CHARTER FOR COMPASSION INTERNATIONAL

ISLAMOPHOBIA

GUIDEBOOK

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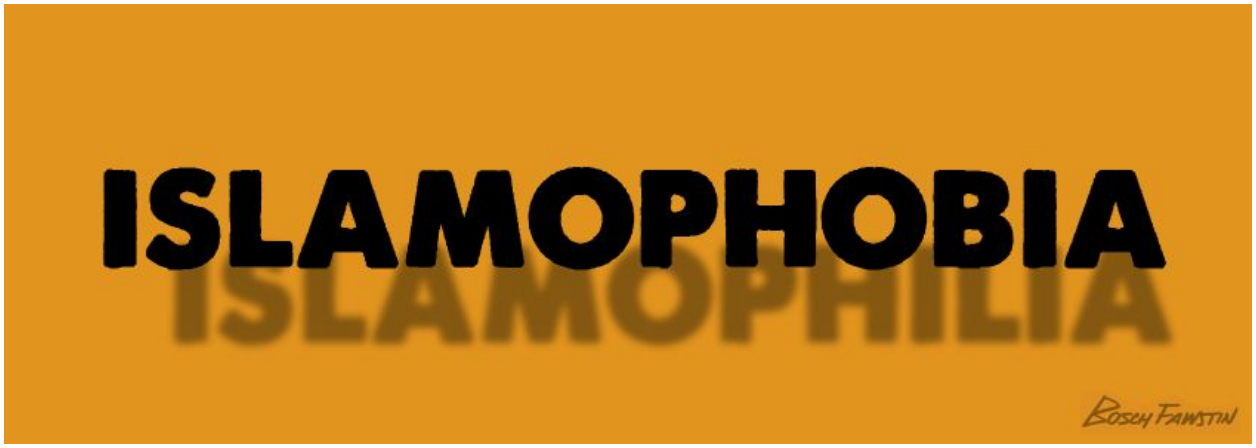
CONTENTS



Introduction and How to Use This Guide

In this document you'll find a variety of resources—some are opportunities to reflect, others are more prescriptive. We recommend you browse the full document so you get a sense of what's available—contextual framing from Karen Armstrong, guidance for Muslims by Imam Abdul Malik Mujahid, an overview of Islamophobia from Barbara Kaufmann, and links to resources by the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) and others—many geared toward educators. Finally, you'll find a reflective article by Cambridge Muslim College dean Abdal Hakim Murad and a list of resources for your further study. After getting an overview of what's here, we recommend you set aside time to read at least one of the background articles. Then, use these tools to take action. The single most important thing that you can do to counter Islamophobia is to not remain silent. Your courage to speak will embolden others to be compassionate, and may give pause to those who vilify.

We invite you to share your experiences with us, either on the Facebook page https://www.facebook.com/CharterCities/ or by emailing the Charter for Compassion at contact@charterforcompassion.org.

This document will continue to be updated online. You'll be able to find updates here: http://www.charterforcompassion.org/index.php/compassion-and-religion/islamophobia-guidebook

Background Articles by Karen Armstrong

The spread of Wahhabism, and the West's responsibility to the world

In 2013, the European Union declared Wahhabism the main source of global terrorism. But it's not just a "Middle East problem"; it is our problem, too.

By Karen Armstrong

François Hollande's declaration of war against Isis (also known as Islamic State) was, perhaps, a natural reaction to the carnage in Paris but the situation is now so grave that we cannot merely react; we also need sustained, informed and objective reflection. The French president has unwittingly played into the hands of Isis leaders, who have long claimed to be at war with the West and can now present themselves as noble resistance fighters. Instead of bombing Isis targets and, in the process, killing hapless civilians, western forces could more profitably strengthen the Turkish borders with Syria, since Turkey has become by far the most important strategic base of Isis jihadis.

We cannot afford to allow our grief and outrage to segue into self-righteousness. This is not just the "Middle East problem"; it is our problem, too. Our colonial arrangements, the inherent instability of the states we created and our support of authoritarian leaders have all contributed to the terrifying disintegration of social order in the region today. Many of the western leaders (including our own Prime Minister) who marched for *liberté* in Paris after the *Charlie Hebdo* massacre were heads of countries that, for decades, have backed regimes in Muslim-majority countries that denied their subjects any freedom of expression – often with disastrous results.

One of these regimes is Saudi Arabia. Despite its dismal human rights record, the kingdom has been central to western foreign policy in the Middle East since the 1970s and western governments have therefore tacitly condoned its "Wahhabisation" of the Muslim world. Wahhabism originated in the Arabian peninsula during the 18th century as an attempt to return to the pristine Islam of the Prophet Muhammad. Hence, Wahhabis came to denounce all later developments – such as Sufism and Shia Islam – as heretical innovations.

Yet this represented a radical departure from the Quran, which insists emphatically that there must be "no coercion in matters of faith" (2:256) and that religious pluralism is God's will (5:48). After the Iranian Revolution, the Saudis used their immense wealth to counter the power of Shia Islam by funding the building of mosques with Wahhabi preachers and establishing madrasas that provided free education to the poor. Thus, to the intense dismay of many in the Muslim world, an entire generation has grown up with this maverick form of Islam – in Europe and the US, as well as in Pakistan, Jordan and Malaysia.

In 2013, the European Union declared that Wahhabism was the main source of global terrorism. It is probably more accurate, however, to say that the narrowness of the Wahhabi vision is a fertile soil in which extremism can flourish. In the 19th and early 20th centuries, Wahhabi chieftains did indeed conduct violent military expeditions against the Shia but, during the 1930s, the Saudi kingdom abandoned military jihad and Wahhabism became a religiously conservative movement. Today, some members of the Saudi ruling class support Isis but the Grand Mufti has condemned it in the strongest terms. Like Osama Bin Laden, Isis leaders aim to overthrow the Saudi regime and see their movement as a rebellion against modern Wahhabism.

Military action in Syria will not extirpate Islamist extremism elsewhere. In order to be fully successful, President Hollande's campaign must also include a review of domestic policy. France has signally failed to integrate its Muslim population. Most of the terrorists responsible for the atrocities of 13 November appear to have been disaffected French nationals. So, too, were the Kouachi brothers, who committed the *Charlie Hebdo* massacre, and Amedy Coulibaly, who hijacked the Jewish supermarket in January. All three lived in notoriously deprived suburbs of Paris and – evoking France's colonial past – were of Algerian and Malian descent. Psychiatrists who have investigated people involved in the 9/11 plot and in subsequent attacks have found that these terrorists were not chiefly motivated by religion. Far more pressing has been the desire to escape a stifling sense of insignificance. Powerless at home, many of them alienated by the host culture, young Muslim men in the West are attracted by the strong masculine figure of the jihadi and the prospect of living in a like-minded community, convinced that a heroic death will give their lives meaning.

As they debate the feasibility of British air strikes in Syria, some MPs have insisted that they must be accompanied by negotiation and diplomacy. Again, these cannot be conducted in a spirit of superior righteousness. There must be a recognition that the West is not the only victim of Muslim extremism. We seem curiously blind to this. Far more Muslims than non-Muslims have been killed by Isis, yet this is rarely mentioned. Two weeks before the *Charlie Hebdo* atrocities in January, the Taliban murdered 145 Pakistanis, most of them children; two days after it, Boko Haram slaughtered as many as 2,000 villagers in Nigeria. Yet, compared with the Paris attack, the media coverage in the West was perfunctory. There has been little acknowledgment that the refugees whom many would seek to exclude from Europe have experienced the horrors we saw in Paris on a regular basis in Syria or Iraq. Already we seem to have forgotten that more than 40 people in Beirut were killed by two Isis suicide bombers on 12 November.

Source: *The New Statesman*, November 26, 2015

Wahhabism to ISIS: how Saudi Arabia exported the main source of global terrorism

Although IS is certainly an Islamic movement, it is neither typical nor mired in the distant past, because its roots are in Wahhabism, a form of Islam practised in Saudi Arabia that developed only in the 18th century.

By Karen Armstrong

As the so-called Islamic State demolishes nation states set up by the Europeans almost a century ago, IS's obscene savagery seems to epitomise the violence that many believe to be inherent in religion in general and Islam in particular. It also suggests that the neoconservative ideology that inspired the Iraq war was delusory, since it assumed that the liberal nation state was an inevitable outcome of modernity and that, once Saddam's dictatorship had gone, Iraq could not fail to become a western-style democracy. Instead, IS, which was born in the Iraq war and is intent on restoring the premodern autocracy of the caliphate, seems to be reverting to barbarism. On 16 November, the militants released a video showing that they had beheaded a fifth western hostage, the American aid worker Peter Kassig, as well as several captured Syrian soldiers. Some will see the group's ferocious irredentism as proof of Islam's chronic inability to embrace modern values.

Yet although IS is certainly an Islamic movement, it is neither typical nor mired in the distant past, because its roots are in Wahhabism, a form of Islam practised in Saudi Arabia that developed only in the 18th century. In July 2013, the European Parliament identified Wahhabism as the main source of global terrorism, and yet the Grand Mufti of Saudi Arabia, condemning IS in the strongest terms, has insisted that "the ideas of extremism, radicalism and terrorism do not belong to Islam in any way". Other members of the Saudi ruling class, however, look more kindly on the movement, applauding its staunch opposition to Shiaism and for its Salafi piety, its adherence to the original practices of Islam. This inconsistency is a salutary reminder of the impossibility of making accurate generalisations about any religious tradition. In its short history, Wahhabism has developed at least two distinct forms, each of which has a wholly different take on violence.

During the 18th century, revivalist movements sprang up in many parts of the Islamic world as the Muslim imperial powers began to lose control of peripheral territories. In the west at this time, we were beginning to separate church from state, but this secular ideal was a radical innovation: as revolutionary as the commercial economy that Europe was concurrently devising. No other culture regarded religion as a purely private activity, separate from such worldly pursuits as politics, so for Muslims the political fragmentation of their society was also a religious problem. Because the Quran had given them a sacred mission – to build a just economy in which everybody was treated with equity and respect – the political well-being of the *umma* ("community") was always a matter of sacred import. If the poor were oppressed, the vulnerable exploited or state institutions corrupt, Muslims were obliged to make every effort to put society back on track.

So the 18th-century reformers were convinced that if Muslims were to regain lost power and prestige, they must return to the fundamentals of their faith, ensuring that God – rather than materialism or worldly ambition – dominated the political order. There was nothing militant about this "fundamentalism"; rather, it was a grassroots attempt to reorient society and did not involve jihad. One of the most influential of these revivalists was Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab (1703-91), a learned scholar of Najd in central Arabia, whose teachings still inspire Muslim reformers and extremists today. He was especially concerned about the popular cult of saints and the idolatrous rituals at their tombs, which, he believed, attributed divinity to mere mortals. He insisted that every single man and woman should concentrate instead on the study of the Quran and the "traditions" (*hadith*) about the customary practice (*Sunnah*) of the Prophet and his companions. Like Luther, Ibn Abd al-Wahhab wanted to return to the earliest teachings of his faith and eject all later medieval accretions. He therefore opposed Sufism and Shiaism as heretical innovations (*bidah*), and he urged all Muslims to reject the learned exegesis developed over the centuries by the *ulema* ("scholars") and interpret the texts for themselves.

This naturally incensed the clergy and threatened local rulers, who believed that interfering with these popular devotions would cause social unrest. Eventually, however, Ibn Abd al-Wahhab found a patron in Muhammad Ibn Saud, a chieftain of Najd who adopted his ideas. But tension soon developed between the two because Ibn Abd al-Wahhab refused to endorse Ibn Saud's military campaigns for plunder and territory, insisting that jihad could not be waged for personal profit but was permissible only when the *umma* was attacked militarily. He also forbade the Arab custom of killing prisoners of war, the deliberate destruction of property and the slaughter of civilians, including women and children. Nor did he ever claim that those who fell in battle were martyrs who would be rewarded with a high place in

heaven, because a desire for such self-aggrandisement was incompatible with jihad. Two forms of Wahhabism were emerging: where Ibn Saud was happy to enforce Wahhabi Islam with the sword to enhance his political position, Ibn Abd al-Wahhab insisted that education, study and debate were the only legitimate means of spreading the one true faith.

Yet although scripture was so central to Ibn Abd al-Wahhab's ideology, by insisting that his version of Islam alone had validity, he had distorted the Quranic message. The Quran firmly stated that "There must be no coercion in matters of faith" (2:256), ruled that Muslims must believe in the revelations of all the great prophets (3:84) and that religious pluralism was God's will (5:48). Muslims had, therefore, been traditionally wary of *takfir*, the practice of declaring a fellow Muslim to be an unbeliever (*kafir*). Hitherto Sufism, which had developed an outstanding appreciation of other faith traditions, had been the most popular form of Islam and had played an important role in both social and religious life. "Do not praise your own faith so exclusively that you disbelieve all the rest," urged the great mystic Ibn al-Arabi (d.1240). "God the omniscient and omnipresent cannot be confined to any one creed." It was common for a Sufi to claim that he was a neither a Jew nor a Christian, nor even a Muslim, because once you glimpsed the divine, you left these man-made distinctions behind.

Despite his rejection of other forms of Islam, Ibn Abd al-Wahhab himself refrained from *takfir*, arguing that God alone could read the heart, but after his death Wahhabis cast this inhibition aside and the generous pluralism of Sufism became increasingly suspect in the Muslim world.

After his death, too, Wahhabism became more violent, an instrument of state terror. As he sought to establish an independent kingdom, Abd al-Aziz Ibn Muhammad, Ibn Saud's son and successor, used *takfir* to justify the wholesale slaughter of resistant populations. In 1801, his army sacked the holy Shia city of Karbala in what is now Iraq, plundered the tomb of Imam Husain, and slaughtered thousands of Shias, including women and children; in 1803, in fear and panic, the holy city of Mecca surrendered to the Saudi leader.

Eventually, in 1815, the Ottomans despatched Muhammad Ali Pasha, governor of Egypt, to crush the Wahhabi forces and destroy their capital. But Wahhabism became a political force once again during the First World War when the Saudi chieftain – another Abd al-Aziz – made a new push for statehood and began to carve out a large kingdom for himself in the Middle East with his devout Bedouin army, known as the Ikhwan, the "Brotherhood".

In the Ikhwan we see the roots of IS. To break up the tribes and wean them from the nomadic life, which was deemed incompatible with Islam, the Wahhabi clergy had settled the Bedouin in oases, where they learned farming and the crafts of sedentary life and were indoctrinated in Wahhabi Islam. Once they exchanged the time-honoured *ghazu* raid, which typically resulted in the plunder of livestock, for the jihad, these Bedouin fighters became more violent and extreme, covering their faces when they encountered Europeans and non-Saudi Arabs and fighting with lances and swords because they disdained weaponry not used by the Prophet. In the old *ghazu* raids, the Bedouin had always kept casualties to a minimum and did not attack non-combatants. Now the Ikhwan routinely massacred "apostate" unarmed villagers in their thousands, thought nothing of slaughtering women and children, and routinely slit the throats of all male captives.

In 1915, Abd al-Aziz planned to conquer the Hijaz (an area in the west of present-day Saudi Arabia that includes the cities of Mecca and Medina), the Persian Gulf to the east of Najd, and the land that is now Syria and Jordan in the north, but during the 1920s he tempered his ambitions in order to acquire diplomatic standing as a nation state with Britain and the United States. The Ikhwan, however, continued to raid the British protectorates of Iraq, Transjordan and Kuwait, insisting that no limits could be placed on jihad. Regarding all modernisation as *bidah*, the Ikhwan also attacked Abd al-Aziz for permitting telephones, cars, the telegraph, music and smoking – indeed, anything unknown in Muhammad's time – until finally Abd al-Aziz quashed their rebellion in 1930.

After the defeat of the Ikhwan, the official Wahhabism of the Saudi kingdom abandoned militant jihad and became a religiously conservative movement, similar to the original movement in the time of Ibn Abd al-Wahhab, except that *takfir* was now an accepted practice and, indeed, essential to the Wahhabi faith. Henceforth there would always be tension between the ruling Saudi establishment and more radical Wahhabis. The Ikhwan spirit and its dream of territorial expansion did not die, but gained new ground in the 1970s, when the kingdom became central to western foreign policy in the region. Washington welcomed the Saudis' opposition to Nasserism (the pan-Arab socialist ideology of Egypt's second president, Gamal Abdel Nasser) and to Soviet influence. After the Iranian Revolution, it gave tacit support to the Saudis' project of countering Shia radicalism by Wahhabising the entire Muslim world.

The soaring oil price created by the 1973 embargo – when Arab petroleum producers cut off supplies to the US to protest against the Americans' military support for Israel – gave the kingdom all the petrodollars it needed to export its idiosyncratic form of Islam. The old military jihad to spread the faith was now replaced by a cultural offensive. The Saudi-based Muslim World League opened offices in every region inhabited by Muslims, and the Saudi ministry of religion printed and distributed Wahhabi translations of the Quran, Wahhabi doctrinal texts and the writings of modern thinkers whom the Saudis found congenial, such as Sayyids Abul-A'la Maududi and Qutb, to Muslim communities throughout the Middle East, Africa, Indonesia, the United States and Europe. In all these places, they funded the building of Saudi-style mosques with Wahhabi preachers and established madrasas that provided free education for the poor, with, of course, a Wahhabi curriculum. At the same time, young men from the poorer Muslim countries, such as Egypt and Pakistan, who had felt compelled to find work in the Gulf to support their families, associated their relative affluence with Wahhabism and brought this faith back home with them, living in new neighbourhoods with Saudi mosques and shopping malls that segregated the sexes. The Saudis demanded religious conformity in return for their munificence, so Wahhabi rejection of all other forms of Islam as well as other faiths would reach as deeply into Bradford, England, and Buffalo, New York, as into Pakistan, Jordan or Syria: everywhere gravely undermining Islam's traditional pluralism.

