

Qasim Rashid and Harris Zafar, Or, Why Bother?

by Hugh Fitzgerald



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A recent letter to the editor of *The Oregonian* – just one of many similar letters being sent out by energetic Ahmadis – makes the predictable claims, denies any justification for

terrorism in the “Holy Qur’an,” calls “true Islam” a “religion of peace,” and suggests that the best way to prevent “so-called” Muslims from terrorism is to have “a strong Muslim identity.” Since these letters are all over the place, let’s – for the nth time – take a look at this one. One has to keep sweeping back the tide, a thankless but necessary task, if only to escape from drowning. Here’s [Glasgow murder of Asad Shah spurred by sectarianism in Pakistan](#)

[US-based Ahmadi doctor shot dead in Punjab](#)

[Two Ahmadi Children Burned Alive by ‘Blasphemy’ Mob](#)

[an article in Salon](#) in 2014, Rashid claimed that Islam stands for free speech and secular governance. As to the first, perhaps he has forgotten the massacre of the Charlie Hebdo cartoonists in Paris, the Muslim death threats to Molly Norris which led to her having to change her identity right here in the U.S., the protests in Pakistan, Iran, and elsewhere across the Muslim world against those murdered French cartoonists, the execution of Theo van Gogh along an Amsterdam canal for daring to expose and mock Muslim misogyny, the repeated attempts to murder the Swedish artist Lars Vilks for daring to draw Muhammad, the fatwa from Tehran calling for the murder of Salman Rushdie for “blasphemy,” the murder of Farag Foda in Cairo for “blasphemy,” the death sentence for Asia Bibi in Pakistan for “blasphemy,” and hundreds of other examples of the war on free speech from all over the Muslim world, each example more horrible than the next. And then there are those in the West who are brave enough to publicly criticize Islam and who are then subject to credible death threats and, as a consequence, need security wherever they go – Ayaan Hirsi Ali, Robert Spencer, Pamela Geller, Ibn Warraq being the best known – which makes their task more difficult and expensive. Even in those Muslim states that do not have laws against blasphemy, as Bangladesh, Muslim vigilantes enforce without fear of punishment their own unofficial blasphemy laws. The ghastly evidence of all those threatened, and of all those murdered,

gives the lie to the notion, that the Ahmadi Qasim Rashid wants you to believe, that Islam favors free speech.

What about Rashid's claim that Islam champions secular governance? Does he know of a single Muslim state, anywhere in the world, that could be considered as having secular governance? Of 57 Muslim states, the only one that is, or rather was, secular, is Turkey, under Ataturk and his successors. But Erdogan's re-islamizing of Turkey means that even that state cannot be considered secular in the way that Westerners understand that word.

The Ahmadi, it can be said from experience, are more peaceful than mainstream Muslims. They do not promote violence. They do not practice terrorism. Of all the sects in Islam, Ahmadiyya Islam is likely the least dangerous for Infidels. Why then do these Ahmadi spokesmen carry water for the other Muslims? Why do they lie about what Islam teaches? Instead of claiming that Islam is "peaceful," why not admit that Muhammad was a warlord who engaged in 65 campaigns just in the last ten years of his life? Why not admit that the duty of Jihad – not an "internal struggle" but rather, a war that uses whatever weapons are available and effective – is incumbent on all Muslims, until such time as Islam is everywhere dominant, and Muslims rule, everywhere? Why don't they, instead of defending – employing taqiyya, deliberate misreading, omission – the very texts and teachings that cause other Muslims to want to persecute or murder them, own up to what those texts and teachings say, and straightforwardly disassociate Ahmadi from them, and suggest ways that those dangerous texts be "contextualized" so that they will no longer govern Muslim behavior today? Perhaps they can offer a way out for Muslims who are not violent, but cannot quite come to the point of jettisoning Islam altogether, for that would constitute an apostasy just too frightening to contemplate. Ahmadiyya Islam might even become a kind of "soft landing" which, in turn, we allow ourselves to believe, could lead by degrees to abandoning Islam

altogether.

Let's look again at the claims of that letter to the editor:

In the weekly "Meet a Muslim" events held by the Portland chapter of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community (AMC), we show that there is no justification for terrorism found in the Holy Quran. Still we are asked, "Why then do these so-called Muslims commit such acts and how can you prevent it?" The answer to prevention is a strong Muslim identity. It is important to know how to practice true Islam, a religion of peace, as it was practiced by the Holy Prophet of Islam (Peace and Blessings be Upon Him).

