: could colour racism decline and fade away and yet cultural racism remains and perhaps even grow? One can certainly imagine a future in which a group could continue to have their culture vilified while colour racism simultaneously declined, and the distinction between what might be called racism proper and 'culturalism' is commonly held and continues to be argued for (Fredrickson, 2002; Blum, 2002). Yet while it appears that to discriminate only against those perceived to be culturally different might be *borderline* racial discrimination, where cultural essentialism and inferiorization may be involved, it would certainly share some of the qualities of what we know of racist stereotyping and practice today. Even then, however, it may still be regarded as a cultural prejudice or cultural exclusionism rather than racism per se, so that if persons are targeted only on the basis of their *behaviour* and not on the basis of their *ancestry*, then might we not have something we should call culturalism rather than racism?

While this is an interesting question it appears to go against what we should expect from communities and social dynamics, since cultures and cultural practices are usually internally diverse, containing and omitting various "authentic" elements, and adaptations and mixes. It follows then that the culturalized targeting could very easily be expansive, rather than purist, and so in one way or another capture most if not all cultural minorities in that group. For example, a non-religious Muslim might still be targeted as a cultural Muslim or Muslim by community, which means Muslim by background, in other words birth and ancestry. This means that it is not clear that culturalism, where it is associated with distinct communities, can really be distinguished from racism in practice, even if it can be in theory. Some have argued that culturalism is a form of racism because it treats culture as a form of quasi-biological determinism and/or because culture is being made to stand in for a prior 'racism' (Barker 1981; Gilroy 1987; Solomos 1991). But this

seems a misreading of cultural racism and is too committed to approximating cultural racism to biological racism.

If we accept that racism does not necessarily involve attributing qualities which are inherent

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in a deterministic law-like way in all members of a group, then we do not have to rule out cultural racism as an example of racism. This means that cultural racism is not merely a proxy for racism but a form of racism in its own right, and that while racism involves some reference to physical appearance or ancestry, it does not require any form of biological determinism, only a physical identification on a group basis, attributable to descent. As such we should guard against the characterisation of racism as a form of 'inherentism' or 'biological determinism' which leaves little space to conceive the ways in which *cultural racism* draws upon physical appearance as one marker, amongst others. We thus maintain that formulations of racialization should not be solely premised upon conceptions of biology in a way that ignores religion, culture and so forth (cf. Miles, 1989).

While these theoretical linkages illustrate how Islamophobia as anti-Muslim sentiment can constitute a form of racism, the discussion thus far has not considered whether and how it may be deemed less problematic than other forms of racism. Contrasting perceptions of anti-Muslim sentiment with anti-Semitism may, once more, provide a fruitful line of inquiry for the reasons a British Member of the European Parliament posits:

"The media and Islamophobia are two of the most potent combinations of recent times.... You see anti-Semitism is loaded with much heightened awareness...that creates a situation which is very emotive and rightly so. With Islam the difference is that there isn't that historical baggage. The media are not identifying a group of people and saying that this is what they suffered. [...] There's

also a sense of confusion about Islam versus cult like behaviour because there hasn't been a very good analysis in the media and popular culture generally" (Interview with Meer, ³ January, 2008).

To explore these issues, we now turn our attention to some journalists who make these allegedly formative contributions to our understanding of anti-Muslim sentiment (for a fuller discussion of the role of journalists see Meer, 2006). To this end we detail in-depth British interview data³, with one senior home affairs broadcast journalist and three senior newspaper commissioning editors, two broadsheet and one tabloid, to consider what this can reveal about the topic at hand.

FRAMING RACISM DISCRETELY

Our data suggests that one of the explanations for the degree of ambivalence attributed to anti-Muslim sentiment reflects

[There is an] assumption that Muslim identities are religious identities that are voluntarily chosen.

a commonly held narrow definition of racism which assumes that the discrimination directed at conventionally, involuntarily, conceived racial minorities cannot by definition resemble that directed at Muslim minorities. This reckoning is premised upon the assumption that Muslim identities are religious identities that are voluntarily chosen (see Modood's (2006) rejoinder in his discussion of the Danish Cartoon Affair, and the case study of Incitement to Religious Hatred legislation in Meer (2008).

So it is frequently stated that while gender, racial and sexuality based identities are ascribed or involuntary categories of birth, being a Muslim is about chosen beliefs, and that Muslims therefore need or ought to have less legal protection than these other kinds of identities.⁴ What this ignores, however, is that people do not choose to be or not to be born into a Muslim family. This is not to impose an identity or a way of being on to

people who may choose to passively deny or actively reject their Muslim identity because, consistent with the right of self-dissociation, the rejection of Muslim identification or adoption of a different self-definition should be recognised where a claim upon it is made. The point is that no one chooses to be born into a society where to look like a Muslim or to be a Muslim creates suspicion, hostility, or failure to get the job one applied for.⁵ One frequent reaction to this complaint, however, is the charge that Muslim minorities are quick to adopt a 'victim mentality'. These two separate but interlinked issues are illustrated in the following comments of a very senior journalist with editorial and commissioning responsibilities at the *Daily Telegraph*:

"It [Islamophobia] doesn't mean anything to me. No, it's a device or a construct that's been used to cover an awful lot of people and censor debate... The racism thing is a bit difficult to sustain because we are talking about a religion here, not race and you have plenty of people who are not Muslim, if you are trying to equate Muslims with South Asians, obviously that's not necessarily the case at all" (Interview with Meer, 22 January, 2008).

This extract conveys the view that the term Islamophobia is used politically to silence potential criticism of Islam and Muslims, and is particularly invalid because racism is only plausible where ethnic groups – not ethnically heterogeneous religious groups – are concerned.⁶ The journalist continues:

"I think I probably went to the first press conference where the phrase came up, I think it was about five or six years ago... Since we were the ones that were being accused of it, it just seemed rather difficult for me to get my head around, because if Islamophobia means a fear of, literally, that was not what we were talking about. We were talking about fear of terrorists who act in the name of Islam; it's a different thing altogether" (interview).

The first sentence of this extract reveals this journalist's first interaction of the term, and their sense of grievance in "being accused of it", while the second sentence invokes a criticism also made by Reisigl and Wodak (2001) who

insist that it is analytically problematic to cast perceptions of prejudice or discrimination in the language of 'phobias'. The last sentence in this extract, which focuses upon terrorism, is particularly instructive and so will be addressed separately below. In the meantime the characterisation of Islamophobia may be contrasted with another that emerges in the less definitive account of a senior BBC news editor with responsibilities across broadcast, internet and radio journalism. This journalist expresses a similar anxiety to that of our *Daily Telegraph* respondent, in reconciling what he considers to be a 'full and frank' account, with the potential charge of anti-Muslim bias in BBC reporting:

"[T]here are certainly quite vocal groups of Muslims who are very quick to stress the problems that Muslims can face in this country and work very hard to encourage journalists like me and others to reflect a particular view which might be described as a victim mentality... I am personally not persuaded that it [Islamophobia] is a huge issue in Britain. It is, racism in all its forms is a problem... I think for the most part it's really a very tolerant country so I'm kind of conscious that we mustn't allow ourselves for the sake of a good story to start painting a picture of a slice of British society which does suffer more than it really does..." (Interview with Meer, 3 January, 2008).

While the latter half of this passage reveals a critical perspective on the prevalence of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim sentiment, it is interesting to note how, in a marked contrast to the *Daily Telegraph* journalist, the BBC respondent comfortably places the issue of Islamophobia alongside issues of racism which "in all its forms is a problem". This may in part be due to the insistence of "vocal groups of Muslims" that this respondent refers to, for the BBC does have a significant policy of diversity awareness training, but the proactive inclusion of Muslim voices is a moot point and is returned to below; as is the characterisation of Muslim complaints forming part of an alleged 'victim mentality'. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the most Muslim-friendly attitude is to be found in the words of a senior figure at the *Guardian*⁷ who describes how treating anti-

Muslim sentiment with "less seriousness" can bias the framing of news-items:

"I think it is easy to slip into... I saw it the other day, and it was three headlines together on one page of the *Daily Telegraph*, and the headline said something like 'Foreigners live in 1.3 million houses'... Then there was a headline where the word Muslim was being used in a pejorative sense and I thought these things to my mind are quite dangerous... I think that's where some papers make a really big mistake time after time after time" (Interview with Meer, 29 January, 2008).

One development that might alleviate this tendency is the greater presence of Muslim journalists working across news items on different newspapers. This is a point that is also raised by a senior correspondent with the *Daily Mirror* who contrasts the public service requirement of the BBC with the commercial imperatives of newspaper - and particularly tabloid - journalism which pursues an aggressive drive for sales:

"Because the way newspapers in particular work, I don't know that that's their job to reflect Muslims *per se* - do you know what I mean? [...] In my time at the *Mirror* I remember the *Sun* hired a Muslim commentator not long after 9/11 and she did a lot of discussion about whether she was going to wear her veil in the picture - Anila Baig. That was all a bit self conscious. The *Mirror* had a few first person pieces and features and so on... if there was a story that involved Muslim groups being invited to No. 10 then you would call the Muslim group to see how it'd gone but I wouldn't say it would go any deeper than that. [...] I just report as I do every story. I'm not self consciously having to check myself or judge myself" (Interview with Meer, 18 January, 2008).

This extract illustrates the dynamics involved in nurturing 'Muslim voices' within newspapers in a way that can draw attention to how issues of importance to some Muslims, such as the wearing of the veil, may be reported in an educative manner. So even though it may be perceived as "a bit self conscious", it appears much more substantive than seeking 'Muslim comment' that - by this journalist's

own admission – would not penetrate the framing of a story in much depth. This is then related to the final issue that emerges from this paragraph and which concerns the absence of reflexivity in this respondent's conception of journalism, something that is evidently in a stark contrast to our *Guardian* respondent.

PLACING THE ROLE OF RELIGION

What the last extract also touches upon is a related issue concerning the ways in which religion *per se* is met with anxiety. One particular implication is that while curbs on defamation of conventionally conceived ethnic and racial minorities may be seen as progressive; the mocking of Muslims is seen to constitute healthy intellectual debate (for a discussion of these sentiments in Danish cartoon affair see Modood, 2006 and Levey and Modood, 2009). This tendency is perhaps heightened when the religion in question takes a conservative line on topics of gender equality, sexual orientation, and progressive politics generally; leading some commentators who may otherwise sympathise with Muslim minorities to argue that it is difficult to view Muslims as victims when they may themselves be potential oppressors. As Parekh (2006: 180) describes, this can be traced to a perception that Muslims are “collectivist, intolerant, authoritarian, illiberal and theocratic” and that Muslims use their faith as “a self-conscious public statement, not quietly held personal faith but a matter of identity which they must jealously guard and loudly and repeatedly proclaim...not only to remind them of who they are but also to announce to others what

they stand for” (ibid. 181).⁸

It is thus unsurprising to learn that some attitude surveys report that 77% of people in Britain are convinced that “Islam has a lot of fanatical followers”; 68% consider it “to have more to do with the middle ages than the modern world”, and 64% believe that Islam “treats women badly” (see Field, 2007: 453). These assumptions are present in our BBC journalist's insistence that “the nature of the debate is such that some Muslims most certainly will be offended (interview)”.

The recent furore that accompanied the Archbishop of Canterbury's lecture on civil and religious laws in England, and which touched upon the availability of recourse to aspects of Shar'ia for Muslims who seek it in civil courts in Britain (see Modood, 2008), provides a good illustration of the implication of this journalist's position. Indeed, at the height of the storm one of the authors received an email from a *Daily Mail* journalist which stated: “I was wondering if you might talk to us about sharia [sic] law in the UK, and the effects it might have on our society. [...] What we do need is someone saying that Sharia [sic] law would not necessarily be a good thing, so if this is not for you, then don't worry!” (email received 8 February, 2008). This sort of approach is anticipated by our respondent from the *Daily Mirror* who describes how it is widely accepted that concerns of accuracy and validity come second to getting a story on Muslims into circulation:

“If you were being accurate you would be going to communities...and speaking to people. What we tend to do is report what is happening... someone from the Beeb might be if they are doing a story on whether or not Muslim women should be allowed to wear a veil when they go to see their MP. I would have talked to Jack Straw and someone from the organisation” (interview).

The optimism informing the view that it should be left to the BBC to play the role of an honest broker, in reporting emotive stories concerning Muslims with impartiality, is not something borne out by our interview data. Indeed our senior BBC respondent considers the portrayal of difficult stories concerning religious affairs generally, but

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particularly stories focusing upon Muslims, as constituting a necessary part of a public conversation which, in the example below - proceeds by questioning for example the legitimacy of the wearing of a face-veil (*nigab*). As the extract highlights, this is informed by this journalist's view that visible markers of difference and diversity are intrinsically tied to broader, in this view legitimate, public anxieties over immigration that should not be silenced in the interests of maintaining what the respondent describes as an artificially harmonious conception of multiculturalism:⁹

"It needs to be something that we do discuss and think about and have a national conversation about because from it flows all the other discussion about our expectations of those who come from other countries to live and work here. [...] I've talked about the veil endlessly over the last year because I do think it's been a really interesting one... suddenly people began to say, well hold on, is it right that somebody can teach a class full of kids wearing a full veil? And I think it's a perfectly reasonable question and one that we need to discuss" (interview).