A whole generation of Muslims, therefore, has grown up with a maverick form of Islam that has given them a negative view of other faiths and an intolerantly sectarian understanding of their own. While not extremist per se, this is an outlook in which radicalism can develop. In the past, the learned exegesis of the *ulema*, which Wahhabis rejected, had held extremist interpretations of scripture in check; but now unqualified freelancers such as Osama Bin Laden were free to develop highly unorthodox readings of the Quran. To prevent the spread of radicalism, the Saudis tried to deflect their young from the internal problems of the kingdom during the 1980s by encouraging a pan-Islamist sentiment of which the Wahhabi *ulema* did not approve.

Where Islamists in such countries as Egypt fought tyranny and corruption at home, Saudi Islamists focused on the humiliation and oppression of Muslims worldwide. Television brought images of

Muslim suffering in Palestine or Lebanon into comfortable Saudi homes. The government also encouraged young men to join the steady stream of recruits from the Arab world who were joining the Afghans' jihad against the Soviet Union. The response of these militants may throw light on the motivation of those joining the jihad in Syria and Iraq today.

A survey of those Saudi men who volunteered for Afghanistan and who later fought in Bosnia and Chechnya or trained in al-Qaeda camps has found that most were motivated not by hatred of the west but by the desire to help their Muslim brothers and sisters – in rather the same way as men from all over Europe left home in 1938 to fight the Fascists in Spain, and as Jews from all over the diaspora hastened to Israel at the beginning of the Six Day War in 1967. The welfare of the *umma* had always been a spiritual as well as a political concern in Islam, so the desperate plight of their fellow Muslims cut to the core of their religious identity. This pan-Islamist emphasis was also central to Bin Laden's propaganda, and the martyr-videos of the Saudis who took part in the 9/11 atrocity show that they were influenced less by Wahhabism than by the pain and humiliation of the *umma* as a whole.

Source: *The New Statesman*, November 27, 2015

The Violent History of Secularism

By Karen Armstrong

On October 31, 1517, the Augustinian friar Martin Luther nailed ninety-five theses onto the castle church door in Wittenberg and set in motion the Reformation. He and the other great reformers were addressing a society undergoing the painful transition to modernity. In any modernizing society, people no longer feel at home in the changing world and they often discover that they can no longer be religious in the old ways. All his life, Luther was prone to agonizing depressions; none of the traditional medieval rites and practices could touch his tristitia, his profound and desolate sorrow. Instead he was released from his despair in a solitary breakthrough when he realised that he was justified before God not by his merits but by his faith in Christ and felt as though he had been born again. Justification by faith was not an original theological idea; it had been widely discussed since the 14th century. What was new was that Luther's revelation was a personal and intensely private experience. Medieval Catholicism had been primarily communal; as in all traditional faith, one experienced the sacred by living in community, which for Christians was the Body of Christ. In leaving the Roman Church, Luther was also making one of the first declarations of independence that would punctuate Western modernization. Henceforth for Luther, the Christian must stand alone before his God, relying simply on his Bible. Luther was experiencing in a religious guise the individualism that would be essential to Western modernity. This would lead him to a wholly new conception of religion's role in public life.

Luther was the first European to advocate the separation of church and state. God, he believed, had so retreated from the material world that it no longer had any spiritual significance. True Christians, justified by born again conversion, belonged to the Kingdom of God. Incapable of hatred or injustice, they were essentially free of state coercion. But such Christians were few and far between. Together with non-Christians, they belonged to the corrupt and violent Kingdom of the World, that is, the state, whose prime duty it was to restrain these sinners by force "in the same way as a savage wild beast is bound with

chains and ropes so that it cannot bite and tear as it would normally do." If the state did not have absolute powers, the world would be reduced to chaos. No government could rule according to the gospel precepts of love, compassion and forgiveness. It could only impose peace, order and continuity by the merciless use of the sword.

For its part, the Church, or the Kingdom of God, must hold aloof from the inherently corrupt and depraved policies of the Kingdom of the World and deal only with spiritual affairs. The Roman Church, Luther believed, had failed in its true mission because it had dallied with the sinful Kingdom of the World. Where previous prophets, sages and reformers in all the great faith traditions had felt impelled by their spiritual insights to undertake a principled critique of state violence and injustice, Luther believed that because religion was a wholly private affair, his reformed Christian should retreat into his inner world of righteousness and let the world, quite literally, go to hell.

Luther's response to the Peasants War in Germany in 1525 showed that a secularised political theory would not necessarily be a force for peace. The peasants were resisting the centralizing policies of the rulers of the German principalities, who were trying to create strong sovereign states on the model of France and England and in the process were depriving the peasantry of traditional rights. Luther, of course, fully supported those princes who were seeking to create absolute states and believed that the peasants had committed the unpardonable sin of mixing religion and politics. Suffering, he insisted, was their lot and they must turn the other cheek and accept the loss of their lives and property. "A worldly kingdom," he insisted, "cannot exist without an inequality of persons, some being free, some imprisoned, some lords, some subjects." So, Luther commanded the princes, "Let everyone who can, smite, slay and stab, secretly or openly, remembering that nothing can be more poisoned, hurtful, or devilish than a rebel." Killing these peasants was an act of mercy, because it would liberate them from this satanic bondage.

Luther's vision of the strong, absolute state expressed in a religious form what was happening in Europe politically. The German princes and the kings of Europe were resisting the ambitions of Charles V to achieve trans-European hegemony on the Ottoman model. These struggles, which culminated in the horror of the Thirty Years War (1618~48), would be known as the Wars of Religion, because, it was said, Protestants and Catholics were so inflamed by the theological quarrels of the Reformation that they had butchered one another in these senseless battles. But while there is no doubt that the participants certainly experienced these wars as a life-and-death sectarian struggle, this was also a conflict between one set of state-builders over another. By the end of the Thirty Years War, Europeans had fought off the danger of imperial rule. Henceforth Europe would be divided into smaller states, each claiming sovereign power in its own territory, each supported by a professional army and governed by a prince who aspired to absolute rule ~ a recipe perhaps for chronic interstate warfare. New configurations of political power were beginning to force the church into a subordinate role, a process that involved a fundamental reallocation of authority and resources from the ecclesiastical establishment to the monarch. All these developments required a new understanding of religion.

Luther had been deeply in tune with his troubled times. The sovereign, independent state achieved at the end of the Thirty Years War mirrored his vision of the independent, sovereign individual; his view of religion as an essentially subjective and private quest over which the state had no jurisdiction would be the foundation of the modern secular ideal. But Luther's solutions also suggested that the wholly secularised state would be no panacea. Not only would secular wars be as pitiless as any religiously-inspired crusade or jihad but in privatizing religion some of the more valuable insights of traditional faith could be lost, in particular the social concern for justice and equity, which had always

been essential to spiritual enlightenment, as well as an insistence that this concern could not be confined to one's own congenial group, but must also embrace the foreigner, other species, and even the enemy.

The trauma of the Wars of Religion inspired what has been called the "myth of religious violence." People concluded that the fanatical bigotry that was always inherent in religion could be contained only by the creation of the liberal state that separates religion and politics. Europe had learned the hard way that once combatants are convinced that God is on their side, compromise becomes impossible and cruelty knows no bounds. The rabidly intolerant passions that religious faith always seems to unleash must never again be allowed to intrude on political life. Even though military historians and experts on terrorism repeatedly insist that a number of interrelated political, social and economic factors are always involved in both warfare and lawless atrocity, there is now a widespread conviction that religion is the main or even the sole culprit. For Richard Dawkins, "only religious faith is a strong enough force to motivate such utter madness in otherwise sane and decent people." But this view is not confined to the "new atheists"; I am frequently informed by all manner of folk that "Religion has been the cause of all the major wars in history," as though this odd remark ~ the two world wars, for example, were clearly not fought for religion ~ were a statement of incontrovertible truth.

We now take the secular state so much for granted that it is hard for us to appreciate its novelty, since before the modern period, there were no "secular" institutions and no "secular" states in our sense of the word. Their creation required the development of an entirely different understanding of religion. In the modern West, we regard religion as a coherent system of obligatory beliefs, rituals and institutions that focuses on a supernatural deity and is an essentially private pursuit, hermetically sealed off from all "secular" activities ~ much as Luther described. But this view of religion is unique. No other culture has had anything remotely like it and before the 18th century it would also have been incomprehensible to most Europeans. Words in other languages that we translate as "religion" invariably refer to something vaguer, larger and more inclusive. The Arabic din signifies an entire way of life and the Sanskrit dharma covers law, politics, and social institutions as well as piety. The Oxford Classical Dictionary firmly states: "No word in either Greek or Latin corresponds to the English 'religion' or 'religious.'"

Before the modern period, therefore, religion was not a separate activity, hermetically sealed off from all others; rather, it permeated all human undertakings, including economics, state-building, politics and warfare. It would have been impossible to say where, for example, "politics" ended and "religion" began. If the Wars of Religion had been solely motivated by sectarian bigotry, we should not expect to have found Protestants and Catholics fighting on the same side, yet in fact they often did so. Thus Catholic France repeatedly fought the Catholic Habsburgs, who were regularly supported by some of the Protestant princes. In the French Wars of Religion (1562~98) and the Thirty Years War too, combatants crossed confessional lines so often that it was impossible to talk about solidly "Catholic" or "Protestant" populations. These wars were neither "all about religion" nor "all about politics". Nor was it a question of the state simply "using" religion for political ends. Until the 18th century, dissociating the two would have been like trying to take the gin out of a cocktail.

Secularism has certainly been beneficial in the West; it has freed us from an ecclesiastical hierarchy which could have impeded the scientific, ideological and technological innovations that were essential to our modernization. But it was itself a wholly new experiment. Traditional spirituality did not retreat, Luther-like, from engagement with the world but urged people to work practically and politically to improve the human lot. The prophets of Israel had harsh words for those who assiduously observed the temple rituals but neglected the plight of the poor and oppressed. Jesus' famous maxim to "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's" was not a plea for secularism. Nearly all the uprisings against Rome in

first-century Palestine were inspired by the conviction that the Land of Israel and its produce belonged to God, so that there was, therefore, precious little to "give back" to Caesar. The bedrock message of the Quran is that it is wrong to build a private fortune but good to share your wealth in order to create a just, egalitarian and decent society. Gandhi would have agreed that these were matters of sacred import: "Those who say that religion has nothing to do with politics do not know what religion means."

There is no doubt that throughout history violence has often been articulated in religious terms and that this has tarnished the more noble values of traditional faiths. But the separation of religion and politics during the early modern period was not the discovery of an iron law that automatically invalidated previous civilizations ~ which, of course, had not separated religion and politics ~ as aberrant. It took root in Europe in part because it mirrored new configurations of power that were pushing the churches out of government. Secularization, however, emerged at a time when Europe was beginning to colonize the "New World" and it would be one of the factors that would influence the way the west viewed the indigenous peoples.

The philosophers who devised the secular ideal came to believe that, in the words of John Locke (d.1704): "The church itself is a thing absolutely separate and distinct from the commonwealth. The boundaries on both sides are fixed and immoveable. As an essentially a "private search", it could not be policed by government. The separation of religion and politics ~ "which are in their original end, business, and in everything perfectly and infinitely different from each other" ~ was thus written into the very nature of things. But the liberal state was in fact, a radical innovation, just as revolutionary as the market economy that was gradually developing in the West and would shortly transform the world. Because of the violent passions it aroused, Locke insisted that the segregation of "religion" from government was "above all things necessary" for the creation of a peaceful society.

Hence Locke, the apostle of toleration, was adamant that the liberal state could tolerate neither Catholics nor Muslims, condemning their confusion of politics and religion as dangerously perverse. Locke was a major advocate of the theory of natural human rights, originally pioneered by the Renaissance humanists. The first draft of the American Constitution would define these rights as life, liberty and property. But for the humanists there had been no question of extending these rights to the indigenous inhabitants of the New World. Indeed, these peoples could be penalised for failing to conform to European norms. Alberico Gentili (d.1608), professor of civil law at Oxford, had argued that land that had not been exploited agriculturally, as it was in Europe, was "empty" and that "the seizure of [such] vacant places" should be "regarded as law of nature." Locke too agreed that the "kings" of America had no legal right of ownership to their territory. He also endorsed a master's "Absolute, Arbitrary, Despotical Power" over a slave that included "the power to kill him at any time." Thomas Jefferson and James Madison, who had crafted the "wall of separation" between church andstate in America, and had proudly declared that "all men are created equal" had no qualms about owning African slaves.

Traditional sages, poets and mystics, however, had often created mythologies that forced people to face up to the damage that they were doing to others. They may not have been able to stop these abuses, but they kept the people aware of their rulers' failings and inconsistencies. Secularism would have its own glaring inconsistency. It was supposedly designed to create a peaceful world order, but, so intricately was the Church involved in the entire economic, political and social structures of society, it could only be established violently. In North America, where there was no entrenched aristocratic government, the disestablishment of the various churches could be accomplished with relative ease. But in France, the Church could be dismantled only by an outright assault; far from being experienced as a natural and essentially normative arrangement, its creation could be experienced as traumatic and terrifying. During

the French Revolution, one of the first acts of the new National Assembly on November 2, 1789, was to confiscate all Church property to pay off the national debt, so that secularization began with dispossession, humiliation and marginalisation. This segued into outright violence during the September Massacres of 1792, when the mob fell upon the goals of Paris and slaughtered between two and three thousand prisoners, many of them priests. The following year, an uprising broke out in the Vendee in western France, led by farmers, artisans and shopkeepers in protest against military conscription, unfair taxation, and above all the anti-Catholic policies of the regime. Early in 1794, four revolutionary armies were dispatched from Paris with instructions to spare no one. At the end of the campaign, General Francois-Joseph Westermann reportedly wrote to his superiors: "The Vendee no longer exists. "I have crushed children beneath the hooves of our horses, and massacred the women…The roads are littered with corpses." It was becoming clear that banishing faith to the private sphere would not necessarily eliminate the violence from political life.

No sooner had the revolutionaries rid themselves of one religion, however, than in 1793 they invented another. Their new gods were Liberty, Nature and the French Nation which they worshipped in elaborate festivals choreographed by the artist Jacques Louis David. That same year the Goddess of Reason was enthroned on the high altar of Notre Dame Cathedral and the reign of terror plunged the new nation into an irrational bloodbath, in which some 17,000 men, women and children were executed. In 1807, while Napoleon's armies invaded Prussia, the German philosopher Gottfried Fichte urged his fellow countrymen to be prepared to lay down their lives for the Fatherland, which was a manifestation of the divine and the repository of the spiritual essence of the Volk, which alone could give humans the immortality they craved. If we define the sacred as that for which we are prepared to die, what Benedict Anderson called the "imaginary community" of the nation has indeed replaced God. It is now considered admirable to die for your country, but not for your religion.

The nation-state came into its own in the early 19th century with the Industrial Revolution. Hitherto all civilizations without exception had depended economically on a surplus of agricultural produce wrested from the peasantry by an elite group, who comprised no more than 5 percent of the population. But once industrial manufacture became the economic basis of society, the nation had to be bound tightly together to mobilize its disparate peoples for industry. Modern communications enabled the government to create a national ethos that could be conveyed to the people and intrude into the lives of their people more than had been possible before. Even if they spoke a different language from their rulers, subjects now belonged to the "nation," whether they liked it or not. John Stuart Mill regarded this forcible integration as progress; it was surely better for a Breton, "the half-savage remnant of past times," to become a French citizen than "sulk on his own rocks." But Lord Acton feared that the adulation of the national spirit, which would emphasize ethnicity, culture and language, would penalise those who did not fit the national norm: "According, therefore, to the degree of humanity and civilization in that dominant body which claims all the rights of the community, the inferior races are exterminated or reduced to servitude, or put in a condition of dependence." Tragically, events would prove that Acton's misgivings were all too well founded.

The Enlightenment philosophes had tried to counter the intolerance and bigotry that they associated with "religion" by promoting the equality of all human beings, together with democracy, human rights, and intellectual and political liberty, modern secular versions of ideals which had been promoted in a religious idiom in the past by poets, sages and prophets. The structural injustice of the agrarian state, however, had made it impossible to implement these ideals fully. The nation-state made these noble aspirations practical necessities. More and more people had to be drawn into the productive process and needed at least a modicum of education. Eventually they would inevitably demand the right to participate in the

decisions of government. It was found by trial and error that those nations that democratized forged ahead economically, while those that confined the benefits of modernity to an elite fell behind. Innovation was essential to progress, so people had to be allowed to think freely, unconstrained by the constraints of their class, guild or church. Governments needed to exploit all their human resources, so outsiders, such as Jews in Europe and Catholics in England and America, were brought into the mainstream.

