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Complexities of Change and Cultural Diversity
Haideh Moghissi in Augsburg



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Complexities of Change and Cultural Diversity

Zwei Vorträge von Prof. em. Dr. Haideh Moghissi (York University, Toronto)
im Rahmen ihrer Gastdozentur am Jakob-Fugger-Zentrum
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Preface

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The following publication brings together two lectures delivered by Haideh Moghissi as “Jakob-Fugger-Zentrum International Visiting Professor” from June 26 to July 3, 2017 at the University of Augsburg.

Haideh Moghissi is emerita Professor of Sociology and Equity Studies at York University, Canada. She was a founder of the Iranian National Union of Women and a member of its first executive and editorial boards before leaving Iran in 1984. At York University in Toronto, Haideh Moghissi has served as Associate Dean of External and International Relations for the Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies; as coordinator of the Certificate for Anti-Racist Research and Practice, as Chair of the Executive Committee of the Centre for Feminist Research and as a member of the executive committee of the Centre for Refugee Studies and the Graduate Program in Women and Gender Studies.

She has regularly commented on Iran and women’s affairs in the Middle East on various media, for example on CBC, TVO, the BBC World Service, Radio France and Voice of America, and has sat on the editorial and advisory boards of the Journal of Comparative Public Policy, the Women and Politics series by Routledge, Resources for Feminist Research and Feminist Forum. Her first book focused on Populism and Feminism in Iran: Women’s Struggle in a Male- Defined Revolutionary Movement (Moghissi 1994) and her second book, Feminism and Islamic Fundamentalism:

The Limits of Postmodern Analysis (Moghissi 2000), won the Choice Outstanding Academic Books Award for Sociology and has been translated into multiple languages. With her exceptional book *Diaspora by Design: Muslims in Canada and Beyond* (Moghissi/Rahnema/Goodman 2009), she once again provided insights into her rich knowledge about Muslim migration and the misconceptions about it. In addition, a multitude of journal articles, conference papers and lectures document her outstanding life's work.

Haideh Moghissi's extensive body of research focusses on gender and Islam, Muslim diaspora and race relations. All of her work has been consistently and profoundly informed by her resolute commitment to meaningful, sustainable change, to social justice, democracy and the core values of equity, dignity, human rights and responsible citizenship. In recognition of her influential body of work, Haideh Moghissi was awarded a Trudeau Foundation Fellowship in 2011. She also won the Status of Women Award of Distinction from the Ontario Confederation of Faculty Associations (OCUFA) in 2015.

Hence we were greatly honored by Prof. em. Dr. Haideh Moghissi's acceptance of the invitation to fill the "Jakob-Fugger-Zentrum International Visiting Professorship" at the University of Augsburg during the summer semester 2017. The Professorship is a cooperation project between the three Humanities and Social Sciences Faculties at the University of Augsburg, including the departments of Catholic Theology, Philology and History, and Philosophy and the Social Sciences. In the present case, it was the Faculty of Philosophy and Social Sciences which had the honor of extending the invitation to Haideh Moghissi and welcomed her with excitement.

Haideh Moghissi's lectures at the University of Augsburg focused on the challenges posed to modern societies by migration, integration, Islamism and Islamophobia. On June 26, she delivered her opening lecture, "Islamism, Islamophobia, Feminism: Challenges of the Twenty-First Century," in which she addressed the various problems and difficulties facing societies in Islamic contexts as well as on the global level. Moghissi focused in particular on gender equality and the struggles to achieve equality between the sexes in a global context. Her second public university lecture delivered on June 29 addressed one of the most pressing problems of our time, namely "Migration, integration and belonging in the Age of Globalization."

One of the main goals of the Visiting Professorship is to integrate the speaker with students, the University and the city's society. Therefore, Prof. Moghissi not only held public lectures, but also conducted a seminar for master's and PhD students in which she discussed "Research as a Democratic Process" in connection with several students' research projects.

Her stay in Augsburg was crowned by a public panel discussion on "Gender Equality and the Challenges of a Globalized World," which took place on July 3 in the Rococo Room of the Government Buildings of the Government of Swabia, with Prof. em. Dr. Leonie Herwartz-Emden (University of Augsburg) and Prof. Dr. Angelika Pofert (Technical University of Dortmund) as further panelists. Prof. Dr. Reiner Keller, speaker of the Board of Directors of the Jakob-Fugger-Zentrum, moderated the discussion and the following exchange with the wider audience.

The organization for the Visiting Professorship lies with the Jakob-Fugger-Zentrum, the Center for Advanced Transnational Studies in the Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of

Augsburg, in collaboration with the above mentioned faculties. The mission of the Center is to strengthen and intensify transnational research in the humanities, cultural studies and social sciences at the University of Augsburg. It contributes to establishing connections between researchers across disciplines and national borders, and it facilitates the communication of research findings to audiences both inside and outside the academic world. The Professorship invites a wide range of individuals with outstanding achievements in science, academia, politics, society, the arts and literature. With public lectures, seminars and debates on topical and relevant social and political issues, the Professorship creates an important exchange platform between the guests, the university and the residents of Augsburg. Past invitees include Ambassador Avi Primor in summer 2016 and the Islamic theologian and sociologist Mouhanad Khorchide in winter semester 2016/17. On behalf of both the Faculty of Philosophy and Social Sciences and the Jakob-Fugger-Zentrum, I would like to thank everyone who helped make this lecture series possible.

Islamism, Islamophobia, Feminism: Challenges of the Twenty-First Century

Haideh Moghissi

The world seems haunted by the threat of Islamist terrorism. Western leaders repeatedly tell us that this is a new dangerous trend. The truth, however, is that it is not. People of my generation remember the frequent terrifying terrorist attacks in Europe, in Canada and the United States, the deadliest of which occurred during the 1970s and 1980s (the era of Germany's Baader-Meinhof Gang, Italy's Red Brigades, Spain's E.T.A., the UK's Irish Republican Army and Canada's Quebec Liberation Army) that by some estimates involved at least ten terror attacks, kidnappings or bombings per week. Even greater numbers of these assaults occurred in the United States during the same period, committed by such groups as the Puerto Rican separatist groups (with 40 attacks in New York City) and the Jewish Defense League (27 attacks). Closer to our time, the US experienced terrorism, committed mostly by white supremacists, such as the Oklahoma city bombing that killed 168 people, and the Unibomber, who terrorized the US for almost 20 years until mid-1990s. The world was shocked also by terrorist violence in Norway, where a massive bombing targeted the government headquarters in Oslo and a large number of defenseless teenagers were massacred at the Labor Party's annual summer youth camp in 2011. An Internet search on the subject will yield numerous acts of terror committed by left- and right-wing terrorist groups.

What distinguishes Islamist terrorism from these earlier forms of terrorism, according to Robin Wright writing in the *New Yorker* (June 5, 2017), is its missions, messages and means of mobilization and the fact that present-day terrorism is indiscriminate (it doesn't remain within boundaries directly related to the terrorists' cause). I would suggest, however, that there are more essential differences between past and present-day terrorist violence which are relevant for our discussion here: First, there is the fact that present-day terrorists have de facto links with a transnational central command, which is itself supported by some nation-states. Second, the present-day terrorists by and large have undergone "self-radicalization" with limited help from that central command; to be sure, they get their clues or instructions via the Internet but they choose the timing, the place and the means of committing their crimes themselves. Third, the perpetrators not only kill but are prepared to be killed, because they supposedly will be rewarded in the afterlife. And, finally, the present-day terrorists are Muslims and their crimes tap into a historical reservoir of anti-Islamic prejudice, anti-Arab hostility and Islamophobia that, following 9/11, flow freely throughout the West. The openly expressed animosity of Islamists to the West, the rigid and sexist version of the faith that they preach and their unbelievable cruelty when it comes to achieving their political goals all generate more confusion about Islam and Muslims and make it harder for the public to differentiate between Islamic fundamentalists, or Islamism and Muslims.

