

Graffiti for intellectuals



SIMON says



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By Si Frumkin

RELIGION OF WHAT? By Yashiko Sagamori, December 24, 2006

Introduction from Yashiko Sagamori: An email I received a few days ago— exact copy—hello, i am rosli from Malaysia and i am a muslim. i had read what you had written in the thinkisrael.com webpage. i totally disaggre the way you mention about us muslim. i think that you did not understand the true meaning of jihad. the best thing to describe islam is "islam is all about peace". the word islam itself mean peace. i want to give you a suggestion if you want to know islam better you must try to read the translation of the holy quran and observe it or you can log on to islamonline.net website to up-grade your knowledge about islam. ok may Allah give you guidance.

Dear Rosli,

When someone wakes you up in the middle of the coldest, darkest night of the winter and complains how unbearable the heat of the sun has become, he is either calling you from halfway across the world or he is blind and sitting dangerously close to a blazing furnace.

When someone tells you in the year 2006 that Islam is all about peace, he can be one of many things. He can be a Jewish liberal looking at the world and the approaching Holocaust through the pink glasses of political correctness. He can be someone as ignorant and unwilling to learn as President Bush. He can be an unapologetic liar like Condoleezza Rice. He can be a ridiculously apologetic coward like Tony Blair. He can be a schizophrenic, because schizophrenics live in an alternate reality. And, last but not least, he can be a Muslim, because Dar el-Islam is an alternate reality.

If Islam is all about peace, then I would like you to explain to me why Sunni Iraqis and Shiite Iraqis, instead of uniting against American invaders, are murdering each other to the tune of several dozens a day.

If Israel is truly oppressing the so-called "Palestinians", why are they, instead of uniting against it, are killing each other at a steadily accelerating rate?

Why did the war between Iran and Iraq in the 1980's claimed more than a million lives without benefiting either side?

Why has the war between Turkish Kurds and "real" Turks, both Muslim people, killed more than 30,000? How could Abdullah Ocalan, the Muslim leader of the Kurds, declare in 1992: "Even if 100,000 people die this year, our movement cannot be disrupted," while knowing that every single one of that impressive number of people whose lives he so easily deemed expendable was a

Muslim?

How did the combined efforts of Islamic Salvation Army and Armed Islamic Group



result in a civil war in Algeria that produced 150 to 200 thousand Muslim casualties between 1991 and 2002?

And look at Mecca, the holiest place of Islam, during the *hajj*, the holiest event of a Muslim's life. Here is a brief (and, by far, incomplete) chronology of Muslims' peaceful piousness in the modern times:

1979 November 21: On the first day of the 15th Islamic century, a group of 300 students from the Theological University of Medina take control over the Holy Mosque of Mecca. They keep control for two weeks, when 63 are captured alive and the mosque is recovered. All occupants are executed.

1987 July 31: Riots by Iranian pilgrims. More than 400 people die.

1989 July 9: Two bombs kill 1 person. Shiites of Kuwait are accused, and 16 are executed.

1990 July 2: Stampede leads to 1402 people dead.

1994: A stampede kills 400 people.

1997 April 15: Fire kills 340 people.

2004 February 1: Stampede kills 244 people.

2006 January 13: More than 345 pilgrims die in a stampede near the Jamrat Complex in Mina.

I hope you noticed that I only listed a few of the most notorious cases of Muslim violence against Muslims. Those are not isolated episodes. They are part of an ongoing process that has accompanied Islam throughout its entire history. In fact, the absolute majority of Muslims who die a violent death are not killed by "infidels": they are slaughtered by other Muslims. Therefore, if your definition of peace has anything at all in common with mine, Islam, contrary to your opinion, is not about peace at all. If you disagree, I will be grateful if you share your definition of peace with me.



Maybe it is about deep personal beliefs? Let's see. Islam is the only religion in the modern world that accepts forced conversions. Just a few months ago, two Western journalists were abducted in Gaza and held for ransom - also a uniquely Islamic practice. While in captivity, they were given a simple choice: convert to Islam or die. They converted. Not a single person of any authority in the entire Dar el-Islam has objected against that rape. And why would they? For 14 centuries Mohammad's followers have spread Islam by the sword. For 14 centuries that worked for them. Why stop now?

