

Militant Islam has a Woman Problem.  
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In the aftermath of the 9/11 terror attack on America, there was a knee-jerk assumption that Muslims had reasons for hating us. Many left-wing chest-beaters blamed "western colonialism" for creating Muslim hatred; others blamed Israel for daring to occupy "Muslim lands." "What did we do wrong?" they asked.

Scholars revisited the origins of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, the godfather of all subsequent Islamist terror groups. This movement began in 1928 when other comparable movements (Fascism, Nazism, and Communism) were gathering adherents. These groups all shared hatred of the modern Capitalist west, including its participatory governments.

Where the Muslim Brotherhood differed from its fascist colleagues was a particular element of modern society that they found to be the last straw: the emancipation of women. I proposed many years ago that the status of women was the hot button issue that triggered the Islamist revolt. One male colleague scoffed at this, claiming that I was making a fuss over a "little headscarf."

One of the founders of the Egyptian Brotherhood, a school teacher named Sayyed Qutb, spent time as an exchange teacher in a Colorado town and was sickened by the sight of boys and girls dancing together "shamelessly" at a school dance. The mixing of men and women, the "immodest" clothing of women, filled him with disgust and rage. He also scorned democracy and certainly disliked women having a voice in their governance. His movement flowered because so many Muslim men agreed with him.

We all know about the nightmare occupation of Afghanistan by the Taliban (1996-2001), creating a hellish world, particularly for women who were the main targets. Today, the Taliban is resurgent in Afghanistan where they recently took over the city of Kunduz, instantly waging war against its women. This was not an issue of "a little headscarf." It was a war against all females, whom they singled out for their punishments.

They methodically "hounded women with any sort of public profile, looted a high school and destroyed the offices of many of the organizations that protected and supported women in Kunduz." (NY Times, October 15, 2015.) Taliban commanders declared women shelters for female victims of violence "immoral" and destroyed them, putting women directors on death lists. Educated women who worked for the government or international organizations ran for their lives. If they had not fled, the Taliban promised that they would be hanged in public. The Taliban also destroyed three radio stations run by women and a girls' high school. Even after Kunduz was retaken by government forces, the women fear returning.

Ayatollah Khomeini (1978) closed a girls' school and turned it into his headquarters when he took over Iran. The first "criminal" he hanged was a woman social worker. Women judges were fired.

ISIS and Boko Haram go door-to-door after a conquest, rounding up all females, (babies to grannies), to rape, traffic, or sell as slaves. They make no bones about their main objectives: women, particularly those who dare to be educated or "in charge."

We can dismiss ISIS and Boko Haram as knuckle draggers and hicks (which they are), but what is the excuse for Muslims living in Europe and the United States who murder wives and daughters for violating Muslim culture, religion, and norms? Remember the Texas taxi driver, a Pakistani immigrant, who murdered his two daughters for no longer wearing the hijab, going to college, and dating? Remember the Pakistani radio station owner who decapitated his wife for daring to demand a divorce? Germany has a plague of honor killings today. European Muslim thugs rape women who dress "immodestly," believing that this is their religious privilege.

Never mind the history of colonialism; never mind the scorn for participatory governance; never mind the pretense of religious values. Instead, look at the model these people select: the life and deeds of the Prophet and his companions, 7th century values. Decapitate, hold for ransom, rape the women of the defeated enemy, and crucify them to make a point. Misogyny is the central core of this neo-Islamic revolution. A little headscarf indeed!

677 words

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