The fact is that Islam is not an essentialist and monolithic entity. Nor is there a unifying Islamic identity that all Muslims embrace. Islam is the product of various interpretations of Scripture, adopted over many centuries in different societies in the context of indigenous cultures and local customs, in close connection with the political context which determined the extent to which Isla-

mic traditions are observed and what type of Islam is practiced – that is, whether it is Islam as a formal legal system under clerical rule with strict adherence to the Shari'a (Islamic laws) treated as fixed, unchanging and unchangeable; or Islam as a set of abstract moral guidelines stipulated in the Quran, to turn to whenever and in whatever way the believer wants; or Islam as an expression of cultural and ethnic identity, as is the case for a large majority of Muslims both inside or outside majority Muslim countries; or Islam as a political ideology for establishing a utopian Islamic society. That is, Islam, like other religions, has the capacity to adapt to different cultures and to the exigencies of the time, depending on corresponding socio-economic conditions and on the dominant political mood in a particular historical period.

For example, in 1948, when the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was drafted in the UN, Saudi Arabia was the only Muslim country that abstained from voting, on the grounds that the provisions for religious liberty violated Islamic laws. But Pakistani representative voted for it, arguing that Islam endorsed freedom of conscience. Moreover, Iran's representatives at the UN, Dr. Ghasem Qani and Fraidoon Hoveida, participated in the process of drafting the UDHR document. Both Pakistan and Iran were Muslim countries then, as they are today. But obviously at the time they adhered to a different interpretation of Islam than they do today.

How can this difference in the attitude of Muslims and the rise of militant Islam be understood? The rise and growth of the influence of the Islamists have multiple causes. The rise to power of the Islamists in Iran certainly had a major influence on the re-emergence and advances of Islamism in other countries in the region. Ironically, the re-emergence of militant Islamism in turn prompted the rise of right-wing populism in Europe and the Uni-

ted States, and a vicious cycle was created by their mutual influence, in a process in which the strengthening of one leads to the strengthening of the other, with detrimental results for the world. Aside from ecological devastations caused by the same process, this vicious cycle undoubtedly poses the greatest threat to civilization, modernity and all the major human achievements of the past centuries. In a sense, we are currently experiencing the clashes between two forms of extremism, extremism of the market under neoliberalist imperialism and the Islamic extremism. My focus here is on the latter.

We need to cast our gaze back about a century to understand the political circumstances that gave rise to the situation in which we find ourselves today. Understanding this historical background is necessary because political circumstances do not change overnight, but gradually, sometimes without people fully understanding where they are heading. Although there were earlier instances of Islamic fundamentalism (Ibn Hanbal, 780-855; Ibn Taiemiya, 1263-1328; and Muhamad Abd al Wahhab, 1703-1792), Islamism or militant Islam is a new phenomenon. In the late 1920s in Egypt, Hassan al-Banna established the Muslim Brotherhood with the aim of fighting "cultural imperialism" and establishing a pure Islamic order. But his movement, despite attracting many followers, was not able to achieve very much. After Hassan al-Banna's assassination, his followers, notably Sayyid Qutb, could not turn the movement into a widespread populist uprising and most of the leadership was hanged by the Young Officers of the new republic. The Muslim Brotherhood's obscurantist ideas,¹¹ including their forthright misogyny, however, continued to inspire many Sunni fundamentalists who came to prominence at a later time, including Osama Bin Laden. Some of these ideas were revived during the so-called Arab Spring in 2011, when the Brotherhood achieved majorities in elections and won the

presidency for a short time in Egypt. But despite their retreat, it is a dormant giant waiting for the opportune moment to rise again. However, that is a different story.

In the post-war period, the US and Britain selected the Islamists as allies in their Cold War policy to contain the influence of the former Soviet Union and, by extension, the nationalist and socialist forces that were considered a serious threat to the West's geopolitical and economic interests in the Middle East. The support they gave to the Muslim Brotherhood against the nationalist governments of Gamal Abdel Nasser in Egypt, and to Fedayeen Islam in Iran against Mohamad Mossadeq, is well documented.

The links between imperialism – and subsequently neoliberalism – and Islamism may be understood more clearly by looking at the example of Iran and the processes through which an oil-rich and fast-developing country fell to the Islamists following the 1979 revolution. In the early 1950s, the *democratically* elected secular government of Mohamad Mossadeq came to power, demanding an equal share of the profits from the Iranian oil industry, which at the time was fully controlled by the British. The British rejected this demand, which was supported by a mass nationalist movement, and decided to bring down Mossadeq's government instead. Unable to do so alone, they sought the help of the Americans who eagerly agreed subject to getting a sizable share of the Iranian oil. The agreement was reached and CIA orchestrated a coup in 1953. This was the first, but obviously not the last, successful regime change in the Middle East orchestrated by the UK/US. After the coup, the West's oil companies democratically divided up Iranian oil among themselves (BP got 40%, US companies 40%, Royal Dutch-Shell 14%, and the remaining 6% went to the France's CFP, now Total). Dictatorial rule was re-established with the help of American and Israeli advisors, along with the brutal suppressi-

on of all secular nationalist and left-wing forces. Combating the political and ideological influence of the Soviets called for the forceful suppression of the Iranian nationalist, liberal and socialist forces. The mosques and Islamist institutions remained the only possible gathering places and, with some exceptions, the Islamists were allowed to continue their activities.

A decade later, when Khomeini, then a mid-ranking Ayatollah objected to the Shah's reforms which had been demanded by Americans, he was sent into exile. During the political upheavals of 1978-79, in the absence of genuine secular nationalist and left-wing leaders, many of whom had been silenced or physically eliminated by the Shah's regime, Khomeini and his followers could effectively use the mosques and Islamic associations networks for mobilizing the masses of people with populist religious narratives and false promises, ending the monarchy, pushing the left and nationalists out of the picture and establishing an Islamic state in Iran.

When Afghan communists orchestrated an ill-judged coup against the Davoud government in Afghanistan in 1978, leading to the disastrous Soviet invasion a year later, the US turned these events into a major opportunity for defeating the Soviets by mobilizing seven Islamist groups of Mujahideen,²⁾ who were angered by the occupation and what they condemned as radical reforms and changes, including the declaration of gender equality. As the war dragged on and with the loss of Iran in the 1979 revolution, the US government turned to Pakistan, which at the time was under the rule of an Islamist general, Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq, with the support of the Jamaat-e-Islami, another brand of Islamist fundamentalism, for training, financing and equipping militant groups, including Taliban, who were orphans of the long and brutal war, brought up in the religious schools funded and operated by Saudis. The Mujahideen eventually established a brutal and corrupt re-

gime, only to be toppled by an even more radical Islamist group, the Taliban, in 1996.

No one, perhaps not even the US and the British governments that used the Afghan Mujahideen and the Taliban, and later Al Qaeda, against the then Soviet forces, thought that they were nurturing the monsters that would eventually turn on them. This has been the story in the whole region running parallel to the millions of dollars spent by the Saudis to create or boost Islamist institutions and fill the gaps in social assistance, educational and medical services in Palestine, Egypt, Jordan and elsewhere, in order to enhance Islamist influence and popularity. And this is how Saudi Arabia, which had little influence outside the Arabian Peninsula before the discovery of oil in 1936, assumed a major role on the Middle Eastern and the global political stage. After the oil bonanza of the early 1970s, the Saudis started to use their massive surplus funds to build mosques and propagate Salafist ideology abroad. Being staunch anti-socialists, they aligned themselves more and more closely with the Americans in their global anti-left and anti-Soviet campaigns of the Cold War era, which culminated in the long Afghan war, and which continues today. The latest demonstration of this unholy alliance was Donald Trump's attempt to create a so-called Arab NATO during his trip to the region in May 2017.

Subsequent events leading to the rise of other Islamist radical groups include the first invasion of Iraq against the former US ally, Saddam Hussein, in 1991; Afghanistan turning into the recruitment and the training ground for Islamists from other countries, including Bin Laden's Al Qaeda; the September 11 attack, which was orchestrated from Afghanistan; the second invasion and total devastation of Iraq in 2003; and the emergence of ISIL and its expansion following the destruction of Syria. In Syria, a

genuine secular uprising against the Assad regime soon turned into a proxy war between the US and Russia, and their respective regional allies, Saudi Arabia and Iran, leading to the total destruction of cities and hundreds of thousands of people killed and millions displaced.

