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EMERGING ISLAMIST POLITICAL CLOUT

ACCELERATES EUROPE’S SELF-ISLAMIZATION

Abigail R. Esman

[IPT News](#), Apr. 17, 2018

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Forget the beheading videos, the ISIS propaganda on social media, even the terrorist attacks themselves. Europe, says counterterrorism expert Afshin Ellian, is Islamizing itself, and in the process, the Western values on which its democracies are built are increasingly put at risk.

Take, for instance, Belgium’s ISLAM Party, which now hopes to participate in the country’s October local elections in 28 regions. (Its name serves as an acronym for “Intégrité, Solidarité, Liberté, Authenticité, Moralité.”) Its ultimate aim: transforming Belgium into an Islamic state. Items high on its agenda include separating men and women on public transportation, and the incorporation of sharia law - as long as this does not conflict with current laws -according to the party’s founder, Redouane Ahrouch. His own behavior, however, suggests that his respect for “current laws” and mores has its bounds: He reportedly refuses to shake hands with women, and in 2003, he received a six-month sentence for beating and threatening his wife. Currently, the Islam Party has two elected representatives in office - one in Anderlecht, the other in Molenbeek - both regions that happen to be known as hotbeds of extremism.

Or consider DENK, Holland’s pro-Islam party founded in 2015 by Turkish-Dutch politicians Selçuk Ozturk and Tunahan Kuzu. The party platform, which supports boycotts and sanctions against Israel, also discourages assimilation, calling instead for “mutual acceptance” of multiple cultures. Non-Muslims, for instance, would apparently be required to “accept” the Muslim extremist father who beats his daughter for refusing an arranged marriage, or for becoming too “Westernized” for his taste. It’s his culture, after all. DENK also calls for a “racism police force” to monitor allegedly racist comments and actions. Those found guilty would be placed in a government “racism register,” and banned from government jobs and other employment.

So far, such pro-Islamist views have served the party well. In local Dutch elections last month, DENK (which means “think” in Dutch) gained three seats in Rotterdam, totaling four seats among 45 total and edging out Geert Wilders’ far-right Partij voor de Vrijheid (PVV), which fell from three seats to one. In Amsterdam, which also has 45 seats, a full 50 percent of Dutch-Moroccans and about two-thirds of Dutch-Turks gave the party a three-seat win in its first election there, as well. Many of these voters, according to post-election analyses, moved to DENK from the center-left Labor Party (PvdA), clearly feeling more at home with a more overtly pro-Muslim politic.

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Similarly, France’s Union of Muslim Democrats (UDMF) has taken a number of voters from the Green Party by promising to defend Muslims. UDMF’s online program statement condemns burqa and headscarf bans. What’s more, in its pretense of supporting what it calls the “sweet dream of Democracy, Union and Human Rights,” the party loudly (though rightly) condemns “anti-Muslim speeches” that “lead the most psychologically fragile people to commit acts of unprecedented violence.” Examples of such “unprecedented violence” follow: a German white supremacist, who killed an Egyptian woman wearing a veil in 2009, and the stabbing of a French Muslim in Vaucluse. “Heavy weapons attacks have exploded in Europe since the beginning of the year against Muslim places of worship,” the statement reads.

What the party statement does not mention anywhere are the attacks by Muslims in Paris and Nice that together killed 240 people between January 2015 and July 2016; the attack by a Muslim extremist on a Jewish school in Toulouse in 2012; and the kidnapping and heinous torture of Ilan Halimi, a 23-year-old Jew, in 2006. These are among other acts of “unprecedented violence” by Islamists.

UDMF also calls for protection of the family and its “essential role in the education of children,” while citing Article 14 of the International Convention on the Rights of the Child which calls for respecting “the right of the child to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion.” From here, the party demands the “right and duty of parents....to guide the child in the exercise of the above-mentioned right.” Implied here is the demand that parents be allowed to treat their children as they see fit according to their religious beliefs - including to beat daughters who refuse an arranged marriage, becoming “too Westernized,” and so on.

Most disturbing are the large numbers of Muslims who have all flocked to parties like DENK and UDMF throughout Europe. Rather than moving towards more secular, traditionally democratic political movements, Europe’s Muslims are apparently increasingly distancing themselves from the “European” side of their identity and identifying more with Islam and the Muslim community. And this, too, is part of Europe’s “self-Islamizing,” the result of taking too unsure a hand, too ambivalent a position, on the issue of assimilation.

