

Islam, Immigration, and the Alienists Among Us

The Breadth of the Battlefield

by Wayne Allensworth

In his Introduction to *Orthodoxy: The Romance of Faith*, G.K. Chesterton casts himself as a man on a yacht seeking the world and finding home. The seeker, he writes, may have entertained us with his efforts to find “in an anarchist club or a Babylonian temple what I might have found in the nearest parish church.” Chesterton had desired to be “in advance of the age,” but found, instead, that he was “eighteen hundred years behind it.” He had uncovered nothing new. The “romance of faith,” he discovered, could be found in Christian orthodoxy.

Chesterton had thought of turning the seeker’s tale into a “romance” in which the “English yachtsman” discovers what he takes as “a new island in the South Seas,” planting a British flag on a “barbaric temple” that turns out to be the “Pavilion at Brighton.” The seekers I am addressing here, however, are not those who traverse the globe (literally or figuratively) to land at home, either slaking a youthful wanderlust and returning to their native lands or, having become disillusioned after “seeing the world,” realizing that “the world” is contained in the ordinary lives they left behind. The seekers who concern us are those who reject home, spiritually or intellectually, finding an elusive sense of identity in the barbarian temple itself. Or, in some cases, those who find a sense of purpose in what amounts to their own destruction.

A search of the World Wide Web yields some remarkable stories of such seekers from recent years.

In Texas, a woman reared in a Christian family told the Fort Worth *Star-Telegram* that a prayer she offered in church led her to Islam. Struggling with the mysteries of faith and forgiveness, she prayed, “God, show me what this means or show me something else.” The *Star-Telegram* reported that, “like many others who convert,” this woman had said “she found that her new religion allowed her an understanding of God that previously seemed elusive.” Islam, the paper stated, is a missionary religion. Indeed, it is—one that has been spread by fire and sword over several centuries.

Other Westerners have gone native while living in Islamic countries. Witness a report from *IslamForToday.com* dated November 25, 2001, just over two months after the terrorist attacks:

The Italian ambassador to Saudi Arabia, Torquato Cardeilli, has converted to Islam, the Italian embassy here announced Sunday . . .

Following a close reading of the Holy Qur’an and study of Islamic culture, Cardeilli embraced Islam to become the first ambassador to convert to Islam in Saudi Arabia, home to Islam’s holiest sites in Mecca and Medina, according to an office which handles conversions to Islam.

Sheikh Nuh bin Nasser’s office said the Italian am-

bassador converted to Islam on Nov. 15, the day before the start of the Muslim holy fasting month of Ramadan . . . Saudi Arabia has in the past few years witnessed the conversion of more than 50,000 foreigners to Islam, the Saudi daily newspaper *Oqaz* reported.

But perhaps the strangest stories of Islamic conversions come from Russia, a country that has suffered from numerous terrorist attacks spawned by the war in Chechnya. With Islamic militancy spreading in the Land of the Firebird, one can read of Russian soldiers taken prisoner, converting, and joining the *jihād*—and of a Russian Orthodox priest’s conversion. In *East European Constitutional Review* (Winter/Spring 2002), Dmitri Glinsky writes:

[T]he expansion of Islam is clearly an unsettling phenomenon for most Russian observers and practitioners of cultural politics, for whom an undeniable link between ethnicity and religion has been a normative standard, an analytical framework, and a guide for political engineering. This deep unease is leading some of them to view the relationship between Christian Orthodoxy and Islam as akin to a zero-sum game. This impression is reinforced by such instances as the recent conversion of a onetime Christian Orthodox priest and public figure, Vyacheslav (nowadays Ali Vyacheslav) Polosin, who has himself turned into a missionary of Islam and its social teachings. Indeed, a sizable share of converts appears to be not just ethnic Slavs but spiritually disenchanted Orthodox Christians.

As I write, the five-year anniversary of September 11 approaches; in Britain, citizens of “South Asian” origin (or “home-grown” terrorists, as the British press depicted them) have been arrested for plotting to blow up a number of airliners in mid-flight to the United States. In Britain, the European Union, and the United States, the perils of importing the Other (in this case, Muslims) *via* mass immigration are finally beginning to be debated; and the stories of Americans and Europeans converting to Islam accumulate, even as the apologists for open borders continue to paint the Other as the equal of, or perhaps superior to, their countrymen.