Yet this toleration was only skin-deep, and as Lord Acton had predicted, an intolerance of ethnic and cultural minorities would become the Achilles Heel of the nation-state. Indeed, nationalism's concentration on the prosperity and destiny of the nation made it difficult for people to acquire a more global perspective. In 1807, Thomas Jefferson, one of the leading proponents of the Enlightenment in the United States, instructed his secretary of war that Native Americans were "backward peoples" who must either be "exterminated" or driven "beyond our reach" to the other side of the Mississippi "with the beasts of the forest." The following year, Napoleon issued the "Infamous Decrees" ordering the Jews of France to take French names, privatize their faith, and ensure that at least one in three marriages per family was with a gentile. Increasingly, as national feeling became a supreme value, Jews would appear chronically rootless and cosmopolitan. In the late 19th century, there was an explosion of anti-Semitism in Europe, which undoubtedly drew upon centuries of Christian prejudice, but gave it a scientific rationale, claiming that Jews did not fit the biological and genetic profile of the Volk, and should be eliminated from the body politick as modern medicine cut out a cancer.

Industrialisation had led to the development of modern weaponry. At first, Europeans had been reluctant to use the new machine guns against their fellow Europeans, but by 1851, Minie ball-firing rifles issued to British troops overseas and used to great effect the following year against Bantu tribesmen. "Civilized man is much more susceptible to injury than savages," Sir John Ardagh explained at a conference in The Hague that debated the legality of these weapons in 1899; "The savage, like the Tiger, is not so impressionable, and will go on fighting even when desperately wounded." Human rights could not be extended to non-Western peoples, because they seemed scarcely human.

Modern weaponry had made it relatively easy for the Western colonialists to subdue the peoples of Asia and Africa in their global empires. As the European imperialists prepared to leave their colonies, they established nation-states on the Western model in which secularization was imposed as violently as it had been in France. Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, who founded the secular republic of Turkey in 1918, is often admired as an enlightened Muslim leader in the West, but for many in the Middle East he personified the cruelty of secular nationalism. He hated Islam, describing it as a "putrefied corpse and suppressed it in Turkey by outlawing the Sufi orders and seizing their properties, closing down the madrasas and appropriating their income. He also abolished the beloved institution of the caliphate, which had long been a dead-letter politically but which symbolised the link with the Prophet. Secularisation was not experienced as liberating but as a force for violence, disempowerment and oppression.

Ataturk continued the policy of ethnic cleansing that had been initiated by the last Ottoman sultans; in an attempt to control the rising commercial classes, they systematically deported the Armenian and Greek-speaking Christians, who comprised 90 percent of the bourgeoisie. The Young Turks, who seized power in 1909, espoused the anti-religious positivism associated with August Comte and were also determined to create a purely Turkic state. During the First World War, approximately one million Armenians were slaughtered in the first genocide of the twentieth century, men and youths were killed where they stood, while women, children and the elderly were driven into the desert where they were raped, shot, starved, poisoned, suffocated or burned to death. Clearly inspired by the new scientific racism, Mehmet Resid, known as the "Execution Governor" regarded the Armenians as "dangerous

microbes" in "the bosom of the Fatherland." Ataturk completed this racial purge. For centuries Muslims and Christians had lived together on both sides of the Aegean; Ataturk partitioned the region, deporting Greek Christians living in what is now Turkey to Greece, while Turkish-speaking Muslims in Greece were sent the other way.

Secularising rulers like Ataturk often wanted their countries to look modern, that is, European. In Europe and the United States, modernity had evolved organically; in the Middle East it was experienced as an alien and foreign import. In Iran in 1928, Shah Reza Pahlavi issued the Laws of Uniformity of Dress and with their bayonets, his soldiers tore off women's veils and ripped them to pieces in the street. In 1935 the police were ordered to open fire on a crowd who had staged a peaceful demonstration against the dress laws in one of the holiest shrines of Iran and killed hundreds of unarmed Iranians. Policies like this made veiling, which has no Quranic endorsement, an emblem of Islamic authenticity in many parts of the Muslim world.

Following the example of the French, Egyptian rulers secularized by disempowering and impoverishing the clergy. Modernization had begun in the Ottoman period under the governor Muhammad Ali (1805~49), who starved the ulema financially, taking away their tax exemption status, confiscating the religiously-endowed properties that were their principal source of income, and systematically robbing them of any shred of power. When the reforming army officer Jamal Abdul Nasser came to power in 1952, he changed tack and turned the clergy into state officials. For centuries, the ulema had acted as a protective bulwark between the people and the systemic violence of the state. Now Egyptians came to despise them as government lackeys. This policy would ultimately backfire, because it deprived the general population of learned guidance that was aware of the complexity of the Islamic tradition. Self-appointed freelances, whose knowledge of Islam was limited, would step into the breach, often to disastrous effect.

In 1954, after surviving an attempted assassination, Nasser incarcerated thousands of members of the Muslim Brotherhood, many of whom had done nothing more incriminating than distributing leaflets. One of the detained Brothers was Sayed Qutb, an educated man who was well-informed about Islam. But in Nasser's prison he himself was tortured and saw other Brothers slaughtered casually by prison guards, beaten and executed. When he heard Nasser vowing to privatize Islam on the Western model, he was convinced that secularism was cruel, aggressive and immoral. Amidst the horror of his Egyptian gaol, he wrote Milestones, the work of a man who has been pushed too far, which would become a classic text for Sunni fundamentalists.

What we call "fundamentalism" has always existed in a symbiotic relationship with a secularization that is experienced as cruel, violent and invasive. The case of Qutb is just one of many tragic examples of an aggressive secularism actually damaging religion and pushing it into a violent riposte. Every fundamentalist movement that I have studied in Judaism, Christianity and Islam is rooted in a profound fear of annihilation, convinced that the liberal or secular establishment is determined to destroy themselves and their faith. From Ataturk to the Shahs to Nasser we can see how this perception has developed in the Middle East.

Some secular thinkers regard "religion" not only as inherently belligerent and intolerant but irrational and backward, the unnatural and violent "other" to the peaceable, rational, and humane liberal state. This attitude had informed the colonialists' view of the indigenous peoples as "primitive" because their political institutions were mired in their benighted religious beliefs and they had failed to develop an industrialised economy. Even today the apparent reluctance of some Muslims to embrace the secular ideals that had

often been imposed so cruelly is often regarded as a failure to evolve naturally and "grow up" in the way that "we" did.

Today the "new atheists" represent an extreme expression of this tendency. In the past, Sam Harris felt it necessary to italicize his claim that "most Muslims are utterly deranged by their religious faith." In a recent article on ISIL, he has argued that "religion itself produces a perverse solidarity that we must find some way to undercut" and that those Muslims who condemn the atrocities of Islamic State, are not and, indeed, cannot be inspired by the teachings of Islam but have simply absorbed the secularist ideals of toleration and human rights. Secularism was an extremely valuable development for us in our pioneering modernization but it should not be regarded as one of the laws of nature. To stigmatize those to whom it does not come naturally as fanatical, unhinged and barbaric has helped to damage our relations with other peoples in the past and even today can manifest the very bigotry that secularism was supposed to supplant.

The True, Peaceful Face Of Islam

By Karen Armstrong

There are 1.2 billion Muslims in the world, and Islam is the world's fastest-growing religion. If the evil carnage we witnessed on Sept. 11 were typical of the faith, and Islam truly inspired and justified such violence, its growth and the increasing presence of Muslims in both Europe and the U.S. would be a terrifying prospect. Fortunately, this is not the case.

The very word Islam, which means "surrender," is related to the Arabic salam, or peace. When the Prophet Muhammad brought the inspired scripture known as the Koran to the Arabs in the early 7th century A.D., a major part of his mission was devoted precisely to bringing an end to the kind of mass slaughter we witnessed in New York City and Washington. Pre-Islamic Arabia was caught up in a vicious cycle of warfare, in which tribe fought tribe in a pattern of vendetta and countervendetta. Muhammad himself survived several assassination attempts, and the early Muslim community narrowly escaped extermination by the powerful city of Mecca. The Prophet had to fight a deadly war in order to survive, but as soon as he felt his people were probably safe, he devoted his attention to building up a peaceful coalition of tribes and achieved victory by an ingenious and inspiring campaign of nonviolence. When he died in 632, he had almost single-handedly brought peace to war-torn Arabia.

Because the Koran was revealed in the context of an all-out war, several passages deal with the conduct of armed struggle. Warfare was a desperate business on the Arabian Peninsula. A chieftain was not expected to spare survivors after a battle, and some of the Koranic injunctions seem to share this spirit. Muslims are ordered by God to "slay [enemies] wherever you find them!" (4: 89). Extremists such as Osama bin Laden like to quote such verses but do so selectively. They do not include the exhortations to peace, which

in almost every case follow these more ferocious passages: "Thus, if they let you be, and do not make war on you, and offer you peace, God does not allow you to harm them" (4: 90).

In the Koran, therefore, the only permissible war is one of self-defense. Muslims may not begin hostilities (2: 190). Warfare is always evil, but sometimes you have to fight in order to avoid the kind of persecution that Mecca inflicted on the Muslims (2: 191; 2: 217) or to preserve decent values (4: 75; 22: 40). The Koran quotes the Torah, the Jewish scriptures, which permits people to retaliate eye for eye, tooth for tooth, but like the Gospels, the Koran suggests that it is meritorious to forgo revenge in a spirit of charity (5: 45). Hostilities must be brought to an end as quickly as possible and must cease the minute the enemy sues for peace (2: 192-3).

Islam is not addicted to war, and jihad is not one of its "pillars," or essential practices. The primary meaning of the word jihad is not "holy war" but "struggle." It refers to the difficult effort that is needed to put God's will into practice at every level--personal and social as well as political. A very important and much quoted tradition has Muhammad telling his companions as they go home after a battle, "We are returning from the lesser jihad [the battle] to the greater jihad," the far more urgent and momentous task of extirpating wrongdoing from one's own society and one's own heart.

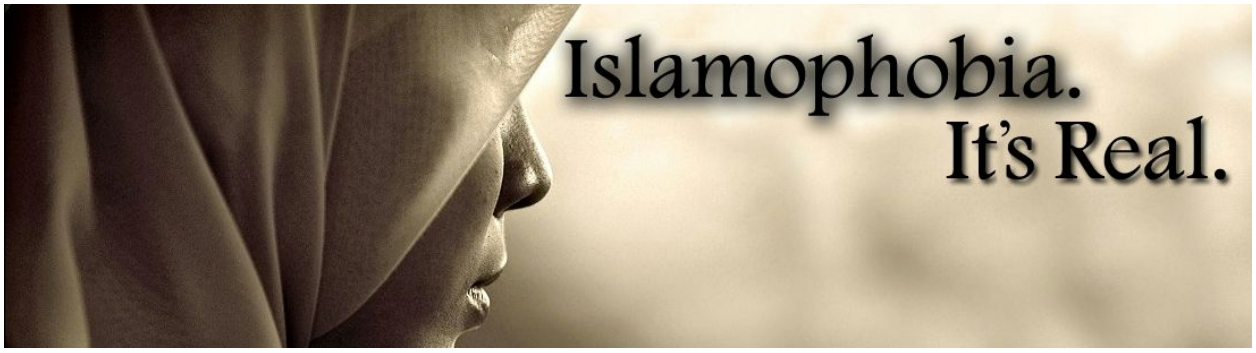
Islam did not impose itself by the sword. In a statement in which the Arabic is extremely emphatic, the Koran insists, "There must be no coercion in matters of faith!" (2: 256). Constantly Muslims are enjoined to respect Jews and Christians, the "People of the Book," who worship the same God (29: 46). In words quoted by Muhammad in one of his last public sermons, God tells all human beings, "O people! We have formed you into nations and tribes so that you may know one another" (49: 13)--not to conquer, convert, subjugate, revile or slaughter but to reach out toward others with intelligence and understanding.

So why the suicide bombing, the hijacking and the massacre of innocent civilians? Far from being endorsed by the Koran, this killing violates some of its most sacred precepts. But during the 20th century, the militant form of piety often known as fundamentalism erupted in every major religion as a rebellion against modernity. Every fundamentalist movement I have studied in Judaism, Christianity and Islam is convinced that liberal, secular society is determined to wipe out religion. Fighting, as they imagine, a battle for survival, fundamentalists often feel justified in ignoring the more compassionate principles of their faith. But in amplifying the more aggressive passages that exist in all our scriptures, they distort the tradition.

It would be as grave a mistake to see Osama bin Laden as an authentic representative of Islam as to consider James Kopp, the alleged killer of an abortion provider in Buffalo, N.Y., a typical Christian or Baruch Goldstein, who shot 29 worshipers in the Hebron mosque in 1994 and died in the attack, a true martyr of Israel. The vast majority of Muslims, who are horrified by the atrocity of Sept. 11, must reclaim their faith from those who have so violently hijacked it.

Source: Time Magazine: http://content.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,175987,00.html

Islamophobia



Recognize Islam as the new "other." The hate is the same hatred of white supremacists against people of color, of Anti-Semitism, of the Tutsis toward the Hutus, of Native Americans by the early American settlers, of Russians (or Americans) during the cold war, of Christians by Roman emperors, of Northern Ireland's Catholics vs. Protestants, or Japanese by other East Asians and Americans, "witches" in Salem Massachusetts and any other group that has been or is marginalized, excluded, banished, ridiculed, or targeted for violence. "Otherizing" divides and harms humanity rather than uniting in compassion, love for one's fellow humans.

Today it is the Muslims; tomorrow it will be another group. Throughout history, groups have been targeted based on current prevailing sentiment until the collective moves on to some new group. Humans practice superiority in the mistaken belief that by putting someone else down, one's own status is "elevated." It's important to remember projection onto a group seen as "other" is temporary and employs the darker side of human nature and depends on who is seen as the new "evil du jour." Remind others to keep this in mind too by pointing out the outcomes of hate groups and war mongering because someone is made "other."

Religion is a sacred space and a private matter. Freedom of religion means the ability to practice one's faith by choice openly or privately and to be free of intimidation or violence. Religions designate a holy space for the purpose of allegiance to the great mysteries or something greater than the human self. Whether it is a church, Mosque, Synagogue, Fellowship Hall, Temple, Shrine, Satsang, Native American Sweat Lodge or Longhouse or Kirtan, that space is holy and should be accorded the respect and reverence accorded a holy place.

Speak up. When someone lumps together all "Muslims" or whatever "evil group du jour" is the contemporary target, and labels and disparages them, your own group can just as easily become a target for no rational reason. Groups represent a diverse population and no one person or one behavior represents the whole of a group. One black person does not speak for all black people. One badly behaving Asian does not represent all Asians. One white person does not speak for the whole race. There are different kinds of Catholics and different brands of Protestants. No one religion is embraced by all people in a group. Not all tenets are embraced by all in that religion. Diversity is as common to faiths as it is to humans.

When someone slams another group or religion, that is an insult to something holy and should not be tolerated. It is important to be vocal about conversation that is offensive. Say you are offended and say why. When something is publicly offensive or comes from a place of authority, question it in a letter to the editor. Hold a meeting to discuss this with your congregation or group.

"Faith" is precisely that—something that is embraced in theory or adopted without proof. The great mysteries and religions are man's way of explaining that which he doesn't understand. Religion is a hypothesis, and act of faith. How do you prove God—by whatever name? It's based on belief and faith and interpretation of scriptures considered holy. No belief or faith or person or group has the one superior or correct answer. Most deities are generous enough to embrace all peoples, even those considered "fringe."

Killing in the name of religion or of a god is just morally wrong and is not sanctioned by a god in any form. The taking of a life is the taking of something holy. Followers of a faith are governed by guiding principles; every major faith, at their esoteric core, incorporates the golden rule in some form. "Treat others as you would like to be treated" is a common thread. Respect for self, others, life and land and all things holy, runs through most scriptures and is a guiding principle no matter the window-dressing.

Earth is an island. At the edge that island is the black and terrifying nothingness of space. We must learn to get along on this planet if we are to survive. Everything is interconnected and the web of life is immense and precious while intertwined in an intimacy that we are only now beginning to recognize. Thus we are all accountable to one another. Remind those who would divide instead of unify that the human is one species no matter the color, religion, location, circumstance, accident of birth or inherited religion.

Respect the instruments of all religions whether it's the building housing the faithful, the scriptures or holy book that is considered divinely inspired and prophetic. Consider how inflammatory disparaging someone else's instruments, traditions, ceremonies is and how you would feel being on the receiving end of that prejudice and hatred. Speak up about respecting all peoples and all faiths whether it suits you or not, in the name of freedom of religion.

Fundamentalism in any faith is rigid and emotions run high among fundamentalists. Fear and dependency are driving forces in fundamentalism. Understand that those who espouse it are motivated by fear and the rigidity is defense in the face of fear. Fundamentalists don't embrace change. Hating or disdain will not help someone examine their own beliefs and behavior but will serve to reinforce the behavior and make it more rigid. Most people who adopt rigidity do not recognize their unconscious motives. Listening to reasoning and finding common ground is a better response than condemnation.

