

Pope Francis and Jihad: Credo Quia Absurdum, And How

by Hugh Fitzgerald

A glutton for punishment, I turned to the Vatican paper, *L'Osservatore Romano*, to read the Pope's exact words, in the original Italian, about the killing of the indomitable priest in Rouvray. Here is what the Pope had to say to the journalists flying with him to Cracow:

"Quando io parlo di 'guerra', parlo di guerra sul serio, non di 'guerra di religione', no!", ha esclamato Bergoglio. Il quale ha poi precisato: "C'è guerra di interessi, c'è guerra per i soldi, c'è guerra per le risorse della natura, c'è guerra per il dominio dei popoli: questa è la guerra. Qualcuno può pensare: 'Sta parlando di guerra di religione': no. Tutte le religioni, vogliamo la pace. La guerra, la vogliono gli altri. Capito?"

È tornato poi a parlare di "guerra a pezzi", parola che secondo lui inquadra meglio la situazione rispetto al termine "insicurezza". A proposito di guerra, ha affermato che "c'era quella del '14, con i suoi metodi, poi quella del '39 – '45, un'altra grande guerra nel mondo, e adesso c'è questa. Non è tanto organica, forse, organizzata, sì,

"When I speak of war, I'm talking about real war, not a "war of religion, no!" the Pope exclaimed. And then he extended his thought further: "There are wars over interests of all kinds, wars over money, wars over natural resources, wars fought to establish dominion over other peoples: those are all real wars. Someone might think: "You're talking about wars of religion." No. All religions want peace. It's others [the non-religious] who want war. You understand?"

And he then started to talk about a "war" being conducted

piecemeal, which according to him better described the current situation than the term "insecurity," On the question of war, he maintained that "there was the war of 1914, with its methods, then the war of 1939-45, another world war, and now there is this one. It's an organized campaign, although not planned at every step."

Take a minute to rub your eyes in disbelief. Apparently the Pope, like the shallowest campus Marxist-Leninist, believes that all wars are caused by conflict over resources of one kind or another: land, natural resources, populations to be plundered. Apparently the Pope, the head of the Catholic Church, cannot believe that religion can ever be the cause of wars. Apparently the Pope has never heard of the Wars of Religion with which the Papacy was deeply involved over several centuries. Apparently the Pope believes that once a set of beliefs manages to be called a "religion," it immediately is transformed into some kind of ambulating peaceable kingdom, incapable of participating in, much less causing, a war. For Pope Francis, the apparent template for wars are the two world wars, which were indeed over such interests as land (Hitler's lust for Lebensraum), resources (Japan's Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere), or simple military rivalry (such as that between Germany and Great Britain, for control of the seas, which was of such importance before World War I). But even if the many wars of religion in Europe have slipped his mind, let's help him, and fish up from the Lesser Lethe, with the aid of Wikipedia, some of those wars of religion:

The [German Peasants' War](#) (1524–1525)

- The [battle of Kappelin](#) in [Switzerland](#) (1531)
- The [Schmalkaldic War](#)(1546–1547) in the [Holy Roman Empire](#)
- The [Eighty Years' War](#) (1568–1648) in the [Low Countries](#)
- The [French Wars of Religion](#) (1562–1598)
- The [Thirty Years' War](#) (1618–1648), affecting the [Holy](#)

- [Roman Empire](#) including [Habsburg Austria](#) and [Bohemia](#), [France](#), [Denmark](#) and [Sweden](#)
- The [Wars of the Three Kingdoms](#) (1639–1651), affecting [England](#), [Scotland](#) and [Ireland](#)
 - [Scottish Reformation](#) and [Civil Wars](#)
 - [English Reformation](#) and [Civil War](#)
 - [Irish Confederate Wars](#) and the [Cromwellian conquest of Ireland](#)

I can understand someone not being able to remember the Schmalkaldic War, but the Eighty Years' War? The French Wars of Religion? The Thirty Years' War? Even the most basic course on European history would cover these. Why does the Pope overlook them? Or does he assume that those "wars of religion" were really about something else, and if so, what?

Even until very recently, we could still find in Europe the smoldering embers of a "war of religion" between Catholic and Protestant in Northern Ireland. Surely the Vatican hasn't forgotten the Rev. Ian Paisley, the intermittent firebrand behind that conflict's flare-ups.