In a significant contrast to the public questioning - as an editorial line - of the visibility and indeed legitimacy of religion, our *Guardian* respondent describes how their newspaper seeks to incorporate religious coverage in an educative manner. One example may be found in its 'Comment is Free' section which is currently 'blogging' the

Qur'an through serialisations penned by the writer and intellectual Professor Ziauddin Sardar. Another example includes that of the appointment of a young Muslim woman as its religious affairs correspondent, which "probably raised eyebrows in one or two places". The journalist continues:

"[S]he went on the Hajj and did some video for the website, and what I thought was terrific as well, she was able to report pilgrim voices, and these were young British people, they were from the North of England, from London, and so on and so forth, and what the *hajj* meant to them, what their Muslim identification meant i.e. voices you don't normally get in a national newspaper".

While these examples perhaps take us away from a direct discussion of racism and Islamophobia, in the way that was elaborated earlier, it is still worth noting how much importance the paper attributes to the value of embedding plural constituencies within its journalism - perhaps as a prophylactic against unwitting anti-Muslim sentiment. The *Guardian* is, then, unique in its approach for not only does it seek to afford space in which to cultivate the representation of religion in public discourse, but it does so through a consciously Muslim interlocutor.

THE IMPACT OF ANXIETIES OVER TERRORISM

With a significantly different interest in the meaning and implication of Islam to its British adherents, other respondents place little importance upon garnering an empathetic understanding of the spiritual role of religion. The focus instead appears orientated toward an assumed relationship between religion and issues of terrorism; issues that are deemed to be specifically pertinent in their respective coverage of Islam and Muslims. As our *Daily Mirror* respondent reiterated: "there's a global jihad going on that we're all involved in... everything changed after 9/11 and again after 7/7" (interview). This sentiment is repeated in the words of the *Daily Telegraph* journalist who summarises how 7/7 "was a surprise because what we were looking at in the late 90's and up to 2004 was the belief that it was going to be imported terrorist attacks... the big surprise was that they were going to attack

their own country which was a bit of a turning point I think. It was a bit of an eye opener" (interview). There is evidence to suppose that this is a widely held view with Field (2007: 459) concluding that post-7/7 there has been an increased "tendency to criticise the inactivity of the Muslim population as a whole, and not just its leaders"; a sentiment arising from the belief that "the Muslim community had not done enough to prevent support for terrorism in its midst". Indeed, he makes the finding that this belief has given rise to a wide-spread view that it is legitimate to proactively target Muslims for reasons of national security:

"[T]hree-fifths argued that Britain's security services should now focus their intelligence-gathering and terrorism-prevention efforts on Muslims living in Britain or seeking to enter it, on the grounds that, although most Muslims were not terrorists, most terrorists threatening the country were Muslims..." (ibid).

These perceptions are perhaps embodied in terminologies that collapse different issues together; a good example of which may be found in attitudes towards the term 'Islamist Terrorism'. Our *Daily Telegraph* journalist, for example, remains convinced that terrorism by some Muslims is primarily an outgrowth of Islamism:

"I think we still edge around certain issues... For instance the Government is reluctant to talk about Islamist terrorism even though somebody like Ed Hussein whose book *The Islamists* makes the point that there is a fundamental difference between Islam and Islamism. Unless you understand the ideological basis of it you don't understand anything".

It is worth noting how despite the contested and relational nature of terms such as 'terrorism' and 'Islamism', which invite qualification and contextualisation, that it is increasingly common to find the portrayal of a seamless association between the two. This is a good example of what Jackson (2006) has called a culturally embedded 'hard' discourse since so many other assumptions compound and reinforce it. One example of what is meant by this can be found in how Melanie Phillips

has stated that "after the Rushdie affair, Islam in Britain became fused with an agenda of murder".¹⁰ This characterisation comes close to conceiving the violence that is committed by Muslims as "something inherent in the religion, rendering any Muslim a potential terrorist" (Poole, 2002: 4).

While some scholars and journalists have gone to great lengths to argue that most Muslims consider violence and terrorism to be an egregious violation of their religion (see Haliday, 2003: 107), attempts to decouple the two are sometimes dismissed as oversensitive (cf Phillips, 2006; Gove, 2006; Cohen, 2007 and Anthony, 2007). It is worth remembering that in Field's analysis 56% of a survey believed that a strongly held Muslim identity could lead to violence (2007: 457). The terms 'Islam' and 'Islamism' are therefore variably used and contested but in at least one dominant discourse emotive conflation rather than careful distinctions are the order of the day and generative of dangerous stereotypes. While media discourses can be seen as contributing to this racialisation, practitioners in some part of the media are also under pressure to question their role in it. The BBC respondent of its' internal debates over the issue of terminology:

"In the end we've used a number of terms and you have to appreciate this is always tricky because in journalism you have to find more than one way of saying everything otherwise it becomes boring. So we talk a lot about *Al Qaeda* inspired terrorism; the word *Islamist* has become reasonably accepted as a way of describing a certain type of person who takes a view...but all these terms are tricky because there are people who might well describe themselves as an *Islamist* but who would never dream of wanting to blow people up. [...] I've certainly been in meetings with... Muslims who have challenged the BBC... I suppose that's what I mean by we've come a long way, we have been forced quite rightly to think about all these issues and I think we still wrestle with it but I think we are better".

This is an instructive account because it suggests that the BBC in particular can be lobbied to take account of minority sensitivities and the risks of stigmatisation. Not only

that, but that they have also undergone an internal process of learning which leads them to continue to 'wrestle' with these issues. The respondent balances their statement, however, with another in which they reiterate that the "real dangers for us and for all journalists in shying away from some of the real challenges that *Al Qaeda* inspired philosophy presents for British society as a whole and indeed for all Muslims within British society". On this issue even the *Guardian* respondent shares a similar concern elaborated in the following extract:

"I went to see Musharraf [the President of Pakistan on a visit to London] earlier this week and he got quite belligerent about this and he was saying 'don't you point the finger at Pakistan, most of your home grown people [terrorist suspects] are home grown, that means they were born, they were bred, they were educated here...' Of course, he's got a point; he's got a very good point!"

It is arguable that these perceptions give rise to the minority in question being perceived as a threat rather than in terms of measures designed to eliminate discrimination. This may of course stem from the ways in which it is difficult to sympathise with a minority that is perceived to be disloyal or associated with terrorism. There is also a political imperative to deny the victimisation of such a minority, to argue that racialisation is not taking, that evidence for discrimination is negligible, that there are no reasons for acting against Islamophobia – for the sake of prioritising security, even at the expense of equality.

CONCLUSIONS

In this paper we have explored why there may be little sympathy for the notion that Muslim minorities are subject to racism by virtue of their real or perceived 'Muslimness' (in the way it is rightly accepted that Jewish minorities are sometimes the object of racism by virtue of the real or perceived 'Jewishness').

It finds that the reasons are four-fold and includes, *firstly*, a conceptualisation of racism which assumes that the protections afforded to conventionally, involuntarily, conceived racial minorities should not be extended to Muslims because theirs is a religious identity that is voluntarily chosen.

The way in which religion per se is frowned upon amongst contemporary British intelligentsia invites the ridiculing of Muslims as healthy for intellectual debate and not, therefore, an issue of discrimination.

One salient, discursive, trope germane to this view laments Muslim minorities for the adoption of a 'victim mentality'. *Secondly*, the way in which religion *per se* is frowned upon amongst contemporary British intelligentsia invites the ridiculing of Muslims as healthy for intellectual debate and not, therefore, an issue of discrimination. *Thirdly*, while ethnic identities are welcomed in the public space there is much more unease about religion. This means that some commentators, who may otherwise sympathise with Muslim minorities, argue that it is difficult to view Muslims as victims when they may themselves be potential oppressors. *Finally*, some find it difficult to sympathise with a minority that is perceived to be disloyal or associated with terrorism, a view that leads to a perception of Muslims as a threat rather than as a disadvantaged minority subject to increasingly pernicious discourses of racialization.

Each of these findings invites further study and underscores the need for a greater exploration of anti-Muslim discourse.

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Being British: Struggles for a Multicultural Citizenship (Trentham Books, 2010); and as co-editor, *Multiculturalism, Muslims and Citizenship: A European Approach* (Routledge, 2006) and *Secularism, Religion and Multicultural Citizenship*, Cambridge University Press, 2009).

Modood was awarded a MBE for services to social sciences and ethnic relations in 2001 and elected a member of the Academy of Social Sciences in 2004. He served on the Commission on the Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain, the IPPR Commission on National Security and on the National Equality Panel, which reported to the UK Deputy Prime Minister in 2010.

ENDNOTES

1. This discussion draws upon Meer, N. and Modood, T. (2009), 'Refutations of Racism in the 'Muslim Question'', Patterns of Prejudice, Special Issue on Islamophobia, guest edited by Maleiha Malik, 43 (3-4): 332-351; and Meer, N and Modood, T. (2010) 'The Racialization of Muslims' in S. Sayyid and AK. Vakil (eds) *Thinking Through Islamophobia: Global Perspectives*, Hurst and Columbia University Press.
2. See, for example, calls from the outgoing head of MI5, Dame Eliza Mannigham-Buller, for the police to develop a network of Muslim spies who could provide intelligence on their co-religionists (Evans and Ford, 2007). This suggestion proceeds the disclosure that a number of British intelligence agencies have monitored over 100,000 British Muslims making the pilgrimage to Mecca (Leppard, 2007), alongside an unpopular attempt by the DfES to encourage universities to report 'Asian-looking' students suspected of involvement in 'Islamic political radicalism' (see Dodd, 2006). These findings are compounded by the astonishing figure that between 2001 and 2002, instances of the 'stop and search' of 'Asians' (categorisations via religion are not kept for instances of 'stop and search') increased in London by 41 per cent (Metropolitan Police Authority, 2004 p. 21), whilst figures for the national picture point to a 25 per cent increase for the 'stop and search' of people self-defining as 'other' (Home Office, 2006a: p. 24). The latter can include Muslims of Turkish, Arabic and North-African ethnic origin, amongst others, for while 68 per cent of the British Muslim population have a South-Asian background, the remaining minority are comprised of several 'other' categorisations. These examples would support Rana's (2007: 149) conclusion that "current practices of racial profiling in the War on Terror perpetuate a logic that demands the ability to define what a Muslim looks like from appearance and visual cues. This is not based purely on superficial cultural markers such as religious practice, clothing, language, and identification. A notion of race is at work in the profiling of Muslims".
3. This research was funded the by the European Commission and forms part of A European Approach to Multicultural Citizenship: Legal Political and Educational Challenges (EMILIE) Contract no. CIT5-CT-2005-02820. While some respondent were open to possibility of being named, to avoid any ambiguity all respondents remain anonymous.
4. For example, Polly Toynbee, writing in *The Guardian*, has stated that she reserves the 'right' to affront religious minorities on matters of faith because "race is something people cannot choose and it defines nothing about them as people. But beliefs are what people choose to identify with... The two cannot be blurred into one which is why the word Islamophobia is a nonsense" (see Polly Toynbee, 'My right to offend a fool', *The Guardian*, 10 June 2005). Elsewhere she has proclaimed: "I am an Islamophobe and proud of it!" (see Polly Toynbee, 'In defence of Islamophobia', *The Independent*, 23 October 1997).
5. Of course how Muslims respond to these circumstances will vary.

Some will organise resistance, while others will try to stop looking like Muslims (the equivalent of 'passing' for white); some will build an ideology out of their subordination, others will not, just as a woman can choose to be a feminist or not. Again, some Muslims may define their Islam in terms of piety rather than politics; just as some women may see no politics in their gender, while for others their gender will be at the centre of their politics.

6. Also writing for the *Daily Telegraph*, Michael Burleigh has stated: "Those claiming to speak for the Muslim community have played to the traditional Left-wing imagination by conjuring up the myth of 'far-Right extremism'. In reality, evidence for 'Islamophobia' as distinct from a justified fear of radical Islamist terrorism or a desire to protect our freedoms, institutions and values from those who hold them in contempt is anecdotal and slight" (see Michael Burleigh, 'Religious hatred bill is being used to buy Muslim votes', *Daily Telegraph*, 9 December 2004).

7. The *Guardian* is probably the only national newspaper where the issue of anti-Muslim sentiment is taken seriously. Yet even here prevailing opinions are clearly divided amongst its columnists, with Madeline Bunting, Gary Younge, Seamus Milne and Jonathan Freedland considering it to be an issue of real concern, and Polly Toynbee, Catherine Bennett, and Timothy Garton Ash, amongst others, considering it to be much less so. This is in contrast to its sister paper, *The Observer*, particularly in the writings of Will Hutton and Nick Cohen, who view it as a misnomer (see Meer, 2006).

8. This is also supported in survey evidence which reports anxiety over the intensity of Muslim religiosity. Field (2007: 457) notes that "in G-2004h, 70% acknowledged that they seemed to take their faith more seriously than Christians, while in G-2005b, 28% had a concern about the presence of those with strong Muslim beliefs. In G-2005c, 80% felt that British Muslims had a keen sense of Islamic identity which was still growing (63%) and which had to be reckoned as a 'bad thing' (56%), with the potential to lead to violence and loss of personal freedoms and to act as a barrier to integration".

