



WHEN APOSTATES BECOME SHAYKHS...



Mohd Elfie Nieshaem Juferi

When Apostates Become Shaykhs,

A systematic analysis of their dominant ideas on the World Wide Web

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“The hypocritical men and the hypocritical women are all alike; they enjoin evil and forbid good and withhold their hands from charity; they have forsaken Allah, so He has forsaken them; surely the hypocrites are the transgressors.” [Qur’an, 9:67]

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PREFACE

In the name of God, The Most Gracious and Merciful and Lord of the Worlds, and peace and blessings be upon His Messengers and their followers.

Originally this work was published as an e-document in .pdf format, entitled “Islam and the Latest Assumptions of a *Mulhid*”¹ in the month of November 2003. This particular document was focused on the so-called “testimony” of an apostate who called herself ‘Ex-Muslim Malaysian’ and was the *de facto* founder and creator of a website about apostates from Malaysia². Our purpose in preparing this document then was to examine the claims of this apostate, her personal experiences whilst she was still a Muslim and the allegations that she hurled against Islam since her declared apostasy. We had then attempted to review her testimony entitled *Islam and Me*³ with a response to every point she had raised. Alhamdulillah, we had successfully shown the Muslim public of the fallacies of her arguments in favour of her apostasy and that her claims were found to have no rational basis at all.

This book in your hands now is an expanded work from this first document. In this book, I have rewritten everything with more elaboration and addressed issues which attempts to accommodate allegations by various apostates from Islam on the Internet. Everything has been categorized according to subject matter and issues are addressed more deeply than before. Furthermore, I have now focused on the arguments she presented by quoting the claims verbatim from her original “testimony”, as well as bringing in new issues by other apostates and their website that she had neither made mention of or related to the original e-document that I first wrote.

Certainly, the apostasy movement is a great form of disbelief and tantamount to *shirik*⁴ and if the problem is not nipped in the bud, it certainly could escalate into a much serious phenomenon in the future. In order to discredit

¹ Ar., “atheist”

² It has now since gone defunct due to the apostates’ in-fighting.

³ Last accessible via WWW at <http://www.geocities.com/muslimapostate/testimonial.html> (December 2003). Since the publication of the above-mentioned e-document, however, it was taken off from the web and suppressed by the apostate herself. However, the “testimony” remains on the WWW at various disparate locations (both Christian and apostate websites) without explicitly naming her Internet pseudonyms, “Ex-Muslim Malaysian” or “Murtad Mama”.

⁴ The association of other gods with God, a violation of *tawheed*, or Islamic monotheism.

Islam and all what it stands for (not to mention “justifying” their apostasy), the apostates aim to bring forth Qur’anic interpretations of their own innovation and their own purposeful misquotations and misinterpretations from the *hadith*⁵ collections and the Qur’an. Their allegations have been responded to countless of times in the past, but it is the duty of Muslims to educate the public with the proper understanding of the Qur’an and the 1400 year-old history that comes with it since it was first Revealed, and be aware of contemporary polemical trends that are being hurled at Islam by its enemies. An analysis of some of their common claims and dominant ideas will be documented in the following chapters⁶, insha’llah.

The author of this book is involved in the study of comparative religions in his spare time, and maintains several websites, including bismikaallahuma.org that focuses on Christianity and their polemics against Islam. This work is a continuation of the author’s efforts in the propagation of Islam, and his upholding of the principle behind the Arabic adage, *al-kufri millatun wahidah* (all disbelief is the same, no matter the form). Insha’llah, we hope that this book will achieve that purpose.

It should also be noted that this book is generally intended to be an “enrichment” project to educate the Muslim public to be made aware of the apostasy threat and its irrational basis, and is thus also generally applied to the apostasy movement and/or any anti-Islam polemic which deals with either or all of the allegations that follows.

May God Almighty forgive my mistakes, if there are any.