Indeed, as Ellian points out, European institutions have enabled this cultural separation. Photographs taken last November during a meeting of the Muslim student union at Amsterdam’s Vrije Universiteit revealed that men and women sat on opposite sides of the auditorium aisle. Such events are common, according to

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journalist Carel Brendel, who first reported on the incident. “Yet the administrations [of these schools] do little or nothing about it, despite the fact that their own rules forbid” such gender separation,” he told the Investigative Project. Brendel has also exposed links between the Amsterdam police and Abdelilah el-Amrani, a Muslim Brotherhood-connected imam invited by the police department to lead last year’s annual Iftar dinner marking the end of a day’s fast during Ramadan. El-Amrani, Brendel said, also oversees a group of interconnected organizations, including an Islamic school that came under investigation last year for having separate entrances for boys and girls.

Worth noting about the event, according to Brendel, is that no other government body sponsors a religious ceremony. Nor does any Dutch government agency, let alone the police, host a Passover Seder or observe any other religious event with the public. In addition, and perhaps more alarming, a spokesperson for the Rotterdam police posted to Twitter that day that “police will be difficult to reach tonight, due to various Iftar meals.” City security and the safety of citizens, in other words, was being compromised in the name of a religious celebration.

Elsewhere, other signs of self-Islamization can be found in the rise of other Muslim parties in Austria as well as a failed effort in Sweden; a proposed ban on the British press against identifying terrorists as Muslim; the proliferation of sharia courts in the UK; and the repeated efforts by some Canadian officials to legalize sharia - a debate that recently has been revived. While all of this involves political movements, it stands as a reminder of what the ideology behind the “war on terrorism” is really all about: an attack against our culture. We need to do better at protecting it.

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BELGIUM: FIRST ISLAMIC STATE IN EUROPE?

Giulio Meotti

[Gatestone Institute](#), Apr. 22, 2018

The French acronym of Belgium’s ISLAM Party stands for “Integrity, Solidarity, Liberty, Authenticity, Morality”. The leaders of the ISLAM Party apparently want to turn Belgium into an Islamic State. They call it “Islamist democracy” and have set a target date: 2030.

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According to the French magazine *Causeur*, “the program is confusingly simple: replace all the civil and penal codes with sharia law. Period”. Created on the eve of the 2012 municipal ballot, the ISLAM Party immediately received impressive results. Its numbers are alarming. The effect of this new party, according to Michaël Privot, an expert on Islam, and Sebastien Boussois, a political scientist, could be the “implosion of the social body”. Some Belgian politicians, such as Richard Miller, are now advocating banning the ISLAM Party.

The French weekly magazine *Le Point* details the plans of the ISLAM Party: It would like to “prevent vice by banning gaming establishments (casinos, gaming halls and betting agencies) and the lottery”. Along with authorizing the wearing the Muslim headscarf at school and an agreement about the Islamic religious holidays, the party wants all schools in Belgium to offer halal meat on their school menus. Redouane Ahrouch, one of the party’s three founders, also proposed segregating men and women on public transport. Ahrouch belonged in the 1990s to the Belgian Islamic Center, a nest of Islamic fundamentalism where candidates for jihad in Afghanistan and Iraq were recruited.

The ISLAM Party knows that demography is on its side. Ahrouch has said, “in 12 years, Brussels will principally be composed of Muslims”. In the upcoming Belgian elections, the ISLAM Party is now set to run candidates in 28 municipalities. On first glance, that looks like a derisory proportion compared to 589 Belgian municipalities, but it demonstrates the progress and ambitions of this new party. In Brussels, the party will be represented on 14 lists out of a possible 19. That is most likely why the Socialist Party now fears the rise of the ISLAM Party. In 2012, the party succeeded, when running in just three Brussels districts, in obtaining an elected representative in two of them (Molenbeek and Anderlecht), and failing only narrowly in Brussels-City.

Two years later, during the 2014 parliamentary elections, the ISLAM Party tried to expand its base in two constituencies, Brussels-City and Liège. Once again, the results were impressive for a party that favors the introduction of sharia, Islamic law, into Belgium. In Brussels, they won 9,421 votes (almost 2%). This political movement apparently started in Molenbeek, “the Belgian radicals’ den”, a “hotbed of recruiters for the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant”. Jihadists there were apparently plotting terror attacks all over Europe and even in Afghanistan. The French author Éric Zemmour, facetiously suggested that instead of bombing Raqqa, Syria, France should “bomb Molenbeek”. At the moment in Molenbeek, 21 municipal officials out of 46 are Muslim. “The European capital,” wrote *Le Figaro*,

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“will be Muslim in twenty years”.

“Nearly a third of the population of Brussels already is Muslim, indicated Olivier Servais, a sociologist at the Catholic University of Louvain. “The practitioners of Islam, due to their high birth rate, should be the majority ‘in fifteen or twenty years’. Since 2001... Mohamed is the most common name given to boys born in Brussels”.