9. In another part of the interview they state: "I think the BBC has been through an interesting phase which echoes that slight change that I've been talking about in the last few years which is I think there was a belief that we had to promote multiculturalism; that it was our job to try and do lots of stories about how lovely it was to have lots of people from different cultures in Britain and not report too much what tensions there were, certainly not allow the voices of those people who had concerns about the changing nature of their high street or whatever it was. I think that has changed over the last couple of years. I think there has been, quite rightly a change of view that we do need in the corporation to ensure that we reflect whatever tensions and anxieties and indeed prejudices that may exist within British society and a recognition that for people to question, for instance the level of immigration into this country is not of itself, beyond the pale. That is a legitimate position for someone to hold and indeed, has become a pretty central political discussion right now".

10. M. Phillips (2006) 'After the Rushdie affair, Islam in Britain became fused with an agenda of murder', *The Observer*, 28 May, 2006, p28.

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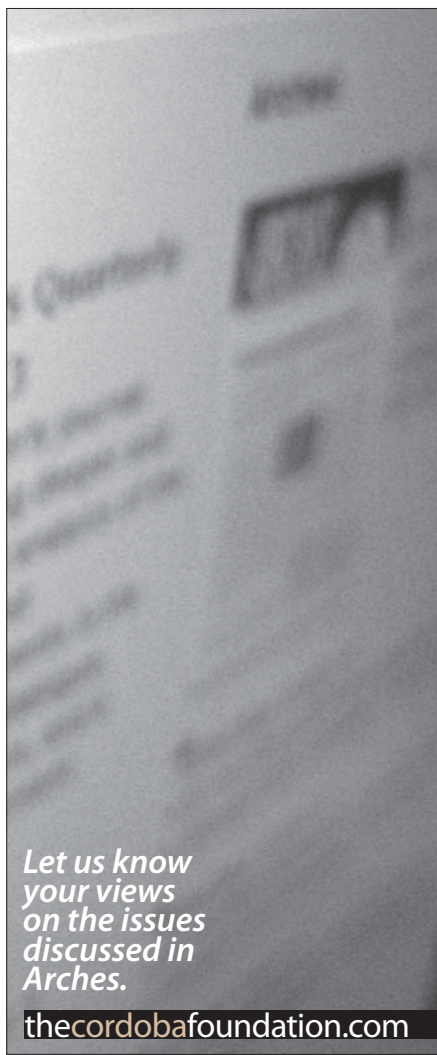
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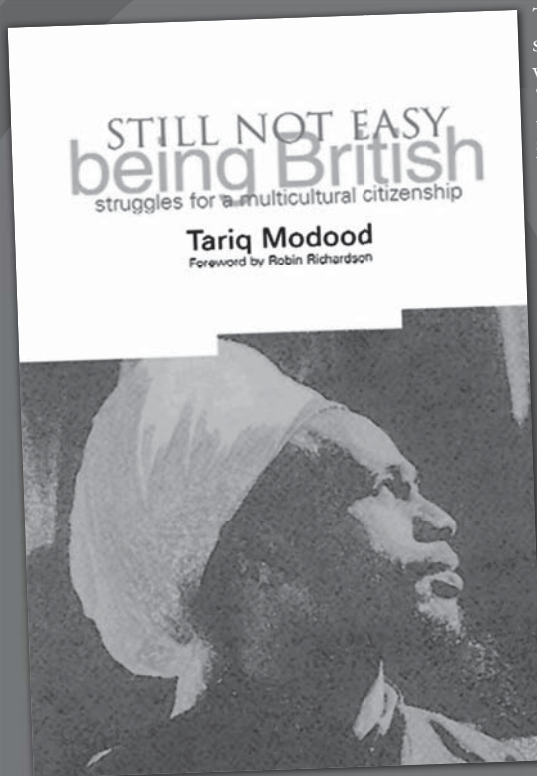


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STILL NOT EASY BEING BRITISH: Struggles for a Multicultural Citizenship

TARIQ MODOOD



The late 1980s and early 1990s in Britain saw dramatic shifts in race relations. They witnessed the fracturing of a political 'black' identity; ethnic minority assertions to be British and about remaking what it is to be British; the manifestation of the social mobility of Indians and, above all, the emergence of Muslim identity politics in the Rushdie Affair. These issues were the subject of Tariq Modood's *Not Easy Being British*.

One of the first books to note these developments and analyse their implications, *Not Easy* became an underground classic. In this new collection, Modood, Director of the University of Bristol Centre for the Study of Ethnicity and Citizenship, returns to some of these topics, considering especially the growth of Muslim political assertiveness and the reactions to it in the context of rethinking multiculturalism and Britishness. Modood's reflections and bold interventions in controversies – which characterise his work and have made him a renowned intellectual commentator on Muslim politics and multiculturalism – could not be more relevant to our fraught and fearful times.

STILL NOT EASY BEING BRITISH:
Struggles for a Multicultural Citizenship,
by Tariq Modood.
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British Muslim Organisations: The Target of an Orchestrated Neocon Campaign of Denigration

*DR ROBERT LAMBERT

IN *Islamophobia and Anti-Muslim Hate Crime: UK Case Studies*, Jonathan Githens-Mazer and I highlight instances in which mosques, mainstream Muslim organisations and their leaders are routinely subjected to a campaign of denigration by a group of neo-conservative journalists, think-tanks and bloggers. Mosques and organisations that are subject to what often appears to be an orchestrated campaign intended to undermine their legitimacy include The East London Mosque, North London Central Mosque, Muslim Council of Britain (MCB), Muslim Association of Britain (MAB), Islamic Forum of Europe (IFE), British Muslim Initiative (BMI), The Cordoba Foundation (TCF), Islam Expo, iEngage and the Islam Channel TV. In this paper I attempt to trace the origins of this campaign in the United States and then examine it in relation to my former role as head of the Muslim Contact Unit in the Metropolitan Police. In doing so, I do not seek to offer a comprehensive analysis of the phenomenon, but instead a perspective that combines academic research and police practitioner experience.

A useful starting point is to recall the influence of the world's largest and arguably most influential think-tank, Rand Corporation. Throughout the 'war on terror', Rand enhanced its role as the pre-eminent, authoritative voice in the field.¹ This ascendancy was safeguarded by the work of allied orbiting satellite terrorism studies academics, eager to eat crumbs spilled from a plentiful corporate security industry table.² Just as scientists working for multinational drug companies work to closed client agendas so do Rand terrorism researchers conduct their investigations through the lens of US military, political and corporate vested interests. If ever a Rand terrorism report criticises a US counter-terrorism strategy it is because that strategy is understood to be problematic in

relation to US interests.

Consequently, Rand has examined Muslim communities in the US, Europe and across the globe to establish which Muslims, if any, might be usefully co-opted as actors in the US driven 'war on terror'.³ In proceeding with due caution in this endeavour Rand is supported by an array of like-minded scholars who view significant sections of the Muslim community with deep distrust.⁴

One major Rand report, *Civil Democratic Islam: Partners, Resources and Strategies*, written by Cheryl Bernard, illustrates this approach.⁵ Lumping Salafis and Islamists together as 'radical fundamentalists', Benard cites their antipathy to modern democracy and 'to Western values in general, and to the United States in particular' as an incontrovertible basis on which to treat them as enemies.⁶ Any counter-terrorist policy maker, strategist or practitioner reading the report would be bound to conclude that Salafis and Islamists should only be viewed as targets for investigation or source recruitment⁷ (an eventuality, significantly, that nearly all of the community interviewees in my research thesis can attest to from personal experience). Benard, moreover, cautions against accommodating 'traditionalists' (by this she appears to mean any seriously practicing Muslim) because to go too far down this road 'can weaken our credibility and moral persuasiveness'.⁸ 'Given the fact that core values are under attack', she argues, it is 'important to affirm the values of Western civilisation'.⁹

Benard's position here is fully representative of US and UK policy in the 'war on terror' and centrally relevant to the London-based counter-terrorism partnership, the subject of this thesis. By extrapolation, the Muslim Contact Unit in the Metropolitan Police (where I worked until 2007) - as a responsible member of an international alliance against terrorism - was clearly wrong to have forged

close, reciprocal partnerships with 'radical fundamentalists' that the latter would interpret as appeasement and weakness on the part of the former.¹⁰ In addition, when in a subsequent Rand report¹¹ Benard explicitly links her approach to George Bush's expansion of the war on terror into a 'struggle against ideological extremists who do not believe in free societies, and who happen to use terror as a weapon',¹² she reveals the extent of the disconnect between mainstream top-down counter-terrorism and a dissenting bottom-up counter-terrorism project in London (the Muslim Contact Unit).

Instead of entertaining Salafis and Islamists as partners, Benard makes a case for cautiously co-opting modernist Muslims (by this she appears to mean individuals on the margins of traditional Islam) so as to 'enhance their vision of Islam over that of the traditionalists by providing them with a broad platform to articulate and disseminate their views'.¹³ 'They, not the traditionalists' she concludes, 'should be cultivated and publicly presented as the face of contemporary Islam'.¹⁴ This was so far removed from the MCU approach as to be diametrically opposed to it. Indeed, empirical practitioner evidence reveals serious limitations preventing Benard's modernist Muslims from having any real purchase in the current counter-terrorism arena at all. Instead in all probability Muslims promoted by Benard have no constructive role to play in any serious efforts to divert susceptible Muslim youth away from terrorism directed or inspired by al-Qa'ida. When considering contested terms such as 'modernist', 'salafi', 'traditionalist', 'Islamist' I have found it useful to refer to a typology and guide provided by Tariq Ramadan.¹⁵

Rand reports by Kim Cragan, Scott Gerwehr and Angel Rabasa similarly insist on the long-term deficit of empowering Muslim community counter-terrorism initiatives that are not premised on a clear undertaking to relinquish political and cultural Islamic imperatives.¹⁶ In consequence, the leading terrorism research institute in the West comes remarkably close to a position adopted by vocal activists campaigning to denude Islam of any political or cultural identity that conflicts with Western democracy.¹⁷ Community

representatives interviewed for my research say their concerns about Rand's proximity to what they regard as Islamophobic campaigns became urgent when they learnt of a Home Office sponsored Rand research project into Muslim radicalisation in the UK.¹⁸ The fact that this research report has never been published has added to their sense that UK counter-terrorism is closely intertwined with the covert monitoring of Muslim communities by agencies that are less than impartial.¹⁹ In fact, community interviewees echo Abdus Sattar Ghazali's assessment that Rand is encouraging and promoting 'so-called modernist Muslims to play one section of society against another' so as to 'split the society'.²⁰ Ghazali describes the strategy as 'neo-Orientalism' and dismisses Benard's report as a 'Machiavellian manifesto that seeks to enforce Western hegemony and cultural imperialism through the policy of 'divide and rule'.²¹ When he concludes that 'the type of Islam that Benard espouses is a passive and weak Islam that can be easily penetrated and hence reformulated to suit the West's agenda'²² he is encapsulating a view trenchantly expressed by MCU community partners not just in interview but over a significant period of time.

Moreover, when Ghazali concludes that Benard's report 'may be seen as the latest in a long series of policy papers by 'embedded intellectuals' dedicated to further the military and economic objectives of the West as well as a cultural onslaught on the Muslims'²³, he effectively expresses a genuine concern that research interviewees have amplified. In the circumstances it is unsurprising that dissenting political voices like George Galloway and Jeremy Corbyn have established Muslim community credibility as have academics like Paddy Hillyard, by being prepared to speak out against the prosecution of the war on terror at home and abroad. In consequence, Muslim interviewees explain how their attachment to Britain endures in large measure because of the support of trusted non-Muslim politicians, academics and activists. This highlights an important finding: the sternest critics of the war on terror have often been the most effective in challenging the important al-Qa'ida narrative that Muslims have no genuine allies amongst

the *kuffar*, or disbelievers.

Generally dismissed as bleeding heart liberals by security experts, I dissent and place high value on the counter-terrorism role performed in London – wittingly or not – by an alliance of old Labour, old socialist, human rights activists and academics. If the best guide to judging success in a war of ideas is the reaction of your opponents, then the fury expressed by al-Qa’ida supporters in Tower Hamlets in east London to the successful political campaigning of George Galloway in the 2005 general election campaign is incontrovertible. For pointing out this fact at a security conference I was diagnosed as suffering from ‘ideological Stockholm Syndrome’.²⁴ Incurable, I elucidate the point when examining the key role played by Jeremy Corbyn MP in tackling the adverse influence of Abu Hamza al-Misri and his hard-line al-Qa’ida supporters at the North London Central Mosque, *aka* Finsbury Park Mosque.

Opposition to the Iraq war in particular and the war on terror in general is a necessary but not a sufficient condition to empower the likes of George Galloway and Jeremy Corbyn (and their academic counterparts) against powerful al-Qa’ida propagandists. Far more important is their willingness to accept Muslim communities on their own terms and to support their rights when all around cherished religious imperatives are being attacked in the name of cohesive community building. Suffice to say Rand researchers do not acknowledge the counter-terrorism potential that exists outside conventional partnership channels.

“Communities defeat terrorism” might sound like a well-worn police public relations mantra, but... it was the only way to tackle the problem.

