

Islam, Islamism, and Islamophobia: A Clarification

Abstract

There is considerable confusion among policy makers, as well as the corporate media (not to mention the masses) between their shallow comprehensions of Islam the religion and a religio-political nationalist ideology known, for want of a better term, as *Islamism*. (A result of this confusion is unsuccessful strategies—including the so-called “war on terror,” which, tellingly, shows no signs of abetting as of this writing, years later—to deal with the rise of this ideology and its political consequences). This confusion has been fueled by the virulent reemergence of *Islamophobia* in the West, and its diffusion to such other parts of world as India, Kenya, the Philippines, Burma, Nigeria, and Israel. (What is more, Islamophobia is also spreading, with the encouragement of the West, among the secularist elites of even those countries where Islam is the dominant religion, such as Pakistan, Tunisia, Turkey, Algeria, and Egypt.)

We live in an age where mass media can deliver news about events from almost any corner of the planet to, literally, the palm of your hands even as they are happening in real time. This development, thanks to the leaps and bounds achieved in the development of information technology, is absolutely unprecedented in human history. Yet, if one were to assume that with this kind of technological progress there would be a greater degree of enlightenment among the masses about the world around them—be it locally, nationally, or globally—then one would be hard-pressed to find evidence in support of such a logical assumption. The problem is that news delivery, for the most part, is still managed by the “information gatekeepers” who own/control the corporate mass media. One of the topics that has dominated the news headlines (especially in the West) with considerable regularity in recent years has been the religion of Islam and its alleged association with terrorism, pointing to the power of the gatekeepers to inflict misinformation and disinformation on the masses that has been the ironic hallmark of the amazing growth in the technological prowess of the corporate mass media to deliver news and information. What follows is an attempt to expose the extent of this misinformation/ disinformation that characterizes this topic, to the detriment in the long-run of the security of us all.

Islam, Islamism, and Islamophobia

The reemergence of the West’s misguidedly unhealthy obsession with the religion of Islam, *or what it thinks is Islam*—especially in the period after that horrific terrorist tragedy in the United States that has come to be known as 9/11 and the resulting so-called “war on terror” that the United States and its Western allies launched—demands analysis of what is really at issue behind this obsession.¹ It will be argued here that

¹ There now exists thousands of books on this event that involved the hijacking of four planes by suicide bombers, who *claimed* to profess Islam, and their use as missiles (two in New York, and one in Washington, D.C.—the third was foiled and ended in a crash south of Pittsburgh), with devastating consequences, in terms of lives lost. Consequently, those who would like guidance on what to read about this event, its consequences, and its significance, will find the following books (but only when considered together) helpful: Ahmed (2005); Ahmed and Forst (2005); Anonymous (2004); Chermak, Bailey and Brown (2003); Dudziak (2003); Holbein (2005); McDermott (2005); Marlin (2004); Nguyen (2005); and Qureshi and Sells (2003).

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Islam versus Islamism

While the explication of what Islamophobia is will be undertaken later below, to begin with, Islamism, in brief, refers to the highly distorted interpretation of the practices and role of the religion of Islam currently in vogue among the ignorant and the extremists in the Islamic world (and among the Muslim diaspora in the West). It is important to stress, as Roberts (2003) reminds us, that *Islamism* should not be conflated with so-called “Islamic fundamentalism.” In fact, the latter does not really exist because all Muslims who practice their religion are in a sense “fundamentalists.” Why? This is because the Qur’an is unlike the Bible (hence the fallacy of the analogy between Christian fundamentalism and so-called Islamic fundamentalism) in that the Qur’an is primarily a constitutional document prescriptive in intent—whereas in contrast the Bible is essentially a historical document. In other words, to be a fundamentalist in Islam is to adhere to the true tenets of Islam, it does not imply a form of “anti-scientific eccentricity appropriate to fundamentalist Christianity,” as Roberts puts it (p. 4), where the objective of the Christian fundamentalist is essentially the advocacy of the literal truth of creationism as it appears in the Book of Genesis.