Conversions by force of arms or a gradual absorption of one population by another, are, of course, nothing new under the sun. What is peculiar about the conversions of Westerners, in general, and Americans, especially, are the circumstances that may have spurred them on. In this “clash of civilizations,” one of the striking trends has been the defense of the Other by some of the very people whom that alien force is attacking. I do not have in mind those who understand that Washington’s Middle

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East policy (unquestioning support of Israel; the democracy-by-force plans of the Bush White House; the occupation of Iraq) has something to do with the popularity of Osama bin Laden. What I am getting at is something else entirely.

After the September 11 attacks, there was reportedly an increase in conversions to Islam in the United States, as well as a general increase in interest—not necessarily an attempt to “know your enemy” or to understand the “root causes” of the attacks—in all things Islamic. And our President, a man many Americans consider to be a devout Christian, assured us that “Islam is a religion of peace,” despite ample evidence to the contrary. There was no backlash against Islam—domestically, at least. How this state of affairs came about can be explained in many ways: We may rage at Big Business globalism, driven by short-sighted greed; or blame “political correctness,” the liberals, or religious universalism. These are merely symptoms of a deeper illness.

In my review in these pages of Paul Sperry’s book *Infiltration* (February), I recounted the bizarre tale of John Walker Lindh. A cradle Catholic, Lindh had converted to Islam as a teenager. Lindh—or Suleyman al-Faris, or Abdul Farid, as he was also known—traveled to Pakistan in 2000, studying in an Islamic *madrash*. He joined the Taliban and met Osama himself, then won his fleeting moment of fame as the “American Taliban.” Some hated Lindh, while others seemed to love him—or at least defend him. As I wrote,

[I]t is questionable that John Walker Lindh ever had a strong American identity. The point that was missing in all the coverage was that Lindh’s saga can only be understood within the context of what the Nixon Center’s Robert S. Leiken has dubbed the West’s “adversarial culture.” Lindh is simply not worth hating. He is another pathetic example of a civilization that has lost confidence in itself and produces lots of people with a very shallow sense of identity. Apparently, Islam provided Lindh/Al-Faris/Farid with [one] . . .

While the mainstream right spun its wheels denouncing liberalism and Lindh’s pathetic parents (his mother had reportedly “dabbled in Buddhism,” while John’s nominally Catholic father had thought his son’s conversion good for him), it was missing the larger point:

“[C]onservative” criticism [of Lindh’s parents] never mentioned a capitalist culture, usually defended by the mainstream right, that inculcates a view of life as a series of consumer choices. It’s a culture in which CEOs are encouraged not to think of their firms as American but “global.” And Americans born and raised in the Good Ole U.S.A. replace their neighbors with “outsourced” foreigners and shop at “big-box” stores retailing Chinese-made goods, with hardly a single pang of conscience.

In the 20th century, the West saw itself betrayed by the likes of Kim Philby, along with the other “Cambridge spies,” and such groups as the Red Brigades, the Red Army Faction, and the Weathermen. The radicals and traitors had legions of sympathizers and fellow travelers in the elites of their own countries. Western individualism and rationalism, radicalized by the decline of Christianity; the curiosity of the Western mind,

which lost its sense of context as it lost its religion; and a fascination with things foreign that is not quite like any that has been seen in other civilizations all contributed to the growth of a rootless, self-hating “adversarial culture,” whose platform for attacking the civilization that produced it was Marxist-Leninist.

The “adversarial culture” is not the wholly owned subsidiary of what is nowadays called the “left”—the “right” is also attached to theories of Economic Man and the worship of Progress, something that *Chronicles* contributors have been writing about for years. The problem is not only ideological but structural: a postindustrial society not attached to the land, or even a company town, is going to have a very hard time putting down roots. And a rootless society with a shaky sense of identity will find it difficult to defend itself.