Mohd Elfie Nieshaem Juferi

October 24, 2005

⁴ A narrative conveying the words or deeds of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ

⁵ *Infra*, chapters 2 – 8

CHAPTER 1: THE PROBLEM OF APOSTASY FROM ISLAM

1.1 THE ORIGINS OF THE APOSTASTY MOVEMENT (AR-RIDDAH)

Apostasy from Islam is not a new phenomenon. It is a problem that has existed since the very beginning of Islam itself. After the passing of the Prophet Muhammad , a group of Muslims apostatized by renouncing Islam, breaking away from the Muslim *ummah*⁷ and the authority in Madinah and rose in retaliation to the nascent Islamic state. This movement was called the *riddah* (apostasy) movement. In time, they became a real danger to the Islamic state and the Muslim *ummah* that the first Caliph, Abu Bakr, had no choice but to declare war against them – known as the “Riddah Wars” in the annals of Islamic history.

From this event and the action subsequently taken by the then Caliph, one can easily deduce that apostasy from Islam is not tolerated in any manner. Apostasy from Islam is regarded as an act of treason, a rebellion against the Muslim community and state. M. Hamidullah comments on the Riddah Wars as follows:

“To wage war against apostates is justified on the same principle as that on which the punishment of a solitary apostate is based. The basis of Muslim polity being religious and not ethnological or linguistic, it is not difficult to appreciate the reason for penalizing the act of apostasy, for it constitutes a politico-religious rebellion. The greater the harm of a given rebellion to a polity, the greater is the severity of repression. Every civilization, not the least the modern Western one - both in the communistic and capitalistic manifestations - has provided capital punishment against violating the integrity of what it considers its very *raison d’etre*; and one cannot deny that right to Islam. As an independent organic community, Islam will have the liberty to determine what points should be dearer to it: color of one’s skin, language spoken by its subjects or ideology which animates its existence. As a passing remark, let us recall that the Byzantine law of

⁷ The community of the Muslim faithful.

the epoch of the Prophet also punished with death the apostasy from the Byzantine sect of Christianity.”⁸

Thus, the punishment for apostasy should not be seen as a restriction on ‘freedom of religion’, as some has misguidedly claimed, but a criminal offence which is to be treated as such.

Apostasy is condemned in Qur’an 16:106, as follows:

“As for anyone who denies God after having once attained to faith - and this, to be sure, does not apply to one who does it under duress, while his heart remains true to his faith, but (only to) him who willingly opens up his heart to a denial of the truth:- upon all such (falls) God’s condemnation, and tremendous suffering awaits them.”

The apostate is worse than one who is a rejector of the truth (*kaafir*) in the first place.

“In Islam, contemptuous, irreverent speech or sacrilegious acts, not only about God, but also about the Prophet Muhammad and all other prophets, and the members of these prophets’ households, as well as the holy scriptures, including the Qur’an, and other things that are of a similar religious nature (i.e., which are regarded as sacred) are all acts of blasphemy. Muslims regard blasphemy to be as heinous a crime as apostasy.”⁹

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah (may God have mercy on him) said, when refuting the pantheistic belief of the Baatinis:

“It is well known that the *kaafir* Tatars are better than these (Baatinis), because the latter are apostates from Islam, of the worst type of apostates. The apostate is worse than one who is a *kaafir* in the first place in many aspects.”¹⁰

On the punishment for apostasy, the scholars of Islam are unanimous in their opinion that the punishment is by the death penalty. Imam ash-Shafi’i in his book, “The Ordinances of the Qur’an”¹¹, remarks that:

⁸ M. Hamidullah, *The Muslim Conduct of State* (Lahore, Pakistan: Sheikh Muhammad Ashraf, 1977), p. 6, para. 330

⁹ Muhammad Hamidullah, *Introduction to Islam* (Lahore, Pakistan: Sheikh Muhammad Ashraf, 1974), para. 119

¹⁰ *Majmoo’ al-Fataawa*, 1/193

“If someone becomes a Muslim then apostatizes, he would be asked to repent; if he does not repent, he should be killed.”