The invasion and disintegration of Libya, on the one hand, aggravated tribal conflicts and soon led to the rise of new Islamist groups, not only in Libya but also in neighboring Chad, Mali and other parts of northwest Africa. Al-Qaeda in Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), which had originated in Algeria, expanded its activities and, along with other Islamists and tribal rebels, wreaked havoc in this part of Africa, which was already suffering under economic crises, man-made drought and mismanagement, corruption occasioned by the imposed neoliberal policies, poverty and unemployment. The opportunity to escape from misery and hopelessness was offered to the youth along with their East African neighbors in the Sudan, Ethiopia and Somalia – themselves devastated in the Cold War conflicts³¹ – as well as in North-west Africa by the opening of Libya borders with the Mediterranean and Europe. The rise of several Islamist groups in Syria, outdoing each other in ruining the Syrian cities and killing people, in addition to the atrocities of the Assad regime, lead to a dramatic increase in the number of asylum seekers. According to UNHCR estimates, in the first six months of 2016 alone 135,711 people had reached Europe by sea.

In all Western countries law-makers and policy makers are now mobilized to control the mass migration from the Middle East and Africa. Muslims are alleged to be conquering the West step by step, destroying it from within. Hence security-driven immigration and settlement policies focus from country to country on how to observe, contain and control Muslims and to protect so-

ciety from “cultural contamination.” And terrorism “experts” call on the public to be on the lookout for suspicious behavior by Muslim (or people who look like Muslims). It is puzzling to them that some boys and girls, born and raised in Europe or North America, leave the comfort of their homes to join the rank of militant Islamists – or worst, why some of them resort to despicable acts of terror against innocent fellow-citizens.

The theories in circulation about this phenomenon are many. The familiar explanation is the predisposition of Islam to backwardness and violence, as if Muslim-ness is a quasi-biological trait that is inherited and automatically reproduced (Modood, 2005). All people who originate from Muslim majority countries are identified as Muslim, plain and simple, regardless of whether or not they are Muslim, or believers for that matter. The identifier “Muslim,” however, implies much more than a religious or national affiliation. It entails a veiled suspicion or charge of potentiality/capacity for terrorism. In other words, Muslims are tacitly assumed to be collectively responsible for the acts of terror. George W. Bush and Donald Trump’s executive orders banning the entire populations of a select number of majority Muslim countries from travelling to the United States are a reflection of this assumption. An interesting study of the media portrayal of crimes in the US shows that the terms used to describe or identify those committing a crime in that country vary. That is, white criminals are described as being “mentally disturbed,” “loners” or “lone wolves,” while the terms “thugs” and “terrorists” are reserved for Blacks and Muslims, respectively.

The second explanation is the failure of integration policies in the receiving societies where Muslims live. The argument is that fixation with “culture” and cultural differences and overt or covert racism that leads to discrimination set Muslims apart from

the rest of the society and affect their everyday lives and socio-economic status, in terms of housing, schooling and access to health care and other social services. This causes disillusionment and disaffection with the second country among self-identified Muslims. Although alienation from receiving societies is an undeniable reality, it is not sufficient to explain the influence of Islamism among certain section of the population, in particular youths.

The third theory blames the rampant Islamophobia in Western countries for forcing Muslims to take refuge in pre-existing culture, and sometimes even in religion, for a sense of community, thereby becoming receptive to Islamist political stands. If we accept the definition of Islamophobia as “unfounded hostility towards Muslims, and therefore fear or dislike of all or most Muslims,” (Runnymede 1997) then Islamophobia in Europe and North America is a pest in all democratic societies. In a good collection of reports on Islamophobia in Europe published by Berkeley University, California (available on the Internet) we read that Islamophobic attacks in France have increased by 130 percent since 2015. The section on Germany reports that Anti-Muslim sentiments are supported by roughly half of the population and 20 percent are also prepared to translate these views into political action. 17 assaults per week were also registered by the authorities and an average of 37 attacks per week was reported in local media. In the US, the FBI statistics confirm that anti-Islamic hate crimes spiked by 1600 percent after 9/11. In Canada, which so far has not experienced terrorist attacks similar to those in Europe and the US, we get frequent reports of verbal or physical abuse against individual Muslims. A most horrible form of Islamophobia was the attack on Muslim prayers in a Quebec City Mosque recently where a young man entered a mosque killing six men and wounded 17 more. What are the merits of each of these theories? The first position

recycles the ancient Christian animosity against Islam, while it is motivated by specific political goals. Consider, for example, that so far all terrorists have come either from Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Afghanistan or North African countries. Not a single one from Iran. I oppose everything that the Iranian regime stands for, but when Iran is identified by Donald Trump, Benjamin Netanyahu and the king of Saudi Arabia as the main promoter of terrorism in the region and an existential threat to Israel or to its neighboring Arab countries, as well as a threat to the world security, then I can't help thinking that some consideration other than concern over terrorism is at work here.

In any case, making Muslims guilty by association simply obscures the remarkable diversity among the over one-and-a-half billion Muslims worldwide. The reality is that the fusion of religion with indigenous cultures has produced a rainbow of Muslims of differing national origin, language, rural-urban roots, class and sectarian affiliations. Muslims include orthodox believers, practicing individuals, non-practicing skeptics, secular and laicist members, as well as non-believers. Among practicing Muslims you will find a small minority of radical Islamists and a vast majority of peaceful and moderate adherents with different behavioral patterns and lifestyles. Given the internal divisions and the clashes between absolutist and moderate Muslims, and clashes even within each group, the world's over one-and-a-half billion Muslims are more divided than they are united. The horrifyingly large numbers of Muslims who fall victim to the blind, brutal terror at the hands of other Muslims in Iraq, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Syria, in the name of defending Islamic prescriptions and values, testifies to this reality. For exactly this reason, some scholars speak of clashes within the singular “Muslim civilization” as opposed to Huntington's clashes between civilizations. Others suggest that the term “Islams,” rather than the singular term “Is-

lam," better captures the diversity of Islamic beliefs, practices and values.

But the problem is that the existence of a larger number of laicist persons of Muslim heritage is recognized neither by devout Muslims nor by average citizens or mainstream media or the governments in the West. Unlike non-religious Jews and non-religious Christians, the category of "cultural" or secular/laicist Muslims is almost totally ignored. The irony here is that nobody would ever consider the actions, pronouncements or directives of American fundamentalist TV evangelists, or even the Pope, as remotely representative of the views, beliefs and lifestyles of all Christians.

The second position has some merits as the ever-deepening psychological, emotional and, increasingly, reasoning gulf between the Western and majority Muslim nations, and by extension between the citizens of European ancestry and Diasporas of Muslim origin in the West, has been one of the most tragic, and perhaps lasting, calamities caused by 9/11. For the live-and-let-live attitude that by and large prevailed in relations among citizens in these societies for decades has now been replaced by a mutual sense of resentment and distrust, fear, anxiety and psychological insecurity. Assuming that the overwhelming challenge for the majority of migrants, particularly when the "race" factor is in play, is inclusion in the job market and creating a niche in the new country that provides them with economic rewards and personal satisfaction, Muslim populations do not seem to have succeeded in creating such a niche in any country in the West.

Take the example of the Muslim population in Canada, where government policies toward the Muslim population, which grew by 128% in a single decade,⁴¹ are more liberal and accommodating than many other countries. (Moghissi et al. 2009) Islam constitu-

tes the second-largest religion in Canada (1,053,700), following Christianity, according to the 2011 Canadian National Household Survey. Nonetheless, my own research showed that Canadian Muslims are in an economically disadvantageous position, with an unemployment rate twice the Canadian average and a median income 37 percent lower than the Canadian average, in spite of having a post-secondary education level twice that of the Canadian average. The difficulty of integrating into the labor market and isolation from the larger society leads to what has been called "long-distance nationalism." There is much truth in this theory, but it does not fully add up either. For in the same study we found that despite the relatively inhospitable conditions for Muslims in the post-9/11 period, the overwhelming majority take a very positive view of their choice of a new home country. That is, despite dissatisfaction with the low levels of occupational and economic achievement, 70 percent of male and female participants in the study thought that their decision to migrate to Canada was the right one. And by and large they expressed support for Canada's liberal democracy and its multicultural tolerance from which they benefit. Therefore, we need to look to other political and psychological factors that may assist us in gaining a better understanding of the appeal of the above-mentioned long-distance nationalism of Muslims.