Gregory McNamee

So the problem is not limited to a few *alienist* (the term has been used as the antonym of *nativist* by immigration-reform advocates) cheerleaders. Because of open borders and an immigration policy enabling mass migration from non-Western states, the Islamic Other is here and offers another opportunity for the agents of adversarial culture to play out their multicultural, anti-Christian, antiwhite, anti-American fantasies. With many of its younger members having missed out on the fun and games of the “revolution” of the 60’s, the current Party of Treason now identifies with the immigrant masses: The more alien, the more hostile, the more militant, the better. But they are not alone. Islam is growing in America—and not only among the John Walker Lindh imitators one would expect in our increasingly fragmented society. Could it be that Western alienists may have found the perfect vehicle to replace Marxism-Leninism in a militant, resurgent Islam?

Muslim militants, hoping to dodge any future profiling, are reportedly seeking out native-born Americans to do their dirty work. At the same time, an alarming number of Islamic converts are black Americans. Accounts of the Islamic recruitment of prisoners, however, are not limited to proselytizing blacks. “Latinos” and even East Asians are said to be targets. Given that normal patterns of socialization have been disrupted, there are plenty of Americans alienated from their traditional cultures and civilization. How can anyone hope to assimilate and socialize waves of immigrants from vastly different civilizations, when we have failed to socialize our own

people? With the white, Christian majority designated the perpetrator of countless genocides and unmatched oppression, it is small wonder that racial minorities, encouraged by the cult of victimhood, might find militant Islam attractive. If Al Qaeda can recruit a John Walker Lindh, how many Third World immigrants will sympathize with, if not join, the *jihad*?

Islam's comprehensive worldview, which does not recognize any division between religious and civic life, is, as Srdja Trifkovic argues, a telling indicator of its incompatibility with Western political systems. Citing terrorist cases involving American citizens and attitudes of Muslims toward the United States and the West, Trifkovic writes that "the application of political criteria in determining the eligibility of prospective visitors or immigrants to the US should become an essential ingredient of a long-term anti-terrorist strategy."


On *ChroniclesMagazine.org*, Trifkovic has further pointed to the feelings of alienation that Muslim immigrants and their progeny have indicated in polls taken after the July 7, 2005, terrorist bombings in London:

According to a detailed survey of the attitudes of British Muslims prepared for the *Daily Telegraph* in the immediate aftermath of the London bombings . . . one in four sympathizes with the motives of the bombers, and six percent insist that the bombings were "fully justified." In absolute numbers, this means that there over 100,000 Muslims in Great Britain who either are prepared to carry out terrorist acts or are ready to support those who do. And a substantial majority—56 percent—say that whether or not they sympathize with the bombers, they can at least understand why they behave in this

way. The sheer scale of Muslim alienation from British society that the survey reveals is remarkable: Nearly a third of them, 32 percent, believe that "Western society is decadent and immoral and that Muslims should seek to bring it to an end."

Other surveys cited by Trifkovic reveal that Muslim hatred for the United States is even worse: 81 percent of Pakistanis, for example, "dislike" America. In Lebanon, 73 percent believed that suicide bombings are justified. This is what Trifkovic described as the "baggage" Muslim immigrants bring with them to America and transmit to their children who are born here:

The sense of hostile detachment from any recognizably American identity and values that breeds terrorist intent is not confined to any single group of Muslims. It transcends class and affects students, Ivy League-educated doctors, and criminals alike. The problem is not limited to those Muslims who came to the United States as adults: In December 2003, five U.S.-born Muslim youths from upstate New York were convicted of aiding Al Qaeda and plotting attacks on Americans.

What is unclear from all of this is the degree to which we are becoming *them* or they are becoming *us*. The sense of hostile detachment of upper-middle-class, American-born Muslims is as much a part of the culture of their white counterparts in those same Ivy League schools as of the Islamic culture their parents brought with them. Calling a halt to mass immigration is an absolute necessity. But having won that victory, patriots will have just begun to fight. 

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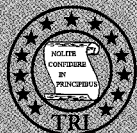


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North Korea and Iran

The Case for Formal Relations

by Ted Galen Carpenter

The United States faces twin crises involving nuclear proliferation, as both North Korea and Iran seem poised to barge into the global nuclear-weapons club. (There are indications that North Korea may have already done so, since she has processed enough plutonium to build as many as 13 weapons.) U.S. policy toward those two rogue states has followed a familiar pattern. Washington has no formal diplomatic relations with either country, and it has entered into negotiations with those regimes only with great reluctance and following intense prodding by long-standing U.S. allies.

