

Islamic Radicalism in America
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When I was a small boy below the age of 13, a few French Catholic nuns called “Petite Soeur” (Little Sister) were serving in our hospitals in Kabul, Afghanistan where I was born. They were wearing blue long dresses and head scarves. They also used to have a wooden cross around their necks. Two of them used to come to our house and learn Farsi with my father. My father was a chemist at the time but also taught foreign nationals either French or Farsi at the same time. I am alluding to the “era of democracy” between 1963 to 1973. One day, I asked my father about the nuns and asked what religion do they practice. He said, “They are Christians and they are called People of the Book.” I said what is that suppose to mean? He took off his glasses and said “God has sent different Prophets and one of them was Prophet *Issa* (Jesus). These ladies are not Muslims but they believe in God and they are followers of the Prophet Issa. Their scripture is called the Bible and contains both the Torah and the Gospel.” My question was answered.

I am an Afghan-American television personality. One day on my show, the “Dr. Younos Show,” which broadcasts through dish satellite, a viewer called and asked me that someone told him the Jews and Christians are infidels and polytheists. Instantly, after 50 years, (I am 61 now), I remembered my father in Kabul, sitting on his burgundy arm-chair, his white shirt with suspenders and thin glasses. While behind the camera at the studio, I gathered my thoughts and I instantly said “No, they are not. They are people of the Book.” The next morning I was bombarded by some viewers asking how could I have said that. I realized that radicalism of Bin Laden had opened its door in American society. Freedom of expression in liberal democracy has opened the door for radical Muslims to propagate hate, unjust and bias reasoning in this society as they burned churches in Egypt. Later, I conducted a research on the position of Jews and Christians in the Qur'an with Professor Ghoriani, a former professor of Islamic Law at Kabul University in Farsi language (cataloged in the Middle Eastern section of the Library of Congress, 2013) and we proved that the Jews and Christians are not infidel or polytheist but People of the Book.

Judaism, Christianity and Islam are considered to be monotheistic religions of the world. All three share the same ancestry that the Prophet Abraham was the father of Issac and Ismail. Jews and Christians are coming from Issac and Mohammad is a descendent of Ismail. Therefore, Jews, Christians and Muslims are cousins by religion. The Qur'an warns “People of the Book” to not associate anyone with the Only God, but never addressed them as polytheists or infidels. That is why in ancient history, the Jews and Christians were under the protection of Muslim empires with specific title called *ahl zemah* (meaning people free of obligation). They were paying dues for the empires and to not joining to fight wars along Muslims. The zenith of the three monotheistic faiths was during Moorish Spain where all three were cooperating together. When Jews were under attack by Christian forces in Spain, all migrated to Muslim lands for protection. In World War II, French Muslims protected the Jews from the Nazis and sheltered them in the Great Mosque in Paris. The French made a movie out of this episode called, “Les Hommes Libres” (Free Men), in 2011. The most prominent Muslim scholar in the Middle East today, Dr Yusuf Al Qardawi, in his famous book, *Al Halal Wal Haram Fil Islam* (The Lawful and The Prohibited in Islam) published in 1994, page 336 says, “[The Qur'an] it looked upon the People of the Book, that is, Jews and Christians, with special regard, whether they reside in a Muslim society or outside it. The Qur'an never addresses them without saying, 'O People of the Book' or 'O you who have been given the Book,' indicating that they were originally people of a revealed religion. For this reason there exists a relationship of mercy and spiritual kinship between them and the Muslims, all having in common the principles of the one true religion sent by Allah through his prophets (peace be on them all.)”

One way to eradicate ignorance and radicalism is to educate our public to foster peace and solidarity among all faiths.

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