As for the third position – that is, the disaffecting impact of Islamophobia on Europe's Muslim population – this form of the hate crime must indeed be condemned and punished in the interests of the security and the dignity of Muslims and the larger society. However, in a very perverse way, Islamophobes and Islamists match and mutually need each other. Not only do they cloud the humanity and the rich history of Islamic rationalist philosophical and spiritual exploration and their innovation and significant contributions to the world civilization, but they also share anti-

democratic and hostile attitudes toward all forms of difference – ideological, social and sexual – and the gendered character of their messages. For all of these reasons, radical Islamism poses no less a threat than does Islamophobia to the wellbeing of citizens in all democratic societies, because of its absolutist and uncompromisingly crude worldviews and actions, its twisted understanding of the notions of justice and dignity, its stance against freedom of religion and freedom from religion, and its determination to annihilate all those considered to be anti-Islam or apostate, Muslims and non-Muslims alike, as well as, and particularly its embedded misogyny.

In recounting these three positions, I am suggesting that without denying the existence of racism, Islamophobia and discrimination against self-identified Muslims on the job market, something larger than personal hurt is at stake here. And that is the selective application of international rules of conduct or human rights standards, which has a greater impact on the psyche of individual Muslims, inside and outside majority Muslim countries, than the social and economic factors. In some extreme cases, this factor stimulates active or tacit support for Islamists, or at least a reluctance to come out forcefully against all of what these groups stand for. Examples of the global political events that alienate and disenchant ordinary Muslims are too many to enumerate. Israel's war in Lebanon and in the occupied Palestine, the siege of Gaza which deprives Gazans from such basic things as fresh water, electricity and medicine, not to mention the invasion and destruction of several major majority Muslim countries in the region, come to mind. Many people from the region see these events as proof that the politics of oil and geopolitical colonial interests define when and where Western powers strike with impunity and without any consideration for the lives of innocent people.

These aggressions communicate the infuriating message that the West stands above the system of international law and that American, and indeed, Western values are of a higher moral order, and hence their imposition on others is justified. Some similar strategies adopted at the domestic level are no less injurious to the sense of identity and self-worth of people of Islamic heritage. In 2015, the then conservative government of Canada passed legislation to amend the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, the Civil Marriage Act and the Criminal Code. The goal of the new legislation was to specify that practicing polygamy makes a permanent resident or foreign national inadmissible in Canada. The legislation also set the marriage age at 16 and defined marriage as the union made only between two consenting adults. (Statutes of Canada 2015) This may be read as a praiseworthy measure against child marriage and forced marriages, to protect the venerable women and girl children, specifically, but not solely of Muslim heritage (although there are some small Mormon communities who observe the same practices). But the government chose to call the legislation the Zero Tolerance for Barbaric Cultural Practices Act. Frankly, it is hard not to feel that the selection of this title was a deliberate provocation intended to offend and insult Muslims.

To take another example: In 2011, then French President Nicolas Sarkozy sent a bill to the parliament aimed at the inclusion in school curricula of a discussion of the *positive aspects of French colonialism in the Maghreb*. It is not hard to imagine the extent of the rage this caused among people of North African descent in France. More recently, Donald Trump during a media interview described how, while enjoying a “beautiful chocolate cake” after dinner in his Florida mansion with his Chinese counterpart, he informed the Chinese president of the US bombing of Syria, which followed testing by the US of the “mother of all bombs” in Afghanistan. Any reasonable person would wonder how this he-

artless arrogance, which sees Muslims not as individual human beings but as pointers of backwardness (the deep-seated Islamophobia that produced Abu Ghraib), could fail to cause rage and indignation, particularly among Muslims who are at the receiving end of these atrocities.

Let me hasten to add that not learning from the mistakes of the past has been the hallmark of US and British policies in the region. Since 9/11, for example, all sensible people knew how toxic for the well-being of people in the region and for the global peace are the aggressions committed by Western powers in the name of waging war on terror. No one should have really been surprised by the enormous boost that militant Islamism received following the US-led invasion of Afghanistan, the complete devastation of Iraq and the destruction of Libya and Syria. What is worse, we now know that the father and brothers of the Libyan terrorist who murdered 22 people and wounded many more in Manchester in May were known to British security forces because they had formed a Manchester Islamic Fighters group travelling frequently between the UK and Libya during the 2012 eruption of the anti-Gaddafi revolts. The British government which referred to this and similar groups at the time as “rebels,” not terrorists, had no problem with the activities of these people and their back and forth traffic with the aim of causing violence and destruction in Libya.

Stating these realities is not to justify or excuse the horrendous crimes committed by the brain-washed youth who are being increasingly desensitized against violence and are trained to commit unimaginably heinous atrocities. The monstrous terrorist acts in Manchester and London, attacks on the Christmas market in Berlin, other terrorist attacks in Nice, Paris, Stockholm and Jakarta, as well as the repeated, senseless shootings of Egyptian

Copts and Pakistani Christians, are inexcusable crimes that must be unconditionally condemned and punished. It is only to suggest that the world has to try to untangle the knots of this very complex situation if the climate of fear and more fear, both in the region and in Anglo-European countries, and the moral dilemma it creates for justice and peace, are to end.

Several points are crucial in this regard. First, is that it is not enough to capture and punish the terrorists without scrutinizing the Western powers' foreign and military policies and adventures, which have created a chain of conflict zones with the disastrous outcomes of uprooting and displacing millions of people from their traditional homelands, only a tiny fraction of whom end up in Europe and North America. The focus on security and the so-called war on terror, which has dramatically diminished the global efforts for reducing poverty in the less developed countries, itself a strategy for producing refugees, must be reconsidered. Note, for example, that the EU has pledged \$1.5 billion in development aid to Afghanistan annually, 42 percent of which goes to defense and security. Canada has pledged \$467m, \$195m of which goes to the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF) – not to mention the reduction or halt to assistance to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and channeling the funds to training Palestinian security forces instead, as the former right-wing Canadian government did for years.

But let me draw attention in particular to how all this affects women and how their bodies, life chances and personal liberties are negatively impacted by Islamism and neo-imperialism, and the “global Jihad” between the two – one in the name of religious and moral purity of the Muslim societies against Western imperialism, the other in the name of secular humanism and democracy.

Radical Islamists use women's bodies as an organizing principle for re-ordering and re-Islamizing the already Muslim society. The pattern of the use of coercion, intimidation and brute violence against women inevitably desensitizes people to gender violence and emboldens misogynist forms of violence in public and in personal relationships. An analysis of the personal conduct of a number of terrorists who have struck the US and Europe, for example, shows the close links between political and personal violence, as the terrorists' first victims have invariably been their own wives. In the US, between 2009 and 2015, 16 percent of mass shooters had previously been charged with domestic violence. One of the London Bridge killers, Rachid Redouane, had repeatedly kicked and slapped his wife and tried to make her wear the hijab; Mohamed Lahouaiej Bouhlel, who drove a truck into crowds in Nice, had a criminal record for domestic violence; Omar Mateen, who killed 49 people in the Pulse nightclub in Orlando, reportedly would beat his wife on the slightest pretext. The Westminster Bridge attacker, Khalid Masood, also had a history of domestic violence and coercive control. (Lewis 2017) The young Canadian man who in February of this year killed six men and wounded 17 more in a Quebec City mosque did not have a wife to beat but turned out to be harboring a grudge against feminists whom he called "Feminazis" on his Facebook account.