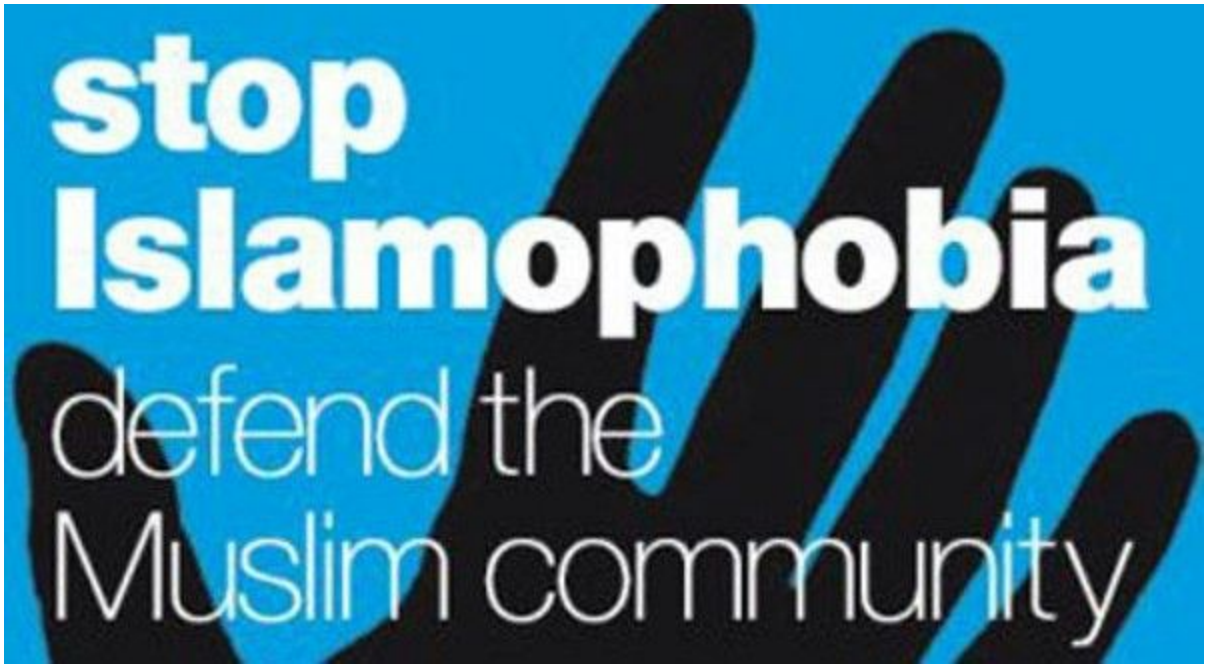
Spend time with Muslims in your community and ask them what you can do to help. Maybe hold a vigil or a public demonstration of solidarity with the faithful to show your support. Attend a service in a Mosque or other place of worship to foster understanding and invite them to your place of worship. Hold an interfaith dinner or event and invite people of other faiths and include Muslims.

Do not be silent in the face of terrorism—any terrorism. Harassment, ridicule, racism, name calling, marginalization, violence, acts of cruelty have no place in civil society particularly in holy places. It is hypocritical to pretend to be against terrorism or terrorists while perpetrating your own brand of terrorism. Do not tolerate terrorism in any form including micro-aggressions. Be clear and be vocal about the intolerance. If the offense is in writing or in the media, write a letter to the editor or go to the comment section of the website to make your thoughts known. Counter bullying where you find it on social media. Let the Muslims in and around your community know you care, embrace and support them. Be visible.

Educate self, others and your community about Islam. Invite a speaker to give a sermon in your place of worship; request books for your library or buy and donate books that help with understanding about what Islam is; bring Islam up in a meeting and discuss how to approach prejudice in your community; practice zero tolerance in the face of intimidation or harassment.

Keep and speak an open mind. Remind those who would close their minds and hearts to others what irreversible damage has been done and what evil perpetrated in the world in the name of religion.

Compiled and written by Barbara Kaufmann



14 ways you can fight Islamophobia

by Imam Abdul Malik Mujahid

Islamophobia is real. You may have personally experienced it or know a family member, friend or acquaintance who has. This new racism must be made known and fought against. Here are a couple of ways to combat this phenomenon:

1. Remember the Prophet. The Prophet was subject to horrible insults and hate crimes in his lifetime. He remained steadfast, patient and tolerant in the face of this Islamophobia. We must model this same behavior.Good and Evil deeds are not alike. *Requite evil with good, and he who is your enemy will become your dearest friend. But none will attain this save those who endure with fortitude and are greatly favored by God.* (Quran 41: 34-35) Pray that God guides these people who mock the Deen and one of God's Prophet.
2. Note that incidents of Islamophobia are not isolated. Whether it's threat of bombing Makkah, calling Islam evil, depicting the Prophet as a terrorist, disrespecting the Quran, discriminating against Muslims, profiling Hindus, Sikhs, or Latinos thinking they look like Muslims, torturing prisoners, bombing civilians, these are all signs of Islamophobia.
3. Also note that not all media or all non-Muslims support this type of insulting behavior. Many have been at the forefront of condemning torture, bombing and occupation. There are 75 million Americans who, despite all Islamophobic media, think positive about Islam and Muslims.
4. Equate racism, anti-Semitism and Islamophobia. They all are fruits of the same tree of hate.
5. Start using the word Islamophobia to describe any kind of hate crime or speech against Islam and Muslims. Doing this will make the term uniform and eventually, an accepted part of the English language the way the term "anti-Semitism" is.
6. If you are involved in interfaith work, bring up the topic of Islamophobia at your meetings. Stress the urgency and need for people of all faiths to help address and condemn it and all other forms of

intolerance publicly. If possible, get the organization to issue a public statement condemning Islamophobia in general, as well as in response to specific incidents like those mentioned above.

7. Sponsor reports on Islamophobia. Unless more documentation and yearly opinion surveys are conducted, people will continue to dismiss Islamophobia as a reality. So far, the UK is the only country which has officially commissioned a report on Islamophobia. The word has yet to become a part of American media.
8. Request your local library to purchase some of the latest books and articles on the phenomenon of Islamophobia. Some of these include Islamophobia: Making Muslims the Enemy, Islamophobia and Anti-Americanism: Causes and Remedies and Combating Islamophobia depends on unlearning intolerance
9. Report any and every incident of Islamophobia you, your family or friends encounter. The FBI collects hate crime statistics. Report Islamophobia to them at your local FBI office. File a report with the Council on American-Islamic Relations. They issue an annual report on Muslim civil rights in the US. Also report the crime to your local police office.
10. If it's an election year, make sure your local Congressman or Congresswoman who relies on your vote is aware of Islamophobia. Organize a delegation of Muslims in your constituency if you can and arrange to make a presentation on the topic, as well as a list of clear things you would like your Congressman or Congresswoman to do about Islamophobia if they want your vote.
11. For every incident of Islamophobia, write a letter to the editor and your local civil rights organization about it.
12. Organize a program at your local mosque or community center about the problem of Islamophobia today. Hold a brainstorming session as part of the program as well to discuss how to solve this problem.
13. Thank those who speak out or act against Islamophobia. A quick call, even leaving a message and/or a two-line email message are sufficient.
14. Make Dua that Allah guides those who hold Islamophobic views and practice Islamophobia. The Prophet made Dua for the Quraysh, asking for them to be guided because they were ignorant of what they were doing by committing Islamophobic acts and saying wrong things against Islam and the Prophet.

Source: SoundVision: http://www.soundvision.com/article/14-ways-you-can-fight-islamophobia

Anti-Muslim Bigotry

The Current Reality by Roqayah

Roqayah has been updating a thread which documents attacks on Muslims, mosques, and people of color perceived to be Muslim, since the attacks on Paris. The thread has been growing at an alarming rate and she has decided that while she will continue to publish updates on Twitter that it would be easier to share and parse through if she created a one-page entry on her website. please contact her at: https://www.roqchams.com/2015/12/06/anti-muslim-bigotry-since-november-2015/

The Anti-Defamation League

ADL's Role in Fighting Anti-Muslim Bigotry

ADL plays a leading role in exposing and combating anti-Muslim bigotry. As levels of anti-Muslim bigotry continue to surface in a variety of public forms and fora, ADL has produced reports and resources on several groups and individuals whose public campaigns have both sheltered and fueled such bigotry.
The threat of the infiltration of Sharia, or Islamic law, into the American court system is one of the more pernicious conspiracy theories to gain traction in our country in recent years. The notion that Islam is insidiously making inroads in the United States through the application of religious law is seeping into the mainstream, with even some presidential candidates voicing fears about the supposed threat of Sharia to our way of life and several states are considering or having already passed bills that would prohibit the application of Sharia law. ADL's anti-Muslim bigotry has extended to actively oppose anti-Sharia laws introduced around the country.

Source: ADL: http://www.adl.org/civil-rights/discrimination/c/anti-muslim-bigotry.html

Anti-Prejudice Tools

all guides created by CAIR (Council on American-Islamic Relations)

Unchallenged, Islamophobia will continue to increase. For this guide, CAIR is directing their recommendations to the Muslim community in the United States. While all of society should and must be involved in eradicating all forms of bigotry from our nation, Muslims must be willing to take the lead when it comes to pushing back against Islamophobia.

There are many recommendations in the guide, but the key point is this: Put your faith into action. Do something positive, however small, on a consistent basis.

"It should not be one percent of our attention or one percent of our time or one percent of our wealth," said CAIR Executive Director Nihad Awad. "We should be generous, as if we are giving to ourselves."

Source: CAIR: http://www.islamophobia.org/anti-prejudice-tools.html

Know your rights pocket guide

This guide informs American Muslims of our legal rights. These are the same rights all Americans enjoy, but the guide focuses on issues Muslims commonly face. The guide gives information about:

- Your rights as an employee
- Your rights as a student
- Your rights if stopped by the police
- Your rights if federal law enforcement contacts you
- Your rights if the Department of Homeland Security contacts you
- Your rights as an airline passenger
- How to tell if you might be on the no-fly list or a selectee list
- What to do if faced with job discrimination
- How to react to anti-Muslim hate crimes

- Recommendations for activism including local involvement, contacting your elected representatives, and media advocacy

View the guide. (The content of this guide is available in non-PDF format here.)

Islamophobia pocket guide

This guide defines Islamophobia and explains its features, then offers steps we can all take to help challenge Islamophobia.

View the guide

Community safety kit

This toolkit was developed to help Muslim communities protect against acts of discrimination or physical attacks and to secure their basic legal rights. It includes recommendations for safety and security measures and how to respond in the event of an incident.

View the safety kit

Securing religious liberty handbook

This toolkit was developed to help Muslim communities protect against state-level efforts to legislate against Islam and to preserve religious liberty for all. It includes lessons learned from efforts in several states as well as suggestions on what to do before such legislation is introduced, once it has been introduced, and if it is passed.

View the handbook

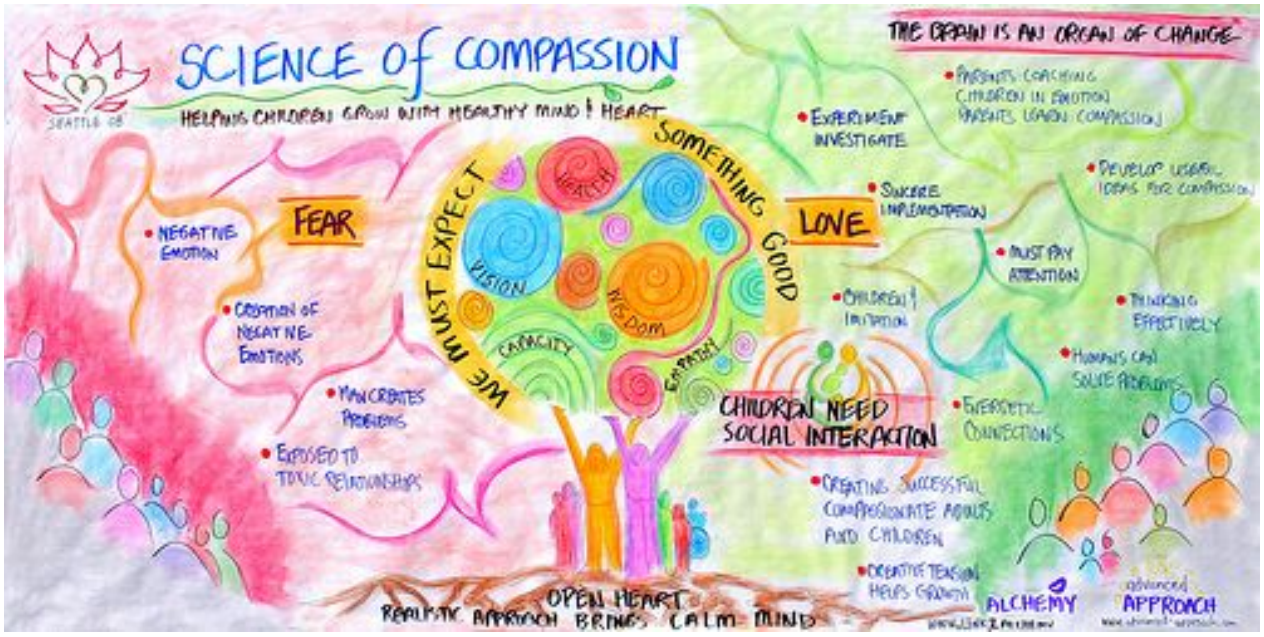
Compassionate Action Steps for Non-Muslims

The range can be from a simple act such as:

1. Joining Muslims in press releases and press conferences
2. When you directly or overhear an Islamophobic comment, respond with patience and tolerance and ask, "Do you know a Muslim personally?" Then, and/or invite them to join you on a visit to a mosque or to have tea with a muslim friend so they can explore their fear or opinions with personal experience.
3. Speaking with media and having different voices heard.
4. Be active on social media and provide support which includes sharing positive stories,
5. Joining a muslim friend and going to a mosque or inviting them to speak at other places of worship.
6. Call or Walk into a mosque and ask the Imam or office staff if you could sit down and talk, showing your support
7. Smiling at Muslims
8. Calling Muslim friends and family and letting know one cares

More Involved:

1. Convene a community dialogue with a facilitator (includes circle principles and rules for dialogue)
    - Contact the local mosque, synagogue, church, interfaith group (s) Human Relations Commission, University Student Affairs Dept.
    - Arrange a follow up service community-wide project
2. Host a dinner party inviting a Muslim (be sure to inquire about dietary sensitivities) and invite friends who may not necessarily seek out a Muslim.
3. Host a screening of a documentary that promotes interfaith peace (On Common Grounds etc)
4. Find out what service project the local mosque supports and show your support



Materials for Educators

Resources for fostering religious tolerance
This community-building toolkit helps neighbors connect with each other around issues of diversity, immigration, and religious difference.

Source: American Friends Service Committee:
https://afsc.org/resource/resources-fostering-religious-tolerance-quaker-meetings-and-churches

After San Bernardino

If we as adults who work for a social justice organization need inspiration right now, we imagine that teachers and young people in classrooms do too. Take the time to study past moments of crisis, and ask your students who or what inspires them when challenges feel insurmountable. Pin this poster to your classroom wall or schedule time for an inspiring documentary. But, most importantly, if you feel yourself or your students sinking into despair for a world that seems to be rotating wildly out of orbit, don't be afraid to ask the question, "How are we going to get out of here?" Because if we never ask the question, we'll never find an answer.

Source: Teaching Tolerance:
http://www.tolerance.org/blog/after-san-bernardino

Debunking Stereotypes About Muslims and Islam

Many religions have things in common. At the same time, each is unique. In the *shared* category, Islam, like Christianity and Judaism, descends from the first five books of the Bible. That's why some people

refer to members of all three religions as "followers of the Book." Some people also call the three religions "Abrahamic" because they all descended from Abraham. In the *unique* category, Jews were the first to believe that there was one God; Muslims believe that Muhammad was God's messenger and Christians believe that Jesus Christ was the Messiah.

In the same way that religions are both alike and unique, so, too are the members of those religions. In this activity, students learn more about Muslims in the United States and practice graph-reading skills.

Source: Teaching Tolerance:
http://www.tolerance.org/lesson/debunking-stereotypes-about-muslims-and-islam

Confronting Students' Islamophobia

How do you address Islamophobia in your classroom? What do you do when you see that prejudice and stereotypes are linked to in-the-moment fears?

Source: Teaching Tolerance
http://www.tolerance.org/blog/confronting-students-islamophobia

The Alwaleed Centre at the University of Edinburgh
All guides listed are published by the Alwaleed Centre and can be accessed at:
http://www.ed.ac.uk/literatures-languages-cultures/alwaleed/resources/classroom

Faith Guide to Islam

Although produced with higher education establishments in mind, this guide produced by the Higher Education Academy is an excellent introduction to Islam and explores a number of challenges facing Muslim students

Brief guidance for handling Muslim parental concern

A very useful guide produced by British Muslims for a Secular Democracy exploring potential points of concern for Muslim parents. A worthwhile read for any teachers teaching Muslim pupils.

Guidelines for educators on countering intolerance and discrimination against Muslims

These guidelines, produced by the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, aim to assist educators in identifying manifestations of intolerance and discrimination against Muslims in schools and to provide suggestions on how to prevent and respond to this phenomenon.