The ISLAM Party is working in a favorable environment. According to the mayor of Brussels, Yvan Mayeur, all the mosques in the European capital are now “in the hands of the Salafists”. A few weeks ago, the Belgian government terminated the long-term lease of the country’s largest and oldest mosque, the Grand Mosque of Brussels, to the Saudi royal family, “as part of what officials say is an effort to combat radicalization”. Officials said that the mosque, was a “hotbed for extremism”. A confidential report last year revealed that the police had uncovered 51 organizations in Molenbeek with suspected ties to jihadism. Perhaps it is time for sleepy Belgium to begin to wake up?

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THE ISLAMIZATION OF TURKEY

Rauf Baker

[BESA](#), Apr. 22, 2018

The Turkish regime is gradually transforming into a developed, complicated, and more dangerous version of the al-Qaeda organization. The rhetoric and approach seem convergent or even identical. The difference is that Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan is leading a country of significant geopolitical importance, not a militant group scattered across Afghanistan’s mountains.

If al-Qaeda succeeded in spreading fear across the globe through its terrorist operations, one can only imagine the extreme damage Erdoğan can cause to the MENA region and even the world, particularly in view of his increasing political paranoia and totalitarianism. As he seeks to stay in power indefinitely following a

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referendum that granted him sweeping powers to run the country largely uncontested, Erdoğan is trying to leave a legacy that will last for decades. To that end, he is using the education system as a repository in which to sow seeds to be harvested later.

The Islamization of the state has been going on systematically, quietly, and slowly for many years, but its pace has increased since the coup attempt in July 2016, with a focus on the education system. Last year, the ruling Muslim Brotherhood-inspired Justice and Development Party (AKP) led by Erdoğan made substantial changes to school curricula, amending more than 170 topics. The Ministry of Education eliminated evolutionary concepts such as “natural selection” and added subjects related to “jihad”. Erdoğan’s government fired more than 33,000 teachers and closed scores of schools over claims that they had ties with those involved in the coup attempt. At the same time, it increased the number of religious schools (“imam hatip”).

The ministry described the changes as “an emphasis on a values-based education” that promotes Erdoğan’s goal of raising a “pious generation”. AKP MP Ahmet Hamdi Çamlı stated last year that “it is useless to teach math to students who do not know jihad”. Prior to the overhaul, the number of students in 537 religious secondary schools reached 270,000 in 2012. In 2017, there were 1,408 and 635,000 students. When we add the 122,000 students attending religious schools in the open education system, the number of students in all religious schools in Turkey reaches 757,000.

Erdoğan has noticeably increased the number of Islamic references in his speeches. He made “jihad” the fountainhead of the war on the Kurdish city of Afrin in Syria, using verses from the “Al-Fath” chapter of the Koran. That chapter uses the Prophet Muhammad’s victory over his enemies to justify military operations. Friday prayer sermons called for “jihad” against the Kurds. When the Turkish army captured Afrin, Erdoğan did not hesitate to call his troops “Islam’s last army”.

Two months ago, during a televised congress of his party, Erdoğan invited a little girl in military uniform onto the stage and told her she would be “martyred” if she were killed while fighting. Several weeks ago, Deputy Prime Minister Bekir Bozdağ described Erdoğan as a leader “who exerts himself for the sake of God”. Last year, Şevki Yılmaz, a columnist for the government mouthpiece “Yeni Akit” and a close confidante of Erdoğan’s, described al-Qaeda founder Osama bin Laden as a

“national hero”. Yilmaz also said voting “yes” to the constitutional referendum to replace the parliamentary system with a presidential one would be to act as the “Ababeel” did. In the Koran, the Ababeel were heavenly birds sent by God to throw rocks on an army that marched upon Mecca intending to demolish the Kaaba.

All the above comes in parallel with a growing number of public attacks on women under the pretext of that they are wearing “inappropriate clothes”. A video circulated on December 31, 2016 showed two bearded young men handing out leaflets to passersby in the city of Izmir on the prohibition of New Year’s celebrations in Islam. The issue does not only affect Turks. Around half a million Syrian students in Turkey are influenced by Erdoğan’s education policy. Authorities ignore, and sometimes encourage, practices of Syrian school administrations in Turkish cities that focus on religious topics, employ veiled women only, prohibit teachers from wearing nail polish, and enforce a strict Islamic dress code for female students...