However, it is important though to note that the misogynist values and practices are not the exclusive domain of extremist Islamist militants. In fact, the atrocities committed by ISIL such as the capture and enslavement of Yazidi women or Boko Haram's abduction of women and girls, may cloud the ongoing and enduring violations with impunity of women's basic rights, life opportunities and personal liberties in the name of religion and the nation, backed by Sharia-based constitutional and civil and criminal codes. In Turkey, for instance, one of the tragic consequences of

Erdogan's AKP social engineering scheme aimed at reversing over 80 years of legal and social reforms in favor of women and his public pronouncements that equality between men and women "is against nature," continually stressing motherhood as women's main role and vilifying working women, have certainly influenced policy directions at odds with gender equity and have emboldened misogynistic attitudes. This is reflected among other things in a dramatic increase in violence against women. The Turkish Ministry of Justice has revealed that, between 2003 and 2010, there has been an astonishing increase of 140 percent in the number of women murdered in the country. (Tremblay 2014)

The situation is even worse in Iran. A study undertaken by the Iran Red Crescent Medical Journal estimated that, between 2003 and 2006, 66 percent of married women in Iran were subjected to physical violence. (Hajnasiri et al. 2016) The violent harassment of women, as well as sexual pestering in streets (*Mozahemat-e Khiabani*) and other public places, according to a representative of the judiciary, have increased 98 percent in just the last two years. This figure does not include a spate of acid attacks against women in 2014-15 in several Iranian cities. It is important to note that these criminal activities were committed at the same time that the parliament was debating a bill that provides legal protection for individuals who volunteer to prevent "social vice" as ordered by the Ayatollah.

I am aware that this complex and multi-layered political situation inflicts a great deal of personal and political moral anguish on many individuals who are concerned about human rights, democracy and justice in majority Muslim countries, as well as for the rights of Muslims in the West. The dilemma is how to defend and promote democratic ideas, feminist demands and the rights of religious and sexual minorities without adding to the already well-

stocked arsenal of racism and Islamophobia, and how to challenge the demeaning stereotypes about Islam and Muslims that serve to justify new colonial policies in the region, without resorting to apologetic and self-glorifying practices hostile to equality, justice and freedom.

Of one thing we can be sure: To uproot terrorists from the region and beyond and block the growth of Islamophobia in the West, a holistic, two-pronged approach to foreign and domestic policies is needed. At the level of domestic policies vis-a-vis migrant populations of Muslim heritage, a reassessment of several strategies is urgently needed. First, lawmakers and policy makers must stop making religion their guiding principle in policy decisions. The dominant trend until now has been that, instead of addressing the genuine grievances and immediate concerns of the population by adopting anti-discriminatory and anti-racist policies and providing equal opportunities for Muslims to live a decent life, free from harassment and disrespect, the governments have fallen into the habit of making conservative Muslims a legitimate partner at the negotiation table whenever there is a need to address the interests and grievances of Muslim populations. What these self-appointed leaders of the Muslim community present to the policy- and decision-makers as the interests and concerns of Muslims are the politically-based interests of a tiny minority who have a loud voice and the necessary means to promote their own agenda. Addressing this problem, the prominent scholar, Bassam Tibi, warned years ago that the larger societies in Europe should be alert to the possibility of the abuse of democracy and human rights issues by fanatical Islamists. He said they use the same concepts "in order to grant themselves legitimacy despite their contempt for these secular concepts." (Tibi 2001: 225) He further cautioned well-intentioned individuals and intellectuals in the West that supporting Islamist movements would be an unwitting,

self-accusing and self-defeating relativism which not only undermines European standards and democratic values, but creates major obstacles to a cultural dialogue aimed at promoting peace.

Second, the cozy relations developed between Western powers and the right-wing states in the region, which are themselves the source of population movements and terrorism is also in need of urgent reconsideration. Let's not forget that some of the terrifying forms of violence committed in the cities and villages under the control of Daesh or ISIL, such as destroying ancient pre-Islamic monuments, the coercive imposition of dress codes on women and men, enforcing the eye-for-an-eye judicial system, beheadings, stonings, and so forth, occur in the countries that are West's trading partners and allies in fighting terrorism.

Related to this is the external provocation coming from outside and the free flow of funding from the cynical oil-rich countries for building new mosques, importing conservative Imams, supporting Islamic associations, Islamic schools, Islamic conferences, establishing TV programs, Islamist publications, blogs, and organizing protest rallies. The stated objectives of some of these bodies are to support the interests and concerns of the Muslim populations. But their mission is in reality to promote the rigid, conservative, sexist values and moral codes of the fundamentalist Wahhabi version of Islam and to make policy demands, such as establishing Islamic schools, segregated swimming pools, Shari'a courts and Friday prayers at schools, and organizing rallies against progressive initiatives such sex education at schools, objectives which are mudding further the brains of already confused and frustrated youth. Several years ago, 18 youths were arrested in Toronto as members of a terrorist cell. Several of them were later released without charge. In the trial of one of them, Fahim Ahmad, a so-called ring leader among them identified as a home-

grown terrorist, it was revealed that he was not a practicing Muslim at all and barely remembered his homeland Afghanistan. And yet following 9/11 and the war on Iraq he started going to a Mosque out of frustration, met other like-minded youth and influenced by the Imam of the Mosque and this changed his life. (The Canadian Press 2014)

In the end, there are many indicators of increasing awareness and resistance against militant Islamism by women and men in the MENA region and other signs of hope. They come from people in Tunisia who took to the streets against the return of terrorists from conflict zones, trained in looting, raping; from the success of women's organizations in forcing the Egyptian state to pass a new law against sexual harassment of women, an endemic problem in Egypt; (Mokbel 2016) and from the Iranian women who mobilized to oust the more extremist populists in the 2017 presidential elections. These activities send a loud and powerful message that they reject the self-serving agenda of Islamists and do not share the Islamists' morality or nationalist chauvinism.

Displacement and Migration in the Age of Globalization

Haideh Moghissi

Not a single day has passed in recent years without horrific stories being reported about the massive flight of refugees from the Middle East, Asia and Africa to Europe and about the loss of lives during the crossing. The 2016 UNHCR report estimated that at the end of 2015 the total number of displaced people had reached 65.3 million, "the highest ever – surpassing even post-World War II numbers," and that one in every 113 people worldwide, or just under one percent of the Earth's population, is now either an asylum-seeker, internally displaced, or a refugee. (UNHCR 2017) Half of them are children. In fact, almost one in three first-time asylum applicants in the EU during the same period were minors, a nine percent increase compared to 2014 levels. Also, one in four of these were judged by national authorities to be unaccompanied – the highest number since 2008 and a three-fold increase over the numbers registered in 2014. The report does not even include at least 19 million people separately uprooted by natural disasters such as floods and earthquakes. (IDMC 2016) The unprecedented scale of the population movements, internal displacements, migrations and asylum seeking in only one-and-a-half decades into the twenty-first century justify the UN's identification of the development as "the most devastating event in history." Several wars and civil wars, the total devastation of some countries and the fact that the inhabitants of others are condemned to a life of fear, ethnic cleansing, the brazen assaults on the environment, economic instability, the onslaught on humanity in the name of

law and order, and the turn to religious and cultural intolerance, all prompt the mass flight of people from their country of birth in search of a decent life and security.

The overwhelming majority of refugees, however, live in countries close to their place of origin. For example of the 12.4 million people who were displaced in 2015, 8.6 million remained within the borders of their own country.⁴¹ Kenya hosts half a million in Dabaab camps alone; one in every four people in Lebanon is a refugee; Turkey is already host to almost two million refugees; likewise Pakistan and to a lesser extent countries like Ethiopia, Jordan and Iran are hosts to large numbers of refugees.

In 2015, over 1.2 million first-time asylum claims were lodged in the EU as a whole, more than double the number registered in 2014. And by the end of 2015, at least 3,770 of those seeking asylum in Europe had lost their lives in the process. (IOM 2015) The majority of those deaths were among people trying to reach Greece and Italy by sea from North Africa.