1001 Interventions
1001 Inventions is an extraordinary organisation promoting the many contributions Islamic scientists have made throughout the centuries. 1001 Inventions have produced a range of teaching resources, including a supplement for Scottish teachers, exploring a wide variety of subjects from the camera obscura to man's first attempt at flight. A great way to give pupils a glimpse at the extraordinary achievements of the Islamic world.

Source: http://www.1001inventions.com/media/teachers-pack-download

Interfaith Explorers (Charter Partner)

Interfaith Explorers is a free, UNESCO supported, online learning resource. The program helps pupils explore cultural diversity, understand and respect differences and embrace similarities. The Learning Unit at the heart of the Interfaith Explorers is designed to give teachers everything they need to plan a comprehensive programme of learning. It fulfills the need for a trustworthy bank of resources for pupils to explore different faiths and cultures in the world around them.

Interfaith Explorers is a project of the Maimonides Interfaith Foundation (www.maimonides-foundation.org), an international charity, supported by UNESCO, which brings people together through art, culture and education.

Founded by UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador Professor Nasser David Khalili the Foundation recognises that tensions existing in the world today are the result of ignorance and lack of understanding. If ignorance is the problem, then education must be the answer.

Source: http://interfaithexplorers.com/

Islamophobia Education Pack

A useful teaching resource created by Show Racism the Red Card. This pack contains activities which have been designed to help young people challenge stereotypes and prejudice towards Muslims and gain a greater historical and political awareness of the climate which has enable Islamophobia to flourish in recent times. A Scottish supplement can also be downloaded to make the pack relevant to the Scottish curriculum.

This pack is free to download but is meant to be used in conjunction with a DVD which must be purchased. Follow the link below if you wish to purchase the DVD for your school.

Source: http://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files//islamophobia_ed_pack.pdf

Public Broadcasting Service (PBS)

A series of lesson plans that can help guide and inspire classroom teaching and learning. Activities range from analyzing political cartoons to creating maps, modeling a peace summit, and exploring interpretations of the Quran. Each lesson provides links to necessary resources.

Source: PBS Global Connections:
http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/globalconnections/mideast/educators/lessons.html#women

Organizations

The Chicago Project on Security and Terrorism (CPOST) is an international security affairs research institute based at the University of Chicago. Founded in 2004 by Robert Pape, Professor of Political Science at the University of Chicago, CPOST is best known for creating and maintaining the most comprehensive and transparent suicide attack database available. Since its creation, it has expanded beyond terrorism research, to now include the study of U.S.-China relations and humanitarian intervention policy, with the goal of creating new knowledge and policy initiatives to inform decision-makers on the limits of intervention in certain cases. Our goal is to produce peer-reviewed scholarship that bridges the gap between scholars and policymakers via conferences and media engagement.

The CPOST Suicide Attack Database, the foundation upon which the institute was built, comprises the most complete list of suicide attacks since 1982 currently available. All data is freely available to the public. This allows users to review and analyze the complete set of suicide attacks independent of CPOST's analysis and findings.

#CompassionConvos evolved from a friendship that developed between Louisa Hext, who is a white, Jewish woman from the UK and Marie Roker-Jones, an African-American, Christian wife and mother. As they began to share their life experiences, they discussed invisible privilege, assumptions, denials, and forgiveness. Louisa and Marie recognized the need for creating safe spaces to have these ongoing, honest, and difficult conversations. They also realized how these conversations are the building blocks to awareness of implicit bias and taking compassionate action.

#CompassionConvos is a compassion movement challenging our biases. It's a call to action bringing people together to create individual and systemic change and an initiative of the Charter for

Compassion. Our goal: to enable people to see others through a different lens and inspire compassionateaction. https://www.facebook.com/CompassionConvos

Jewish Voice for Peace (JVP) opposes anti-Jewish, anti-Muslim, and anti-Arab bigotry and oppression. JVP seeks an end to the Israeli occupation of the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and East Jerusalem; security and self-determination for Israelis and Palestinians; a just solution for Palestinian refugees based on principles established in international law; an end to violence against civilians; and peace and justice for all peoples of the Middle East: https://jewishvoiceforpeace.org. JVP has a special project devoted to challenging Islamophobia and anti-Arab racism.

The Parliament of World Religions (http://www.parliamentofreligions.org) was created to cultivate harmony among the world's religious and spiritual communities and foster their engagement with the world and its guiding institutions in order to achieve a just, peaceful and sustainable world.

The Parliament maintains a number of resources which are related to issues of Islamophobia: http://www.parliamentofreligions.org/search/node/islamophobia

The Pluralism Project at Harvard University: http://pluralism.org/publications/new-religious-america. The mission of the Pluralism Project is to help Americans engage with the realities of religious diversity through research, outreach, and the active dissemination of resources. The Pluralism Project: World Religions in America is a two decade-long research project with current funding from the Lilly Endowment and the E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation to engage students in studying the new religious diversity in the United States. The Project explores particularly the communities and religious traditions of Asia and the Middle East that have become woven into the religious fabric of the United States in the past twenty-five years.

United Religions Initiative (URI) is a global grassroots interfaith network that cultivates peace and justice by engaging people to bridge religious and cultural differences and work together for the good of their communities and the world.

URI implements its mission through local and global initiatives that build the capacity of our more than 600 member groups and organizations, called Cooperation Circles, to engage in community action such as conflict resolution and reconciliation, environmental sustainability, education, women's and youth programs, and advocacy for human rights. URI has a rich archive of materials on Islamophobia, including a Tool Kit for dealing with responses to hostility against faith communities: https://www.uri.org/files/resource_files/URI%20TOOLKIT%20Interfaith%20Responses%20to%20Islamophobia.pdf

Articles and Sources for Reflection

The Curse and the Promise: Religion and Violence

Abdal Hakim Murad

A lecture given at St Martin-in-the-Fields, London, on 2 November 2015

One of my favourite novels is called *Death and the Dervish*. It's the major work of the mid-20th century Bosnian novelist Mesa Selimović. He's been turned into something of an icon in post-independence Bosnia, with boulevards, high schools and various public libraries now carrying his name. In the contested, competitively-loved city of Sarajevo, which sometimes calls itself the Balkan Jerusalem, where religious faultlines only a generation ago collapsed into catastrophe, he's taken as a helpful icon of Bosnian togetherness, a Muslim anxious about religious divides — Orthodox, Catholic, Jewish, Muslim — which under Tito had been forcibly subsumed under the slogan of Brotherhood and Unity, in a new secular world in which class, and not religion, would henceforth be the criterion of worth and identity.

Selimović, child of a city both divided and united by its Abrahamic plurality, was not a happy man, nor did he write happy books. *Death and the Dervish*, a dark tale in which all the action seems to happen at night, tells us the story of the head of a dervish retreat prominent in the city during the eighteenth

century. He is a respectable, literate preacher who presides competently over his order's serene and complex Sufi ceremonies. His comfort-zone is invaded, however, when he learns that his brother has been arrested and sent to prison on a serious but frustratingly vague and misty charge: the city police and bureaucracy are willing to offer no clear idea of what the offence might have been. In this Kafkaesque darkness the imam prevaricates, hesitant to act, intervene or speak up on his brother's behalf, until, some days later, the news arrives of his brother's execution.

His agony and shock are described in the title of Chapter Six, which bears a Koranic quotation: *My God, I have no-one besides You and my brother*. This is, of course, from the story of Cain and Abel; and he feels the parallel spreading like a stain of dark ink across his soul. In a way he is like Hamlet, whose indecision, apparently peaceable and benign, allows moral darkness to prevail in his family, leading to a terrible guilt and his own destruction.

Shattered by the news, Selimović's dervish stands up before his mosque congregation, in the dim candlelight. They all already know what has happened. And he says this:

> *Sons of Adam! I will not give a sermon. I could not, even if I wanted to. But I believe that you would hold it against me, if I did not speak about myself now, at this moment, the darkest in my life. What I have to say has never been more important to me, but I am not trying to gain anything. Nothing, except to see compassion in your eyes. I did not call you my brothers, although you are that more than ever, but rather sons of Adam, invoking that which we all have in common. This crime concerns you as well, since you know the scripture: whoever kills an innocent man, it is as if he has killed all men. They have killed all of us countless times, my murdered brothers, but we are horrified when they strike our most beloved. Maybe I should hate them, but I cannot; I do not have two hearts, one for hatred and one for love. The heart that I have knows only grief now.*
>
> *I am like Cain, to whom God sent a crow that dug up the soil, to teach him how to bury the body of his dead brother. I, the unfortunate Cain, more unfortunate than a black crow. I did not save him while he was alive; I did not see him after he died. Now I have no one except myself, my Lord, and my sorrow. Give me strength, so that I will not despair from brotherly and humanly grief, or poison myself with hatred. I repeat the words of Noah: Separate me from them, and judge us.*
>
> *And now go home, and leave me alone with my misfortune. It is easier to endure, now that I have shared it with you.*

This is, as you may have guessed, the beginning, not the end of the book, which then charts his agonising descent into doubt and amorality. But in this tragic soliloquy, contemplating the claustrophobic darkness that now surrounds him, the dervish is trying to voice several painful insights about our human condition. All revolve around what his language calls *malodušnost*, which means, roughly, to have a diminished soul. When we fail the absolute duty and challenge of fraternity we become smaller and frailer; and the experience of that shrivelling of the soul can be as painful as the memory of our original dereliction.

Selimović tells us that how we discharge our duty to our brother, which in the rather thinly-populated world of Adam's time essentially meant to everyone, is going to make or break our spirit. Nothing

agitates and abrades the human consciousness quite like the remembering of violence, weakness, vulnerability, and our own reluctance to do something about those afflictions. Complicity causes us to rot; for the rest of our lives we relive the moment when we seemed to hold in our hands the miracle of free will, an actual fork in the road open before us; now, although we can look back, we cannot turn back. Put to the test, we were not our brother's keeper.

There is a tragic depth here, but it is not the tragic depth of he who would simply counsel a peaceable response. The dervish's homily asks for forgiveness for the bearer of false witness who has destroyed his brother. Could I do the same in his shoes? Probably not. Yet it cannot end here. Forgiveness and passivity are unnatural bedfellows. Forgiveness is more whole and healing when we know that we might, just, become instruments of some just resolution. Because we are made in God's image, inertness is foreign to our constitution. In the prospect of restitution, even of some form of justice, there is a healing. We are not to sentence ourselves or others to permanent guilt and distress at the memory of our own inaction, or that of others. It is monstrous to impose or to expect such corrosion.

'There is life for you in restorative justice, O possessors of souls', says the Muslim scripture. To forgive a murderer may be a miraculous sign of forbearance and trust in God's creation, of transcending the certainly heathen impulse of revenge. Restorative justice, however, is something else; it is not tied to revenge. It can bring a certain lightening of the burden. The relatives of crime victims sometimes speak of what they call 'closure' when a due sentence has been passed, say on a murderer or a child molester. In the United States, families traditionally have the right to witness the murderer's execution. In our soft Europe we wince at what we dismiss as trans-Atlantic crudeness, and perhaps there is a sort of absent mindedness here, rather as we happily eat chicken sandwiches but have no desire to see how the chicken's life ended. But what are called the right-to-view laws only endure because families *do* often report a certain strange peacefulness once they have witnessed the execution. Again, this is not simply the acceptable face of revenge.

Brooks Douglas, who wrote Oklahoma's new right-to-view statute a decade after his parents were murdered, said this: 'It is not retaliation or retribution that I seek in witnessing the execution of the man who killed my parents. It is closure. Closure on an era of my life which I never chose to enter. Closure of years of anger and hate.'

Justice does not normally *remedy* a crime, but we are reassured when we recall that it may help to preserve the order of the world; despite our squeamishness we know that when justice is rightly administered some sort of holiness fills the air, a presence of the *mysterium tremendum*, the deep, solemn mystery of God and His will for equity and safety among His servants. Even St Paul, sometimes read as an abolisher of the Jewish law, at least, also writes in Romans that 'the law is holy, and the commandment is holy, righteous and good.' He is telling us that it is not only useful, but *holy*.

Whether or not we support the death penalty, which I cite only as an example, we are likely to recognise that despite our anxieties the Queen's peace will always depend on punishment. If convicted, Cain ought to be punished. And to fail to punish will not only endanger the good order of the world, but is likely to purtify our souls. It is not justice *or* forgiveness, but, we may ideally hope, justice *and* forgiveness.

This is, a few radical pacifists excepted, a pretty normal understanding in our three monotheisms. But as so often in our chaotic human world the matter does not stop with crime and punishment. What if

there is no constable and no magistrate? What if one is a refugee, or stateless, or living in a failed state? What if there is no human arbiter who might re-establish a settled pattern of life and bring offenders to book? If one is, say, in a Croydon riot, and the police are nowhere in sight, what is the right course of action? May one defend one's shop and family against looters and thieves?

This is not, of course, a matter only for theologians. Section 76 of the 2008 Criminal Justice Act sets out our common law understanding of legitimate self-defence. Turning its pages I find that subsection 5a even makes it legal for me to use disproportionate, but not grossly disproportionate, force when defending myself against an intruder who has broken into my house. The courts will generally consider any violent action which I honestly and instinctively think is necessary for a legitimate purpose to fall within the purpose of legitimate self-defence, as defined in English law; in fact, this subsection, introduced as recently as 2013, significantly *expands* my right to use violence to defend my property, family and home. The same applies in a public place if I witness, for instance, a mugging on the Piccadilly Line, and become involved in the defence of the victim. In some cases I may even be prosecuted for inaction. I am very much my brother's keeper.

Again, on the issue of self-defence where the police are not to hand, we are likely to be united. Who respects the bystander who just passes by on the other side when a woman is being molested, or seeks to intervene only with words of pious exhortation? But what if we enlarge our compass again, and zoom out, to view great collective issues of war and peace? Clearly, unless we are convinced pacifists, even on this macro scale we will allow human communities, and not just individuals, the use of force in self-defence. If Israeli soldiers or settlers try to demolish Palestinian homes, to take one topical example, it is hard to deny their victims, as individuals and communities, the right to raise their hands in self-defence. And this surely applies on the national level as well. To remain with Palestine, since it has been cited so emphatically by a previous speaker in this series, there would seem to be no ground in our English legal precedent and historical norms to deny the Palestinians the right to defend themselves. To propose a simple thought-experiment, if what befell Palestine in 1948 had happened to us here in England, we would presumably have fought; neighbouring states would have come to our aid, and probably many of us would still be fighting.

Are we now feeling a little less comfortable? Perhaps fidgeting ever so slightly, and wondering where tonight's speaker is likely to go? You are right to fidget. I do so as well. But if we are morally serious we ought to look this one in the eye. Should self-defence apply only to our own British selves, while on others we wish an interminable Peace Process while the lands of the victims are steadily curetted away, as a whole country is subjected to a kind of death by a thousand cuts? At the end of October I read on the website of the human rights activist Philip Weiss, that, quote, "Israeli forces have killed 65 Palestinians this month, including 14 children.' The Palestinians in their weakness are trying to resist the progressive confiscation of their land. I suppose that we would do the same, if England and our own suburbs were facing the bulldozers. So why do we find their resistance so morally difficult? If I fight back when my house in Croydon is vandalised by intruders, and would fight back if my country was occupied, why should this not introduce a universal principle, available to other races, peoples, and faith groups?

As the poet Rumi says:

> *'Knowledge and wealth and office and rank and fortune are a mischief in the hands of the evil-natured.*
>
> *Therefore the Jihad was made obligatory on true believers for this purpose, namely, that they might take the spear-point from the hand of the madman.'*

So far our argument has been, I think, roughly consensual. I have given a topical example, but the rule seems to be rather simple and universal. Of course, if someone stabs my wife, I should fight back; if my country is invaded and occupied, I should defend it. The law is holy precisely when it prevents or punishes aggression. The three monotheisms largely concur on this. So why, at this point of the argument, do we feel a certain agitation?

I think the reason is not, in fact, located in an assumption that non-Europeans ought not to have a right which we would claim for ourselves. It is more disturbing and challenging. It is to do with unease over the due boundaries of our resistance. Does subsection 5a *explain* the dividing line between excessive and grossly excessive force? It does not. Can religion do so? On the face of it, it seems to insist that it does. Here, for instance, is the Qur'an:

> *And if one has responded to injustice to no greater extent than the injury he received, and is again tyrannized, God will help him; for God is Pardoning and Forgiving.* (22.60)

The medieval commentator Razi here gives the sense: the believer who fights proportionately, but is thereafter still the victim of aggression, will certainly be given victory by God; but he adds: 'even though God gives you this guarantee of victory, he offers you something which is better: forgiveness and pardon.'

This is the principle of proportionality, which as the American scholar John Kelsay has shown is a key principle in both Islamic and Christian theories of just war. And the option of forgiveness is provided as well.

This sounds easy. But how easy is it for religious scholars to explain proportionality in practice? Probably, if we are honest, not very easy at all. Every human situation has its own logic; the boundary between legitimate and transgressive violence will fluctuate wildly from encounter to encounter. In a life-or-death situation, emotions can flare, and under such circumstances we find ourselves doing things which posterity may or may not find it possible to forgive.