I am not hero myself. I have to admit that if I were offered the same choice, I would, most probably, choose life and repeat the

shahadah after my tormentors. But how would those foreign sounds that are utterly meaningless to me, sounds that were forced out of me by the gun at my temple or a knife at my throat, change the way I feel towards Islam and everything it stands for? You can force someone to follow your rituals; you can even force someone to fight on your side. But can you force a person to believe or not to believe something? No more than you can force an Islamic country into democracy, even if the entire military might of the United States is at your disposal. No, dear Rosli, Islam has nothing to do with personal beliefs.



Maybe, Islam is all about truth? I doubt that, too. You must know that Sharia expressly forbids non-Muslims to bear witness against Muslims. This means that your religious courts, and, therefore, your religion, are not interested in truth but in the Muslim domination over the "infidel".

Besides, the Koran itself contains, shall we say, inaccuracies. For example, in 2.135 we read:

They say: "Become Jews or Christians if ye would be guided (To salvation)."

In reality, unlike Christianity or Islam, Judaism does not declare salvation a monopoly of its followers. Jewish law explicitly states that a gentile will go to heaven if he or she abstains from committing the seven mortal sins; a Jew, in order to go to heaven, must follow 613 commandments, including the seven mandated for gentiles. That's why, when a person approaches a rabbi asking for conversion, the rabbi's duty is to explain to the petitioner that the conversion will endanger his chances for salvation. A person desiring to become a Jew must understand the responsibility and accept it willingly and knowingly. This alone, as you can see, makes a forced conversion to Judaism even theoretically impossible.

Whether the quotation above was a deliberate lie or the result of ignorance of the man you mistook for a prophet, it certainly prevents me from accepting the idea of divine inspiration behind the text.

Maybe, Islam is all about love? I don't think so either, because Islam is the only religion in the world whose followers routinely practice "honor killings" of members of their own families. It is also the only religion in the world that does not promise family members a reunion in the afterlife. Instead, it guarantees good Muslim men a free brothel for all eternity. It does not spell out the reward for

virtuous women, but does specify that dead Muslims will be segregated by gender in their X-rated heaven. Wouldn't a loving husband prefer to spend eternity surrounded by his family rather than fornicating like a priapic rabbit? He would, unless, of course, the loving husband in question is Muslim.

Maybe, Islam is about high moral standards? Not really. Even if you decide to disregard the overwhelming corruption reigning in all Islamic countries, without a single exception, as a perversion of the true faith, you must know that wine, sexual pleasures, and everything else Islam declares taboo in this life, is promised in abundance in the next one. But if something is evil here, on our sinful earth, it must be even more evil in the pristine purity of heaven. Therefore, the wrongness of the act is not the reason for the prohibitions. What is then? Here's my guess. If you forever prevent perfectly normal people from having fun, from enjoying their lives, they will be easier to control, easier to turn into "martyrs". As you must know, this works wonderfully well.

You must also know that in Muslim countries mullahs run prostitution rings by officiating temporary "marriages" between their customers and the hookers in full compliance with Sharia. You must have heard about Ayatollah Khomeini's fatwas detailing what a man should do to an infant he raped or to domestic animals subjected to a similar treatment.

Besides, even Mohammad himself didn't rely on the high moral standards of his followers. He is quoted as saying, "When a man and a woman are in the same room together, the third person in that room is the devil." I do not guarantee the accuracy of the quote (to the best of my knowledge, it is not found in either the Koran or Hadith), but I do know that it reflects the customary Muslim attitude: a person who has an opportunity to do wrong is not expected to resist the temptation. Don't you think that such an attitude alone makes the average Muslim enormously more immoral than the average Western teenager who manages to spend a day of fun at the beach surrounded by half (or, rather, nine-tenth) naked females without ever being tempted to rape anyone?

Maybe Islam is about charity? No, because all your charities support terrorism. After the devastating tsunami of 2004, Dar el-Harb provided tens of times more aid to its mostly Muslim victims than Dar el-Islam did.

What is Islam about then? What has Mohammad brought into the world that was unknown before he declared himself a prophet? Monotheism was discovered by the Jews millennia before Mohammad. Worshipping a mortal instead of God was practiced by Christians centuries before Mohammad succeeded in turning himself into a bloodthirsty deity. What else is there?

Having read the Koran and the Hadith long before you suggested it to me, I must tell

you that Muslim sacred texts are not the best way for an outsider to acquire a practical understanding of your religion. If I wanted to help you understand Nazism or Communism, I would never invite you to start with the *Mein Kampf* or, respectively, *Das Kapital*. Instead, I would ask you to look at the Nazi atrocities during World War II or at the Communist atrocities wherever Communists came to power. And if, having learned what Nazis and Communists do, you decided to learn how they justify their crimes, then reading their propaganda materials might help you. Otherwise, you don't need to dive head first into the cesspool, no matter how curious you are about the taste of its contents.