Some European countries perform much better than others, both in terms of the number of refugees and asylum seekers they accept and how those granted asylum are treated afterwards. For example, in 2015, Germany became the largest single recipient of first-time individual asylum seekers in Europe, with almost 442,000 applications lodged in the country by the end of the year. (Some give the figure 890,000). (IOM 2015) By contrast, Britain received just 38,000 applications, and has the lowest approval rates for asylum claims. A collaborative study conducted by The Guardian and three other newspapers also reported that Britain not only “takes fewer refugees (or 3% of applications in Europe) but offers less generous financial support, provides housing that is often substandard, denies asylum seekers the right to work, ... punishes

those who do voluntary work and routinely forces those granted refugee status into destitution even homelessness through bureaucratic delays.” (Lyons et al. 2017)

How to deal with this record number of displaced persons is perhaps the most pressing concern of the receiving countries both in Europe and elsewhere, especially since there is not likely to be a reduction in the numbers in the future. What is not often recognized, however, is that population movements and the displacement of millions of people are the inevitable result of a global economic system under the sway of fanatical neoliberal policies leading, on the one hand, to intensified economic competition for access to larger and more diversified profitable economic resources and markets and pressure to lift border controls to facilitate the flow of capital, goods and services, and, on the other, to reductions in social spending and the dismantling of the welfare state. These developments inevitably lead to a widening of the gap between the rich and the poor, chronic unemployment and poverty and an accompanying brazen assault on environment.

The point is that the European countries and the US are suddenly become aware of the tragedy of population displacement because a tiny fraction of these unfortunate millions, 86 percent of whom according to UNHCR estimates remain in the countries of the South, are now knocking on their doors. They are alarmed at the sheer numbers of asylum seekers who are fearless of the potential danger to their lives and heedless of the fact that they are interfering with the neoliberal mantra of maintaining the highest level of mobility of capital and production sites, and the lowest level of labor mobility (labor in the past had to be brought to the site of capital, now capital goes to the site of labor). What has been erased from historical memory is the responsibility that the European and North American imperialist countries bear for uproo-

ting millions in their former colonies – the British in India, Iraq, Egypt and Palestine, the French in Lebanon/Syria and North Africa, the US in South East Asia and almost everywhere else. It was certainly in recognition of this responsibility that after WWI the League of Nations established a High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) to deal with the millions of uprooted persons.

Nor is there any need to remind ourselves of the post-9/11, refugee-inducing US/UK-led adventures in the Middle East and Africa, the invasion of Afghanistan, the devastation of Iraq and the disintegration of Libya and the emergence of ISIL and the expansion of their army and influence following the destruction of Syria. The unfortunate thing is that the countries that bear the greatest responsibility – namely, the US and the UK – are the ones that are least affected by the problems of their own creation. In fact, no industrially-advanced nation can fully escape the consequences.

My point is that there should really be no surprises here. Even before the massive pressure exerted by the displaced populations streaming into Europe from conflict zones of the Middle East and Africa, the UN and some analysts had repeatedly warned of the consequences of underfunded aid efforts – including the cuts to food subsidies for the refugees in Lebanon and Jordan by European governments and Canada – and that neglect of the impending crisis would lead to disaster. This is to say that mass flights of migrants and asylum seekers are intimately interconnected with the loss of livelihoods and hope resulting from corporate greed, confiscation of lands, neoliberal deregulations, cuts to public spending and the unshakable faith in the power of market to solve all social and economic problems.

For example, every year thousands of temporary migrant workers come to Canadian farms under the Seasonal Agricultural Workers

Program (SAWP). The Canadian government, through bilateral agreements made mostly with Mexico and a few Central American countries, issues seasonal workers temporary visas for up to eight months to enable them to enter the country. Canada needs this pool of cheap, unorganized labor to do so-called 3-D jobs, that is, jobs that are “Dirty, Difficult and Dangerous.” The growth of commercial agriculture or agrifood industries, the break-up and sale of lands held in common (which was prohibited by the Mexican constitution until this was changed in early 1990s) and the inability of small farmers to compete with big US agribusinesses are the missing links in the saga of Mexican workers in Canada. The farmers are forced to abandon cultivation and find work either for the same agribusinesses or to look for work in Canada and US. In 2008 the special representative of the UN secretary general on the issue of human rights and transnational corporations, in his report to the General Assembly and the Human Rights Council proposed the framework of “Protect, Respect and Remedy” as the guiding principles, or three aspects, of the human rights responsibility of corporations and their respective states (for example with regard to the acquisition or confiscation of land from indigenous peoples). Needless to say the implementation and enforcement of these principles are the states’ responsibility. But what happens when the states no longer see their role as being to protect the welfare of citizens but instead to serve the interests of global capital?

To return to the present so-called refugee crisis, the general response of European and North American countries, with the exception of Germany and Canada, to this major crisis of the twenty-first century has centered on strengthening border controls, tightening asylum policies, investing citizenship status with new importance, re-establishing visa requirements for certain countries, adopting various security measures, such as Patriot Act in

the US and similar measures in Europe, and inventing new surveillance methods, in particular ones based on biometrics (i.e. devices for recognizing a person based on a physiological or behavioral characteristic for security identification, such as finger printing). Donald Trump beats the drum of security in an attempt to avoid the moral and political responsibility of US and other Western political leaders in creating this problem; Hungary built a wall to keep refugees out; France sealed its border with Italy; a former British prime minister called the asylum-seekers who gathered in Calais to find their way to the UK a “swarm” and the UK opted out of the EU proposal to allocate the populations seeking refuge in the EU proportionally among Member States and the country eventually voted for Brexit. The response of Denmark to the crisis was first to reduce its social welfare benefits by 50 percent and to place a newspaper advertisement in Lebanese newspapers telling potential refugees not to come to Denmark because social benefits are no longer as generous as before – the assumption being that the Syrian refugees who put their lives and the lives of their children at risk in order to escape the war zones were enticed by Denmark’s generous social benefits. Worse still, proposals continue to be made to stop the sea rescue operations for refugees in distress trying to cross the Mediterranean in flimsy boats.

These policies and attitudes fly in the face of the fact that demographic stagnation or shrinkage is a major cause for concern in Europe (the birth rate in Italy in 2014 was reported to be lowest since the founding of the Italian state in 1861; the German government acknowledges that it needs an average of 533,000 immigrants per year to offset the shortage of labor in the country; and the decrease in the birth rate Portugal and Spain coupled with the emigration of young adults in large numbers in recent years are also major sources of concern). Statistics in Canada in

April 2017 showed that, for the first time in Canadian history, the number of people over 65 is higher than the number of children under 14. But Canada’s response to its demographic needs is an orderly admission of 250,000 so-called legal immigrants annually. Asylum seekers represent a small number of those admitted to the country, except for a special provision to accept about 60,000 Syrian refugees in 2015.

Integration

Let us now shift our attention to the post-immigration problems and the challenges of integrating resettled refugees and migrants. Historically, several strategies have been adopted for dealing with different cultural and religious groups and ethnic communities brought together as a result of regional expansion and colonialism. In some cases the colonial power tried to impose its own language and cultural practices on all of its subjects. The Czarist Russification policy and – to a lesser extent and only in specific colonies – Frenchification policies are well-known examples. A different policy was to maintain diverse groups in their difference by granting them considerable autonomy in religious and cultural practices in exchange for their acceptance of the imperial hegemony, as implemented in the millet system of the Ottoman Empire and British policy in India and in most of its territories.

A common perception, however, is that the process of integration and the formation of a sense of belonging for the migrants to a new land is speedier and more harmonious in democratic societies than through specific strategies aimed at their invited or uninvited migrant populations designed to create a space for migrants through assimilationist and/or multicultural policies or a combination of both. The fact remains, however, that integration

is not only or even predominantly about the individual migrants' or refugees' adaptation to the new country. Governments, through their settlements and integration policies and practices, and the general public, through their attitudes and responses to the new arrivals, are partners in the integration process, particularly when the cultural practices, civic behavior and life-styles of migrant populations appear strikingly different and unusual to the receiving society.