So, what then, to go now into greater detail, is Islamism? It refers to the belief among *some sections* of Muslims that it is possible and necessary to dissolve the division between church and state (or more correctly between mosque and state) that currently exists almost throughout the Islamic world—with the exception of one or two instances (such as Iran). While in theory that may be so, in practice it has amounted to merely a call to replace the current secular authoritarianism of the praetorian oligarchies that dominate (what are virtually) police states that make up a large part of the Islamic world with an equally virulently brutal authoritarianism of a theocracy with a matching horrendous anti-Islamic human rights record (vide the experiences of Islamist rule in countries such as Afghanistan, Iran, and Sudan—and perhaps one may also add to the list in parts of, albeit for brief moments, Nigeria, Pakistan, Somalia, and the DA-ISH-controlled Iraq and Syria, etc.). The problem is not just a question of good intentions gone awry, but it’s one that is an outcome of a fundamental theoretical weakness emanating from the refusal by the ulama (also spelled *ulema*, which refers to the body of Islamic scholars who claim expertise in Islamic theology) to grapple with what Islam has to say on such critical questions as representative government, human rights, constitutional checks and balances, social inequality, economic exploitation, the nation-state, the modern world economy, science and technology, and so on—not in terms of airy-fairy nostalgic references to the caliphates of the past (capped with the usual escapist lines like “God knows best” or “God will take care of it”), but in terms of real, practical, day-to-day program of action today.

No Islamist has yet come up with a single example of what a concretely viable Islamic constitution, one that can be implemented in the modern world of today, would look like. The problem is highlighted by Lazarus-Yafeh (1995: 175) when he accurately observes about the ulama “It is a puzzling historical fact that although

Islam produced some of the greatest empires the world has ever known, the ulama eschewed for centuries the issues of the political and constitutional structure of the state and preferred, much like the sages of the small, dispersed Jewish people, to deal in great detail with such problems of the divine law as prayers and fasting or purity and impurity.” There are two related conjectural explanations one may hazard to offer here for this circumstance: One, is that in Islam a political tradition arose where the executive and the legislative branches of government were considered to be subordinate—at least nominally if not always in practice—to the judiciary (since the latter drew its legitimacy from the scriptures). Yet, as we all know, in the context of the complexity of the modern world of today the judiciary, by itself, lacks the wherewithal to be able to fully confront the complex daily tasks of modern governance. Two, is that in its early caliphal history, Islam was perceived to have been ruled by God-fearing and just rulers (even if autocratic) who obeyed Islamic law, the effect of which was to obviate the thorny task of grappling with the issue of devising a political system with the potential to neutralize an unjust and oppressive ruler should one emerge in the future (that is a democratic political system). At the same time, there arose a tradition of almost blind obedience to those in charge of the state. In other words, on the issue of political authority, while Islamic doctrine evolved to include injunctions for obeying authority, it had little to say in practical terms on what to do if that authority was unjust or non-Islamic because the issue of democracy simply did not enter the equation, especially in a context where Islam did not recognize the separation of church and state.

However, even when in later times it became absolutely necessary to confront these thorny issues, especially following the emergence of Western imperialism in the post-Columbian era, the ulama were still found wanting. The reason this time was a peculiar dialectic that had emerged where the traditional refusal by the ulama to accord importance to *awail* (the “foreign” sciences) in the curricula of *madrasas*—religious-oriented multi-purpose educational institutions—as they insisted on hewing to the traditional categories of mnemonic knowledge as a response, ironically, to the increasing irrelevance of Islam in matters of a modern industrial economy and state in a post-1492 Western-dominated global arena, in turn, continued and continues to reinforce this irrelevance.