"There is no justification for terrorism in the Holy Quran." What then do these verses mean?:

"When your Lord revealed to the angels, 'Truly I am with you. So, keep firm those who have believed. I will strike terror into the hearts of those who have disbelieved. So, strike them at the necks and cut off their fingers.'" 8.60

"Soon shall We cast terror into the hearts of the Unbelievers, for that they joined companions with Allah, for which He had sent no authority: their abode will be the Fire: And evil is the home of the wrong-doers!" 8.12

How do Ahmadis deal with these verses? Do they just ignore them? Do they claim something like "Well, there are these verses, I'm not denying it, but quite obviously they are not taken literally but only figuratively. I mean, if out of 1.5 billion believers, only a few tens of thousands have been involved in terrorism – gosh, doesn't that speak for itself?" For those eager to be inveigled, that might be enough. For those Infidels who have actually come to learn something about Islam, that might be, now in a negative sense, more than enough.

Then there is this business of “true Islam” – “as it was practiced by the Holy Prophet of Islam” – being a “religion of peace.”

Here someone in the audience need only offer to read out a handful of Qur’anic verses, and also, one hopes, have prepared those verses printed out, ready to be distributed to those of his fellow Infidels who might be willing to open their minds in a direction that their Ahmadi hosts are unprepared for. Everyone will have his own favorites among the 109 jihad verses of the Qur’an. Here are four – you can choose from a great many more – that should make a deep impression:

“Fight against those who do not obey Allah and do not believe in Allah or the Last Day and do not forbid what has been forbidden by Allah and His messenger even if they are of the People of the Book until they pay the Jizya with willing submission and feel themselves subdued.” 9:29

“When the sacred months have passed, then kill the Mushrikin wherever you find them. Capture them. Besiege them. Lie in wait for them in each and every ambush but if they repent, and perform the prayers, and give zacet then leave their way free.” 9:5

“Kill them wherever you find them and drive them out from where they drove you out. Persecution is worse than slaughter.” 2:191

“When you meet the unbelievers, smite their necks.” 47:4

What can the Meet-A-Muslim Ahmadis say about these verses? That they applied to some situation 1400 years ago and have no relevance today? That “smite their necks” does not really mean “smite their necks”? “Kill, capture, besiege” – my goodness, why take these things so literally? There’s no other way, pathetic as it is, of trying to explain away this stuff. And the mixture as before just won’t do. Those Ahmadis better hope there is no one in the audience who’s locked and loaded, with

the only weapon he needs – the Qur'an.

Do the Ahmadis, explaining Islam to the unwary Infidels who came to one of their "Meet A Muslim" event, discuss any of those verses I've just presented above? 9:5, 9:29, 8:12, 47:4, 2:191, 8:60? Did anyone in the audience ask "what about 8:12? What about 8:60? When those verses talk of striking terror into the hearts of the Unbelievers, isn't that exactly what Muslim terrorists today say they are doing, and what all Muslims, who read their Qur'an and follow its strictures, are taught to support?" What can be said in reply?

What is it with the Ahmadis? Do they think that if they defend Islam – meretriciously, of course, for there is really no other way to defend it – that they will obtain the gratitude of Muslims, or at least lessen the hatred many Muslims hold for them? Why don't they instead explain exactly why they are persecuted, and how they differ from mainstream Islam, and why they are more peaceful than other Muslims, instead of making the absurd claim that Islam is a "peaceful religion" when all the evidence suggests otherwise?

Eventually these Ahmadi meetings are going to be attended by those ready, willing, and able to cross-question the taqiyya artists, to quote aptly from the Qur'an, and to ask, with deliberate sweetness and light and gee-whizzness, "What does this verse mean?" "And this?" "And this?"

There are about 15 million Ahmadis in the world, and 1.5 billion Muslims. That means only 1% of the world's Muslims are Ahmadis. They are persecuted, even murdered, not by Infidels, but by the Muslims whom they meretriciously defend. Why don't they stop their masochism, stop defending, with ever increasing implausibility, the texts of Islam – or rather, the Qur'anic text (the Hadith are even more difficult to defend), start telling the truth about Islam, and explain how, as Ahmadis, they hope to persuade other Muslims to "contextualize" the Jihad-verses, end the practice of

“abrogation,” and work to fashion an Islam with adherents capable of real, not fake, coexistence? No can do? One of those six impossible things you have to believe before breakfast?

Sometimes, you know, it really happens: “Know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” It’s worth a shot. Even for the Ahmadis.

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