At the expense of simplifying the complex process of integration and belonging, I suggest that there are two major components to the logic of integration as it bears on citizenship. These are the rights and duties, or the entitlements and obligations, of all residents in a country toward the society, and those of the society and its government toward the residents. This essentially means that there is a give and take relationship between the state, on the one hand, and citizens, on the other, even though by virtue of having all sorts of powers at its disposal, the responsibilities of the state are much more extensive than those of the citizens. There are two sides to the state's responsibilities: first, providing practical and logistical support for resettlement in the areas of housing, health care, education, employment and other immediate needs of the individuals being relocated; ideally, this assistance should be provided with sufficient attention to the needs and the dignity of the recipients; and, second, the responsibility to protect the human rights of the new citizens and deliver justice in the interest of the respectful cultural integration and the security of both those directly involved and the larger society. The fulfillment of these responsibilities makes peaceful interactions among citizens or residents in a country possible in the interest of social cohesion and undisturbed coexistence that are preconditions for sustaining a humane society.

Integration is a major issue and it requires a give and take. Thus, migrants can be expected to accept social norms and practices in important areas of life in their new country and the larger society can be expected to tolerate and show respect for benign cultural practices or rituals that seem central to a minority's distinct identities, psychological security and self-confidence. Maintaining a balance between these two requirements poses enormous challenges for all concerned.

Some scholars appeal to the notion of public and private domains within society to clarify the need for balance between the two seemingly opposed tendencies: calling for unity and recognizing diversity. They suggest a compromise in the form of the separation between the private and public domains at the level of policy. According to this proposal, the public domain is the proper location of a unitary culture, whereas the private, communal domain is the proper location for diversity. (Rex 2004) Religious and cultural diversity or plurality are tolerated, and sometimes even encouraged, on the grounds that they do not impinge on the public sphere. The private domain, it is argued, provides social and psychological support for the individual members of cultural and religious groups, whereas the public domain is the domain of politics, the economy and the law where diversity is not permitted. This view is, of course, open to debate because the private domain is also the domain of family in which the rights of women, for example, can be violated in the name of culture. The vulnerability of women within minority communities has prompted some feminists to call for "prohibiting some minority practices" so that "moral values like individual autonomy and sexual equality" can be enjoyed by all citizens. Others like Will Kimlicka, who, although they defend the accommodation of cultural practices, are aware of the paradoxes of such a policy and the danger that the rights of individuals to autonomy and choice will be compromi-

sed for the sake of the rights the group, have suggested that “the groups that violate their members’ basic liberties, or prevent them from exercising their autonomy are not entitled to accommodation or protection.” (Iverson 2010: 11) Needless to say, those who defend such positions still have to tell us how these ideas can be implemented in practice.

The reality is that with the securitization of immigration and citizenship in the post-9/11 era, when “difference” is treated as sufficient grounds for suspicion and a police file, Muslims in particular are exposed to much greater pressure to adopt the values of the majority society and to integrate through social interaction with the larger society. Some scholars, such as Taher Abbas, argue that this reflects the general assumption that Muslims are not making sufficient efforts to meet the obligations that go with the claim of citizenship – that they don’t reciprocate, so to speak. With this point in mind, I want to return to the point raised earlier about the need for balance in policy.

Generally speaking, populations of Islamic cultural origin are perceived as an undifferentiated religious community. Ethnicity, culture and religion are taken to be one and the same thing and religion is assumed to be all that there is to the identity and concerns of anyone who comes from a specific region. Let me offer some examples here. A friend who works with unaccompanied teenage refugees as a counsellor in a resettlement center in Munich told me how annoying it was to hear the center’s plan to send the youth under its care to a Mosque in order to address their psychological and cultural concerns. He regarded this as an obviously well-intentioned but misguided plan which reflected a rather racist perception about Muslims that reduced their whole identity, their interests and needs to religion and religion alone. Moreover, the fact that only Islam/Muslims are perceived in this way, and

not any other population regardless of their religious affiliation, amounts in effect to imposing religion on this specific population. In fact, religion might be the last thing on these children’s minds compared to an uncertain future regarding education, jobs, family separation, etc.

To take a second example: A few years ago the Ontario education authorities, with much fanfare, allowed Friday prayers to take place in some publically-funded middle schools in Toronto, which also included hiring an Imam to lead the prayers for 13- to 14-year-old pupils. Again, we considered this to be an irresponsible, popularity-driven decision by individuals who were uninformed, and did not try to inform themselves, about the Islamic tradition of Friday prayer, which is neither an obligatory part of the faith nor required of children. Many people saw this as the result of a cozy relationship that has developed between decision makers and hardline Muslim community leaders and Imams who sell their own desires and their own agenda as those of the community. The fear was that this action would encourage more conservative religiosity among the children in question and even embolden conservative men within Muslim communities to reject the existing criminal and civil laws and to call instead for religiously-based legal practices.

That these fears were not far off the mark was shown by the subsequent launching of an extensive campaign to implement Shari’a (Islamic laws) in arbitration in Ontario, whose success was prevented only by an extensive counter-campaign by other sections of the population, including a few Muslim women’s associations. A similar campaign was conducted in the UK, where a group of Muslim fundamentalists declared part of East London to be a “Shari’a controlled zone” where women are already harassed for not covering themselves. Another interesting case was the policy of assi-

milationist, secular France of permitting polygamous immigrant men to bring multiple wives into the country, which was stopped only in 1993 when polygamy was declared illegal in the country.

In all of these cases, it is not unreasonable to assume that either it is more convenient for the governments to turn to self-appointed community leaders whenever a decision has to be made in relation to a non-dominant ethnic group, rather than to listen to many different voices from within these populations; or, what is worse, that the decisions and practices are opportunistic moves motivated exclusively by the hope of reaping rewards in the voting booth.

This is not to minimize the importance of the attitudes and the inclinations of refugees and migrants in the process of integration. In fact, substantial numbers of immigrants rise to the challenges of learning the language of the new country if needed, follow the established rules of conduct and selectively adopt the normative expectations of the larger society and counter their own exclusion by trying to excel and to claim their own space as citizens, with or without the support of the mainstream society. These are individuals who embrace the promises and expectations of citizenship rights. This might be what Floya Antias has theorized as identifying with the country you reside in, but not feeling that you belong. Nevertheless, this is more valid in cases where other stigmatizing factors such as racial location, religious affiliation and economic factors are not at work. Factors such as the level of economic, social and political development of the receiving society, the passage of time and proximity and remoteness from sources of power would, of course, make a difference in this regard.

The fact is that certain degrees of assimilation through, among other things, a unified school system and teaching single history,

playing the same games, watching the same TV programs and comedies and even some behavioral patterns are inevitable, at least in educational institutions and the workplace. Obviously, this is truer of second-generation migrants who consciously or unconsciously gradually distance themselves from the culture of parents. In other words, having been brought up and educated in the country, the cultural gap narrows between the younger generations. And the reality is that the more assimilated or adapted they become, the more chances they'll have for integration and success.

Belonging

A variety of studies have shown, however, that regardless of the specific historical context or the reasons for departure from a homeland, and despite differing material conditions of life in the second country and notwithstanding where this country is located, the first generation of migrants and refugees often continue to live in what Edward Said has described as "the territory of not belonging." Narratives of voluntary and involuntary migration from the country of birth testify to this reality and in some cases reflect an attitude of rejection or even irrational hostility toward the new place. During his exile in the United States in the 1940s, Bertolt Brecht, for example, complained about everything American; he claimed that he was not able to open his windows in the morning, as he used to do in Germany, because nothing in California was worth breathing and smelling. (Lyon 2014) A moving passage in Eva Hoffman's brilliant autobiography, *Lost in Translation*, evokes the magical power of loss: not only does everything that has been lost remain forever as one remembers it, but it is "made more beautiful by the medium in which it is held and by its stillness." (Hoffman 1989: 115)

Two years ago the nostalgic laments of an Israeli shopkeeper in West Jerusalem's fashionable Ben Yehuda Street brought this painful reality home to me. Entering his shop I was pleasantly surprised to hear him speaking in Farsi on the phone, with heavy Isfahani accent. We immediately connected through our common abhorrence for the present rulers of our shared homeland, Iran. It was sad to hear this old man, who had voluntarily migrated to Israel 55 years earlier, longingly say that for him there was no place on earth like Iran.