In order to understand Islam, one doesn't need to read the Koran. One only needs to take a careful, unprejudiced look at life in Islamic countries. Or, even better, at the purest, least corrupted by Western influence implementation of Islam in modern times. I think you would agree with me that the Taliban regime in Afghanistan was exactly such an implementation of Islam. Would you like to live in Afghanistan under the Taliban? Would you like to deprive the women in your family of all opportunities to go to school, to pursue a career, to walk in the streets, to be able to see a doctor when they become ill? Would you enjoy attending public executions? Would you like to take part in the stoning of an adulteress? Would you like to be told what clothes to wear, what length beard? Would you like the government



to deprive you of the last vestiges of your privacy by insinuating itself into every aspect of your personal life?

As a Muslim, you probably would. But as a reasonable person you shouldn't expect people from other cultures to wish that upon themselves.

My own initial acquaintance with Islam began not with its literature, but with the experience of living in a Muslim country. I decided to read the Koran when I heard about the Islamic belief that God handed Moses not the Torah, but the Koran and that later the evil Jews maliciously rewrote the holy book. I began reading the Koran out of curiosity. I wanted to see the other vision of the Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. I was curious if Muslims had an analogue of the Psalms or the Song of Songs.

A few years before that, I was going through a period of fascination with Russian history and politics. Russia is the biggest and, in terms of its natural resources, arguably the richest country in the world. I wanted to know how the Russians had managed to turn themselves into one of the most miserable nations on the planet. I turned to Lenin for answers. I was hoping to find in his writings a monumental vision of greatness and the clues of mis-

takes that had prevented that greatness from happening. Instead, I found volumes of bickering with ideological opponents, minutiae of arguments that had ended decades before I was born and could interest nobody today.

My experience with the Koran was similar to that. Instead of a different vision of the world I found fuming anger against Jews and Christians and shallow syllogisms intending to prove that the Forefathers of the Jewish people were Muslims rather than Jews. Allah in that book sounded like an insecure chieftain desperately trying to solidify his power over people who were uncertain as to whether they should submit to his will - which is exactly the situation Mohammad was in when he undertook the project of writing the Koran . The book is full of promises to his followers and threats to the rest of the human race.

And here is the most important detail that sets the Koran aside from the Torah and the New Testament . Just as the Koran never mentions Jerusalem, it doesn't contain a single reference to the Ten Commandments . All religions I am familiar with define good and evil in terms of how the believer is expected to relate to other people, whether or not they belong to the same religion. For Jews and Christians, the Ten Commandments provide the most fundamental guidance in distinguishing between good and evil. What about the Muslims? Their only measure of good is the loyalty to their prophet.



Koran 3.110 states:

Ye are the best community that hath been raised up for mankind. Ye enjoin right conduct and forbid indecency; and ye believe in Allah.

Since the right conduct is a lie and forbidding indecency is pure hypocrisy, what is left? What exactly makes you "the best community that hath been raised up for mankind"? Has there ever been a Muslim Newton? Or a Muslim Shakespeare? Or a Muslim Mozart? Or a Muslim Mother Teresa? A few Muslim names that you can name, like al-Khwarimi , could shine only in the darkness of the Dark Ages.

As soon as Dar el-Harb moved forward, Dar el-Islam found itself unable to produce even a single person of any global significance, except for an enormous variety of Qaddafis, Saddams, bin Ladens, Arafats, and other Hitlers of every imaginable magnitude.

One of the most respected Muslim leaders of modern times, the former Prime Minister Mahathir Mohammad of Malaysia, made a remarkable admission in his farewell speech:

We need guns and rockets, bombs and warplanes, tanks and warships for our defense. But because we are discouraged from learning of science and mathematics as giving us no merit for the afterlife, today we have no capacity to produce our own weapons for our defense. We have to buy our weapons from our detractors and enemies.

It is remarkable because it makes clear that one of the most respected Muslim leaders has no clue what motivates the people of Dar el-Harb. He would never believe that our apocalyptic (and, due to the cowardice of our leaders, absolutely useless) military might is nothing but a side effect of our insatiable curiosity about God's creation. He also inadvertently admitted that his religion is nothing but a cult of death.