To put the matter differently, the political failure of Islamism (wherever it has taken root today) stems from the fact that it has emerged as a political enterprise of an essentially flag-waving anarchic and intolerant nationalist identity politics bereft of concrete Islamic proposals to address the very problems that are at the root of the rise of Islamism (and this failure one must stress is not because Islam is wholly incapable of supplying these proposals, but for lack of intelligent philosophic analyses of how Islam can provide the answers to the problems of governance *in a modern world*). Perhaps, Moore (1994) comes closest to the mark when he defines Islamism as “a political ideology akin to nationalism and should be viewed primarily as an abstract assertion of collective identity.” He further explains: “Like nationalism, it may harbor a variety of contents or purposes. Consequently it may take many forms, depending on the social and political contexts in which it is expressed. Like nationalism in a colonial situation, however, it becomes a vehicle for collective action when alternative channels are suppressed or lose their legitimacy” (Moore 1994: 213). For more on Islamism see also these sources: Beinin and Stork (1997), Ciment (1997), Entelis (1997), Naylor (2000), Sonbol (2000), and Wickham (2002).

Now, one does not have to be a rocket scientist to quickly determine what such a misguided form of religio-political nationalism (fomented by power/glory-seeking messianic charlatans) among a sizable segment of the oppressed and dispossessed can lead to. In a context of decades upon decades of political and economic marginalization, locally and globally, that also often involves a relentless assault on their human rights and dignity, not to mention their constitutional rights, by what is usually a compradorial kleptocratic praetorian oligarchy, aided and abetted by the West in its relentless effort to hegemonically dominate the planet—against the backdrop of access to affordable instantaneous communication technology that is global in

scope—the slide into violent barbarism in such circumstances may not appear to be inexplicable after all. (Viewed strictly from the perspective of Islamism itself, this development is highly ironic given that an important element of Islamism, by definition, is self-righteousness and piety, and Islamic piety—unlike Christian piety of the Crusader era or even the modern imperialist era—does not brook terrorism of any kind.) Under these circumstances, the Islamophobic notion that “Islamist” terrorist attacks are the work primarily of *Muslim* religious zealots is a foolhardy notion that we all subscribe to at our own peril. (Consider: the majority of those who executed 9/11, as in the case of the recruits of DA-ISH today, were not even remotely religious at all. See also Reuter [2015] on the role of the secularists from Iraq's former Saddam Hussein regime in the rise of DA-ISH.)

In reality, September 11, 2001 was an explosive catalyst—militarily taking the form of the so-called “war on terror” (incorporating the much vaunted “shock-and-awe” strategy concocted by the Rumsfeld/Cheney/Bush triumvirate that in the end turned out to be the wholesale massacre of civilians by means of aerial bombardment and euphemistically dubbed “collateral damage” to cover up what it really was: a crime against humanity worthy of a case before the International Criminal Court)—for the reworking of the effort by Western-dominated international corporate capital to push for an ever-expanding global Western hegemonic project *in alliance with the compradorial kleptocratic praetorian oligarchies* as it marches to the beat of its own internal logic of relentless accumulation. However, one must be forcefully reminded that this effort predated September 11, 2001, by *centuries* and which has come to be known as imperialism. Therefore, the “war on terror” should be correctly viewed on one hand as chimerical in its stated objective, at least as it is currently constituted, and on the other as little more than an extension of this historically rooted continuous effort at Western global hegemony. Considered from this perspective, one is left with no other logical recourse but to view events such as September 11, 2001—however repugnant they may be to all who abhor terrorist violence—as a not-so-surprising response to this ongoing hegemonic project. Especially when one is reminded that the focus of this effort, in its more sensationalist manifestations, has in recent times appeared to be the lands and peoples (Afghanistan, Bosnia, Chechnya, Iran, Iraq, Kashmir, Muslim China, Palestine, Philippines, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, etc.) of a once proud civilization that continues to live on in its fully glory, *even if only mythically in the realm of collective memory*. What is more, their awareness of empirical evidence everywhere of their civilization’s long journey into the twilight of history (in terms of determinative global influence), that began centuries ago—allegedly, at the hands of the very people who are the current architects of this hegemonic project—only serves to enrage. Therefore, an authentic “war on terror” would call not for the Islamophobic remaking of Muslim national identity (which is being executed at great cost, in terms of both lives lost and monies expended), but the termination of the hegemonic project itself.