Instead, Rand, related academics and hybrid security experts proceed to claim insider and privileged access status for their version of a highly contested and elusive terrorist typology. The Rand approach encouraged knee-jerk

reactions to 9/11 and 7/7 in Whitehall and Fleet Street that allowed politicians to jettison all the hard won lessons of the community support that was needed in counter-terrorism:

“‘Communities defeat terrorism’ might sound like a well-worn police public relations mantra, but we reckoned it was the only way to tackle the problem. And despite all the talk after 9/11 that the al-Qa’ida threat was so different, so new and so evil that all of our prior experience went out of the window, we didn’t buy it. We had experience of good and bad counter-terrorism, how potential allies in the London Irish community had been won over by good police work, and others had been alienated by aspects of counter-terrorism policy and practice against the IRA that were indiscriminate and we were determined that London Muslim communities should get a good service and not be alienated in the same way”.²⁵

At precisely the moment police needed to utilise prior experience of this kind, politicians were anxious to describe al-Qa’ida threat as so wholly new and exceptional as to warrant an unprecedented response. Sadly, there were precious few academic voices willing to challenge that notion at the beginning of 2002 when the MCU sought to bring experience of dealing with Provisional IRA terrorism to bear in an al-Qa’ida context:

“For roughly three decades, Irish Catholic communities in London, as well as in Northern Ireland of course, were at risk of being stigmatised and conflated with the terrorism of the Provisional IRA. Our first hand experience of Provisional IRA community support activity in London enabled us to see that one of the major lessons of that long campaign was UK counter-terrorism’s failure to adequately distinguish terrorists from the Republican Catholic communities where they sought support. Then, as now, counter-terrorism had no yardstick for measuring adverse community impact, the extent of the alienation it causes, and the potential for terrorist support and recruitment it creates. And then, like now, a *Catch 22* situation arises in which the absence of measurement inhibits an awareness of the problem within counter-terrorism. And my view is that an awareness

of the connectivity between terrorism and counter-terrorism is harder to envisage in the major parts of counter-terrorism that operate in isolation from communities. So a key motivational factor for the two of us setting up and manning the MCU – initially on our own – was to reassure Muslim communities that they were not ‘suspects’ simply because al-Qaida terrorists claimed to be acting in the name of Islam. In practice, time has also been spent advising mainstream counter-terrorism of its successes and failures in terms of strengthening or weakening the confidence in Muslim communities that it needs to succeed.”²⁶

The notion that police should obtain intelligence from communities is uncontested: rather, it is the practice of treating Salafis and Islamists as partners instead of informants that is at issue. Dean Godson makes the point trenchantly when he acknowledges the need for police to meet such individuals in the course of their work but insists that it be done ‘in a dark alley’.²⁷ Significantly, as security research director of London’s most influential think-tank Policy Exchange, Godson does so in the knowledge that he has the support of key Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) police officers²⁸ and more crucially the ear of leading politicians.²⁹ In the circumstances it is significant that he should begin to discredit the MCU in 2006 – once it became clear to him that the unit was working closely with Muslim groups he regarded as a subversive threat. Instead of the MCU approach he wanted to see a counter-insurgency approach adopted against the same groups:

“During the Cold War, organisations such as the Information Research Department of the Foreign Office would assert the superiority of the West over its totalitarian rivals. And magazines such as *Encounter* did hand-to-hand combat with Soviet fellow travellers. For any kind of truly moderate Islam to flourish, we need first to recapture our own self-confidence. At the moment, the extremists largely have the field to themselves.”³⁰

As Tom Griffin notes, Godson’s approach to fighting radical Islam ‘has significant parallels

with a US Department of Defence proposal from 2002’ which called for ‘efforts to discredit and undermine the influence of mosques and religious schools that have become breeding grounds for Islamic militancy and anti-Americanism across the Middle East, Asia and Europe.’³¹ This is therefore not simply a procedural or management issue, recurring challenges to the suitability of Salafis and Islamists as police partners need to be addressed against the notion of legitimacy and effectiveness as defined by Policy Exchange, one of the UK’s most influential think-tanks. Instead, recent major developments in policing theory concern the risk management of intelligence gathering, not political and ethical issues of this kind, concentrating instead on information technology, data mining and the concept of police as “knowledge workers” in a society measured by risk.³² The same is true in police practitioner circles where the last ten years have been dominated by the development of risk management procedures for intelligence models such as the National Intelligence Model (NIM).³³

Both approaches think of intelligence in terms of risk management rather than ethics. In contrast, the issue of the London partnership initiative’s legitimacy and effectiveness raises ethical questions of the kind that have been raised in recent years by the judiciary, most notably Lord Scarman³⁴ and Lord Macpherson.³⁵ Indeed the moral censure delivered to police by Lord Macpherson has contributed to a loss of their ‘symbolic aura’, a ‘capacity to command widespread implicit trust’, and an ‘ability to signify a common moral and political community’.³⁶ Moreover, as Nigel Fielding notes, policing has to ‘balance its function as servant of the public with its function as coercer of the public’ and ‘the problem of balancing the opposed functions is acute’:

“[Policing is] constantly obliged to negotiate the space between the need to serve the whole society by enforcing general norms and the need to serve individuals demanding mobilisation of the law. Community policing aims to overcome policing’s coercive dimension, but this dimension is acutely innate in political institutions.”³⁷

This dilemma sits at the heart of the MCU project, not least because policing's 'coercive dimension' is otherwise innate to counter-terrorism, especially in Europe. When French counter-terrorism officials listened to accounts of MCU empowerment of Salafi and Islamist communities they have been at a loss to understand its rationale. Given the extent to which the MCU rationale is so different to counter-terrorism approaches elsewhere in Europe, it is worth recalling John Alderson's observation about the crucial separation of police and military in Britain:

"The distinction between the military and police functions, at least since the formation of the modern police in 1829, has been marked in Great Britain. The distinction is

**[The] absence of
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not so clear in France and other countries much influenced by the Napoleonic police systems where the *gendarmérie* are in fact under military command but have a normal policing function as well."³⁸

It is only that absence of military thinking that allows British policing to build partnerships with minority and marginalised communities. William Lyons argues that counter-terrorism must learn to police in ways 'that build trusting relationships with those communities least likely to willingly assist the police: those often marginalised communities where criminals and terrorists can more easily live lives insulated from observation'.³⁹ The point is re-enforced by M. C. de Guzman who argues that a 'community-police relationship that is based on mutual trust is more likely to uncover matters that are helpful in identifying prospective terrorists':

"A more formal or authoritarian police-community relationship would distance police from the rest of the community and

only reports of actual law breaking are likely to be reported...Enlisting the community in its own defence encourages it to take control of its own destiny".⁴⁰

That is certainly what the MCU has done and normally the unit would have expected plaudits for building the trust that Lyons and de Guzman recommend. Instead it is the unacceptable nature of the community partners' views that leads the MCU to be disparaged by Godson:

"Members of the Met's Muslim Contact Unit, one of the weirder parts of the force, extol the work of the Muslim Association of Britain...' thereby revealing themselves to be suffering from 'a kind of ideological "Stockholm syndrome", the psychological state whereby hostages start viewing the world through the eyes of their captives".⁴¹

Godson sees MCU activity here as being emblematic of an 'unselfconfident...modern British State (that) has great difficulties setting its own standards: it has to bring in dodgy Islamist outsiders to do its dirty work – and then only in Islamist terms. And, inevitably, that carries a high price'.⁴² To illustrate that price Godson compares the MCU approach to asking Nick Griffin (the British National Party /BNP leader) to help combat a violent insurgency from Combat 18 'terrorists' on the basis that Griffin has street credibility with alienated skinheads.⁴³ His point appears to be that simply because Griffin is non-violent, police should not give his politics legitimacy at any price.

Thus, Godson would almost certainly not object if Griffin was employed by police for the same purpose as an informant. That kind of relationship would not grant legitimacy to Griffin's politics – and it would be intended to remain covert. This would be a compelling case if the politics of 'Islamist' Londoners like Anas Altikriti whose thinktank The Cordoba Foundation, Godson attacks as 'sectarian', bore any resemblance to the hate filled politics of the BNP. In fact Altikriti has spoken out against sectarian extremists in the Muslim community for many years and has been assaulted by extremists for his trouble. He is probably best characterised by his willingness to risk his life

trying to intercede on behalf of the London Christian peace activist Norman Kember when he was held hostage in Iraq in 2005.⁴⁴ However, if Godson is right that Altiqtri belongs to a strand of Islamist thinking that is inimical to the future well being of British democracy – a Trojan horse that threatens the State, then he must also be right that the MCU should not afford partnership status either to him or his associates who share the same views.

There might be a moral argument that al-Qa'ida threat to London is such that the MCU is entitled to enlist the support of anyone who can help tackle it. This notion equates to an analogy of a serious fire when the political views of fire fire-fighters are of less concern than their willingness to put the blaze out.

In 2009 Godson invited General Petraes, Commander of the US military's Central Command (known as Centcom)⁴⁵ to deliver the fourth Colin Cramphorn memorial lecture on the topic of military strategy in Afghanistan and its purported importance for containing the terrorist threat in the UK.⁴⁶ Perfectly illustrating the subordination of a 'hearts and minds' policing approach to military-led counter-insurgency and counter-subversion strategies, General Petraes re-enforced high-level military messages delivered elsewhere in London on the same day.⁴⁷ Petraes linked US and UK military strategy in Afghanistan to al-Qa'ida and al-Qaida-related domestic terrorist threats in the US and UK.⁴⁸ Thus, by ensuring that 'al-Qaida and other transnational groups do not re-establish safe-havens' in Afghanistan, US and allied military strategy he argued, aimed to make us 'less vulnerable at home'.⁴⁹ General Sir David Richards, newly installed UK military Chief of the General Staff, spoke at Chatham House on the same day on the same topic and made the same connection.⁵⁰

In contrast to this military model, the London partnerships developed from the community outreach work of the MCU, a bottom-up initiative. After the successful removal of Abu Hamza's supporters from FPM in February 2005, Norman said the community led operation and the partnership work that facilitated it was a major highlight in his eventful police career.⁵¹ On Thursday, 17 September 2009, the same day Godson invited

General Petraus to speak at Policy Exchange, Lorenzo Vidino circulated his latest research paper *Europe's New Security Dilemma* in which he uses the MCU partnership with the Finsbury Park Islamists to illustrate Godson's winning argument that the legitimacy such partnerships clearly bestow upon Islamists is counter-productive and ineffective.⁵² Familiar with the MCU and the arguments in this study about the importance of street credibility in determining legitimacy and effectiveness in Muslim London communities Vidino highlights his discussions with security officials in the UK and across Europe where the MCU approach has been assessed and found wanting, precisely on the basis first highlighted by Godson four years earlier.⁵³

Although not subject to the rigours of the kind of peer review that applies to publication in academic journals, publication in the prestigious *Washington Quarterly* nevertheless imbues Vidino's article with gravitas and influence. These qualities are further enhanced by reference at the beginning of the article to Vidino's academic role at the Belfer Centre for Science and International Affairs at Harvard University and references in it to his meetings with senior government officials during the course of his research.⁵⁴ Following if not referencing similar findings by Pantucci,⁵⁵ Vidino acknowledges that the Islamist takeover of FPM in 2005 was effective and successful in removing and reducing the influence of Abu Hamza and his core supporters.⁵⁶ However, he appears to agree with the security officials he interviews who point to the long term deficit of legitimising Islamists in such a process.⁵⁷ These deficits are the ones identified by Rand, Middle East Forum and Policy Exchange and their acolyte academics throughout the study period: namely that the Finsbury Park Islamists are best defined by their antecedents with and allegiance to the Muslim Brotherhood which in turn should be viewed as a subversive and sectarian organisation.

Vidino's government interviewees helpfully articulate the defining characteristics of subversion and sectarianism in the case of the Muslim Brotherhood: opposition to the three non-negotiable political principles - democracy, freedom of religion and sexual equality.⁵⁸

Vidino quotes Alain Chouet, 'former head of France's counter-intelligence service Direction Ge'n'rale de la Se'curite' Exte'rieure', to explain that al-Qa'ida 'is only a brief episode and an expedient instrument in the century-old existence of the Muslim Brotherhood' and that 'the true danger [was] the expansion of the Brotherhood, an increase in its audience'.⁵⁹ Moreover, dissimulation and deception were inherent to the Muslim Brotherhood: 'the wolf knows how to disguise itself as a sheep' Chouet explained.⁶⁰ From this top-down perspective, it followed that MCU officers or London politicians like Ken Livingstone and Jeremy Corbyn were naive to argue that members of MAB and Muslim Welfare House (MWH) did not exhibit signs of opposition to democracy, freedom of religion and sexual equality. This was to underestimate Muslim Brotherhood skills in deception and disguise. MCU officers encountered the same perspective from European and US counterparts on a regular basis, especially in respect of Tariq Ramadan when he moved from Geneva to London, having been banned from moving to the US in 2005. The notion that Ramadan was guilty of 'doublespeak' became common coinage in practitioner and academic security circles at the same time.⁶¹ Whereas in contrast for activist Muslim Londoner Naima Bouteldja, Ramadan followed 'in the footsteps of revolutionary thinkers like Franz Fanon and Malcolm X' and quite transparently established 'the universal values of Islam within the framework of western societies'.⁶²

Professor Gwen Griffith-Dickson suggests a more realistic benchmark for counter-terrorism partnership work might be, to ask whether a Muslim is 'hostile to co-operation with non-Muslims' and 'how far is the person or group willing to co-operate with non-Muslims in areas of shared concern?'⁶³ Throughout the period 2002 – 2007, mainstream Muslim organisations consistently demonstrated a willingness to co-operate in this way, just as Ramadan recommends they should.⁶⁴ Vidino, however, is concerned with other benchmarks and refers to 'the positive radical flank effect', a conceptual term used by social movement theorists,⁶⁵ to explain 'why the emergence of al-Qa'ida and other jihadist groups ... led European governments to see nonviolent

