

A Little More on That Recent Study of Aussie Attitudes Toward Muslim Immigration

Graham Young, writing in The Australian.

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/opinion/concerns-about-islam-must-not-be-ignored/story-e6frg6zo-1227567966362>

'Concerns About Islam Must Not Be Ignored'.

'A change of leadership in the Liberal Party (from the abrasive and somewhat Islamoresistant Tony Abbott, to the worryingly-Islamophile and appeasing Malcolm Turnbull – CM) has convinced some erstwhile supporters that now is the time to form new parties on the Right of politics.

A time to form new parties, period. – CM

'At least one of these is based around an organisation called the Q Forum (I thought it was called the Q Society, myself – CM), which has concerns about Muslim immigration.

Perfectly rational, fact-based concerns, by the way. Concerns I myself fully share. – CM

'Will any of these groups achieve the prominence of Pauline Hanson's One Nation? I don't know.

I think they stand a good chance of becoming more prominent, because this little matter of the encroachment and depredations of Islam is not just about Australia; this is a global problem. – CM

'What I do know is that if you ignore the concerns of a large part of the community, or dismiss those concerns as illegitimate, then you get the sort of political forest fires

that we saw with Hanson.

'In that case a new party went from a standing start in 1997 to 22.68 percent of the Queensland vote and 11 seats in the state parliament one year later in 1998.

The worry about Islam is much, much bigger and much more demonstrably real and rational than the issues that Hanson complained about (Islam as such did not feature in her platform at all, so far as I recall). The proper comparison is not with Hanson's "One Nation". It is – I hope – with something like Wilders' Party For Freedom. – CM

'What I also know, based on a qualitative survey of 1349 Australians we conducted and the study we have just released, is that if parties are based around concern about Muslim immigration, then a significant segment of the community is likely to welcome them.

'I also know that, while this concern is strongest on the Right, with 75 percent of our Liberal and 69 percent of our non-Greens minor-party respondents saying Muslim immigration is bad for Australia, on the left 22 percent of ALP and 18 percent of Green respondents thought the same.

I observe the distinct possibility of a cross-party consensus a few more years down the track... if the Resistance are sensible – CM

'Even more startling, only 8 percent of all respondents thought Muslim immigration has been for the good.

That was 8 percent of all respondents. Startling? No, it's a testament to the common-sense and powers of observation of the average Aussie, who is quite prepared to believe his or her own eyes and ears. – CM

'But not only is this an issue for a prime minister seeking to be inclusive, it is even more an issue for the community, or

more properly, the communities.

Why do our current lot of pundits always harp on the necessity of being 'inclusive' when confronted with Infidel wariness of Muslims and Islam? Is there some rule that says that there must be Muslims everywhere, in every country all over the world, and that if you haven't got Muslims, preferably quite a lot of Muslims, you are not being virtuously "inclusive"??

'Diverse' and 'diversity' tend to be used in a similar sort of way: you can have every religion present except Islam, and a dizzying range of ethnicities, but you're still not really diverse, you don't have 'diversity', until and unless you have a lot of Muslims. – Cm

'There are the recently arrived migrant communities, and other communities that have been here for centuries, and then there are overlapping communities based not on ethnic origin but shared beliefs.

'The research identifies different belief groups with significantly different attitudes on immigration, even when they use the same words.

'For those we have termed "campers", a person qualifies as a citizen just by being present in Australia.

'For "Team Australia", a term we borrowed, citizenship depends on signing up to a core set of beliefs that represent the Australian project.

'The first group believes that diversity is a good in itself, and the more diversity there is the better off we are as a nation.

This group seems to be naively transferring ideas about ecological biodiversity to the socio-political sphere, forgetting that even in the realm of nature we have had some pretty good demonstrations of the danger of indiscriminately attempting to increase 'diversity' – because sometimes a

deliberately or accidentally introduced novelty – such as, notoriously, in Australia, the rabbit, the cane toad, the feral cat and the fox – “takes over” and multiplies excessively, displacing and even totally destroying many other creatures, thus ultimately reducing diversity. – CM

‘the second group has no problems with diversity as long as it leads to a strengthening of aspects of society, but there must be direct benefits.

‘The first group strongly overlaps with another divide between those who are “humanitarian” in their approach to immigration, and those who are “utilitarian”.

‘The humanitarians are strongly concerned with unauthorised boat arrivals and in fact refuse to engage on the issue of immigration on any other point. Immigrants are valued as people per se.

Without stopping to think about what kind of mental baggage they may be bringing with them. – CM

‘Utilitarians, on the other hand, support immigration, but only so far as it benefits the existing culture.

‘So increased migration is seen as benefitting Australia by creating a “big Australia” and therefore providing a larger economic market and making Australia more secure in an increasingly populous world.