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HARD TRUTHS ABOUT AN ANCIENT DOCTRINE

Machla Abramovitz

[Michpacha](#), Mar. 14, 2018

Last December, about two hours after President Donald Trump recognized Jerusalem as Israel’s capital, the media was in a tizzy. Pundits were breathlessly prognosticating that the White House move would ignite an explosion of pent-up rage on the Arab street.

Meanwhile, Dr. Harold Rhode went on the radio in Washington, D.C., to explain to a local audience that despite dire warnings to the contrary, he didn’t anticipate any violent outbursts from the Muslim world. Time proved the historian and Islamic affairs expert correct: Except for some staged skirmishes in the West Bank and boilerplate criticism out of Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey, the Middle East remained shockingly quiet.

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“Jerusalem is only important to Muslims when non-Muslims control it,” Rhode says now, in conversation with *Mishpacha*. “Had that not been the case, Jordan would have proclaimed it their capital when it was under their control. For Sunni Muslims, the issue of Jerusalem is less religious than political, and for Shiites, it’s all political. Right now, the Muslim street, for the most part, is fed up with its leadership and is sick and tired of being taken advantage of by them for political purposes.”

If anyone could have predicted this outcome, it’s Harold Rhode. His decades of study and living among Muslims in the Middle East has attuned him to how the Muslim world thinks. Rhode received his PhD in Islamic history from Columbia University, specializing in the history of the Turks, Arabs, and Iranians. He studied overseas for years in universities in Iran, Egypt, and Israel. In the 1980s, he went to work as an advisor on the Islamic world for the US Department of Defense.

The Jerusalem issue has exposed deep divisions between the Muslim street and its leadership, but other internal struggles being played out within the Islamic world are of even greater significance to the West. Rhode points out that Jerusalem has always been a focus for other nations, and today, the Palestinians are only part of the crowd. Turkey’s leader, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, issues harsh rhetoric about Jerusalem as a way of reasserting his country’s historic leadership of the Sunni world. And of course, the Iranian regime is obsessed with the Holy City. Harold says a prominent mullah admitted to him personally that according to Shiite tradition, Jerusalem belongs to the Jews. Why then this obsession? He says the ayatollahs hope to exploit the issue to gain dominance in the centuries-old conflict between Shiites and Sunnis.

“Iran, a Shiite country, is using Jerusalem as a tool against the Sunnis,” he explains. “Because the Sunnis, who cannot tolerate Jews running Jerusalem, have not been able to wrest Jerusalem from the Jews, the Shiites say they will do the job for them. For that purpose, the Iranians established Hezbollah and are empowering Hamas. Tehran believes that Israel’s inability to destroy Hezbollah during the 2006 Lebanon War showed the Sunnis that Shiism is the way.”

The entire geopolitical landscape shifted, however, with President Trump’s recognition of Jerusalem as Israel’s capital. That announcement, Rhode says, dealt a severe blow to Tehran’s ability to assert itself within the Arab world, exposing it as weak. That, together with the president’s refusal to certify the Iran Deal, has terrified the Iranian government; they don’t know what’s coming next. “For the

last five months, Iran hasn't attacked any US ship in the Gulf," Rhode points out. "They haven't attacked anyone. They are petrified, which is good."

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[Struggling to Prevent Terrorist Attacks, France Wants to 'Reform' Islam: James McAuley, Washington Post, Apr. 18, 2018](#)—Speaking alongside the flag-draped coffin of a police officer killed in a terrorist attack in southern France, President Emmanuel Macron last month lay blame on “underground Islamism” and those who “indoctrinate on our soil and corrupt daily.”

[A Month of Islam and Multiculturalism in Germany: March 2018: Soeren Kern, Gatestone Institute, Apr. 21, 2018](#)—March 1. The Spreewald Elementary School in Berlin's Schöneberg district hired security guards to protect teachers and students from unruly students. Around 99% of the pupils at the school have a migration background. “Within the past year, the violence has increased so much that we now had to take this measure,” said headmaster Doris Unzeit.

[90 Years In, The Muslim Brotherhood Faces An Uncharted Future: Hany Ghoraba, IPT News, Apr. 19, 2018](#)—The Muslim Brotherhood has managed to weather many storms during nine decades in Egypt. Presidents Gamal Abdel Nasser, Anwar Sadat and Hosni Mubarak all tried to contain and suppress the Islamist movement, which ultimately seeks a global Muslim Caliphate.

[Honor Killing Is Not Just a Muslim Problem: Phyllis Chesler, Tablet, Apr. 15, 2018](#)—I co-pioneered the study of violence against women in the late 1960s. I focused on women living in North America and Europe who had been psychiatrically diagnosed and hospitalized; were the victims of rape, sexual harassment, incest, intimate partner battering, pornography and prostitution.