Islamophobia

Having explained the difference between Islam the religion and Islamism as the deeply misguided religio-political nationalism, we are now left with considering the matter of Islamophobia. One can begin by noting that relations between Islam and the West date back almost to the beginning of the founding of Islam in the 7th century; however, the West’s view of Islam has almost always been through the lens of what may be called Islamophobia. And this continues to be true today. (See, for example, the Islamophobic article authored by Wood (2015) popularized by ultra-right zealots, as well as critiques of it by Dagli (2015); Haqiqatjou and Qadhi (2015); and Jenkins (2015). For a historical perspective, see also Hillenbrand (2000), and Meserve (2008).) So, what then is Islamophobia? It refers to a variant of racism (much like *anti-Semitism*) that rests on essentialist stereotypes that foster an irrational distrust, fear or rejection of Islam and those

who are Muslims (or thought to be Muslims).² While Islamophobia dates back almost to the period of the founding of Islam, as just noted, in recent times it has received considerable currency and legitimacy (especially in the West with the complicity of much of the Western corporate media, as well as academics and government officials—often hiding behind “freedom of speech” slogans) following the 9/11 tragedy in United States. Read, for example, Sandra Silberstein’s well-received book, *War of Words: Language, Politics and 9/11* that not only documents how language can be commandeered in the service of objectives that go well beyond simple communication, but also provides an illuminating window into the mechanics of the construction of ideologies of war (such as the current replacement of the Cold War, with the “War on Terror”). Of particular relevance is her last chapter (titled “Schooling America: Lessons on Islam and Geography”), in which she demonstrates how an opportunity, in the aftermath of 9/11, to mount a genuine effort to provide the U.S. citizenry (and the rest of the planet that subscribe to such U.S. television news channels as CNN) with an objective introduction to Islam—in terms of its history, basic tenets, and its far from insignificant role in the genesis of modern Western civilization—was, instead, often subverted to produce a caricatured image of Islam and Muslims well-suited to the task at hand of manufacturing a new global enemy to replace the one of yesteryear, communism. As she explains: “The geography [of Islam] Americans learned post 9/11 was of a particular sort. This was not a benign travelogue of cultural and historical highpoints. Rather, instruction focused on the military, political, and economic self-interest of the United States as it became involved in a region in which several of the countries were presented as dangerous and incompetent. And the metaphors used to describe this area were often military” (p. 149). (For additional sources on Islamophobia, past and present, see: Ahmed (2013); Allen (2010); Helbling (2014); Kundnani (2014); Lyons (2012); Meer (2014); Omidvar and Richards (2014); Rane, Ewart, and Martinkus (2014); Shyrock (2010); Trudeau (2015); and Van Driel (2004).)

It should be pointed out that from the perspective of the Muslims living in Western countries, Islamophobia has also involved government sponsored projects to reconstruct the Muslim identity by suggesting implicitly, and sometimes explicitly, that Islam is a primitive and backward religion practiced by a backward peoples (the darkies) that is intrinsically violent and terrorism prone. Such an essentialist view, of course, is not only false but completely neglects to consider the historical truth, as those intimately familiar (in a scholarly sense) with both the history and practice of Islam know quite well, that its appearance on the stage of human history marked an important turning point toward the better for much of the Afro-Eurasian ecumene (and indirectly the rest of the world). It is not simply that Islam was marked by such deeply progressive ideas as education and social welfare as constituting the responsibility of the state (*baitul mal*), or that a highly inegalitarian class-fractured society was unjust (*ẓakaat*), or that an economic system that rested on unbridled capitalism was anti-democratic (laws of equity governing commerce), or that the conduct of war be based on principles akin to those agreed to at the Geneva Convention of 1864 and its later incarnations, or that reciprocal obligations between the state and the citizenry be constitutionally codified (*dhimma*), or that seeking knowledge (*ilm*) was an exceptionally worthy attribute, and so on, long, long before such ideas came into vogue elsewhere, but that without the Islamic civilization it is quite conceivable that there would be no Western civilization as we know it today.