I have to say that knowing what I know about the Australian landscape – the driest inhabited continent – I would probably not fit into this “Bigger is Better” subset. I am not opposed to all immigration, but to Muslim immigration specifically; however, I am also not in favour of bringing in very large numbers of people with the aim of trying to make Australia as densely peopled as other countries – in Eurasia or the Americas – that have much higher amounts of arable land and more – and more reliable – rainfall. – CM

'They approve of skilled migration and expect migrants to integrate. They are not necessarily opposed to multiculturalism; however, their concept of multiculturalism is not one where different cultures are tolerated, but one where we are one culture, a feature of which is tolerance of diversity.

'So when we are debating immigration, even when we are using the same words, such as "citizen", we often mean radically different things, leading to a dialogue of the deaf.

Sounds like it's time to have a public discussion of the precise meaning of much-banded-about terms like 'diversity' and 'cohesive' and 'inclusive', that always seem to be heard when Islam and Muslims are in the vicinity. – CM

'It is highly unlikely that resistance to Muslim immigration arises from some broad-based racism in society, as the majority of our respondents (69 percent) favoured immigration at or above current levels.

'There was some resistance to net migration from Liberal voters (40 percent) and non-Greens minority party voters (43 percent) but there were still majorities in both these groups (57 percent and 53 percent) in favour.

'A number of issues characterise resistance to Muslim immigration, and they almost universally stem from a fear (*no, it is not just a 'fear', in many cases I would say it is an informed awareness – CM*) that Islamic culture is incompatible with Western culture as practised in Australia.

Which it is. – CM

'Some respondents are concerned about Islam as a religion, but others think the issues might arise from Muslim immigrants' culture of origin.

A distinction without a difference. Islam – a total and

totalitarian system – suffuses and produces the ‘culture’ of all Islamised societies. – CM

‘Team Australia and the utilitarians were most likely to be opposed to Muslim immigration and to see this as part of a culture war, a similar thesis to that advanced by Samuel Huntington in his book “The Clash of Civilisations”.

‘This was because of a fear that immigrants would not integrate because of their religion, or more strongly, that their religion was actively opposed to Western culture, a sort of “culture jihad”.

People also fear the military jihad, the “hot” jihad. They rightly fear being shot by Muslim jihadis – like Curtis Cheng, or the gentleman who was shot by Man Monis in the Lindt Cafe in Martin Place – or blown up, like those who were murdered or severely injured in the Bali Bombing in October 2002 or those who were blown up in London or Madrid, or ambushed and beheaded in the street, as happened to Lee Rigby, or stabbed, as so many Israeli Jews right now are being stabbed. – CM

‘They differentiated between this lack of integration and previous waves of immigrants, whom they saw as having been culturally more similar to pre-existing inhabitants, and therefore liable to integrate relatively easily.

And this perception is perfectly true and correct. – CM

‘At its strongest this manifested in a concern that Australia is being colonised by Islam; sharia law, as well as being another cultural differentiator, was also seen as a potential threat.

People are right to worry. Some have themselves been to Europe, or other places where Islam is visibly throwing its weight around, to the detriment of host societies. Some are simply watching the news with a keen and sceptical eye, and comparing the different things they see, with what they read

in the texts of Islam, now conveniently available in English, which they have become curious about, and examined, with mounting horror as they began to understand. Some have read books like ex-Muslim Patrick Sookhdeo's "Faith, Power and Territory" and "Islam in Britain", or ex-Muslim "Sam Solomon"'s "Al Hijra: The Islamic Doctrine of Immigration", and have compared what is written there, with observable events in some parts of Australia, and in various countries overseas. All have become rationally alarmed. – CM

'Another issue was the perceived lack of economic skills of immigrants, so that they became a burden on society rather than adding to its wealth.

'There was also a human rights concern, and this was present across all groups, and arose from the perception that Muslim migrants were not just misogynistic but homophobic.

A 'perception' that happens to correspond with fact: with the content of Islamic texts and with the reality of Islamic practice, past and present, which is observably in strong continuity with those texts. – CM

'So the hijab is seen as symbolising the violation of human rights rather than just [as] a cultural garment.

Again, people are reading it correctly. – CM

'Female genital mutilation was also frequently raised.

And it must be borne in mind that although there are non-Muslim groups (all in Africa) that practise it and it appears to have been originally a pre-Islamic cultural practice, FGM has been absorbed and adopted by Sunni Islam, such that the Shafiite school (prevalent in Egypt and the Horn of Africa) regard clitoral excision as "obligatory" (just like removal of the foreskin for males), while the other three schools – Maliki, Hanbali, Hanifite, do not forbid it or condemn it and, while not actually viewing it as obligatory, see it as

commendable or desirable. – CM

'The idea (no, not the 'idea' but the fact – CM) that Islam discriminates against other religions also gives rise to human rights concerns, such [as] how nonbelievers may be treated.

'These are perceptions.

Perceptions? Mere 'perceptions'? No. They represent knowledge