Ibn Hazm also says:

“Any of the disbelievers who said, ‘There is no God but God, and Muhammad is the apostle of God’, he became a Muslim obligated to Islamic laws. If he rejected that later on, he would be subject to death. But if he was one of the people of the Book (namely, from the Jews or Christians), in order to become a Muslim, he must say, ‘I have embraced Islam.’ Then he becomes a Muslim obligated to the Islamic laws. If he rejected them, he would be killed.”¹²

However, some of them had offered various opinions on how it is implemented and when it is to be done.¹³ Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah (may God have mercy on him), for example, differentiates between the types of apostasy, as follows:

“Apostasy is of two types: ordinary apostasy and extreme apostasy, for which execution is prescribed. In both cases there is evidence that it is essential to execute the apostate, but the evidence indicating that the sentence of death may be waived if the person repents does not apply to both types of apostasy. Rather the evidence indicates that that is allowed only in the first case – i.e., ordinary apostasy – as will be clear to anyone who studies the evidence that speaks about accepting the repentance of the apostate. In the second type – i.e., extreme apostasy – the obligation to put the apostate to death still stands, and there is no text or scholarly consensus to indicate that the death sentence may be waived. The two cases are quite different and there is no comparison between them. It does not say in the Qur’an or Sunnah, or according to scholarly consensus, that everyone who apostatizes in word or deed may be spared the death sentence if he repents after he is captured and tried. Rather the Qur’an and Sunnah, and scholarly consensus, differentiate between the different kinds of apostates.”¹⁴

¹¹ “The Ordinances of the Qur’an”, part 1, p. 289

¹² *Al-Muhalla*, vol. 4, p. 316

¹³ See Ust. Zaharuddin Bin Ab. Rahman, *Diskusi Hukuman Jenayah Murtad*, 2002 [online article]

¹⁴ *Al-Saarim al-Maslool*, 3/696

Despite this, however, the basic principle behind the punishment of apostasy remains the same. Some so-called “liberal Muslims” have attempted to reject the majority opinion of the scholars, but their claim is not based on the sources of Islam (the Qur’an and Sunnah). Rather, it is mostly based on their liberal understanding of Islam and influenced by the Western interpretation of “human rights”.

1.2 APOSTASY AND THE MALAYSIAN SITUATION

In the past there have been many Malay-Muslims who have taken advantage of the weak Malaysian laws on the issue of apostasy. Two such cases were highlighted in a work written by an extremely biased Christian lawyer¹⁵, namely the cases of **Jeshua Jamaluddin Othman** and **Nor Aishah Bokhari** (both having apostatized to Christianity)¹⁶.

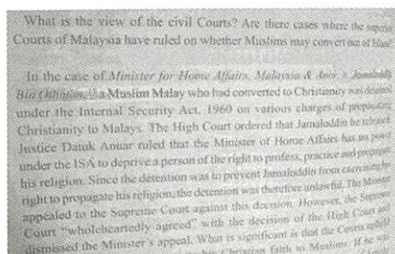


Figure 1 The apostasy of Jamaluddin Othman¹⁷

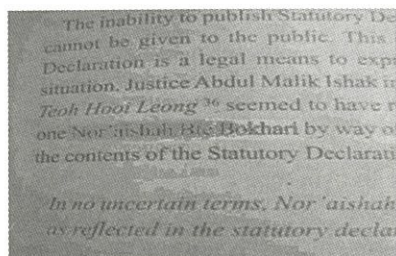


Figure 2 The apostasy of Nor Aishah Bokhari¹⁸

¹⁵ Lee Min Choon, *Freedom of Religion In Malaysia*

¹⁶ On the subject of Christianity, see this author's website on Muslim-Christian dialogue at bismikaallahuma.org.

¹⁷ Lee Min Choon, *op. cit.*, p. 42

¹⁸ *ibid.*, p. 51

It is believed that Jeshua Jamaluddin Othman is currently residing in New Zealand, whereas Nor Aishah Bokhari had ran off with her Christian boyfriend to Thailand.

Several apostates from Malaysia have recently become vocal in several online discussion forums and websites. Most have migrated elsewhere to the West and openly declared their apostasy. Others still remain in the country and conceal their disbelief from their family and relatives. They use the term “pretending Muslim” to describe themselves and their present attitude towards Islam. However the correct Islamic term for their behavior is *munafikeen* (hypocrites).

Ironically, such a situation is happening in a country where its Government recently declared itself as a moderate Muslim nation practicing the tenets of the ‘Islam Hadhari’¹⁹ concept. Considering the facts above, it is imperative that something is needed to be done about the currently lax situation in this country where the malaise of apostasy is concerned. In this regard, the “Faith Protection Bill” which was first tabled and passed by the Perlis State Government in 2001 is a good step towards this direction. An “Apostasy Bill” should be reconsidered for a re-tabling by the parties concerned at a Federal level if they are truly sincere in protecting the *aqeedah* of the Muslims in Malaysia from those who wish to undermine it.