Islamists more benignly'.⁶⁶ Thus, for Vidino, the notion of a positive radical flank effect illuminates Chouet's account of the 'emergence of a severe and prolonged terrorist threat' leading 'European governments (but not his own) to lower the bar of what is acceptable and endorse extremist organisations as long as they oppose violence in Europe'.⁶⁷ Far from providing new insights, this analysis repeats the 'Londonistan' analyses made repeatedly by Giles Keppel, Melanie Phillips, Michael Gove, Douglas Murray and the seemingly endless corps of Rand, Middle East Forum, Policy Exchange and allied academics, researchers and commentators, ably and effectively marshalled in the US by Daniel Pipes and in the UK by Dean Godson throughout the study period. Vidino seeks to suggest that European governments have come to this analysis of their own volition as a result of experiences like the FPM case. Such a failure to acknowledge the extent of Rand, Middle East Forum, Policy Exchange and related political influence is all the more notable given Vidino's own antecedents within Middle East Forum.⁶⁸ By avoiding all references to this body of work, Vidino presents himself as an honest broker and independent academic observer in a way that mirrors the allegations of dissimulation made against Ramadan. Such economy with the truth would however be justified in the context of a counter-subversion strategy advocated by Moore⁶⁹ and Godson.⁷⁰

Not that this was the only accusation made by Vidino's circle against their Islamist opponents that might be reflected back on them. It is central to their case against the Islamists that they are not truly representative of Muslims. Moore considers it apposite to quote Edmund Burke's description of revolutionary agitators as a 'half-a-dozen grasshoppers under a fern [who] make the field ring with their importunate chink, whilst thousands of great cattle, reposed beneath the British oak, chew the cud and are silent'.⁷¹ Godson compares Islamists who challenged the MPS handling of the 'Forest Gate raids' in 2006 with members of the Militant Tendency in the 1980s who Frank Chapple, Moore's counter-subversion model for Ed Husain,⁷² dismissed in the following anecdote:

"Ere, boy, know what these Trots are like?

They're like the Red Indians surroundin' the 'omestead in those early cowboy films. The camera flits from one window to the next and it looks like there's 'undreds of 'em. In fact it's the same three geezers runnin' round".⁷³

In fact, the evidence in this research study suggests that the 'Finsbury Park Islamists' and the 'Brixton Salafis' (and most other London Islamists and Salafis) had more community legitimacy and support than either Militant Tendency or Policy Exchange and their respective allies in two separate periods of London politics. Sharing an elitist top-down vanguard approach to politics, Militant Tendency and Policy Exchange are perfectly matched ideological opponents, both lacking experience of real urban street life. Indeed, it is perhaps inherent to this kind of top-down political thinking that it is considered legitimate for a small, elite group of Cambridge graduates to forge a counter-subversion strategy against their political opponents. Such was the strength and resources of their trans-global alliances⁷⁴ that they appeared to be sufficiently confident to embark on a counter-subversion project without the express support of US or European governments or their security services.

Vidino's article demurs from acknowledging the influence it springs from and shares the same blind-spot Godson and Moore have about leaderships and spheres of influence, emerging legitimately within equally small circles in non-elite street politics just as they do in Cambridge, Oxford and Westminster. In contrast, the only study to examine MAB and London Islamist involvement in the Stop the War campaign, supports the findings that the numbers of activists in Islamist politics and their relationship with the wider communities they represent, is no different to what would generally be found in Labour, Conservative, Liberal Democrats or other London street politics.⁷⁵ Phillip's article is cited as subsequent research that corroborates this study's finding that MAB and its Islamist allies represented and enabled Muslim and non-Muslim community anger at the War on Terror in Iraq legitimately and effectively -- perhaps better and more representatively than all three mainstream political parties in Britain.⁷⁶

For his part, Vidino characterises the entire panoply of the War on Terror as reasonably repressive policies and aggressive methods that gave way in due course to a counter-insurgency 'hearts and minds' approach 'to prevent the radicalisation of scores of potential new militants'.⁷⁷ At no point does Vidino or his government interviewees allow that any aspect of the War on Terror may have exacerbated the terrorist threat in the UK, thereby accurately reflecting post 7/7 policy.⁷⁸ As such, they have no inclination to accept that credible and effective opponents of the War on Terror might have been equally effective opponents of al-Qa'ida apologists in London – a central research finding in my research.

Instead Vidino offers a solution to what he describes as 'a new security dilemma'.⁷⁹ In fact, the solution he offers for police and security services to treat Islamists and Salafis as informants and not as partners is exactly the response offered consistently during the research period by Godson and his acolytes to the same problem.⁸⁰ Vidino reports that government officials have now adopted this strategy and say it is necessary 'to preserve a harmonious and cohesive society' and also that it allows for 'occasional co-operation' [with Islamists and Salafis] that might be necessary 'in emergency situations'.⁸¹ Although the article's major focus is on the democratic deficits of Islamists, Vidino makes it sufficiently clear that Salafis should be treated in the same way, thus not only echoing Godson and Moore but also an influential US military report that acknowledged the distasteful but necessary business of engaging Salafis for a specific counter-insurgency purpose.⁸² Such an unrealistic notion as 'occasional co-operation' could only arise from the kind of top-down thinking that helps to distinguish the bottom-up approach of this study and its contrary findings. Vidino's concluding question serves to conclude this study as well. Do European governments achieve their interests by engaging with non-violent Islamists [and Salafis]? 'If the state interest is the marginalisation of extremist and anti-integration ideas among young European Muslims, then many' [policymakers], Vidino reports, 'believe that partnering with nonviolent Islamists is counterproductive'.⁸³

On this basis, 'short-term and occasional forms of cooperation with nonviolent Islamists [and Salafis] can be used to achieve gains against jihadists, but such tactical partnerships should not develop into a permanent strategy'.⁸⁴ This is an accurate reflection of UK government policy that marks the eclipse of the MCU and the London partnerships it gave rise to, largely as a result of the efforts of an unelected transatlantic elite lobby group in which Vidino played a small role during the study period.

Brixton Salafis worked against a secular street gang culture where gays were routinely identified and targeted for particular vilification.

Nowhere in the wealth of research data I have collected is there any evidence to support what Melanie Phillips, Vidino and his government interviewees take as given: that non-violent Islamists and Salafis are unfit for partnership because they hold views that threaten social cohesion in society. On the contrary there is clear evidence that points to them serving as antidotes to the terrorism and hate crimes promoted by the likes of Abu Hamza, Abu Qatada, Abdullah el-Faysal and their supporters. Non-Muslims, Jews, gays and women who might sometimes feature as victims of hate crimes licensed by these extremist Muslims were regularly protected from the risk of attack by the work of both groups in their communities over a long period.

More specifically Brixton Salafis worked against a secular street gang culture where gays were routinely identified and targeted for particular vilification. If the Finsbury Park Islamists continually campaigned against what they described as Zionist Israel they did no more or less than their local elected MP with whom they worked in partnership to remove Abu Hamza's violent extremist supporters and the influence of al-Qa'ida. What the Brixton Salafis and the Finsbury Park Islamists shared was what MCU officers

valued most: skill, courage, experience and long-term commitment to the well being of all Londoners.

The arrival of Vidino's article coincided with my final reflections and consultations with former partners about my research study. It also served to highlight the extent to which government policy has continued to shift away from the MCU and the London partnership approach and towards the position developed by Policy Exchange and its US, UK and European allies. Having helped them win power, Moore and Godson will be optimistic that the counter-subversion project they appear to have embarked on will be formalised and implemented by a Conservative coalition government whose counter-terrorism policy they have shaped.⁸⁵ Similarly their populist ally Melanie Phillips will be anxious to ensure that an era of 'lunacy at the Yard' that allowed a Salafi oriented police officer to be involved in counter-terrorism is finally over.⁸⁶ Based on Policy Exchange recommendations the police will still be encouraged to engage in the kind of cross-cultural partnerships recommended by Thomas and Inkson⁸⁷ but only with partners who conceive al-Qa'ida to be part of a wider Islamist or Salafi threat.

In exceptional cases where there is a need for the police to engage with Islamists or Salafis it should be in strict accordance with the rules governing dealings with informants and subversives. That outcome would see trusted partners of police become members of suspect communities instead and, on the evidence of my research, consequently provide a propaganda coup for al-Qa'ida apologists they spent two decades opposing in London. In the circumstances I support Paddy Hillyard's argument that counter-terrorism lessons learned before 9/11 and 7/7 are still relevant.⁸⁸

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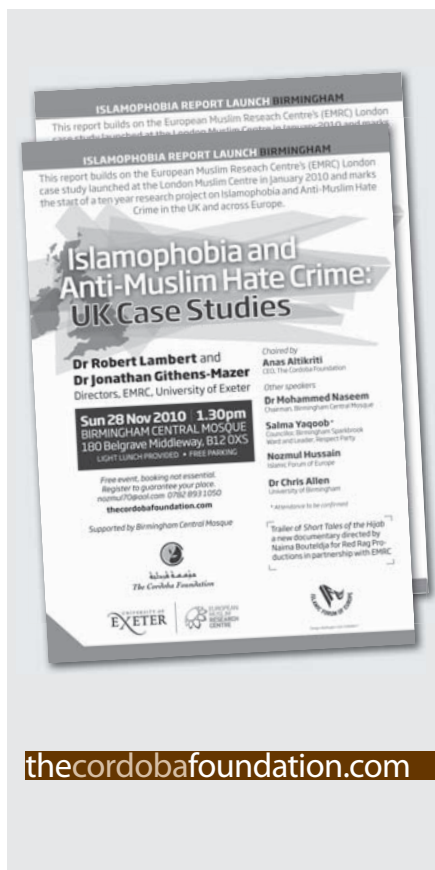
Lambert's twin research interests are Islamophobia and community based approaches to counter-terrorism, both topics are reflected in his forthcoming book, *Countering Al-Qa'ida in*

Britain: Police and Muslim Communities in Partnership in London (Hurst). For the bulk of his police service (1977-2007) Lambert worked in counter-terrorism, gaining operational experience of tackling all forms of violent political threats to the UK, from Irish republican to the many strands of international terrorism. Prior to retiring from the Metropolitan Police in 2007 he was the head of the Muslim Contact Unit, which he helped set-up in 2002 to help establish partnerships with the Muslim community.

ENDNOTES

1. Rand is active across the full spectrum of public and corporate client interests. According to the Rand mission statement, 'for nearly sixty years, decision-makers in the public and private sectors have turned to the Rand Corporation for objective analysis and effective solutions that address the challenges facing the nation (US) and the world. These challenges include such critical social and economic issues as education, poverty, crime, and the environment, as well as a range of national security issues'. <<http://www.rand.org/about/history/>> - accessed 6.1.07
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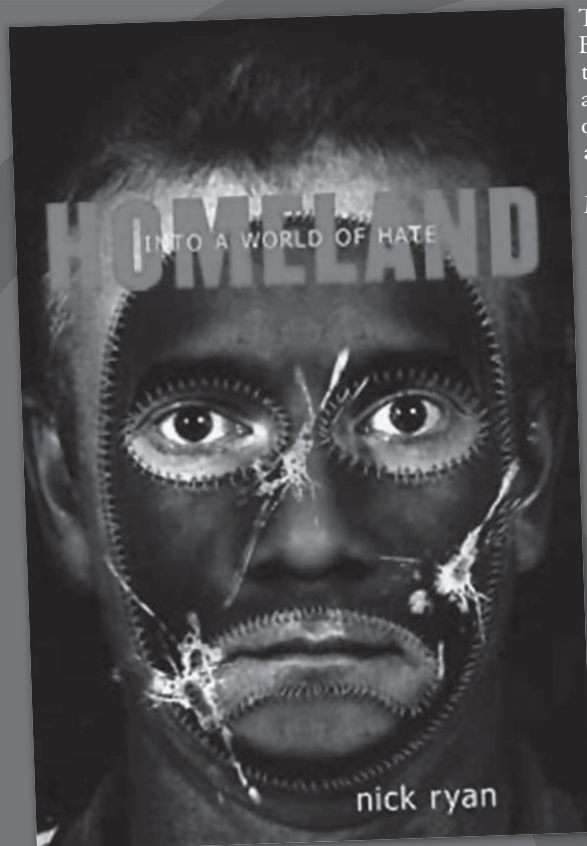
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NICK RYAN



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Homeland presents the coal face of fascism, which is as dangerous and threatening as al-Qaeda in the East is now rising in the West.

The work for the book led to Nick's involvement with the critically-acclaimed BBC drama *England Expects* (written by Frank Deasy), which he helped produce over a three-and-a-half year period.

Homeland: Into a World of Hate by Nick Ryan.
Published by Mainstream Publishing, 2004

Available in all good bookshops

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New Gallup Report: Muslim-West Discourse

*JULIAN WEINBERG

IF the Gallup report published in November 2010 has one message above all others that should be utilised to improve relations between Muslims and the West, it is this: Those who see conflict in terms of identity – in other words seeing religious or cultural differences as the root cause of conflict – tend to see that conflict as unsolvable, with inevitable violent conflict.

Fortunately, this is a two part message: Those who see conflict in terms of political differences see that it as solvable with the need to engage the ‘Other’ to find common ground.