But why limit ourselves to the wars of religion in Europe? Does the Pope recall the Biafra War (1967-69) between Christians and Muslims in Nigeria, a war that began when Muslims – Hausa and Fulani – conducted "pogroms" against Christians in the north? And then, in response, the southern Christians attempted to declare the independent state of Biafra. It was the Biafran head of state, Colonel Ojukwu, who in his Ahiara Declaration described the Muslim campaign as nothing less than a "jihad" to Islamize the south:

"Our Biafran ancestors remained immune from the Islamic contagion. From the middle years of the last century Christianity was established in our land. In this way we came to be a predominantly Christian people. We came to stand out as a non-Muslim island in a raging Islamic sea. Throughout the period of the ill-fated Nigerian experiment, the Muslims

hoped to infiltrate Biafra by peaceful means and quiet propaganda, but failed. Then the late Ahmadu Bello, the Sardauna of Sokoto tried, by political and economic blackmail and terrorism, to convert Biafrans settled in Northern Nigeria to Islam. His hope was that these Biafrans of dispersion would then carry Islam to Biafra, and by so doing give the religion political control of the area. The crises which agitated the so-called independent Nigeria from 1962 gave these aggressive proselytizers the chance to try converting us by force."

What about the Hindus and Muslims at each other's throats in 1947, at the time of partition in India, when hundreds of thousands died, and many more millions, both Hindus and Muslims, sought refuge among their coreligionists on one or the other side of the lines of partition? What about the war carried on for decades by the northern Muslims against the southern Christians in Sudan, a war that ended only when the country was split in two?

And what does the Pope think explains the continuing Muslim attacks on Christian communities in Iraq and Syria, and on a smaller scale, against Christians in Pakistan, and Bangladesh, and Indonesia, on Hindus in Kashmir, on Buddhists in Bangladesh, attacks which have nothing to do with land, or natural resources or money, but only with the spread and dominance of Islam? Why does the Pope think churches are attacked? Or Christian girls kidnapped in Nigeria by Boko Haram and then either converted to Islam or used as sex slaves by Muslim fighters? How can the Pope overlook so much?

What land, money, or natural resources did the Yazidis possess that Muslims coveted? They have nothing, but they are being subject to a genocidal campaign by ISIS for one reason: because they are not Muslim. The Bamiyan Buddhas were blown up by the Taliban, because statuary is forbidden in Islam, and because the visible signs of other religions are to be

vandalized or, if possible, destroyed, as part of asserting the rightful dominance of Islam. Pope Francis won't allow himself to believe that Muslims believe in Jihad, that is, in Islamic Holy War, a war to spread Islam. A cursory search suggests that he has never even used the word. Religion, he claims, being A Good Thing, can never be the real cause of war, ever. Take it from him; he knows. As the Pope told the reporters, "Capito?" ["Understand?" or "Get it?"]. *Ipsa dixit.*

But what about what we read in the Qur'an and Hadith? The Pope is silent on their contents. Presumably he believes they must not be taken by non-Muslims at face value. Instead, we should accept the assurances of Muslims with whom we engage in "dialogue," who, when not managing to divert our attention from those texts, allow us to believe that terrorists rely on a "twisted" interpretation. The Pope steers clear of confronting those texts. Were he to study them, and discuss them truthfully, he would have to admit that despite all his talk about the essential peacefulness of all religions, one religion, Islam, today, as for the past 1400 years, places great importance on Jihad, a holy war to spread the faith across the globe, not for the sake of natural resources, land, or money (those "interests" the Pope insists explains all wars), but so that Islam can everywhere dominate, and Muslims rule, everywhere. And that would mean he would then have a big problem on his hands. He would have to recognize that pieties about peace, and all that "dialogue" to date with representatives of Islam, have merely been occasions for Muslims to listen to Christian mea-culpas, and that the Islamization of Europe, through demography, constitutes the greatest threat to its survival that Christianity has ever faced.

And if the reason two Muslims entered a church in Normandy, and slit the throat of a priest when he refused to kneel down at their command (according to a nun who was present) just possibly had something to do with religion, then the Pope has

a lot of 'splainin to do about quite a few things, including his lecturing Europeans on the need to let millions of Muslim migrants in, just to show how nice Christians are, and what, aside from "dialogue," he thinks might be done to safeguard Christians and other non-Muslims. Even now, after the latest Muslim atrocity, he's content to keep whistling in the dark and to give Islam, because it is a "religion," what appears to be a permanent pass. "Credo quia absurdum" – *I believe because it is absurd* – is the famous phrase of Tertullian, a Father of the Church who came from North Africa, where Christianity once flourished and then was almost wiped out, someone should remind the Pope, when the Muslim Arabs invaded and spread Islam, as they are still spreading Islam, by terrorism, by demography, and even by "dialogue" in Europe, and everywhere else they can.

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