And yet everyone asks religion to furnish guidance, and to keep it as clear as possible. What must we, and what must we not do, to protect Abel, or to prevent a repeat offence? General injunctions to act morally and proportionately can abound in a generously gaseous profusion; but what combatants and victims would really like to hear is clear and practical instructions. Nowadays some might urge the setting-aside of religious talk in favour of an allegedly neutral and objective secular theory of the right conduct of war and international affairs. Leave Hebron, or Kabul, or Srinagar, to the diplomats! But this turns out not to help very much. Just as subsection 5a cannot really tell me when I should use a kitchen knife on a burglar, so also the brave declarations of the United Nations, in themselves so precious, seem only to offer limited guidance. It is fine that we have the Convention on Cluster Munitions, for instance, and I find it a source of pride that the United Kingdom is a signatory. But we

all know how blunt an instrument the law is in practice. Whatever the law might be, the ultimate decision in the real world is likely to stay in the hands of the combatants; it is they who decide what might be a legitimate use of force under the circumstances.

In our literature perhaps the best-known recital of this fear is Shakespeare's Henry the Fifth, as the king warns the people of a besieged town that when his soldiers' blood is up, neither he nor any moral law can answer for the consequences. These are his great and sobering lines:

> *I will not leave the half-achieved Harfleur*
> *Till in her ashes she lie buried.*
> *The gates of mercy shall be all shut up,*
> *And the flesh'd soldier, rough and hard of heart,*
> *In liberty of bloody hand shall range*
> *With conscience wide as hell, mowing like grass*
> *Your fresh-fair virgins and your flowering infants.*
> *What is it then to me, if impious war,*
> *Array'd in flames like to the prince of fiends,*
> *Do, with his smirch'd complexion, all fell feats*
> *Enlink'd to waste and desolation?*
> *What is't to me, when you yourselves are cause,*
> *If your pure maidens fall into the hand*
> *Of hot and forcing violation?*
> *What rein can hold licentious wickedness*
> *When down the hill he holds his fierce career?*
> *We may as bootless spend our vain command*
> *Upon the enraged soldiers in their spoil*
> *As send precepts to the leviathan*
> *To come ashore.*

In our modern scenarios, not enough has changed. Generals and politicians will still shrug, and blame the chaos of war itself and the passions which it perhaps uniquely enflames. Conventions and rules for armed conflict are right and proper, but the boundary between necessary and grossly-excessive force cannot be successfully policed by the instructions of anxious bureaucrats at the United Nations. All too often the men in blue helmets appear after the last shot has been fired, to investigate atrocities, and to file reports.

Above all, religion must surely step in here to define, in a world of white-hot hasty passions in which deliberative judgement is often difficult or swept completely away, the limits of self-defence. What is the use of religion, I ask myself, if it cannot help me to discern my own spirit, and know the difference between justice and vengeance? Between proportionate and excessive self-defence? Between protecting myself from a subsequent lifetime of guilt at my own inaction, and a no less ravaging guilt at my own excessive and vicious action?

We religionists will need to be honest about this. Have all rabbis spoken out against what has happened to the Palestinians? Did all Anglican bishops condemn Bomber Harris during the Second World War? And what precisely were the Slovak bishops doing? And in the modern Islamic world,

exactly how many are condemning suicide bombings against random Israelis and others? Some do, but we are haunted by the fact that some do not. Here, surely, there is a shameful *trahison des clercs*.

There is a kind of excuse for which we reach. In 1943 we might have thought that the Reich would surrender if her beautiful cities were reduced to smoking rubble. It was a partial, ill-informed judgement of its time; and six hundred thousand civilians died. Today, some might imagine that the fate of the Palestinians will be improved rather than exacerbated by suicide bombing, a practice unknown to Muslims until some twenty years ago. That too is surely the consequence of emotion, excitement, and even a kind of fear and despair driven by current events and relentless media frenzy. Yet surely we find such excuses underwhelming and distressing at best.

I myself once stayed in a refugee camp near Jerusalem, where I found that some still defended terrorism because they felt they had no other weapon. But most, I found, felt shamed and humiliated. Their claim to be on a pristine moral high ground, the weak and poor victims of Israel's military Goliath, a noble sense of self which sustained them and in some measure healed them in their exile, was now obscurely besmirched. Justice is a healing, to be sure; but ugly disproportion adds to the soul's distress, heaping on our wounds the desperate feeling of shame.

Here we ought to stand, I feel sure. How terrible that religion, whose rich resources for helping us with anger management and self-control seem so much deeper than any international convention could ever be, should sometimes seem to act as a magnifying glass for our rage and desperation, and find through a disastrous casuistry some theology of the moment which allows us to defend the indefensible in the name of faith. Read an al-Qaida justification of suicide bombing, and one will be struck by the vast effort made to reconfigure ancient texts and values to deliver what is taken to be a strategically-useful weapon. This is what we might call the Guantanamo school of scriptural interpretation: treat the text badly enough and it will end up saying whatever we want to hear. And who is there who will intervene, to rescue the texts from this kind of torture?

My talk this evening must certainly not be a mere commentary on current events. But Muslims still need to explicate this present and very new crisis, not least because of the disgrace which it brings. One needs to make the point again and again to a dismayed world that classical Sunni Islam has nothing to do with the new zealotries, the phenomenon of *Tanfir*, as we call it: that which is so vehement that in the name of the One God it ironically repels humanity from the monotheistic principle itself. Why does the Nigerian group Boko Haram not only attack churches, but also explode massive suicide bombs in Sunni mosques? Because its theology is not recognised as Sunni. Boko Haram's founder Muhammad Yusuf, who established the Ibn Taymiyya mosque in the northern city of Maiduguri, studied with a certain Shaykh Ja'far Muhammad Adam, a graduate not of a mainstream Sunni university but of the Saudi Islamic University in Madina. Shaykh Ja'far came to distance himself from Muhammad Yusuf's extremism, but the genealogy is noted by many Nigerians to this day. In Indonesia, the religious scholars have noted the strong convergence between Saudi types of Puritanism recently exported to the country, and the doctrinal ideologies of some of the country's most intransigent radical groups, including the best-known, Lasykar Jihad.

In Iraq, during the years of sanctions, some Saudi agencies were working hard to create a network of fundamentalist colleges; some of their graduates eventually joined the complex sea of radical factions which emerged after the 2003 invasion.

The determination evident in some Saudi institutions to push the Islamic world in the direction of a puritanical literalism, lubricated by oil wealth and excellent relations with America, has over the past few years placed traditional Sunni Islam on the defensive. At a time when the Muslim world most needs to marshal its resources for dealing with the philosophical, moral and spiritual crises and challenges of our age, these institutions have issued a siren call to a desert Puritanism hostile to philosophical theology, mysticism, and the classical formulations of Islamic jurisprudence. Instead of the careful wisdom of ages directing our reading of the scriptures, there are only our own fallible convictions about how the earliest Muslims might have behaved, had they been in our situation.

The timing has been disastrous. For most of the twentieth century Muslim scholars strove to interpret and reinterpret their ancient and hallowed legislation in ways that could allow Muslims some workable accommodation, if not agreement, with the emerging global consensus. The Sharia, which Muslim scholars agree is not a single body of statutes but a rich and diverse legal tradition, turned out to lend itself admirably well to such a project. In particular, the practice known as *tanqih al-manat* – identifying the context for laws in order to determine their current form and application; and *maslaha mursala*, taking due account of public interest and utility, moved the jurists of the great seats of Muslim learning in the direction of accommodation, which was taken to be an authentic, not a compromised, jurisprudential strategy in a time of complex challenges. This eirenic tendency saw itself as profoundly rooted in the assurance that God's law exists to instantiate mercy, not hardship; far from representing a concession to a secular age, as the fundamentalists thought, it maintained a prudential option for gentleness which long predated the impact of the modern world. Even in the sixteenth century the great Ottoman jurist Birgivi was urging this: 'In our time, it is impossible, I repeat, impossible, to take the more stringent interpretation in any legal matter.' This wisdom permitted the flourishing of an Ottoman and Levantine cosmopolitanism in which different denominations were able to thrive and interact for centuries. Thus was monotheism defended from weakness and discredit.

By contrast, we have the new Puritanism, intolerant of internal Muslim difference and maximally suspicious of non-Muslim intent. Let me cite just one example. Most Muslims are disturbed by the verdict of the leading Saudi scholar, the late Muhammad bin Salih al-Uthaimin, who wrote this:

> *Today, why should we not wage war on America, Russia, France and England? What is the reason? It is because we lack the power and weaponry which they have developed in this age. What is in our hands resembles kitchen knives by comparison, opposing rockets.*

What precise message is this sending to Muslims in the West? That the only reason why they are not at war with the host countries is because of a disparity in military hardware? That seems to be the implication of the shaykh's dictum. But this view is eccentric, regarded with abhorrence by more mainstream Sunni scholarship. The more normal view is articulated by the Mauritanian jurist Abdullah Bin Bayyah, who tells us this:

> *The Prophet, may God bless him and give him peace, says: 'Not one of you has faith until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself'. ... Brother here does not only mean your brother Muslim, but it refers to the greater and broader brotherhood of our Adamic nature. It is a brotherhood in the sense that we are all from Adam, that Adam is the father of us all. ... We have to be good citizens because an excellent Muslim is also an excellent citizen in the society that he lives in. ... In addition, we have to recognize that creation itself is a creation of*

> *diversity. It is a creation in which you see variations of colours. God did not make all the trees one, and He did not make all the animals one. He diversified His creation. He diversified even our colours and our languages, and He did all this for a wisdom. Not only that, Allah made us on different religions and different paths, and He did that intentionally because … there is a divine wisdom in the differences that we have.*

The new fundamentalisms, sometimes fuelled by petrodollars, treat this ancient wisdom with suspicion and contempt. And so the story of contemporary Islamic extremism is so often that each movement is succeeded by one more extreme still, as we saw with the splintering of radical movements in Algeria, and as currently we see al-Qaida giving way to movements that are even more radical and outrageous, which turn on it and attack it. Under such wildly anarchic and furious circumstances the only option for traditional Sunni scholarship is often to flee or face execution.

In areas controlled by extremists, Sunni scholars may be persecuted or killed. In other places, however, they may face a different fate: brutal co-option by secular regimes. In an increasing number of countries they are forbidden to preach their own sermons, having to read out a state sermon instead. Criticism of governmental abuse and corruption is savagely punished. They have hence found themselves caught between two fires, with the result that everywhere their authority and reach is being eroded. Still, we find that they remain unanimous in their condemnation of al-Qaeda, Isis, and the other new Tanfiri movements.

Where mainstream voices are silenced or repressed it becomes easier for the extremists to step in. But here Muslims need to grapple with a painful question. One can comprehend the new fundamentalism's rejection of classical forms of religious authority. But can one so easily account for the fact that so many young people do not only reject the classical Sunni rules, but seem to reach for disturbingly brutal new interpretations? The existence of a possible extreme has always been known in the Islamic world, although it has very seldom won favour. In fact the Prophet spoke against *ghuluww*, which translates very well as 'extremism', saying that some people go into religion so hard that they come out the other side, as an arrow passes through its target. And he also warned:

> *On the Day of Judgement there shall be two people for whom I will not intercede: an unjust, arbitrary ruler, and an extremist, who departs from religion by his way of entering it.*

It is clear that the Prophet despised the type of the fanatic. So why is that extreme end of the spectrum being populated now? Is it enough to blame Saudi largesse?

Clearly it is not a sufficient explanation. The Saudis have, in fact, manfully struggled to ride the tiger of fundamentalism, supporting it in general but dealing firmly and sometimes brutally with its most political and extreme manifestations at home. And to be fair, those who in various corners of the world are now defending the Saudi theology, often find themselves the targets of the new radicals. Last year the prominent Nigerian Salafi cleric Muhammad Awal Adam was assassinated after criticising them in a sermon.

So doctrinal novelty has been a factor, but not the only one. We need a further interpretation, of a more numinous kind. How to diagnose the iron in the soul, which causes young people to reach for the most extreme available interpretation?

Let us step back and try to find some parallels. Take the atrocities of the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia. One explanation for them points to the extreme humiliation the population had suffered under the previous administration, intensified by American aerial bombing that according to some estimates claimed a hundred thousand civilian lives. In fact, three times as many bombs were dropped on Cambodia than had landed on Japan during the entirety of the Second World War. The countryside was torn apart or incinerated with napalm. As one Western journalist observed: 'it is difficult to imagine the intensity of their hatred towards those who are destroying their villages and property.' The monster called Pol Pot crawled out of this cauldron, determined to shatter traditional society, and to rebuild a new, Maoist order which would restore his people's self-respect and heal their humiliation.

Another case, perhaps more familiar. This time it is Hitler in 1940, arriving for the signing of France's capitulation in the famous railway carriage at Compiègne. The American correspondent William Shirer saw his face, writing: 'his expression, a sort of scornful, inner joy at being present at this great reversal of fate. … It is a magnificent gesture of defiance, or burning contempt for this place now and all that it has stood for in the twenty-two years since it witnessed the humbling of the German Empire.'

In those two decades that produced Hitler, Germany had been subjected to the extreme humiliations of the Treaty of Versailles. The crippling war reparations were described by John Meynard Keynes as a 'Carthaginian peace' which would destroy Germany. In that world of unemployment, hyperinflation and debt, the madness of Nazism took root easily, even in the land of Goethe and Schubert.

The disproportionate, almost cultic and ritual violence, of Kampuchea and the Third Reich, thus seems to be explicable, at least in part, as the result of years of extreme humiliation and a thirst for a vengeance that would re-establish a lost self-esteem. Nothing could be allowed to stand in the way of that project. In the case of both Maoism and Nazism, the ideology was secular, taking the form essentially of a kind of totalitarian Darwinism.

In the contemporary Middle East, decades of economic and social mismanagement by desperately corrupt regimes, which themselves replaced the humiliating years of colonial rule, produced a weakness which then enabled the Western invasion of Iraq. The exact motivations and circumstances for that may or may not be unveiled when we finally see the Chilcot Report. However even Tony Blair, not a man given to undue self-criticism, has conceded that the 2003 invasion was a factor in the rise of tanfiri extremism.

But before the invasion there were the sanctions. Who now remembers the harrowing letter sent by the Iraqi Medical Association to the *British Medical Journal* in 2001, which said: 'Thousands of Iraqis are still dying from malnutrition, infectious diseases, and the effects of shortages or unavailability of essential drugs. More and more children are dying from cancer, probably related to contamination of the environment with depleted uranium.' UNICEF calculated that around half a million children died as a result of the sanctions. Most notoriously, Madeleine Albright was asked on live television: 'We have heard that half a million children have died. I mean, that's more children than died in Hiroshima. And, you know, is the price worth it?' Albright replied: 'We think the price is worth it.'

Into this apocalyptic situation came the invasion, bringing yet another experience of humiliation. It was probably in the detention camps, whereas at Guantanamo, culturally-specific types of

interrogation procedures were adopted, such as nudity, the use of dogs, and religious abuse, all designed to break the resistance of Arab prisoners, that the new extremist factions were born.

It is often said that the original sin in the West's relationship with the Middle East was its refusal to deal equally with Israelis and Palestinians. Certainly that is the final proof, for many sermonisers, of the Anglo-Saxon world's indifference to Arab and Muslim rights. Robin Cook, in his moving farewell speech to Parliament, also highlighted the foundational centrality of the Palestine issue to current Muslim grievances.

But although America's closeness to Israel certainly added to Iraqi humiliation, and made collaboration with occupation psychologically more hard, this explanation is not nearly sufficient. Sometimes, too, it is invoked as the solitary master-explanation of all the region's woes.

The loss of Palestine, and the ongoing loss of the remaining Palestinian lands, have clearly made it harder for the Islamic world to love the West. There will not be a resolution of this any time soon. But this must never be deployed as an excuse for breaking moral boundaries. To say that all Hamas can do to hit back at Israeli violence is to fire missiles at random civilian targets is to adopt a utilitarian calculus, driven by humiliation and a longing for revenge. And yet we find that the Prophet of Islam, who once found a woman's body on a battlefield, forbade the killing of women and children. This is a scripture narrated by Imam Muslim, on unimpeachable authority. Proportionality is a rule in just war theory; so also is what is called discrimination. Again John Kelsay has shown in great detail that Islamic law respects the principle of discrimination, and opposes the targeting of noncombatants.

Just as Jews must condemn Jewish extremists, and Christians must condemn Christian extremists, including many on the US evangelical right who have supported violent policies towards the Arab world, so too must Muslims take risks and adopt controversial positions, opposing the logic of rage-driven revenge and tribal solidarity.

What are the prospects? It may be that the current escalation, whereby every extremism generates one still more extreme, will eventually collapse when the society and economy it seeks to produce turns out to be impossible. The Ottoman scholar we cited earlier explained that the jurist must always seek the lighter and easier interpretation because of the weakness of the people of the age. He was writing in the early sixteenth century, in an age of faith! Today, with hedonism, atheism, and a myriad of alternatives snapping at the heels of religion, all of them only a couple of clicks away, we are clearly weaker still. It seems unlikely that a fanatic religious utopia could last long before collapsing into disillusionment. It is interesting that on Fridays, those who cross the border from Turkey into Iran leave behind them a land where the mosques are full, and enter an Islamic Republic where the mosques seem almost deserted.