And this is why I keep urging everybody who will listen to read the Koran and the *Hadith* , so they can see for themselves that Islam is not "just another religion" but an ideology of jihad, and jihad is not an internal strife of a Muslim for spiritual perfection, but genocide that's been going on for 14 centuries in the name of a false prophet.

And, by the way, the Arabic world Islam does not mean peace; it means submission. Can you tell the difference between the two?

Having said this all, I must add that I understand that your letter was sincere and inspired by good motives. Let me respond with a sincere suggestion. Try reading the Torah . Don't be afraid; it won't make you a Jew, just as listening to Bach won't make you a composer. But it might provide you with something you so desperately need: an alternative view of the universe.

May you find good guidance wherever you seek it.

Sincerely,

Yashiko Sagamori

CARTER" FROM PAGE 4

activity whatever in Saudi Arabia. The Saudis have apparently bought his silence for a steep price. The bought quality of the Center's activities becomes even more clear, however, when reviewing the Center's hu(See "man rights activities in other countries: essentially no human rights activities in China or in North Korea, or in Iran, Iraq, the Sudan, or Syria, but activity regarding Israel and its alleged abuses, according to the Center's website <http://www.cartercenter.org/countries/Israel_and_the_palestinian_territories.html>. The Carter Center's mission statement claims that "The Center is nonpartisan and acts as a neutral party in dispute resolution activities." How can that be, given that its coffers are full of Arab money, and that its focus is away from significant Arab abuses and on Israel's far less serious ones?

No reasonable person can dispute therefore that Jimmy Carter has been and remains dependent on Arab oil money, particularly from Saudi Arabia. Does this mean that Carter has necessarily been influenced in his thinking about the Middle East by receipt of such enormous amounts of money? Ask Carter. The entire premise of his criticism of Jewish influence on American foreign policy

is that money talks. It is Carter not me who has made the point that if politicians receive money from Jewish sources, then they are not free to decide issues regarding the Middle East for themselves. It is Carter, not me, who has argued that distinguished reporters cannot honestly report on the Middle East because they are being paid by Jewish money. So, by Carter's own standards, it would be almost economically "suicidal" for Carter "to espouse a balanced position between Israel and Palestine."

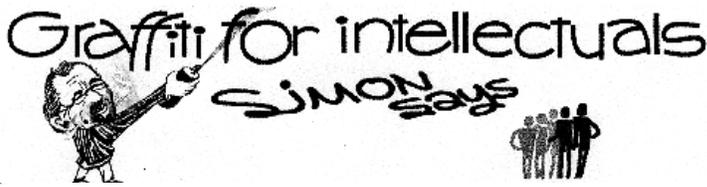
By Carter's own standards, therefore, his views on the Middle East must be discounted. It is certainly possible that he now believes them. Money, particularly large amounts of money, has a way of persuading people to a particular position. It would not surprise me if Carter, having received so much Arab money, is now honestly committed to their cause. But his failure to disclose the extent of his financial dependence on Arab money, and the absence of any self reflection on whether the receipt of this money has unduly influenced his views, is a form of deception bordering on corruption.

I have met cigarette lobbyists, who are supported by the cigarette industry, and who have come to believe honestly that cigarettes are merely a safe form of adult recreation,

that cigarettes are not addicting and that the cigarette industry is really trying to persuade children not to smoke. These people are fooling themselves (or fooling us into believing that they are fooling themselves) just as Jimmy Carter is fooling himself (or persuading us to believe that he is fooling himself).

If money determines political and public views as Carter insists "Jewish money" does-then Carter's views on the Middle East must be deemed to have been influenced by the vast sums of Arab money he has received. If he who pays the piper calls the tune, then Carter's off-key tunes have been called by his Saudi Arabian paymasters. It pains me to say this, but I now believe that there is no person in American public life today who has a lower ratio of real to apparent integrity than Jimmy Carter. The public perception of his integrity is extraordinarily high. His real integrity, it now turns out, is extraordinarily low. He is no better than so many former American politicians who, after leaving public life, sell themselves to the highest bidder and become lobbyists for despicable causes. That is now Jimmy Carter's sad legacy.