Thus this new opinion survey is not only one of the most comprehensive sources on the popular views of citizens from across the Muslim world and the West, but is one of the most important resources for policy-makers, analysts and those working in the field.

ASSESSING THE NEW BEGINNING

The Gallup report, *Measuring the State of Muslim-West Relations: Assessing the “New Beginning”*, aimed to present “an in-depth analysis of Muslims’ and Westerners’ attitudes toward interactions between their societies.” It is an excellent snapshot of the views of people across the globe regarding the tensions that exist today.

The report is based on survey research Gallup conducted between 2006 and early 2010 across 48 countries, and “compares and contrasts individuals who express an interest in Muslim-West engagement and those who do not.”

At a time when the WikiLeaks-ed diplomatic cables are being read worldwide, shedding light on the thinking of diplomats and governments, we have the opportunity to counter, with the opinions of citizens, government-held perceptions on certain issues..

The poll asked questions along six broad themes: How have Muslims’ views of Muslim-West relations changed over time?; Are

Muslim-West interactions perceived as a threat or a benefit?; Exploring where the fault-lines lie – in politics, culture or religion?; Who is ready for engagement and improved relations within each country?; What would help diffuse tensions?; Views from – Afghanistan, Iraq and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The report is lengthy and this paper does not claim to cover it all. In fact separate papers could be written for example on the implications and lessons to be drawn from the polling results of the people from Afghanistan, Iraq and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. However, as three major theatres of war in predominantly Muslim countries, these three conflicts contribute a great deal to the perception of a conflict between the Muslim and Western worlds. The interest of this study is thus to try to tease-out some indicators for how we can move the situation forward and improve those relations based on the evidence in this report.

As John Esposito, Professor of International Affairs and Islamic Studies at Georgetown University and Director of the Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding, said at the launch of a new report in early November 2010 at the London Muslim Centre on Islamophobia in Britain, “We now don’t need to rely on the word or put our faith in analysts and scholars who we think ‘get it’, because now we have hard data with which to support our arguments”. The same can be said to be true of East-West/ Muslim-

There are sizeable majorities, in both the Muslim and Western worlds who see the conflict between them as religious and cultural.

West relations. Before the Gallup Poll data was made available, we used to have to size up the scholar or commentator writing; ask ourselves if we were convinced of the evidence they put forward; perhaps do a little research on their track-records and decide whether we felt they had the sources or the insights to be able to write the story as it was. Those commentators who say that the thrust of the conflict between the Muslim world and the West is best seen as political – and that these political differences could be resolved – appear to have been right all along.

Populations are neither monolithic nor static, and so it is also true that there are sizeable majorities, in both the Muslim and Western worlds who see the conflict between them as religious and cultural. By viewing them in this light the report indicates these people see the conflict as unsolvable.

However what might be surprising and deeply concerning for the readership of *Arches*, is that the percentages seeing the conflict as religious and cultural are higher in the West than they are in the Muslim East. When Western writers publish books entitled, ‘Why Do They Hate Us?’, perhaps we should also be questioning ourselves, ‘Why Do Some of Us Hate Them?’

WHY ENGAGE?

Thus there is a need to engage. The argument that stacks up based on the Gallup poll is twofold: Firstly, if we do not engage we leave the arguments to be conducted by those who see a clash as inevitable, and admit they do not think it can be solved; Secondly, and more simply because people want to engage. This two-fold argument is illustrated through the following few issues raised by the poll.

When asked ‘are Muslim-West relations important?’ in 2009, 61% of Middle East and North Africa (MENA) residents, 52% of Asian and 49% of sub-Saharan Africa, said “yes, the quality of the interactions between these two geographical areas was important to them”.

People were asked ‘are Muslim communities committed to improving relations with their Western counterparts?’ with the majority responding affirmatively, and believing that the quality of their lives would also improve

as a result.

However, when the question was asked ‘do residents of the MENA region think the West is intent on improving relations with majority Muslim societies?’ only a minority believed the West actually was. Equally, 78% of Americans (and 64% in the UK) felt that the quality of relations with the Muslim world was important to them.

When asked ‘if majorities want good relations, do they see interaction between the Muslim and Western worlds as a threat or a benefit?’ the majority saw it as a benefit with a 59% average across 48 countries, supporting interaction, and a 21% average across those countries seeing it as a threat.

Negative views of the West’s attitude towards the Muslim world were not reserved only for the Muslim world: when asked if the Western world respects the Muslim world, 29% of MENA respondents answered ‘yes’ in 2009, an increase of 9% on 2008, no doubt due to President Obama’s overtures to the Muslim World. But when Americans and Canadians were asked the same questions 53% said the West did not respect the Muslim world. In Europe, the figure was 35%.

A respect deficit exists according to the data. Comparing the perspectives of Muslims and non-Muslims across all 48 countries surveyed, one finds that 25% of non-Muslims feel that the Muslim world respects Western societies, and 40% believed that the West does not respect majority Muslim societies. Less than 3 in 10 Muslims reported that they had confidence that the West respects the Muslim world, with 6 in 10 believing that Muslims respect the West.

SHOW SOME RESPECT

The concept of ‘respect’ emerges as an important theme explored in the poll, where Muslim respondents said showing respect towards Islam was the most oft-repeated reply for how the West could improve relations.

This means that activities such as abstaining from desecrating the Qur’an and other religious symbols were considered the most significant action the West could take. However, it was also considered that such passive action – in essence, abstaining from action – would not be sufficient to re-set relations and heal the anger

that is felt in the region, and reflected in those statistics. It was felt that treating Muslims fairly in policies that affect them (52%) and portraying Muslim characters accurately in popular media (46%) would be important positive steps that could be taken by western governments.

IDENTITY-BASED POLITICS

Politics based on identity, as the poll suggests, is a growing phenomenon in Western societies. Though this issue of *Arches* is dedicated to exploring such politics through the ugly phenomena of anti-Muslim hatred, it is important to note that to single out one danger of identity-based politics over others is not to under-value those not mentioned. There is no doubt that identity driven politics increases social unrest and empowers those who believe that it is right to vent their frustrations and anger through violence against other identities that they dislike. But in terms of resolving conflict and trying to build a more peaceful and cooperative world, if one sees these problems as identity based – in this poll expressed in seeing the problems as having a religious or cultural basis – then one correspondingly sees the conflict as unsolvable, with a high risk that conflict would become violent.

The data in Figure 1, illustrates the correlations between culture and religion, and politics:

In contrast to the clear higher percentages in the Western respondents citing ‘identity’ issues as causes of tensions, Lebanon – perhaps the most sectarian country where identity plays an integral, almost institutionalised, part of the political system – is noticeably alone in its citing ‘politics’ as the root cause of such tensions. Perhaps there is something to learn from Lebanon’s experience, and years of civil war, which was fought mostly along lines drawn by one’s identity?

CONCLUSION

The encouraging message that emerges from this poll, however, is that it doesn’t have to be that way. By reframing perceived conflict as revolving around political interests, expectations rise that the problems become resolvable. Why this is the case, is a subject well worth further survey research.

Re-framing the conversation in political terms, away from religious affiliations, does not mean we need to ignore or reject religious partners in that effort. That would be a mistake. With sizeable proportions of those interviewed viewing religion as the basis for the conflict, political religious leaders are precisely those who need to be engaged. Such engagement will not only enable these leaders to move the discourse towards political differences and away from what some may consider irreconcilable theological differences, but will also empower their constituencies and communities to follow-suit.

Western Respondents

	Culture	Religion	Political Interests
Netherlands	29%	49%	20%
US	26%	36%	35%
UK	23%	32%	39%
France	19%	22%	43%
Belgium	20%	30%	35%
Canada	20%	36%	38%
Germany	18%	30%	45%

Contrast with MENA respondents

	Culture	Religion	Political Interests
Lebanon	7%	16%	74%
Iran	15%	20%	58%
Syria	13%	20%	53%
Jordan	9%	48%	39%
Iraq	10%	36%	45%
Pal Terr	7%	36%	53%
Saudi Arabia	13%	42%	39%

Figure 1
Thinking about the tensions between the Muslim and Western worlds – do you think they arise more from differences of religion or differences of culture or from conflicts about political interests?

This is something that we have learnt through the Nyon Process, a project of dialogue-to-action that engages three key constituencies at the intersection of religion, politics, and social activism: foreign policy advisors and analysts from Europe and the United States, religio-political activists from the United States and Europe, and religio-political activists from predominantly Muslim countries.

Our meetings, over the past two years, have shown us that those who one might not expect to be able to sit in the same room with each other, let alone cooperate together on projects, *can*. At our meetings we regularly have Evangelical Christian leaders and Muslim political leaders, in meaningful and fruitful discussions based on mutual trust and respect.

Whilst religion and religious political and social movements may superficially be seen as part of the problem..., they can also be seen as part of the solution -- [by] engag[ing] and work[ing] with their secular counterparts.

These stakeholders are perhaps used to being typecast as being part of the problem – where their religious ‘fundamentals’ and their close adherence to their faith are seen as obstacles to political engagement and reconciliation. However, our experience would contradict those assumptions. Whilst religion and religious political and social movements may superficially be seen as part of the problem, (and perhaps often with good reason), they can also be seen as part of the solution -- able to engage and work with their secular counterparts as well.

This is an important observation! A real challenge that we, particularly in the West, are facing today is how and to what extent the overarching Liberal discourse that governs

European thought can accommodate the religiously political. This is a challenge that arguably has not been made since the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648 set in motion secularization and state-building processes across Europe.

The Gallup poll recognises another important reality that should be taken on board by those engaging in the region. Those in the Muslim world who say they are ‘Ready’ for engagement with the West, are more likely to have been to a religious service in the past week. The opposite is true in Western societies.

Our experience in the Nyon Process has taught us that just because a Western individual is currently ‘Not Ready’ for engagement, may have been to a religious service that week, and sees the tensions rooted in religion and thus irresolvable, nevertheless that individual can be moved from the ‘Not Ready’ to the ‘Ready’ camp. The opposite is no doubt also true for rejectionists from the Muslim world too.

‘Solvability’ is a term that needs its own discussion but one understanding is that in a pluralistic system, solvability does not have to mean full agreement, and in many of our meetings of the Nyon Process, agreement on certain issues may never be reached. That is an expectation that is acknowledged, enabling the discussion to move beyond what could be forever stumbling blocks. In this way, there is a possibility of feeling comfortable with the natural tensions that arise from competing but not necessarily exclusive worldviews. From that point there is then an opportunity to harness those frictions into a creative process learning from one another and developing one’s political maturity.

Indeed in the Gallup poll, respondents in the MENA region did not share their Western counterparts’ view that the underlying issues were cultural. In some cases, as with Jordan or Saudi Arabia, there was a high proportion who felt there were underlying religious differences, but in many others, conflicting politics was seen as the root causes.

What this data shows, coupled with the experience of dialogue processes like the Nyon Process, is a powerful reality: If tensions between two vast geographical areas, with complex current and historical political relations including years of conflict, can be

viewed in terms of political differences, then they have more likelihood of being solved – at least in the public perception.

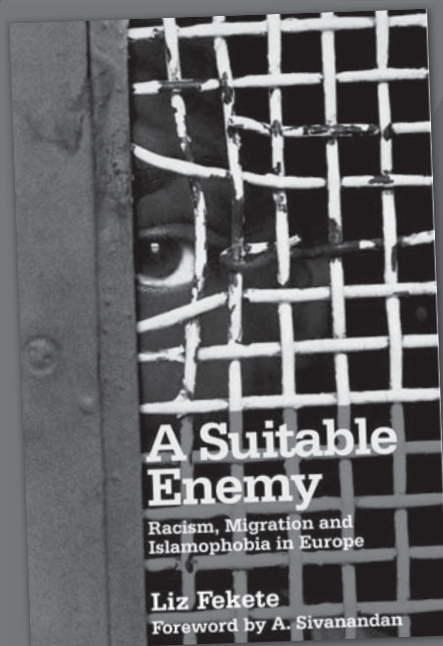
Despite trends showing that those who see conflict in religious terms are more pessimistic about the solvability of these conflicts, they are nonetheless not rigid immovable rocks, but in fact have the ability to be key agents in the effort to diffuse such tensions.

*Julian Weinberg works for Forward Thinking as the programme manager of the Nyon Process. The Nyon Process is a tri-part dialogue between Western secular policy-makers, influential Muslim social and political activists and American evangelicals engaged in social and political activity. It is the result of a joint partnership between the United Nations Alliance of Civilisations, the King Faisal Centre for Research and Islamic Studies, the Turkish Institute SETA, the Swiss Ministry of Foreign Affairs and is led by Forward Thinking.

BOOK PROMOTION

A SUITABLE ENEMY: RACISM, MIGRATION AND ISLAMOPHOBIA IN EUROPE

LIZ FEKETE



Liz Fekete, a leading authority on racism, Islamophobia and national security legislation, shows in this book how the extreme right captured the political initiative by portraying immigrants and asylum seekers as a threat to European security, identity and prosperity; and how once lunatic-fringe ideas became a new conventional wisdom, propagated by mainstream politicians and media, and inscribed in immigration and security laws.