² It ought to be mentioned here that sometimes one gets the sense as one travels around Europe and North America that the issue is not Islamophobia but what may be called “Arabophobia,” where the age-old racial hatred of Arabs is trundled out under the pretext of a “freedom of speech” criticism of Muslims. Of course, ignorance is also tied in because there is a lack of conscious awareness that not all Arabs are Muslims and vice versa. (On Muslims and the “freedom of speech” issue that the Charlie Hebdo tragedy in France highlighted see the excellent address (Trudeau, 2015) by the celebrated U.S. cartoonist Garry Trudeau—of the *Doonsbury* comic strip fame—at an award ceremony.)

European modernity was a generalized expression of a dialectic between the development of science and technology on one hand, and on the other, socioeconomic transformations that led to that momentous event—when seen through the eyes of Europe—the Columbian project of 1492 (without which Europe would never have achieved modernity). This dialectic was characterized by such developmental markers as the invention of gunnery, the birth of the Copernican revolution, the invention of the printing press, the undertaking of voyages of *exploitation*, the emergence of mercantile capitalism and commercial law, and so on. Yet, one of the central factors that helped to facilitate this dialectic was Islam. That is, at both levels—modernity in general and the development of science and technology in particular—the hand of Islam was both catalytically and causatively present. How so? Through the Muslim invasions of Spain in the eighth-century and Italy in the ninth-century, and later through the Crusades against the Muslims unleashed by Europe at turn of the eleventh-century (that would last, if one includes the final stages of the Spanish *Reconquista*—the fall of Granada in 1492—well into the fifteenth-century), Europe would learn much (theories and methods) and take much (artifacts and products) from the Islamic civilization that would prove absolutely decisive in its eventual quest for a sea route to the East and all the consequences that would ensue for Europe’s journey to modernity. To drive home this point, consider, as Huff (1993: 48) reminds one, for example, that during the 700-year period marked by the eighth to almost the beginning of the fifteenth-century, “Arabic science was,” in his words, “probably the most advanced science in the world, greatly surpassing the West and China.” He continues: “In virtually every field of endeavor—in astronomy, alchemy, mathematics, medicine, optics and so forth—Arabic scientists (that is, Middle Eastern individuals primarily using the Arabic language but including Arabs, Iranians, Christians, Jews, and others) were in the forefront of scientific advance. The facts, theories, and scientific speculations contained in their treatises were the most advanced to be had anywhere in the world, including China.” Grant (1996) makes a similar point, stating: “Contrary to prevailing opinion, the roots of modern science were planted in the ancient and medieval worlds long before the scientific revolution of the seventeenth-century. Indeed, that revolution would have been inconceivable without the cumulative antecedent efforts of three great civilizations: Greek, Islamic, and Latin. With the scientific riches it derived by translation from Greco-Islamic sources in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the Christian Latin civilization of Western Europe began the last leg of the intellectual journey that culminated in a scientific revolution that transformed the world.” (For more, on the Islamic contributions to “Western” civilization see also Al-Khalili (2011); Freely (2010); Appendix I in Lulat (2005); Lyons (2010); Mansur (2013); Masood (2009); and Reeves (2013). Additionally, those who would like to probe this subject even further would do well to explore the excellent series titled “The New Edinburgh Islamic Surveys” edited by Carole Hillenbrand and published by Edinburgh University Press.)

The question that emerges here, however, is this: Is the problem of Islamophobia simply one of ignorance and misunderstanding? Or is there something more going on in that Islamophobia is a symptom of a wider problem: the use of ideologies of prejudice in Western societies to underwrite domination and exploitation, internally and externally? The answer is that it’s the latter. That is, Islamophobia, whether in its past (Crusader era) or current (“war on terror”) guises, is not an aberration, but tied up with the construction of the Euro-Americo-Australasian identity. It is one of several ideologies of the “Other” that aims to render non-European peoples as merely “resident aliens” of this planet and which has been so instrumental in justifying and explaining both the past and the current global domination by the West.