The Cain and Abel story, a kind of primordial parable of the human tragedy, needs to be read carefully by those who would build holy dictatorships in our time. Religious witness needs to protect our brothers, not only from physical harm, but also from the spiritual assassination that comes through any thoughtless and brutal coercion directed at their innermost convictions. Capitalism's entertainment culture may finally serve as the crow which disposes of the decomposing body of a brother slain by the wrong kind of religious politics. In a few years we may see many such bodies littering the streets of the Islamic world. Some will be still teaching, working, loving, or parenting; but their souls will be dead to religion.

Ultimately some religious scholars themselves may share this fate. What is the end of Selimović's Bosnian novel? He does not have his protagonist collapsing into public immorality. On the contrary, he is appointed the chief religious judge of his city. But his guilt at his abandonment of his brother has eaten away at his soul, and he is a hollow man; outwardly punctilious but inwardly a ruin. After such a crime, even the man of religion's religion can be no more than a shell, eventually replaced, one guesses, by something else. Every Cain becomes his own Abel in the end.

Abdal Hakim Murad is Dean of the Cambridge Muslim College, UK, which trains imams for British mosques. In 2010 he was voted Britain's most influential Muslim thinker by Jordan's Royal Islamic Strategic Studies Centre. He has translated a number of books from the Arabic, including several sections of Imam al-Ghazali's *Ihya' Ulum al-Din*.

Recommended Articles

"America's embrace of Islamophobia is new – but not surprising" by Rula Jebreal:
http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/oct/16/america-islamophobia-republicans-politics-trump-carson

"Business Ethics in Islam" by Dr. Muzammil Siddiqi:
http://www.irfi.org/articles/articles_1101_1150/business_ethics_in_islam.htm

"Freedom of Speech v. Freedom of Religion?: How American Muslims Are Countering Hate and Getting It Right":
http://berkleycenter.georgetown.edu/cornerstone/refugee-policy-in-the-west/responses/freedom-of-speech-v-freedom-of-religion-how-american-muslims-are-countering-hate-and-getting-it-right

"Islam, Commerce, and Business Ethics" by Imad-ad-Dean Ahmad:
http://www.minaret.org/islamcommercebusinessethics.pdf

"Islam in the Workplace" for Kwintessential:
http://www.kwintessential.co.uk/cultural-services/articles/islam-in-the-workplace.html

"Islamophobia: Understanding Anti-Muslim Sentiment in the West" by Gallup:
http://www.gallup.com/poll/157082/islamophobia-understanding-anti-muslim-sentiment-west.aspx

"Muhammad Ali to Trump: You Don't Know Islam" by Martin Rogers, Sojourners
https://sojo.net/articles/muhammad-ali-trump-you-dont-know-islam

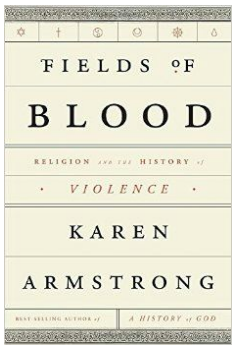
"The Muslim Drill" by Wajahat Ali, *New York Times*:
http://www.nytimes.com/2015/12/09/opinion/the-muslim-drill.html?_r=1
Wajahat Ali, a writer and the author of the play "The Domestic Crusaders," is a journalist at Al Jazeera America.

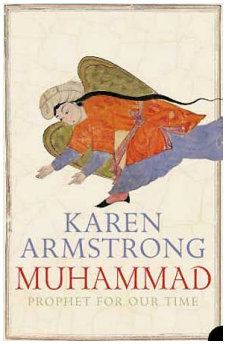
"New Religious America" by Diana L. Eck on Frontline:
http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/faith/neighbors/excerpt.html

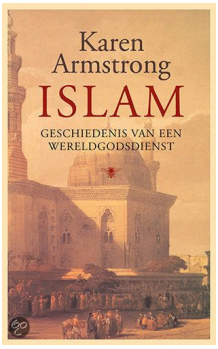
"Next Door Neighbors, Muslims and Methods" by Diana L. Eck on BeliefNet:
http://www.beliefnet.com/Faiths/2001/06/Next-Door-Neighbors-Muslims-And-Methodists.aspx

"Top Ten Ways Islamic Law forbids Terrorism" by Juan Cole in informed Comment:
http://www.juancole.com/2013/04/islamic-forbids-terrorism.html

Recommended Books







Armstrong, Karen. *Fields of Blood* (Anchor; Reprint edition, 2015).

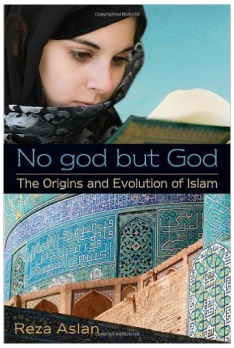
In these times of rising geopolitical chaos, the need for mutual understanding between cultures has never been more urgent. Religious differences are seen as fuel for violence and warfare. In these pages, one of our greatest writers on religion, Karen Armstrong, amasses a sweeping history of humankind to explore the perceived connection between war and the world's great creeds—and to issue a passionate defense of the peaceful nature of faith.

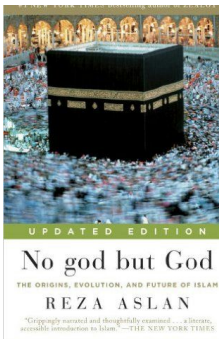
With unprecedented scope, Armstrong looks at the whole history of each tradition—not only Christianity and Islam, but also Buddhism, Hinduism, Confucianism, Daoism, and Judaism. Religions, in their earliest days, endowed every aspect of life with meaning, and warfare became bound up with observances of the sacred. Modernity has ushered in an epoch of spectacular violence, although, as Armstrong shows, little of it can be ascribed directly to religion. Nevertheless, she shows us how and in what measure religions came to absorb modern belligerence—and what hope there might be for peace among believers of different faiths in our time. New Postscript in paperback deals with IS and the events in Paris January 2015.

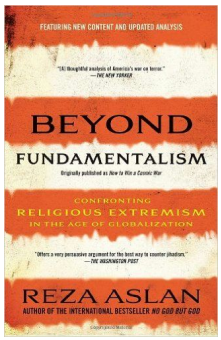
Armstrong, Karen. *Muhammad: A Prophet of Our Time* (HarperOne, 2007, reprint).

Muhammad presents a fascinating portrait of the founder of a religion that continues to change the course of world history. Muhammad's story is more relevant than ever because it offers crucial insight into the true origins of an increasingly radicalized Islam. Countering those who dismiss Islam as fanatical and violent, Armstrong offers a clear, accessible, and balanced portrait of the central figure of one of the world's great religions.

Armstrong, Karen. *Islam: A Short History* (Modern Library, 2002, reprint).
No religion in the modern world is as feared and misunderstood as Islam. It haunts the popular imagination as an extreme faith that promotes terrorism, authoritarian government, female oppression, and civil war. In a vital revision of this narrow view of Islam and a distillation of years of thinking and writing about the subject, Karen Armstrong's short history demonstrates that the world's fastest-growing faith is a much more complex phenomenon than its modern fundamentalist strain might suggest.







Aslan, Reza. *No god, but God* (Ember 2012).

For teens and young adults. An invaluable introduction for young readers to a faith that for much of the West remains shrouded in ignorance and fear. Written by Reza Aslan, an internationally acclaimed scholar of comparative religion, *No god but God* examines Islam: its rituals and traditions, the revelation of Muhammad as Prophet and the subsequent uprising against him, and the emergence of his successors.

Engaging, accessible, and thought-provoking, *No god but God* is sure to stimulate discussion and encourage understanding of the Islamic faith and the people who follow it.

Aslan, Reza. *No god, but God* (Random House, 2011).

In *No god but God,* internationally acclaimed scholar Reza Aslan explains Islam—the origins and evolution of the faith—in all its beauty and complexity. This updated edition addresses the events of the past decade, analyzing how they have influenced Islam's position in modern culture. Aslan explores what the popular demonstrations pushing for democracy in the Middle East mean for the future of Islam in the region, how the Internet and social media have affected Islam's evolution, and how the war on terror has altered the geopolitical balance of power in the Middle East. He also provides an update on the contemporary Muslim women's movement, a discussion of the controversy over veiling in Europe, an in-depth history of Jihadism, and a look at how Muslims living in North America and Europe are changing the face of Islam. Timely and persuasive, *No god but God* is an elegantly written account that explains this magnificent yet misunderstood faith.

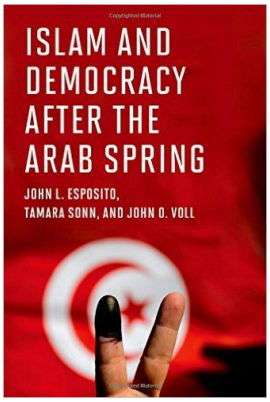
Aslan, Reza. *Beyond Fundamentalism: Confronting Religious Extremism in the Age of Globalization* (Random House Trade Paperbacks; 2010).

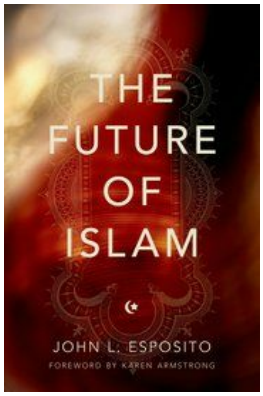
The wars in the Middle East have become religious wars in which God is believed to be directly engaged on behalf of one side against the other. The hijackers who attacked America on September 11, 2001, thought they were fighting in the name of God. According to award-winning writer and scholar of religions Reza Aslan, the United States, by infusing the War on Terror with its own religiously polarizing rhetoric, is fighting a similar war—a war that can't be won.

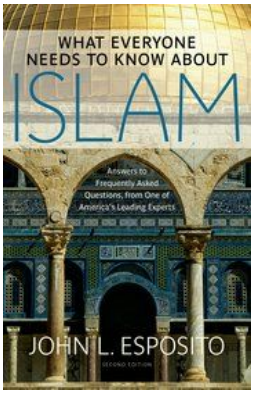
Beyond Fundamentalism is both an in-depth study of the ideology fueling al-Qa'ida, the Taliban, and like-minded militants throughout the Muslim world and an exploration of religious violence in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. At a time when religion and politics increasingly share the same

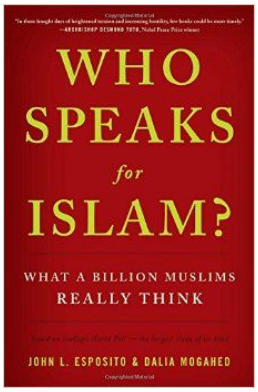
vocabulary and function in the same sphere, Aslan writes that we must strip the conflicts of our world of their religious connotations and address the earthly grievances that always lie at its root.

How do you win a religious war? By refusing to fight in one.









Esposito, John L. *Islam and Democracy After the Arab Spring* (Oxford University Press, 2015).

The landscape of the Middle East has changed dramatically since 2011, as have the political arena and the discourse around democracy. In *Islam and Democracy after the Arab Spring*, John L. Esposito, John Voll, and Tamara Sonn examine the state of democracy in Muslim-majority societies today. Applying a twenty-first century perspective to the question of whether Islam is "compatible" with democracy, they redirect the conversation toward a new politics of democracy that transcends both secular authoritarianism and Political Islam.

While the opposition movements of the Arab Spring vary from country to country, each has raised questions regarding equality, economic justice, democratic participation, and the relationship between Islam and democracy in their respective countries. Does democracy require a secular political regime? Are religious movements the most effective opponents of authoritarian secularist regimes? Esposito, Voll, and Sonn examine these questions and shed light on how these opposition movements reflect the new global realities of media communication and sources of influence and power. Positioned for a broad readership of scholars and students, policy-makers, and media experts, *Islam and Democracy after the Arab Spring* will quickly become a go-to for all who watch the Middle East, inside and outside of academia.

Esposito, John L. *The Future of Islam* (Oxford University Press; Reprint edition, 2013).

John L. Esposito is one of America's leading authorities on Islam. Now, in this brilliant portrait of Islam today--and tomorrow--he draws on a lifetime of thought and research to sweep away the negative stereotypes and provide an accurate, richly nuanced, and revelatory account of the fastest growing religion in the world.

Here Esposito explores the major questions and issues that face Islam in the 21st century and that will deeply affect global politics. Are Islam and the West locked in a deadly clash of civilizations? Is Islam

compatible with democracy and human rights? Will religious fundamentalism block the development of modern societies in the Islamic world? Will Islam overwhelm the Western societies in which so many Muslim immigrants now reside? Will Europe become Eurabia or will the Muslims assimilate? Which Muslim thinkers will be most influential in the years to come? To answer this last question he introduces the reader to a new generation of Muslim thinkers--Tariq Ramadan, Timothy Winter, Mustafa Ceric, Amina Wadud, and others--a diverse collection of Muslim men and women, both the "Martin Luthers" and the "Billy Grahams" of Islam. We meet religious leaders who condemn suicide bombing and who see the killing of unarmed men, women, and children as "worse than murder," who preach toleration and pluralism, who advocate for women's rights. The book often underscores the unexpected similarities between the Islamic world and the West and at times turns the mirror on the Us, revealing how we appear to Muslims, all to highlight the crucial point that there is nothing exceptional about the Muslim faith.

Recent decades have brought extraordinary changes in the Muslim world, and in addressing all of these issues, Esposito paints a complex picture of Islam in all its diversity--a picture of urgent importance as we face the challenges of the coming century.

Foreword to the *Future of Islam* by Karen Armstrong

This is an important book. Those of us who have been on the front line of the effort, since the atrocities of September 11, 2001 ,to explain Islam in the Western world soon became aware not simply of the widespread ignorance of Muslim religion in both Europe and the United States but also of an entrenched reluctance to see Islam in a more favorable light. People often look balked and vaguely mutinous when, for example, you explain that the Qur'an does not in fact advocate the indiscriminate slaughter of the infidel or the propagation of the faith by the sword, and that even though there is still much to be done to promote gender equality in Muslim countries, the message of the Qur'an was initially friendly to the emancipation of women.

One of the most frequently asked questions is: "Why has Islam not had a reformation?" The query betrays an ignorance of both Islamic and Western history. It assumes that there was something special and unique about the reform movement initiated by Martin Luther (1483–1556) and John Calvin (1509–64) that points to the inherent superiority and progressive nature of our Western culture. In fact, Luther's was a typical pre-modern reformation, similar to many of the movements of islah ("reform") and tajdid ("renewal") that have regularly punctuated Muslim history. They all, Muslim or Christian, follow a similar agenda: they attempt to return to the wellsprings of tradition and cast aside the piety of the immediate past. Thus Luther and Calvin sought to return to the "pure" Christianity of the Bible and the Fathers of the Church, in exactly the same way as Ahmed ibn Taymiyyah of Damascus (1263–1328) advocated a return to the Qur'an and the sunnah ("customal practice") of the Prophet Muhammad. In his desire to get back to basics, Ibn Taymiyyah also overturned much revered medieval jurisprudence and philosophy, just as Luther and Calvin attacked the medieval scholastic theologians; like any Muslim reformation, therefore, their movement was both reactionary and revolutionary.

Reform movements usually occur during a period of cultural change or in the wake of a great political disaster, when the old answers no longer suffice and reformers seek to bring the tradition up to date so that it can meet the contemporary challenge. The Protestant

Reformation took place during the profound societal changes of the early modern period, when people found that they could no longer practice their faith in the same way as their medieval ancestors. It was, therefore, the product rather than a cause of modernization, and instead of being regarded as the instigator of change, Luther should rather be seen as the spokesman of a current trend. A similar process is now under way in the Muslim world, where the modernization process has been even more problematic than that of sixteenth-century Europe, because it has been complicated by the colonial disruption and continued Western influence in the internal affairs of the former colonies.

Again, Western people are often skeptical about the ability of Islam to reform itself and doubt the presence and effectiveness of Muslim reformers, in part because these creative thinkers get little coverage in the Western press. Thanks to this much-needed book, there is no longer any excuse for such ignorance. Professor Esposito has given a clear and informative introduction to the work of such reformers as Tariq Ramadan, Amr Khalid, Shaykh Ali Goma'a, Mustafa Ceric, Tim Winter, and Heba Raouf. Like Luther, these individuals articulate an important trend in Muslim thinking that challenges the common Western view of Islam. This trend clearly does not regard a literal interpretation of scripture as normative; it is well aware that laws and customs have been conditioned by the historical circumstances in which they developed and must be interpreted in the light of this understanding; it regards self-criticism as creative, necessary, and a religious imperative; it abhors terrorism and violence; and it is anxious to initiate a "gender jihad."

Most important, Professor Esposito makes it clear that Western people simply cannot afford to remain uninformed about these developments in the Muslim world. He shows how the failure of Western foreign policy has been one of the causes of the current malaise in the region and that, for example, ignorance about the Sunni/Shia rift in Iraq made it impossible for the United States to identify friends and foes. We now live in one world and share a common predicament. What happens in Gaza or Afghanistan today is likely to have repercussions tomorrow in London or Washington, D.C. To persist in the belief that all Muslims support terrorism, oppose democracy, and are atavistically opposed to freedom is not only counterproductive to Western interests but, as we see in these pages, flies in the face of the evidence, such as that provided in the recent Gallup Poll. Westerners cannot expect Muslims to adopt a more positive view of their cultural values if they themselves persist in cultivating a stereotypical view of Islam that in some significant respects dates back to the Middle Ages. Unless we can learn to live together in a more just and rational way, we are unlikely to have a viable world to hand on to the next generation.