It may be emotionally satisfying to refuse to recognize the current North Korean and Iranian governments, since one would be hard-pressed to identify two more odious regimes in the international system. Nevertheless, refusing to maintain any formal relationship with Iran and North Korea when those countries are poised to become nuclear powers is potentially very dangerous.

Washington has never recognized North Korea's communist regime since it seized power (with Moscow's assistance) after World War II. Any chance that U.S. leaders might adopt a more flexible policy disappeared when Pyongyang's forces attacked noncommunist South Korea in June 1950 in an effort to unify the peninsula under communism. Although the United States has occasionally negotiated with North Korea (most notably, the 1994 agreement freezing that country's nuclear program), the focus of U.S. policy has been to isolate Pyongyang diplomatically and maintain a system of rigorous economic sanctions. Even when Japan, China, Russia, and the major European powers recognized both Korean states following the end of the Cold War, Washington did not follow suit.

When the current nuclear crisis erupted in the autumn of 2002, the Bush administration refused to talk to Pyongyang. During the early months of the confrontation, Washington's position was unyielding: There would be no talks whatsoever until Pyongyang stopped violating the 1994 Agreed Framework and allowed outside inspections to verify that it was complying with all provisions of the agreement. When it became evident that North Korea was accelerating the revival of her nuclear-weapons program, China, Russia, Japan, and South Korea all urged Washington to drop its demand and talk to Pyongyang. The United States finally responded (especially to pressure exerted by our allies) and shifted tactics in early 2003. Following a meeting with Japanese and South Korean diplomats, the State Department announced that it would agree to direct

talks with Pyongyang. U.S. officials stressed, however, that this would in no way constitute "negotiations."

Most experts found this to be a distinction without a difference. Eventually, Washington agreed to direct negotiations with Pyongyang, but only within a multilateral framework. Pyongyang's nuclear-weapons program menaced North Korea's neighbors, Washington argued, so they should play a role in any diplomatic sessions. North Korea, in turn, insisted on bilateral talks with the United States. A compromise was reached in which all formal negotiations would take place within the framework of six-party talks (including Russia, China, Japan, and South Korea), but U.S. and North Korean delegates could conduct informal, bilateral "discussions" on the side. The six-party talks have dragged on for more than three years with meager progress.

Washington's relationship with Iran over the decades has been almost as rocky as its interaction with North Korea. After a coup orchestrated by the Central Intelligence Agency ousted a democratic government and restored the shah to his throne, Tehran and Washington became close allies for the next quarter century. That situation changed dramatically when an Islamic revolution drove the shah into exile in early 1979. A few months later, tensions rose dramatically when an Iranian mob (with the apparent connivance of the new government) stormed the U.S. embassy and took American diplomats hostage. They were not freed until January 1981, and the United States and Iran have had no formal diplomatic relations since the start of the hostage incident.

The lack of a formal relationship has become a significant issue since evidence began to mount in the past three years that Tehran was pursuing a program to develop nuclear weapons. Yet Washington made no move to engage the Iranian regime in negotiations or even substantive discussions. Indeed, until the spring of 2005, White House officials discouraged Britain, France, and Germany from negotiating with Iran on the nuclear issue. Washington reluctantly endorsed the diplomatic efforts of the "EU-3" only after extracting a commitment from them to support stronger measures against Tehran if diplomacy failed to produce the desired result. Despite prodding from London, Paris, and Berlin, the Bush administration steadfastly refused to participate in the ongoing negotiations.

Tehran's efforts to thaw relations with Washington also were rebuffed. In the months following September 11, the Iranian regime expressed a willingness to work with the United States to undermine the Taliban government and its Al Qaeda allies in Afghanistan. After initially exploring that possibility, the administration spurned the overtures. The degree of hostility directed against Tehran was reflected in President Bush's January 2002 State of the Union Address when he dubbed Iran, North Korea, and Iraq the "Axis of Evil." There was one more

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