Drawing on sixteen years of research, *A Suitable Enemy* is very timely and provides comprehensive overview of EU immigration, asylum, race and security policies. Among the issues and themes explored include the often contradictory role of EU, such as introducing selective migration policies but at the same time closing its borders against asylum seekers – the first victims of the growth of the security state which now embraces Muslims. The use and abuse of the anti-terrorist legislation to evict undesirable migrants, deportation policies commodifying and de-humanising the most vulnerable, and an examination of xeno-racism -- a non-colour coded form of institutionalised racism, are some of the issues explored in the book.

A Suitable Enemy: Racism, Migration and Islamophobia in Europe by Liz Fekete.
Published by Pluto Press, 2009

Available in all good bookshops



South African Muslims Over Three Centuries: From the Jaws of Islamophobia to the Joys of Equality

*EBRAHIM RASOOL

WHEN visiting South Africa, many people, Muslim and non-Muslims, are quite confused about the size of the Muslim population in the country. They cannot believe that the Muslims make up at most 1.5 million in a population of 50 million South Africans, a mere 3%. This statistic is confounded by the presence of Muslims in the broader nation, the availability of the symbols of Islam, the spectrum and variety of practices that are observed by this group, reflective almost of the global spectrum and variety, and the role played by Muslims in the broader society.

The fact that the premier tourist destination, Cape Town, has such an availability of Halal-friendly food outlets; the *adhan* (call to prayer) being transmitted through amplifiers five times a day from the many mosques across the country; the minarets that join the other landmarks on the South African skylines; the variety in the observance of dress codes from the simple headscarves to the full veil, from the Arab *thawb* to the Indian *kurta*; the ease with which Muslims occupy their positions in the boardroom, the classroom, the caucus room, and the games room; and the active engagement of Muslims with their fellow citizens – harmoniously, and sometimes robustly – all speak of a community that is at home in their country.

It would be tempting to romanticise the situation of Muslims in South Africa, and the factors described may elicit such a response or accusation, but it is important to note that all of these factors rest on an edifice of daily contestation, debate and attempts to shift the balance of power within the Muslim community. Moreover, it is to redefine our relationship with our fellow citizens. While the external symbols of the presence of Muslims are clearly present, there is also the same variety of viewpoints, opinions and persuasions that characterise the intra-Muslim discourse. There

are sometimes the same tendencies towards intimidation in this discourse.

But even so, alongside those external expressions of identity, there is the lovely freedom to be Muslim, and to express it in ways that intersect with other components of identity, like ethnic, cultural, or traditional identities, or simply to adhere to values and practices of Islam, but wrapped in fairly modern garb. Intra-Muslim tolerance and acceptance, by and large, also translates into an inter-community expression.

Visitors and observers to these phenomena are of two kinds: those in awe of such apparently seamless living, who wonder why it would be elusive elsewhere, and those who come to correct this aberration, in the belief that because there is peace and co-existence there must be a perversion of Islam.

Accepting that on the whole, and relative to other contexts where Muslims constitute a minority, and in a global atmosphere of suspicion and hostility aimed at Muslims, South Africa does appear as a beacon and symbol of peace, co-existence and engagement where its Muslim community is concerned. It must be understood that this situation has not easily or instantly been achieved. In this lies the lesson and example of how to go about constructing an abode of peace, security, co-existence, engagement and equality for Muslims and all their fellow citizens.

In learning these lessons, we must also be aware there are fundamental differences in the evolution of the South African Muslim community, and that of others in the West. Chief among these is that the Muslim community in South Africa has evolved over three centuries, and many Muslims in the West are probably there for less than 50 years, with the exception, among others, of those in the African-American community.

But just because we have reached some equilibrium in South Africa over a space of

three centuries, and we do not today have those same sharp edges of Islamophobia, do we allow other newer Muslim communities to take the same time to reach equilibrium? Can we shorten the trajectory for other societies to be relatively free of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim hatred? Are we all permitted to make our own mistakes? Is it not better to condense history and distil its lessons and apply its wisdom more expeditiously and contextually?

ORIGINS IN SLAVERY AND EXILE

As mentioned earlier, Muslims came to South Africa over 300 years ago, with the first wave arriving as exiles and slaves from other Dutch colonies in the Malay archipelago and south India. They were brought to the Cape to blunt the anti-colonial struggles they led, and the slaves came as a pool of labour to service the needs of the Dutch as they developed transport routes between the colonies and Europe. With time, other slaves were brought from the rest of Africa to join their Malay counterparts, and found in this community both solidarity and spiritual sustenance. This Malay community had spiritual luminaries among the political exiles, and soon the complete integration of all slaves – Malays, Indians and Africans – into one ethnic identity, the Cape Malays, and an over-arching religious identity, Islam, made for a durable presence in South Africa.

Meanwhile, on the east coast at Port Natal, the British colonisers in 1860 started the transfer of Indian indentured labourers from places like Madras and Calcutta to South Africa to work on the sugar plantations. This started the second major wave of Muslims into South Africa, as this wave later included more Indians as merchants to the country. This wave however was part of a different process of identity formation, as common conditions of hardship forced them to seek ways, difficult as it was, to transcend their fault-lines of religion, class and caste. They sought refuge in a common Indian identity, which found expression in languages, music and culture.

Conditions were hard for the early Muslims in South Africa, and these difficulties persisted in various forms for about 300 years. The political exiles were serving out banishment orders or jail sentences. In fact the first

prisoner, in whose footsteps Nelson Mandela followed, on Robben Island was Shaykh Madura, a Muslim leader who was exiled. It was from his grave that Nelson Mandela sought inspiration and solace when he spent his many years as a prisoner of Apartheid on Robben Island.

The slaves were the property of the Dutch masters, and subjected to the usual conditions and forms of abuse that slaves are subjected to. The indentured labour system was the British compensation for labour after they

In the Cape, the Dutch had additionally banned and outlawed the practice of Islam. Disobedience to this carried one of three consequences: confiscation of property; imprisonment; or execution.

had formally outlawed slavery, but remained in need of slaves. The conditions were brutal. They toiled unceasingly. They enjoyed no rights, and the chances of ever returning to their countries of origin were remote.

ANTI-MUSLIM PRACTICES

Particularly in the Cape, the Dutch had additionally banned and outlawed the practice of Islam. Disobedience to this carried one of three consequences: confiscation of property; imprisonment; or execution. This was a law that remained in force for about one century, and resulted in the absence of any visible Islam in the form of mosques and other institutions.

The Apartheid system introduced by the National Party in the twentieth century, deemed both the ethnic and religious identities of Muslims inferior, with no recognition for the practices of Islam, and Islam was deemed a “false faith” by the Apartheid state and its theological bedrock, the Dutch Reformed Church. Apartheid was the ultimate expression of Christian Nationalism, and was infused into every aspect of life, alongside the racial

separation and the systematic dispossession of black South Africans.

The latter two apartheid projects – separation and dispossession – were rooted in a Christianising mission. Whites conceived of themselves as a bulwark against an anti-Christian, communist tide engulfing the African continent. Islam was seen as subversive to the apartheid ideology because where apartheid deemed mixed marriages illegal, Imams were solemnising marriages across the colour line, mosques were welcoming all races, and Muslims were also showing leadership in the struggle against apartheid as they had in the struggles against slavery and colonialism.

From the early years of slavery, when the banished spiritual leader, Shaykh Yusuf of Makassar, made his place of banishment a refuge for escaped slaves, to the dubious campaign by Muslims not to obey the burial rules for those who died in a smallpox epidemic, to the inspiration Muslims drew from the campaigns led by Mahatma Gandhi in Natal and the Transvaal, to the prominence of Muslim names (like Dr Yusuf Dadoo, Moulvi Cachalia and Dr Abdurahman) in the leadership of the broad Liberation Movement, to the sacrifices made by prominent Muslims like Imam Abdullah Haroon who was tortured to death by the Security Police, to the rise of Muslim organisations like the Call of Islam to fight alongside black South Africans against apartheid, Muslims have been seen to be part of the struggle for freedom, human rights and dignity.

DEBATING OPPOSITION TO INJUSTICE

It would, again, be wrong to exaggerate the extent of Muslim involvement in the anti-colonial and anti-apartheid struggle. Muslims vacillated between the politics of moderation and radicalism, co-option to apartheid and full participation in liberation, compromising the core values of Islam and proclaiming them boldly. The major underlying discourse was about the survival of the Muslim community and identity: do we protect that which apartheid allowed us to practice as the ritual base of our faith, or is our survival intrinsically linked to the struggle of the broader (oppressed) community? How do

we navigate the balance between being distinct in aspects of our identity and being the same in our experience of oppression?

Even among those who constituted the politically conscious component of the Muslim leadership, there were debates about the strategic and tactical options Muslims needed to exercise. Some were intoxicated by the victory in Iran in 1979 and believed that all efforts in our contribution to the liberation struggle should be aimed at the construction of a post-apartheid Islamic State. Others, followers of the path of the reformist dimensions of the Islamic Movement, understood personal reform to precede social reform, and missed the opportunity to make their contribution at the most dramatic and critical phase in the defeat of apartheid.

But at the time of the release of Nelson Mandela from prison, and the preparation for democracy at the hand of a negotiated settlement, enough Muslims had made their mark in the struggle against apartheid to identify the Muslim community as a force for good and a community of virtue, and Islam as a religion that had an inclusive and confident impulse for fairness and humaneness. These were the Muslims who took active roles in the broad liberation movement, or aligned their Islamic vehicles to the immediate objectives of that liberation movement for a non-racial, free and democratic society.

The challenge that next faced the Muslim community was what they were going to do now that the common enemy of colonialism and apartheid was defeated. Would Muslims retain the impulse to goodness and virtue? Would we still be able to maintain the balance of being both distinct and connected to the broader society? How would we want the wrongs of the past be righted in the new South Africa that was at hand, for society as well as for Muslims?

FOUNDATIONS OF EQUALITY AND DIGNITY

One year before the historic 1994 Elections that removed the apartheid party from power, and installed Nelson Mandela as President, 750 delegates from across South Africa, representing every shade of Muslim opinion, and every facet of Muslim community life,

and every type of institution that had been hard won in the dark days of oppression, came together in Cape Town in the National Muslim Conference. The Conference had two purposes: a) to give a Muslim mandate to the negotiators for the finalisation of the settlement between the apartheid system and the liberation movement; and b) to guide the future Bill of Rights, the Constitution, and subsequent laws about the status and aspirations of Muslims, and the provisions that would facilitate a life of equality and dignity for Muslims alongside their fellow citizens.

On the mandate for the negotiating process, the major debates were about whether negotiations were legitimate and whether we could live with the outcomes resulting from compromises, and the second major discussion was about the type of relationship the new South African state should have with religion. In the latter debate, Muslims discounted the two extremes in the debate – the theocratic and atheistic models of relationship – and discussed the two versions of secularism, namely the Chinese Wall or the Porous Wall approaches. At the end of the discussion the Porous Wall was preferred to the absolute separation of religion and state. This was a tribute to the active role of religious communities in the struggle for freedom, the need to continue infusing our social and political life with a religious dimension of ethics and values, and the desire to utilise the full infrastructure of religion in the reconstruction and development of our society.

Muslims did not stay aloof from the major issue facing the broader nation regarding the content and direction of the negotiating process between the apartheid government and the liberation movement. Muslims could recall from the Qur’anic and Prophetic precedents at Sulh al-Hudaibiya, that negotiation, compromises and not winning all that you desire was sanctioned, if it was at the hand of higher purposes and more sustainable outcomes. In other words, if there was to emerge a greater good that was not immediately apparent.

On the second purpose of the Conference, Muslims deliberated on matters ranging from

the need and scope for regulating Muslim Personal Law, to the spatial planning need for religious institutions in town planning, to the practical matters relating to Halal abattoirs and burial sites. Pointers were also developed to the management of the balance between freedom of expression and the elimination of hate speech.

In turn, a Muslim delegation took the outcomes of the National Muslim Conference to the National Interfaith Conference for synthesis with their co-religionists. The result of all of these intra-Muslim discussions, the interfaith exchange, and the engagement with the Liberation Movement was that South Africa has a constitutional framework that prioritises the right to dignity, that embraces the equality of all religions, and manages to balance individual rights and freedoms with community ones, as well as personal rights with socio-economic ones.

This is the genesis for the situation I described at the beginning. It is an evolution from severe suffering, deprivation of rights, including the right to worship as Muslims, discrimination and prejudice, institutionalised racism and religious intolerance, the hatred and abasement of the other, the demonisation of non-apartheid ideologies like Islam, and the humiliation visited upon people by not recognising their beliefs -- therefore not registering their marriages, and then forcing parents to sign their children off as “illegitimate” on their birth certificates. From being killed for practising Islam, Muslims have moved to being equal and free contributors to their society.

PROBLEMATISING ISLAMOPHOBIA

Mindful of this condensed history of Islam in South Africa, and using the power of hindsight, it would be useful to interrogate the concept of Islamophobia, and the notion of anti-Muslim hatred, as it may have manifested in South Africa, and as it would apply in the world. This is crucial, because the apartheid tragedy, or United States rage after 911, or Israeli actions in Palestine, or BJP excesses in India, or the genocide in Bosnia, or the many instances where Muslims have suffered at the hands of others, cannot all be put under the

simple label of Islamophobia or anti-Muslim hatred. Further, we then have to dispense with both the need for analysing the causal factors as well as the need for calculated, strategy-driven processes and actions towards lasting solutions. Such shortcuts exacerbate our victimhood and allow us not to take responsibility for solutions. Even if our analysis leads to the diagnosis of Islamophobia, we would then, especially, be in need of our full capacity for agency and the ability to take responsibility.