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\$10 million? \$15 million? Whatever...It ain't peanuts! By Alan Dershowitz

I HAVE KNOWN JIMMY CARTER FOR MORE THAN THIRTY YEARS. I FIRST MET HIM IN THE SPRING OF 1976 WHEN, AS A RELATIVELY UNKNOWN CANDIDATE FOR PRESIDENT, HE SENT ME A HANDWRITTEN LETTER ASKING FOR MY HELP IN HIS CAMPAIGN ON ISSUES OF CRIME AND JUSTICE.

I had just published an article in The New York Times Magazine on sentencing reform, and he expressed interest in my ideas and asked me to come up with additional ones for his campaign. Shortly thereafter, my former student Stuart Eisenstadt, brought Carter to Harvard to meet with some faculty members, me among them. I immediately liked Jimmy Carter and saw him as a man of integrity and principle. I signed on to his campaign and worked very hard for his election. When Newsweek magazine asked his campaign for the names of people on whom Carter relied for advice, my name was among those given out. I continued to work for Carter over the years, most recently I met him in Jerusalem a year ago, and we briefly discussed the Mid-East. Though I disagreed with some of his points, I continued to believe that he was making them out of a deep commitment to principle and to human rights.



Recent disclosures of Carter's extensive financial connections to Arab oil money, particularly from Saudi Arabia, had deeply shaken my belief in his integrity. When I was first told that he received a monetary reward in the name of Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahayan, and kept the money, even after Harvard returned money from the same source because of its anti-Semitic history, I simply did not believe it. How could a man of such apparent integrity enrich himself with dirty money from so dirty a source? And let there be no mistake about how dirty the Zayed Foundation is. I know because I was involved, in a small way, in helping to persuade Harvard University to return more than \$2 million that the financially strapped Divinity School received from this source.

Initially I was reluctant to put pressure on Harvard to turn back money for the Divinity School, but then a student at the Divinity School Rachael Lea Fish showed me the facts <<http://www.thecrimson.com/article.aspx?ref=348172>>. They were staggering. I was amazed that in the twenty-first century there were still foundations that espoused these views. The Zayed Centre for Coordination and Follow-up think-tank funded by the Shiekh and run by his son hosted speakers <http://www.adl.org/Anti_semitism/zayed_center.asp> who called Jews "the enemies of all nations," attributed the assassination of John Kennedy to Israel and the Mosad and the 9/11 attacks to the United States' own military, and stated that the Holocaust was a "fable." (They also hosted a speech by Jimmy Carter.) To its credit, Harvard turned the money back. To his discredit, Carter did not.

Jimmy Carter was, of course, aware of Harvard's decision, since it was highly publicized. Yet he kept the money. Indeed, this is what he said in accepting the funds: "This award has special significance for me because it is named for my personal friend, Sheik Zayed bin Sultan al-Nahyan." Carter's personal friend, it turns out, was an unredeemable anti-Semite and all-around bigot.

In reading Carter's statements, I was reminded of the bad old Harvard of the nineteen thirties, which continued to honor Nazi academics after the anti-Semitic policies of Hitler's government became clear. Harvard of the nineteen thirties was complicit in evil. I sadly concluded that Jimmy Carter of the

twenty-first century has become complicit in evil.

The extent of Carter's financial support from, and even dependence on, dirty money is still not fully known. What we do know is deeply troubling. Carter and his Center have accepted millions of dollars from suspect sources, beginning with the bail-out of the Carter family peanut business in the late 1970s by BCCI, a now-defunct and virulently anti-Israeli bank indirectly controlled by the Saudi Royal family, and among whose principal investors is Carter's friend, Sheikh Zayed. Agha Hasan Abedi, the founder of the bank, gave Carter "\$500,000 to help the former president establish his center...[and] more than \$10 million to Mr. Carter's different projects." <<http://www.washingtontimes.com/op-ed/20061220-092736-3365r.htm>> Carter gladly accepted the money, though Abedi had called his bankostensibly the source of his funding "the best way to fight the evil influence of the Zionists." BCCI isn't the only source: Saudi King Fahd contributed millions to the Carter Center "in 1993 alone...\$7.6 million" <<http://frontpagemagazine.com/Articles/Printable.asp?ID=26045>> as have other members of the Saudi Royal Family. Carter also received a million dollar pledge from the Saudi-based bin Laden family, as well as a personal \$500,000 environmental award named for Sheikh Zayed, and paid for by the Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates.

It's worth noting that, despite the influx of Saudi money funding the Carter Center, and despite the Saudi Arabian government's myriad human rights abuses, the Carter Center's Human Rights program has no **Please see "CARTER" PAGE 3)**