Finally, by way of a coda to this exegesis: The stock-in-trade of the Islamophobe includes, of course, deliberate historical amnesia. So, as a word of caution for the practicing (and aspiring) Islamophobes of today, here are two examples from recent European and North American historical experiences that should give pause to the essentialist analyses that is their stock in trade on all matters that concern Islamism (and Islam). First, on the matter of barbarous violence against the innocent: we saw a similar development in the

preceding century (albeit in slightly dissimilar circumstances) on a massive scale in Europe with the rise of a different form of virulently extreme nationalist ideology—but performing the same role—called fascism. Under the aegis of this ideology, the fascists would eventually unleash a global reign of terror taking the form, on one hand, of the Second World War in which tens of millions would perish across the planet, and on the other, the construction of a racially-inspired primitive but large-scale barbarous killing machine in which the gas chamber became the trademark. (Reminder: Nazism is a variant of fascism.) Second, on the matter of the misuse of religion for unsavory political purposes: those familiar with the place of religion in the U.S. are well aware of how religion, in this case Christianity, can be misused for deeply nefarious purposes—and here reference is not to the Ku Klux Klan, whose ideology represents another perversion of Christianity but of a different kind. No, reference here is to the permeation of U.S. national political life with a highly corrupted form of Christianity (even though the principle of separation of Church and State is constitutionally enshrined), that not only preaches that the inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven would be the wealthy but enjoins the working classes to demonstrate Christian piety by not organizing against capital for the betterment of their lives. The huge distortion of Christ's teachings that is involved here can be seen by considering some of the relevant passages from the Bible:

12. And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves, 13. And said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves. (*Matthew 21:12-13; King James Bible*)

21. Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me. 22. But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions. 23. Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. 24. And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. (*Matthew 19: 21-24; King James Bible*)

Is it any wonder that the loudest Bible-thumpers, who tend to populate the former slave-holding states of the U.S. South (sometimes referred to as the “Bible Belt”), are also proselytizers of unabashed jingoism, militarism, extreme right-wing conservatism, intolerance to racial/ethnic diversity, and laissez-faire capitalism. That there is this deeply perverse theological marriage between a highly distorted reading of the Bible and the corporate capitalist agenda is no mere coincidence. It has been deliberately engineered by segments of corporate capital with the cooperation of a corrupt mercenary clergy. In fact, as Professor Kevin Kruze shows us in his book, *One Nation Under God: How Corporate America Invented Christian America*, the process began in the 1930s in response to the basket of economic measures that were ushered in by the administration of Franklin D. Roosevelt in the wake of the Great Depression (itself a horrific “gift” from the capitalists) and which came to be known as the *New Deal*. U.S. corporate capital then, as now, was not willing to leave unchallenged any significant measure adopted by the U.S. government that would safeguard the masses from the harsher predatory tendencies of capitalism—a mandate of the New Deal program.

Clearly then, whether it's the use of barbaric violence in the name of a political or economic ideology or the horrendous misuse of religion, neither is the exclusive preserve of the purveyors of Islamism (of which DA-ISIH is its latest extremist barbaric incarnation). The truth is that among the tragedies of the human race, a supposedly intelligent species, is its incredible capacity for unfathomable evil in the service of this or that ideology. Throughout history, the Euro-peoples of the Western countries have engaged in more than their