Interrogating the slavery, colonialism and apartheid visited upon, among others, Muslims in South Africa, we can begin to make some tentative observations. Isolated from a broader context, the suffering of Muslims over three centuries would appear as an affirmation of Islamophobia and hatred of Muslims. The Dutch and British colonialists may indeed have had a combination of fear and hatred of Muslims, but would this have been the driving passion for what they did? They needed labour, they needed to maintain a supply line from their colonies to the colonial centre, and they needed systems to maintain law and order in the colonies. They would not brook interruptions to the process of plunder and accumulation from anti colonial forces, so they dealt with them.

Apartheid did institutionally discriminate against Muslims, but not simply as Muslims. They were discriminated against also as non-Whites, as Malays, Indians, Africans, as non-Afrikaans.

On the other hand, they were also systematically dispossessing and exterminating the Khoisan in the Cape, fighting frontier wars against the Xhosa and the Zulu in the East, while further north in Africa, Europeans had unfolded the most reprehensible Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade of Africans who were either displaced or killed.

Apartheid did institutionally discriminate

against Muslims, but not simply as Muslims. They were discriminated against also as non-Whites, as Malays, Indians, Africans, as non-Afrikaans speakers, as merchants who shouldn't be allowed into certain markets, and as adherents to a "false faith". But Christian liberation theologians too were made to suffer. The same Afrikaners were also followers of Hitler, and also subscribed to anti-Semitism. Communists bore the brunt of repression.

It does require a severe measure of disregard and denigration for the other to prosecute and justify such heinous crimes against them. So colonialism, apartheid and other systems that systematically discriminate, humiliate and eliminate the other, must be based on an idea of superiority and inferiority, the indispensable and the dispensable, human and less than human. In South Africa this idea did circulate around the 'whiteness', the Christianness, and the civilisedness of the oppressor. These were the core constructs of superiority that allowed for callous and inhuman behaviour by fairly educated people.

AVOIDING MUSLIM EXCEPTIONALISM

It requires sufficient caution when elevating one form of hatred as the defining feature of what is being done to people, at the expense of other forms that also cause suffering. Islamophobia, racism, sexism, anti-Semitism, xenophobia, homophobia, and all related prejudice and discrimination are all the offspring of that moment when coveting another's power, freedom or resources meets up with an intolerance of difference. It requires clarity and rationality of thought to drill down to the question: what do they want, and why are they threatened by my difference?

South African Muslims, had they been hooked onto the idea, from the earliest arrival to the moment of freedom, that they were suffering only because they were Muslims, and had they subscribed to the uniqueness of their situation of oppression, they would have been unable to recognise the suffering in others, make common cause with them, enter with them into life and death struggles for survival, and adopt a set of common objectives that would initially realise freedom from oppression and a state of equality. In the

event, Muslims contributed to a nationally transformed society with benefits for all and a better dispensation for Muslims as Muslims.

It is instructive that the one moment in post apartheid South Africa which had the greatest potential for Islamophobia and hatred of Muslims occurred, when the same group of Muslims who tried to “Islamise” the anti-apartheid struggle so as to justify an end game of an Islamic State, organised themselves into an urban terror group, ostensibly to fight drugs and crime. Wearing Muslim garb, chanting Arabic slogans, mobilising through quotes from the Qur’an, they set about assassinating gangsters and later businessmen and *‘ulema* (Muslim scholars) with whom they disagreed, threatening drug merchants and politicians they disliked, bombing the homes of criminals and the tourist infrastructure of Cape Town. This was the moment when acceptance of Muslims could become fear of Muslims and fear could turn into hatred of Muslims and Islam in a country where we had all fought injustice side by side over three centuries. It was the courage of the Muslim leadership to stand up to them, and to refuse to be cowed by fear or silenced by false solidarity, that not only dissipated the terror group, but rallied the broader community in defence of the brave Muslim leaders.

On the other hand, it is equally instructive that throughout the 300 years of Islam in South Africa, Muslims were respected for their dignity in the face of oppression, Muslim leadership was welcomed in the struggle against colonialism and apartheid, and Islam was seen as a source of inspiration for justice, peace and equality. At the bitterest moments of suffering, and at the height of slavery, being a Muslim was a moment of belonging in a context of marginalisation. The place of banishment of Shaykh Yusuf of Makassar was the refuge for escaped slaves, the spiritual healing for the broken-hearted, and the restoration of identity for those removed from their homelands, their families, and their dignity. Islam was the integrator.

What are the insights we can gain out of the long history of the evolution of the Muslims of South Africa?

LOCATING THE ANTI-MUSLIM IN THE ANTI-HUMAN

The fact that Islam and Muslims today are respected and recognised as equals, must not blind us to the suffering Muslims experienced in the past. The Dutch and British colonisers did come to civilise and to Christianise. Apartheid was the political expression of Christian Nationalism. Islam was a forbidden religion, and its practice was punishable. Islam was regarded as a “false faith” and its adherents were humiliated.

But this was in a context of the general dispossession and subjugation of the colonised and oppressed, and the even more severe brutalisation and dehumanisation of other indigenous people. It must also be seen in the context of an intolerance of all ideas and ideologies different from the ruling ones, including communism, African nationalism, militant liberalism, liberation Christianity, and others, but also Islam.

Was this Islamophobia and hatred of Islam, pure and simple? Or was it a variant on the theme of a general intolerance and attack on the other? Were Muslims the ultimate source and target of this brutality and others the collateral damage? Or was Islamophobia the specialised weapon of choice for Muslims

[Muslims] suffered under a general yoke of intolerance and oppression, and that which we would today call Islamophobia, was indeed a tailor-made weapon for one component of the many who opposed colonialism and apartheid.

within a general war on Blacks and other ideologies? The evidence would suggest that Muslims did suffer, but not exclusively. They suffered under a general yoke of intolerance and oppression, and that which we would today call Islamophobia, was indeed a tailor-

made weapon for one component of the many who opposed colonialism and apartheid.

VICTIMHOOD OR AGENCY?

A critical insight would be that South African Muslims, throughout the periods of suppression and repression, and more importantly, despite those experiences, did not adopt the mantle of victimhood. Islamophobia and feeling hatred towards you because of being Muslim can be an objective and real experience. When you internalise this objective reality, and suppose yourself a victim, an exclusive victim, and you elevate your suffering above all other suffering, then Islamophobia and the hatred felt towards you and your religion become that mantle of victimhood. It gives you the license for self pity and passivity, alternatively for what you may consider justified extremism.

On the contrary, South African Muslims assumed agency. The clarity of such agency is that you recognise that what is done to you and your faith community is a variation on a theme of brutality done to all those considered the other and who purvey difference and opposition. This insight, that we are all victims of one source of brutality, but through methodologies specific to our varied conditions, allows, not victimhood, but agency in responding to the challenge confronting us.

The Muslim community could then insert themselves into a broader struggle for justice, equality and freedom. They conducted themselves inclusively, creating conditions for an active solidarity with all other victims of the same system of brutality. They participated in struggle through alliances, coalitions and networks across ideological divides, and made the same sacrifices of their freedom, property and lives. Not only were they elevated to positions of leadership in that struggle, but at crucial moments in the early days of colonialism and slavery, Islam was often the glue that held a fractured, alienated and despised community together, providing refuge, identity, spiritual sustenance and also a language.

This made Muslims through the history of Islam in South Africa a dependable ally for the noblest human values. They were an ally

to be embraced, not feared or hated. Muslims came closest to being hated when in the name of Islam, and with the mantle of victimhood, some took it upon themselves to launch a reign of terror, and a level of violence that was out of character with how our fellow citizens had come to see Islam and Muslims over three centuries. We were redeemed only because the middle ground in the Muslim leadership reclaimed Islam by asserting its core values of peace, compassion and balance.

The story of South African Muslims is a story of a community that had indeed been the victims of a hatred for, and intolerance of, Islam and Muslims. But rather than turning this into victimhood, they were agents in a struggle for human rights and dignity, which they recognised as the building blocks of Islam itself. They understood that what they guaranteed for all, they guaranteed for themselves. They understood that indeed they were Muslims, but they could also carry other, complementary identities that built bridges of solidarity and co-operation. They understood that such co-operation did not take them down the path of assimilation – losing who they are and being subsumed in the whole – but rather created the conditions for integration – where the integrity of both the parts and the whole is in equilibrium. Most importantly, they shunned the path of isolation that comes so easily to those who act as the chosen among God's creation or those who make their suffering exclusive.

FROM EXCLUSIVITY TO SOLIDARITY AND COMMON CAUSE

So, through long periods in the history of South Africa, Muslims were the victims of Islamophobia and the hatred of Islam, but always as fellow sufferers in a system of slavery, colonialism and apartheid. This realisation was the point of empathy and common cause. What in the world today would be the equivalents of Islamophobia in a context of globalisation that wreaks horrific poverty for victims in the South and increasingly in the North; that creates climate change threatening low-lying islands, food security, and water supply for millions of victims, that foments conflict, genocide and violence for

many people?

By not inserting Islamophobia into the broader struggle for survival and human dignity in current conditions, we make it impossible to reach out and build solidarity and joint struggles. By elevating Islamophobia and hatred of Islam above the general impact of the negative consequences that also come with globalisation, and by conferring a status of uniqueness on Muslim suffering, we not only lessen the possibility of collaboration with the millions of other victims, we run the risk, through extreme rhetoric and methodologies, of adding Islam and Muslims to such victims' list of things to fear and combat in the world -- in addition to their everyday poverty, conflicts, desertification, marginalisation, and anti-immigrant hostility.

More than that, by not participating in, and giving leadership to, a global discourse against a range of ills being visited on the world's people, our victimhood, and our reaction of extreme rhetoric and actions to Islamophobia and hatred of Islam, open up paths that both divert attention and resources from this entire range of challenges to millions in the world. Our actions create the atmosphere and pretext for greater loss of sovereignty and control over resources as wars on terror are justified. So often Muslims find themselves understanding ultimate causes of the anger that burns within us, but at the same time they recoil from that which is said and done in the name of Islam and Muslims.

Furthermore, an important lesson from South Africa's Muslim community is that when those Muslims, ostensibly responding to real conditions of provocation by criminals and drug lords, appropriate the symbols and language of Islam for an agenda of terror and general mayhem, then there can be no solidarity in the name of Islam, despite our recognition of the causal factors. We become complicit in that which creates a genuine fear of Islam and Muslims when we do not contest unequivocally the Islamicity of such actions and rhetoric.

Finally, the South Africa of Nelson Mandela has opened conditions of democracy within which Muslims have found a platform and voice. We do not understand democracy to compromise the sovereignty of God, but the

platform from which to create space for the better worship of God. The condition for the effective use of that space is participation in individual and organised capacities, and not simply Muslim-only organised formations. Muslims are also civic, professional, sporting, economic and political beings. Being part of the fabric of society is the immunisation against Islamophobia and anti-Islam hatred. This is the lesson we leant on the eve of democracy when we gathered our thoughts to insert our aspirations as both South Africans, as well as South African Muslims, into the new Bill of Rights and the Constitution of our free, non-discriminatory and democratic society.

*Ebrahim Rasool is South Africa's Ambassador to the United States of America. Before joining the Embassy, his most recent positions have included Member of Parliament in the National Assembly, Special Advisor to the State President of the Republic of South Africa and Premier (governor of the Western Cape Province).

Rasool has a long history of involvement in the anti-apartheid struggle starting at High School and including leadership in the United Democratic Front (UDF) and the African National Congress (ANC). He also endured imprisonment and has been placed under house arrest for his political views. He has been the recipient of a number of leadership awards, among them the Visionary Leadership and Public Good Award from the World Congress of Muslim Philanthropists in 2008 and the Foreign Direct Investment Africa Personality of the Year Award by the London Financial Times in 2005.

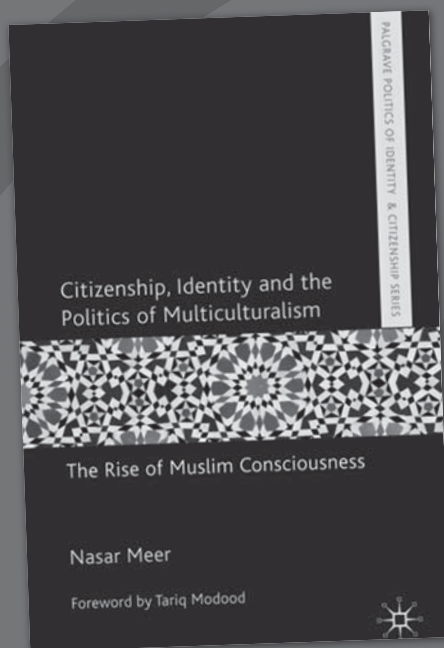
Rasool's social and political involvement has consistently been faith-driven. He has been involved in both the Islamic and Interfaith Movement, and has been actively mobilising Muslims and other faith communities towards a deeper understanding of Islam and faith under conditions of oppression (under apartheid) and currently under conditions of globalisation.

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Citizenship, Identity and the Politics of Multiculturalism: The Rise of Muslim Consciousness

NASAR MEER



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Citizenship, Identity and the Politics of Multiculturalism: The Rise of Muslim Consciousness, by Nasar Meer.
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