

The corrections

Just two small errata in Allison Pearson's excellent [dramatised last night in BBC Two's Wolf Hall](#). The victim was put to death for heresy, for wanting to read the Bible in English.

[is on trial this week for "subverting democracy"](#), running a "den of iniquity" and "systematically stealing votes". The High Court was told this week that Muslim voters were in tears at the ballot box after being warned that it was "a sin" and "un-Islamic" not to vote for Rahman, who allegedly funneled hundreds of thousands of pounds of public money to his cronies. The children of electoral rivals "received death threats on their mobiles". Anyone who dared to challenge the mayor's practices was branded racist or – my favourite – Islamophobic.

Neither the police nor any public body dared challenge this rotten borough. It took four ordinary citizens, including one Muslim restaurateur, Azmal Hussein, to bring a private action. This courageous quartet has lined up 100 witnesses, but many have reported "threats of violence, threats to their families in Bangladesh, pressure from their employers and pressure from the community". Some are so terrified that a barrister claimed they would not take the witness stand even if ordered by the judge.

Is this really the UK in the 21st century? Or is it a brutish, zealously religious, feudal society (not unlike the Tudor England of *Wolf Hall*), imported from South Asia and allowed to flourish here unchecked because we haven't had the guts to stand up for enlightened values?

To understand how this parlous situation came about, look no further than Jenny Watson, the chairman of the Electoral Commission, which has just published a report on vote fraud. The report was quite clear that the biggest risk of electoral fraud is in Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities, because of "kinship networks" – or, if you prefer, enforcers of the Muslim status quo – and low levels of literacy or English. Did Jenny Watson let those shameless fraudsters have it with both barrels? Not exactly. More in sorrow than in anger, she spoke of the strengths of a certain community which, in some circumstances, could, unfortunately, lead to...

When do you reckon liberal apologists like Jenny Watson will stop making excuses for undemocratic, uncivilised and downright illegal behaviour? I prefer the reaction of

Azmal Hussein, the Tower Hamlets restaurant owner, who told Channel 4 News with a cheery grin: "Voter fraud is endemic in Bangladeshi and Pakistani communities. Because it is our culture."

Notice Mr Hussein makes no attempt to pretend that his community's culture is the same as mainstream British culture, as our flailing political leaders do. It is quite separate and runs according to its own rules and traditions, which we may well find abhorrent.

Take the disgusting scenes [for fear of "offending the community"](#).

What community? Not yours and mine, that's for sure. So desperate is the situation that Whitehall-appointed commissioners are to move in and take over the council. In Rotherham, we see with terrible clarity how the whole edifice of multiculturalism is as rotten as a Tudor monarch's mouth.

I have never watched an Islamic State beheading video. Why pollute your mind with such hatred, I figured. But I made myself watch Flt Lt Moaz al-Kasasbeh being burnt alive. Something happens at a cellular level when you witness a fellow human suffer that much.

It has taken us many centuries to leave such savagery behind. Civilisation, however, cannot be taken for granted. It can be threatened by corruption, religious extremism; by cruelty to women and children and animals, and by good men averting their eyes from inconvenient truths.

The barbarities of ~~Islamic State~~ are easy to identify; those closer to home ~~less even more~~ so. But identify them, and fight them, we must. Let us pray that Rotherham marks the start of that fight.