One comes away from this book convinced that the future of Islam does not simply depend on the effectiveness of a few Muslim reformers but that the United States and Europe also have a major role to play. If short-sighted Western policies have helped to create the current impasse, they will, if not corrected, continue to have a negative effect upon the region, will weaken the cause of reform, and play into the hands of extremists. In the Qur'an, God calls all men and women to appreciate the unity and equality of the human race: "O people! Behold, We have created you all out of a male and a female, and have made you into nations and tribes so that you might come to know one another" (49:13). One of the major tasks of our generation is to build a global community, where people of all persuasions can live together in harmony and mutual respect. In writing this book, which will help many

Western readers to achieve a more balanced, informed, and nuanced appreciation of the Muslim world, Professor Esposito has made a major contribution.

Esposito, John L. *What Everyone Needs to Know about Islam* (Oxford University Press; 2 edition, 2011).

Since the terrorist attacks of September 11th, there has been an overwhelming demand for information about Islam, and recent events - the war in Iraq, terrorist attacks both failed and successful, debates throughout Europe over Islamic dress, and many others - have raised new questions in the minds of policymakers and the general public. This newly updated edition of *What Everyone Needs to Know about Islam* is the best single source for clearly presented, objective information about these new developments, and for answers to questions about the origin and traditions of Islam.

Editor of *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Modern Islam* and *The Oxford History of Islam*, and author of *The Future of Islam* and many other acclaimed works, John L. Esposito is one of America's leading authorities on Islam. This brief and readable book remains the first place to look for up-to-date information on the faith, customs, and political beliefs of the more than one billion people who call themselves Muslims.

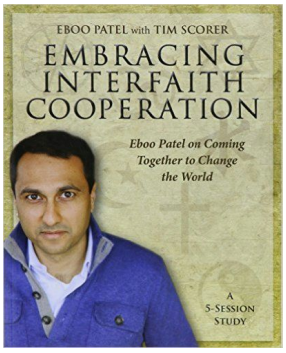
Esposito, John L. *Who Speaks for Islam: What a Billion Muslims Really Think* (Gallup Press; 1st edition, 2008).

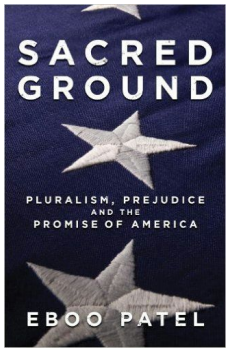
In a post-9/11 world, many Americans conflate the mainstream Muslim majority with the beliefs and actions of an extremist minority. But what do the world's Muslims think about the West, or about democracy, or about extremism itself? *Who Speaks for Islam?* spotlights this silenced majority. The book is the product of a mammoth six-year study in which the Gallup Organization conducted tens of thousands of hour-long, face-to-face interviews with residents of more than 35 predominantly Muslim nations — urban and rural, young and old, men and women, educated and illiterate. It asks the questions everyone is curious about: Why is the Muslim world so anti-American? Who are the extremists? Is democracy something Muslims really want? What do Muslim women want? The answers to these and other pertinent, provocative questions are provided not by experts, extremists, or talking heads, but by empirical evidence — the voices of a billion Muslims.

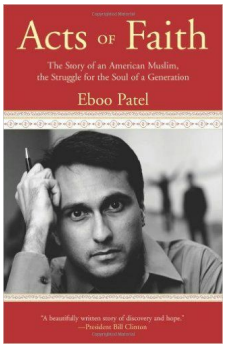
Kamali, Mohammad Hashim. *The Middle Path of Moderation in Islam: The Qur'anic Principle of Wasatiyyah* (Oxford University Press, 2015).

In *The Middle Path of Moderation in Islam*, leading Islamic law expert Mohammad Hashim Kamali examines the concept of *wasatiyyah*, or moderation, arguing that scholars, religious communities, and policy circles alike must have access to this governing principle that drives the silent majority of Muslims, rather than focusing on the extremist fringe. Kamali explores *wasatiyyah* in both historical/conceptual terms and in contemporary/practical terms. Tracing the definition and scope of the concept from the foundational sources of Islam, the Qu'ran and Hadith, he demonstrates that *wasatiyyah* has a long and well-developed history in Islamic law and applies the concept to contemporary issues of global policy, such as justice, women's rights, environmental and financial balance, and globalization.

Framing his work as an open dialogue against a now-decades long formulation of the arguably destructive Huntingtonian "clash of civilizations" thesis as well as the public rhetoric of fear of Muslim extremism since the attacks of September 11, 2001, Kamali connects historical conceptions of wasatiyyah to the themes of state and international law, governance, and cultural maladies in the Muslim world and beyond. Both a descriptive and prescriptive meditation on a key but often neglected principle of Islam, *The Middle Path of Moderation in Islam* provides insight into an idea that is in the strategic interest of the West both to show and practice for themselves and to recognize in Muslim countries.







Patel, Eboo. ***Embracing Interfaith Cooperation Participant's Workbook: Eboo Patel on Coming Together to Change the World*** **(Morehouse Education Resources, 2013).**

Join interfaith commentator Eboo Patel as he explores what it means to be "literate" about other faiths, how interfaith cooperation "works" and why, the skills needed for interfaith cooperation and the significant role that our institutions, including colleges and faith communities, can play in this process. This resources contains all the material needed by class participants and the group facilitator.

SOLD SEPARATELY. Embracing Interfaith Cooperation DVD. This resource features five 10-15 minute presentations by Eboo Patel, each of which is followed by video of Patel interacting with a small, diverse group of adults and young adults as they respond and discuss interfaith issues.

Eboo Patel believes religion is a bridge of cooperation rather than a barrier of division. Inspired by his faith as a Muslim, his Indian heritage and his American citizenship, he speaks to his vision of interfaith harmony at places like the Clinton Global Initiative, The Nobel Peace Prize Forum, as well as college and university campuses across the country. He is a regular contributor to the *Washington Post*, *USA Today* and he *Huffington Post*.

Patel, Eboo. ***Sacred Ground: Pluralism, Prejudice, and the Promise of America*** **(Beacon Press, 2012).**
There is no better time to stand up for your values than when they are under attack.

In the decade following the attacks of 9/11, suspicion and animosity toward American Muslims has increased rather than subsided. Alarmist, hateful rhetoric once relegated to the fringes of political discourse has now become frighteningly mainstream, with pundits and politicians routinely invoking the specter of Islam as a menacing, deeply anti-American force.

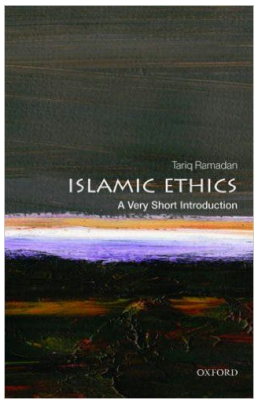
In Sacred Ground, author and renowned interfaith leader Eboo Patel says this prejudice is not just a problem for Muslims but a challenge to the very idea of America. Patel shows us that Americans from

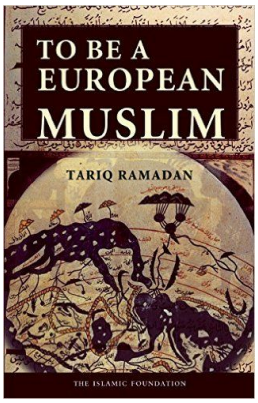
George Washington to Martin Luther King Jr. have been "interfaith leaders," illustrating how the forces of pluralism in America have time and again defeated the forces of prejudice. And now a new generation needs to rise up and confront the anti-Muslim prejudice of our era. To this end, Patel offers a primer in the art and science of interfaith work, bringing to life the growing body of research on how faith can be a bridge of cooperation rather than a barrier of division and sharing stories from the frontlines of interfaith activism.

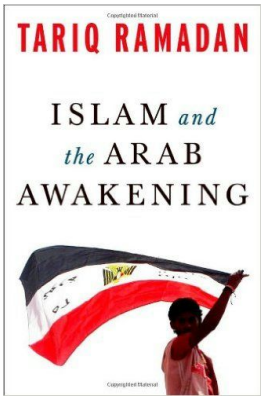
Patel asks us to share in his vision of a better America—a robustly pluralistic country in which our commonalities are more important than our differences, and in which difference enriches, rather than threatens, our religious traditions. Pluralism, Patel boldly argues, is at the heart of the American project, and this visionary book will inspire Americans of all faiths to make this country a place where diverse traditions can thrive side by side.

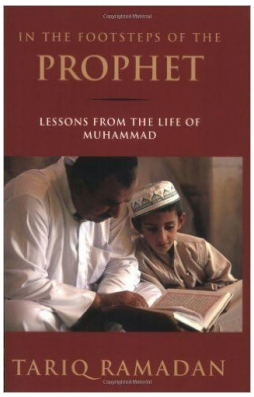
Patel, Eboo. *Acts of Faith: The Story of an American Muslim, in the Struggle for the Soul of a Generation* (Beacon, 2010).

Acts of Faith is a remarkable account of growing up Muslim in America and coming to believe in religious pluralism, from one of the most prominent faith leaders in the United States. Eboo Patel's story is a hopeful and moving testament to the power and passion of young people—and of the world-changing potential of an interfaith youth movement.









Ramadan, Tariq. *Islamic Ethics: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford University Press, September 2016).

The concept of 'ethics' involves the choice between what is 'right' and what is 'wrong', but no exact equivalent of the word 'ethics' exists in the Arabic language. Instead, the Arabic terms used to describe ethics cover a whole range of complimentary teachings with regard to concepts such as dignity, justice, and equality, about which Islamic legal scholars, thinkers and mystics have by no means always agreed.

In this *Very Short Introduction* Tariq Ramadan examines the traditional contents of Islamic ethics and the dominant objectives of Islamic teachings. Analysing new approaches which are currently making their appearance, he shows how the ethical considerations of Islamic ethics are not far removed from those central to the Jewish, Catholic, Protestant and even Buddhist traditions.

Ramadan, Tariq. *To Be a European Muslim* (The Islamic Foundation, 2015).

To Be a European Muslim addresses some of the fundamental issues born of the several million strong Muslim presence in Europe in our times. Based on a thorough study of Islamic sources, it seeks to answer basic questions about European Muslims' social, political, cultural, and legal integration. Tariq Ramadan is recognized worldwide for his original scholarship. He is a professor of Islamic studies at the University of Oxford and was named by *Time* magazine as one of the one hundred innovators of the twenty-first century.

Ramadan, Tariq. *Islam and the Arab Awakening* (Oxford University Press, 2012).

One of the most important developments in the modern history of the Middle East, the so-called Arab Spring began in Tunisia in December 2010, bringing down dictators, sparking a civil war in Libya, and igniting a bloody uprising in Syria. Its long-term repercussions in Egypt and elsewhere remain unclear. Now one of the world's leading Islamic thinkers examines and explains it, in this searching, provocative, and necessary book.

Time Magazine named Tariq Ramadan one of the most important innovators of the twenty-first century. A Muslim intellectual and prolific author, he has won global renown for his reflections on Islam and the contemporary challenges in both the Muslim majority societies and the West. In *Islam and the Arab Awakening*, he explores the uprisings, offering rare insight into their origin, significance, and possible futures. As early as 2003, he writes, there had been talk of democratization in the Middle East and North Africa. The U.S. government and private organizations set up networks and provided training for young leaders, especially in the use of the Internet and social media, and the West abandoned its unconditional support of authoritarian governments. But the West did not create the uprisings. Indeed, one lesson Ramadan presents is that these mass movements and their consequences cannot be totally controlled. Something irreversible has taken place: dictators have been overthrown without weapons. But, he writes, democratic processes are only beginning to emerge, and unanswered questions remain. What role will religion play? How should Islamic principles and goals be rethought? Can a sterile, polarizing debate between Islamism and secularism be avoided?

Avoiding both naive confidence and conspiratorial paranoia, Ramadan voices a tentative optimism. If a true civil society can be established, he argues, this moment's fragile hope will live.

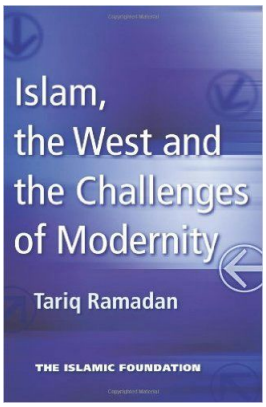
Ramadan, Tariq. *In the Footsteps of the Prophet: Lessons from the Life of Muhammad* (Oxford University Press, 2009).

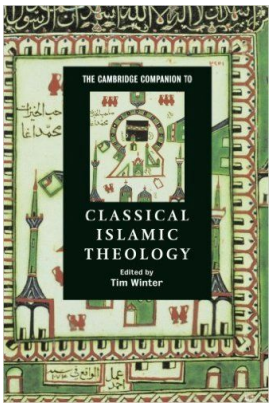
Named by *Time* magazine as one of the 100 most important innovators of the century, Tariq Ramadan is a leading Muslim scholar, with a large following especially among young European and American Muslims. Now, in his first book written for a wide audience, he offers a marvelous biography of the Prophet Muhammad, one that highlights the spiritual and ethical teachings of one of the most influential figures in human history.

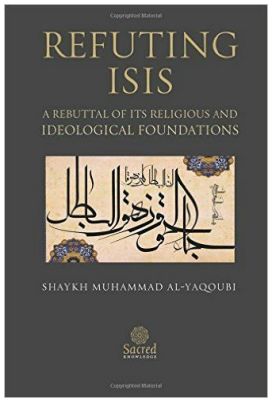
In the Footsteps of the Prophet is a fresh and perceptive look at Muhammad, capturing a life that was often eventful, gripping, and highly charged. Ramadan provides both an intimate portrait of a man who was shy, kind, but determined, as well as a dramatic chronicle of a leader who launched a great religion and inspired a vast empire. More important, Ramadan presents the main events of the Prophet's life in a way that highlights his spiritual and ethical teachings. The book underscores the

significance of the Prophet's example for some of today's most controversial issues, such as the treatment of the poor, the role of women, Islamic criminal punishments, war, racism, and relations with other religions. Selecting those facts and stories from which we can draw a profound and vivid spiritual picture, the author asks how can the Prophet's life remain -- or become again -- an example, a model, and an inspiration? And how can Muslims move from formalism -- a fixation on ritual -- toward a committed spiritual and social presence?

In this thoughtful and engaging biography, Ramadan offers Muslims a new understanding of Muhammad's life and he introduces non-Muslims not just to the story of the Prophet, but to the spiritual and ethical riches of Islam**.**







Ramadan, Tariq. *Islam, the West and the Challenges of Modernity* (The Islamic Foundation, 2009).

Tariq Ramadan attempts to demonstrate, using sources which draw upon Islamic thought and civilization, that Muslims can respond to contemporary challenges of modernity without betraying their identity. The book argues that Muslims, nourished by their own points of reference, can approach the modern epoch by adopting a specific social, political, and economic model that is linked to ethical values, a sense of finalities and spirituality. Rather than a modernism that tends to impose Westernization, it is a modernity that admits to the pluralism of civilizations, religions, and cultures.

Winter, Tim. *The Cambridge Companion to Classical Islamic Theology* (Cambridge University Press, 2008).

This series of critical reflections on the evolution and major themes of pre-modern Muslim theology begins with the revelation of the Koran, and extends to the beginnings of modernity in the eighteenth century. The significance of Islamic theology reflects the immense importance of Islam in the history of monotheism, to which it has brought a unique approach and style, and a range of solutions which are of abiding interest. Devoting especial attention to questions of rationality, scriptural fidelity, and the construction of 'orthodoxy', this volume introduces key Muslim theories of revelation, creation, ethics, scriptural interpretation, law, mysticism, and eschatology. Throughout the treatment is firmly set in the historical, social and political context in which Islam's distinctive understanding of God

evolved. Despite its importance, Islamic theology has been neglected in recent scholarship, and this book provides a unique, scholarly but accessible introduction.

Al-Yaqoubi, Shaykh Muhammad. *Refuting ISIS: A Rebuttal Of Its Religious And Ideological Foundations* (Sacred Knowledge, 2015).

The Islamic State in Syria and Iraq (ISIS) constitutes the most serious threat Islam has ever faced. To justify its horrible crimes and appeal to Muslims around the world, ISIS has based its ideology on a superficial and literalist approach to the Sacred Texts of Islam - the Holy Qur'an and the Prophetic Tradition. ISIS manipulates religion to brainwash angry young Muslims, who have little knowledge of Islamic theology and jurisprudence. Therefore, the Muslim scholars are obliged to respond with a counter-narrative that elucidates the reality of Islam and its commitment to tolerance. There exists a plethora of proofs that demonstrates ISIS' actions do not represent Sunni Islam and its claims are based on clear fallacies. The author, Shaykh Muhammad Al-Yaqoubi, a renowned scholar and one of the 500 most influential Muslims in the world today, presents in this invaluable book a thorough refutation of ISIS' beliefs and crimes. Providing authentic quotes that destroy the allegations of ISIS, Shaykh Al-Yaqoubi reaches the conclusion that this group does not represent Islam, its declaration of a caliphate is invalid, and fighting it is an obligation upon Muslims.

Acknowledgements

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Marilyn Turkovich, Director
Charter for Compassion International

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