

"The Shamelessness of Islamic Extremism"

Author : Jacob Thomas on Apr 06, 2007 - 10:23 PM

When relating the history of the Islamic conquests in Asia, Africa, and Europe, Arab historians refer to them as *futuhat*. The Arabic word means literally "openings." These historians gloss over the awful nature of these conquests, and their lasting negative impact on the native populations. So, it is very heartening to notice an Arab writer who departs from the tradition of extolling the greatness of the *futuhat*, thus exposing the hypocrisy of mainline Islamic historiography. His main point, though, was to draw attention to the **empty pretensions of Islamic extremism**. His article appeared on Sunday, 18 March, 2007, on the online daily *Elaph* with the title, "*The Shamelessness of Islamic Extremism*." Here are, in translation, its main points:

*"Recently, **Elaph** published an article describing the so-called "**Shamelessness of Liberalism**." It went on to portray liberalism in a distorted way. At the same time, the author of the article described Islam as possessing the solutions for all the problems that beset society, and the key and foundation for civilization. I have followed the discussions on **Elaph**, as well as on other publications dealing with the topic of liberalism. That led me to do further studies of the subject; and I arrived at the conclusion that it was **liberalism that held the key for the civilizational progress** that took place in Europe following the end of the Church's hegemony over society and the collapse of the absolute monarchies.*

*"Some writers have drawn our attention recently to the fact that liberalism stood behind such improvements as the **U. N. Declaration of Human Rights, moderate governments, and the improvement in the status of women**. Needless to mention here, that both Islamic thought and tradition have been responsible for **the oppression of women**.*

"It is not my aim to defend liberalism, as this is not my specialty. There are Arab intellectuals and writers who are capable of dealing properly with this subject. My comments are directed at the claim that since Islam contributed to the rise of Western civilization; it should be through the consistent application of the principles Islam that we may expect to see progress in the Arab world.

*"Such a claim requires scientific proofs, since what we do know about Islamic regimes, such as in Sudan, Iran, or Afghanistan (under the Taliban), **boils down to tyranny, persecution of religious and ethnic minorities, the enslavement of women, and a persistent attack on the freedom of conscience and expression**. Just consider the actions of those Islamic parties and those organizations that have not yet gained political power and you will get an idea of the fate of any country that succumbs to their control. Take for example Hamas, Hezbollah, and the Ikhwan, and their likes in Iraq and reflect on what they have done to the people!*

"Hamas, regardless of its agreement to participate in the government of the Palestinian

*Authority, is still **the Hamas of extremism**. It rejects international agreements and decisions regarding the Arab-Israeli struggle. Mr. Abbas will soon find himself a prisoner of the radical Islamic Palestinians whose goal is to implement the plans of the Iranians and Syrians, while claiming, at the same time, that they are serving the Palestinian cause!*

"As for Hezbollah in Lebanon, it was responsible for the destruction of Lebanon. It continues to be a factor that keeps destabilizing and weakening Lebanon, all the time implementing the decisions and plans of Iran and Syria. Furthermore, those claiming to be the Fuqaha of Islam and its propagandists, continue in their campaign of persecuting liberals, and secular writers. They even call for their assassination, as they are busy spreading extremist thought that encourages violence, and begets terrorism.*

*"The author who criticized liberalism and liberal writers refers to the impact of Islamic civilization on Europe during the Middle Ages, and the great benefit Europeans received from that civilization. He referred especially to the experiment of Andalus**. This is very true, as Westerners confess, for example, the role played by Ibn Rushd [known in the West by the name of Averroes] in the evolution of Western thought. However, we should never forget in the interest of objectivity and fairness, that in their turn, Arab Muslims would not have been able to produce an advanced civilization without the contributions of Greek thought, the accomplishments of the ancient Persian civilization, and Indian literature. A mere glance at the names of those geniuses in the fields of medicine, astronomy, philosophy, and mathematics, reveals the fact that most of them were of non-Arab origin.*

*"Indeed the Arab Muslims left some great monuments in Andalus, and produced some great philosophers and historians. But should we forget what the Arabs did when they conquered Andalus and occupied it for centuries? Should we forget the thousands of those killed, the hundred of thousands of captives as spoils of victory, the rape of women, who were regarded simply as a part of the **ghana'em*****?"*

*"We are all aware that some responsible Church authorities have now confessed the wrongs and sins of the Crusader Wars; Germany and other states have also acknowledged the sins of Hitler's crimes against the Jews. Are the Arab Muslims willing to confess the awful sins they have committed in Spain? Of course, not. Because when Muslims occupy other peoples' lands, they consider their actions as blessed **ghazawat******, accomplished for the spread of Islam, and for the glory of Allah's name in the lands of the **Kuffar*******"*

***Fuqaha**: Arabic for legal experts in Islam, the singular form of the word is: *faqih*

****Andalus**: Arabic name of Spain, most likely meaning the land of the *Vandals*. Since the letter "V" does not exist in Arabic, the Arabs dropped it, and called Spain, **Andalus!**

*** **Ghana'em**: plural of **ghanima**, a spoil of war

**** **Ghazawat**: plural of **Ghazwa**, a raid for plunder and material gain

*******Kuffar**: plural of **Kafir**, an Infidel (a Jew, a Christian, a Zoroastrian, or a Hindu)