1.3 THE “MALAISE” OF THE UMMAH

The question here that needs to be asked immediately is why are there those who choose to apostatize from this beautiful *deen*²⁰? Why are there individuals who, after living for years in an Islamic society, decided to commit a crime against God and His Apostle?

It is a fact today that the Ummah of Islam stands at the lowest rung in the civilized world. This is not, however, due to Islam, but because Muslims today have abandoned the principles of Islam for the secular methodologies of the West. Faith is irrelevant in the Muslim life today; it has been restricted to a domain of personal affairs of life, marriage and ritual worship.

¹⁹ See Abdul Hadi Awang, *Hadharah Islamiyyah Bukan Islam Hadhari* (Nufair Street, 2005) to note the discrepancies in this concept.

²⁰ The religion of God, of nature and reason.

Due to this abandonment of Islamic principles, Muslims today are not concerned about the faith of the other. Such is the overemphasis on *fard 'al-kifayah* (collective duty) by Muslim nations today, instead of balancing it with *fard 'al-ayn* (necessary duty), that the Muslim ummah is divided against itself. This is observed by Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas who says:

“They [**those leaders**] are content at leaving the Muslims’ basic education in *fard al-`ayn* knowledge at the infantile level while they allow the development of *fard al-kifayah* knowledge to increase tremendously. In this way the amount of secular knowledge increases and develops in the Muslim’s life out of proportion to the religious so that the Muslim spends most of his adult life knowing about the world and less about religion. Thus we have weak Muslims and weak and dangerous leaders whose comprehension and knowledge of Islam is stunted at the level of immaturity; and because of this Islam itself is erroneously made to appear as if ‘undeveloped’ or ‘misdeveloped’ or left to ‘stagnate’.”²¹

Problems such as apostasy within a Muslim society were practically non-existent during the height of the Islamic civilization. This was because almost every lay person in the Muslim world then were educated in, at the very least, the basics of *aqeedah* and *usul ul-fiqh*, not to mention the abundance of Islamic scholars that were held in high-esteem for their knowledge and scientific prowess.

There can be no doubt that the intellectual and methodological decline of the Ummah is the core of the ‘malaise’. Such is the rot that it has already infected the best minds in the Ummah. The educational system in the Muslim world is merely a caricature of the system found in the West, devoid of Islam and deeply secularized. The centuries of decline have also caused a high rate of illiteracy, ignorance and superstition to be widespread amongst Muslims. These evils have caused the contemporary lay person towards blind faith without understanding the importance of religion; to realize that Islam is in fact an

²¹ Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, *Islam and Secularism* (ABIM, 1978), p. 113

integral, beneficial, world-affirming and realistic religion in which practical solutions for the contemporary problems of humanity can be sought and found.²²

1.4 PSYCHOLOGICAL INSECURITY OF THE APOSTATES

Generally, apostates from Islam generate a sense of ‘psychological insecurity’ by putting themselves on a moral pedestal above others. A majority of these apostates are, quite surprisingly, atheist or agnostic. Only a small number of the vocal Muslim apostates are actually Christians.

Taking an example, the individual who identifies herself as “Ex-Muslim Malaysian” (an agnostic today) in her testimony of apostasy from Islam opens the door by stating that:

“...a lot of details are omitted to prevent people finding out who I am, etc. Some individuals and organizations may use my detailed info to hurt me in some way – just because I do not think Islam is right for me.”²³

This is the general theme of nearly all of the apostates’ testimonies on the Internet. I have observed that they usually attempt to “mystify” their origin and give an illusion of being “oppressed” or hunted down in order to emit a sense of horror to their unsuspecting non-Muslim readers, when in actual reality only their family members or closest friends have ostracized them. It is also interesting to note that the apostates have indeed declared “war” upon the Muslim Ummah, as proclaimed in their statement on one of their websites:

“It is extremely important for ex-Muslims to form a community. Ex-Muslims can be powerful active forces who will help in shaking other Muslim’s faith, and ultimately help to abolish Islam.”²⁴

Now note the following “complaint” and compare it with their above proclamation:

²² International Institute of Islamic Thought, *Islamization of Knowledge: General Principles and Work Plan* (IIIT, 1989), pp. 1-4

²³ “Murtad Mama’s” article, *op. cit.*, p. 1

²⁴ Under the heading “Welcome, New Apostate!” at [apostatesofislam](http://apostatesofislam.com) website.