fair share in such evil. Only deliberate historical amnesia would fail to remember the savage violence of the Christian Crusaders against the ordinary people ethnically different from themselves they encountered (Muslim, Christian, and Jew alike) as they rampaged through the Middle East over a period of several centuries, beginning in the 11th century;³ or the horrendous systematic tortures and killings by burning characteristic of the Spanish Inquisition that began in the late 15th century (targeting primarily Jews and Muslims); or the four centuries of Western imperialism that arose in the immediate aftermath of the 1492 Columbian project—most especially in its settler colonial form—that was accompanied by great barbaric brutality, including enslavement and genocide on a scale that remains unrivalled to this day. And who can forget the horrendously stomach-churning violence that marked lynchings in United States in the 19th and 20th centuries. More recently, consider also the period of the Cold War that involved frequent armed violence against civilians perpetrated by the United States and its allies in many countries around the world, from Angola to Vietnam—as a result, thousands upon thousands of innocent civilians would die. At the same time, one may also draw attention to the emergence of domestic terrorist violence in the 1960s through to 1980s in countries such as the United States (Weather Underground), Italy (Brigate Rosse or Red Brigade), and the then West Germany (Baader-Meinhof Gang). (In United States, other examples include the assassination of U.S. presidents and other political leaders; the Unabomber's terrorist activities, the Oklahoma City bombing; the Centennial Olympic Park bombing; and the anti-abortion terrorism.) And then, in Europe, there is Bosnian War of the early 1990s that saw all manner of savagery and brutality (in a mini-replay of the atrocities of the Nazi-era Europe) as thousands of civilians were slaughtered or forced out of their homelands. Needless to say, none of these examples of barbarism in which millions would die had anything to do with Islamism! One other thought: does the use of torture on the darkies of foreign lands, innocent or otherwise, or blowing them up—women and children included—with remotely-controlled planes (drones) count as terrorism? (For sources on the foregoing examples see: Aust and Bell (2009); Ciment (2011); Claster (2009); Gordon (2014); Gott (2011); Gregg (2014); Jefferis (2011); Hancock and Wexler (2014); Hashmi (2012); Headrick (2012); Henningfeld (2012); Honigsberg (2009); Hybel (2010); Kakel (2013); Lieberman (2013); Martinez (2012); Mastnak (2002); McCoy (2007); Motadel (2014); Nobel (2010); Orsini and Nodes (2011); Paul and Yeager (2012); Scahill (2013); Singh (2013); Totten, Bartrop, and

³ Compare, for example, the orderly arrival of the Muslims in Jerusalem in 638 C.E. with the mind-numbing horrifying carnage inflicted by the Crusaders when they stormed its walls on July 15, 1099 (See, for example, Murray [2009]; and Albert of Aachen [2013]). Respect for human rights by Muslims, strange it may appear from the vantage point of today, was integral to armed conflict in the past. Consider, for instance, the quote below from a farewell address by the first Caliph of Islam, Syeddina Abu Bakr, delivered before the first Muslim expeditionary force to depart Saudi Arabia (on its way to do battle with the much feared army of one of the superpowers of its day, the Byzantine Empire) following the death of Prophet Muhammed. As Salahi (2004:5) points out, the rules of engagement—which long predated the Geneva Conventions—that the Muslim armies of that period were assigned paid great heed to human rights (and this in an age when “war meant what it means to all humanity today: a wave of senseless, careless, indiscriminate destruction”).

Learn the following ten points and always bear them in mind: Do not do any act of treason to your community or to yourselves; and never betray anyone. Do not disfigure a dead body. Never kill a child, an elderly person, or a woman. Do not destroy or burn any date farm, and never cut down a fruit tree. Do not slaughter a sheep, cow or camel except for your food. You will come across some people who devote themselves to worship in hermitages, so leave them alone to do what they please. (from Salahi 2004: 5).

Jacobs (2008); and Vollers (2006). See also the report on drones by the Stanford International Human Rights and Conflict Resolution Clinic and the Global Justice Clinic at NYU School of Law (2012).⁴

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⁴ For those who may be interested in seeing audio-visual material of relevance to some of the points made in this exegesis, they can see these documentaries: *The Day the Universe Changed (episode 2)—In the Light of the Above* (BBC television, 1985); *Islam: Empire of Faith* (PBS television, 2000); *Memory of the Camps* (PBS television—Frontline, 1985); *Occupation 101* (2006)—together with documentaries totaling more than 20 hours of viewing time titled "Palestine Remix" from Al-Jazeera Media Network (2014); *The Rise of ISIS* (PBS television—Frontline, 2014); *Science and Islam* (BBC television three-part documentary, 2010); *When the Moors Ruled in Europe* (BBC television, 2005); and *Why We Fight* (2005).

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