The sense of not belonging is most acute for the individuals who for various reasons are more "visible" and become targets of stereotypical imagery and exclusionary practices. They live mostly in the periphery (suburb) of social and political life of the receiving society and not at its center. The sense of not belonging causes more emotional vulnerability and often the collapse of the sense of self-confidence, at least initially. In some cases basic everyday activities present a major challenge, which aggravates the deep sense of having lost the people and things one cherishes and loves. One becomes almost like a child and is often treated like a child who is learning to speak and the basics of life: how to behave and interact with people; what is polite and impolite in a foreign culture; going to school to learning a skill; and, in some cases, finding a job, any job, regardless of one's education and skills. Regardless of what one learned before, all previous achievements and experiences seem worthless in the new country.

The Gender Factor

Many refugees even experience a change of character involving a loss of self-esteem and self-confidence. When everything you know, care for and hope for is devalued all the time, you have no

reason to value them yourself. For many refugees, this can lead to permanent bitterness or cynicism. Many female refugees have already experienced cruel punishments: sexual abuse and rape are weapons of war in many parts of the world being commonly used as forms of torture to elicit information from women and to extract confessions from men. They have had to carry their children from one place to another. Most often female refugee claimants face similar forms of discrimination, bias and double standards in "modern" societies as they had to escape from in their "traditional" society. Wherever and whenever religion and culture dictates assume the central role in policy decisions vis-à-vis a migrant population, they are bound to violate the rights of women and youth. For there is an intimate connection between gender and culture and home and family (that is, the private domain) are where much of culture is practiced, preserved and transmitted to the young and the domain where men's authority and control over women is exercised. Providing a particular minority culture with special rights to practice its own culture often amounts to giving men the authority to violate the rights of women and children, even though the latter are guaranteed in the laws of the land and followed (for the most part) by the majority culture.

The clearest manifestation of the interaction between patriarchy and racism is also revealed within the home and family. The frustration inspired by racism encourages members of migrant families to take refuge in their own culture, to stick together and to suppress disharmony, no matter what form it takes. In this context, sustaining the native culture and identity manifests itself, among other things, in maintaining beliefs and practices pertaining to men-women relationships within the family and to culturally acceptable masculine-feminine values and roles.

The naïve, narrow focus on “culture” and cultural differences, combined with lack of attention or the will required to develop a well-defined and consistently and forcefully implemented anti-discrimination policy to address social and economic inequities and injustices, promotes the formation of self-contained, isolated and exclusivist enclaves, or what the French call “the development of nations within nations,” to the detriment of women and youth. Encounters with the dominant culture and its institutions are then reduced to a bare minimum and citizenship rights are reduced to getting a legal document that entitles the person to some social services and a passport.

In conclusion, in our increasingly globalized world we have no other choice but to accept change in how we live and work and how we think about people of very different cultural traditions who voluntarily or involuntarily are brought together by the force of migration. My central point in this paper has been that accommodating diversity requires formidable efforts from different sides. To be sure, it is in the first instance the responsibility of the larger society to create the institutional mechanisms required for the dignified and equitable integration of new immigrants. This requires moving away from a focus on token, superficial celebrations of ethnic and religious festivities, in the hope that this will counter potent forces of prejudice and racism in more crucial areas of life, and on making some small changes here and there. The problem with such approaches is that, instead of adopting a holistic view that gets at the deeper roots of the problem in consultation with all those involved, we are in danger of succumbing to a false sense of confidence that the problem has been addressed. For example, accommodating the rights and claims to cultural difference in a multiethnic society is an issue of human rights and a matter of legal obligation for the government. But such accommodation must always be conditional on respect for the

rights of others inside or outside the community. All sides must be expected to respect liberal and constitutional values and the social contract which stand above personal opinions or cultural norms and to realize that they cannot expect “one-way toleration,” as Bassam Tibi puts it.

In this regard, I want to draw attention to articles 25 and 29 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights:

Article 25 on the right to an adequate standard of living.

(1) Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.

(2) Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance. All children, whether born in or out of wedlock, shall enjoy the same social protection.

Article 29 on duties and limitations

Everyone has duties to the community in which alone the free and full development of his personality is possible.

1. In the exercise of his rights and freedoms, everyone shall be subject only to such limitations as are determined by law solely for the purpose of securing due recognition and respect for the rights and freedoms of others and of meeting the just requirements of morality, public order and the general welfare in a democratic society.

2. These rights and freedoms may in no case be exercised contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

I think that despite the limitation of the human rights paradigm (namely its focus on civil and political rights), or the politically motivated and self-serving use of the human rights discourse by Western governments based on double standards, the philosophical foundation of human rights is still something we can refer to in claiming the rights to which we are entitled as human beings.⁵¹

My final point is that in a genuine democracy the focus of the state is or should be less on its regulatory and disciplinary functions, which often serve the interests of the minority elite, and more on its ability and responsibility to provide and guarantee equal opportunities to all people who live in a country and to protect them against discrimination and violation of rights in different areas of life. As I have argued, only under such conditions can loyalty be demanded from citizens or can the integration of the newcomers and bonds of national solidarity be achieved. The absence or the weakness of this reciprocal relationship gives rise to tensions between conflicting aims on both sides. The documented experiences of the majority of new immigrants from the South in Europe, Canada and elsewhere provide ample confirmation of this reality.

Having said all this, there are also signs of positive steps taken to reduce this tension. For example, across Canada, about 235 agencies and community organizations work to serve immigrants in the areas of settlement and labor market integration, offering employment preparation courses and advice to immigrants, in addition to services provided by private organizations and churches. (Moghissi 2016) The focus is normally on the economic integration of migrants as a very important factor in promoting the self-

confidence and the overall contentment of the individuals moving to a new country.

What we don't have in Canada, and what I believe is necessary, is an institution similar to Germany's Federal Agency for Civic Education – with the generous funding and the flexibility beyond what was set up following the Second World War to de-Nazify the German population – to meet the needs for the civic education of citizens under conditions of a rapidly changing population make-up in the interest of promoting real democracy. The hope here is that with full participation in the social and economic life of the new country, with meaningful interaction with the larger society and engagement in civic activities, new migrants will gradually find their own place and their voice within the society as persons with overlapping identities. Identities are then merged and/or reconstructed in the new country in an interactive process. Such a development would reduce cultural isolation, creating space for cultural infiltration and interaction, and for inter-cultural learning in the interest of social cohesion and bridging the divide between the central and the peripheral cultures. Only through two-way exchanges between different cultural traditions in any given country will integration and inclusive citizenship become meaningful.

Anmerkungen

1) Sayyid Qutb was very much impressed withby Alexis Carrel, the French biologist and a pioneer of eugenics (improving genetic quality), and a Nazi collaborator, who had an essentialist view of women as inferior beings.

2) Jamiat Islami (Rabbani, Masoud), Hizb-e-Islami (Hekmatyar), Hizb-e Islami (Khalis), Ittihad-e Islami (Sayyaf), Afghan National Liberation Front, Harak-Inghilab-i-Islami, and Mahaz-ilMilli-i-Islami.

3) When the US moved to the British Indian Ocean Territory (BIOT) in Diego Garcia and established a major naval base in the Indian Ocean, the Soviets were attracted to Ethiopia and Somalia, where pro-Soviet governments came to power through coup d'états, leading to wars and civil wars, and the eventual collapse of the state in both countries.

4) Only 16.1 million of this huge population is under UNHCR mandate, and 5.2 m under UNRWA (UN Relief and Work Agency).

5) There is no consensus on what constitutes human rights. The very concept of human rights is increasingly under scrutiny, including its relation to human dignity. Some scholars go so far as to consider the two concepts of human rights and human dignity as one and the same thing, whereas others argue that human rights present only one path to the realization of human dignity (Jack Donnelly).

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