“They are just so insecure about their religion that they have to get rid of people who know the truth about it!”²⁵

We have just witnessed an apostate website declaring “war” on the Muslim *ummah* and the religion they hold dear to their heart. Yet another apostate is claiming that Muslims are “insecure” about their religion! This is typical of anti-Islam rhetoric – blame everyone else around you, but exonerate yourself from the blame! Such empty rhetoric only reflects their insecurity, and there is little need to comment anything further from this.

Their psychological disorder is much evident when we read some of the apostates’ hateful statements on the Internet.

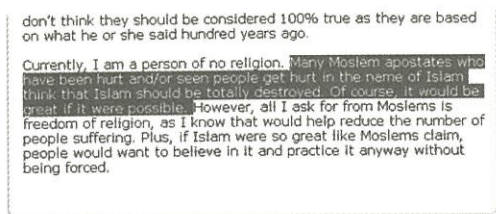


Figure 3 A screenshot of a hateful testimony from an apostate online.

These apostates were originally disillusioned Muslims who found the illusion of Western material thought and its godless philosophy “enticing”. Eventually they became so dissatisfied with the *status quo* of the Muslim Ummah that they decided to break away from it. Most of them migrated to the West and adopted their godless culture. Once they have become godless themselves, these apostates turn against their families, relatives and friends by attacking their former religion, i.e. Islam, for their problems, in the hopes that their efforts would at the very least weaken the faith of the Muslims. Towards this end, these apostates have gained the support of the Christian missionaries, Hindu *kar sevaks* (extremists) and Western atheists or agnostics who were never familiar with Islam in the first place.

²⁵ “Murtad Mama’s” article, *op. cit.*

CHAPTER 2: POSITION OF WOMEN IN THE QUR'AN AND SUNNAH

The apostates touched on the topic of the general treatment of women in Islam and one particular apostate believes that “there is a lot of discrimination against women in Islam”²⁶, which were among the reasons which eventually led her to leave Islam. Another apostate by the name of “Ninetta” (pseudonym) said:

“I found the religion suppressive to my level of intellectual capacity apart from devaluing my existence as a woman.”²⁷

Obviously, the ones who are being “suppressed” intellectually are those who leave the *deen al-fitrah*.²⁸

Before continuing further, it should be noted that the alleged “mistreatment” of women in Islam is nothing new. The Orientalists and the Christian missionaries have been constantly hurling such accusations at Islam in the past. The apostates are simply jumping on the bandwagon of misconceptions built on the past efforts of these avowed enemies of Islam. This author has also refuted a number of allegations regarding the status of women in Islam, of which a collection of articles on this topic are available online.²⁹

2.1 DECEIT OR SINCERE IGNORANCE?

But let us now move on to the specific allegations made by a certain female apostate. According to this apostate, “there is a lot of discrimination against women in Islam”³⁰, and she had learnt about this when she “was in [her] last year in secondary school”³¹ and “had to study about marriage in detail to do

²⁶ “Murtad Mama’s” article, *op. cit.*, p. 2

²⁷ “Ninetta”, [apostatesofislam](http://apostatesofislam.com) website.

²⁸ The religion of God, of nature and reason, of balance and the golden mean.

²⁹ <http://www.bismikaallahuma.org/index.php/articles/category/women-in-islam/>

³⁰ Murtad Mama’s” article, *op. cit.*

³¹ *ibid.*

well”³² for the Islamic Education³³ subject. Then she cites some examples of what she thinks consist of “discrimination towards women” in Islam. To quote her boastful tirade, word-for-word:

“Because I know it so well, I know that there is a lot of discrimination against women in Islam.”

It looks like this apostate does not “know it so well” after all, as we shall soon see.³⁴ What is even more disgusting is how apostates generally resort to blatant untruths like these in order to “dramatize” the situation simply for the sake of validating their apostasy.

2.2 CAN A WOMAN BE MARRIED OFF AGAINST HER WILL?

The apostates like to make the allegation that women in Islam can be married off against their will. To repeat the argument by a particular apostate:

“Things like a father and grandfather can marry a girl/woman to whomever they want without the girl’s/woman’s permission. That is disgusting!”

Let us now address the apostate’s claim that in Islam, women can simply be “married off” without their consent. Regarding the rights of the woman to accept or reject a marriage, Rukaiyah Hill Abdulsalam comments:

“A Muslim woman cannot be forced to marry without her consent. This was practiced only in an age when Muslims were ignorant of their religion. In addition, widowed and divorced women are free to remarry according to their own wishes after their prescribed waiting period.”³⁵

³² *ibid.*

³³ *Pendidikan Islam* is much more accurately translated as “Islamic Studies”, as this is its official name in English as set by the Ministry of Education, Malaysia.

³⁴ *Infra.*

³⁵ Rukaiyah Hill Abdulsalam, *op. cit.*, p. 130

Indeed, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ himself had invalidated a marriage which was done without her knowledge or consent, as recorded in al-Bukhari's hadith collection:

“Narrated Khansa bint Khidam Al-Ansariya: that her father gave her in marriage when she was a matron and she disliked that marriage. So she went to Allah's Apostle and he declared that marriage invalid.”³⁶

Imams Abu Dawud and Ibn Majah also reported that Abdullah ibn Abbas narrated that a virgin girl (i.e. one who did not marry before) came to the Prophet ﷺ and mentioned to him that her father made her marry without her consent and the Prophet ﷺ gave her the choice to either uphold or dissolve that marriage.³⁷

Another Muslim scholar, Fatima Umar Naseef, discusses the issue of the right of women to choose her husband in a whole chapter dedicated to the topic³⁸ and in fact says that:

“Forcing a woman to marry, without her consent, is a violation of Islamic law and transgress the teachings of the Prophet(S) who said: ‘A matron should not be given in marriage except after consulting her; and a virgin should not be given in marriage without taking her permission.’ The People asked, ‘O Allah's Messenger! How can we know her permission?’ He said, ‘Her silence indicates her permission.’”³⁹

It is therefore obvious that Muslim women are not married off without their consent. Hence we are obliged to ask: from where did the apostate gain her warped and distorted information on the matter? It is clear that the apostate in question is simply ignorant of the facts at hand.

³⁶ al-Bukhari, hadith no. 7:69

³⁷ al-Albani's *Sahih Abi Dawud* (2096) and *Sahih Ibn Majah* (1532)

³⁸ Fatima Umar Naseef, *Women in Islam: A Discourse in Rights and Obligations*, IMMA: 1999, p. 89ff (Chapter Seven)

³⁹ *ibid.*, p. 89

2.3 DOES ISLAM SANCTION WIFE-BEATING?

We have successfully addressed the apostate's claims in regard to how Islam does not "permit" women to choose their own marriage. The façade does not end here, however. She continues with:

"A man can beat his wife (after giving her advice and sleeping apart) if she doesn't do whatever he wants her to (Q 4:34) sounds horrible to me too. I am a person that is strongly against corporal punishment on children because of my own personal experience and certainly against women!"⁴⁰

Such a ridiculous interpretation regarding Qur'an 4:34 have already been discussed online.⁴¹ Much of the problem is due to the numerous attempts at an English interpretation of the Qur'an and not one being all that good.

Let us now look at the verse in its context which is often neglected intentionally for the sake of the bigoted polemics. This is how it should be rendered into English based on the Prophet Muhammad's ﷺ own words, how his Companions^(R) understood them, and how the traditional scholars of Islamic Jurisprudence ruled according to these precepts:

"Men are the vigilant custodians of women, because of what Allâh has endowed upon the one over the other, in that they spend from their means. Thus are those women righteous and devout, and protective in absentia over what Allâh has deemed to be secure. As for those from whom you fear insolence, **(first)** edify them, **(second)** abstain from laying together with them, **(lastly)** beat them. However, if they seek reconciliation, do not be hostile against them. Verily, Allâh is the Exalted the Great." (Qur'an, 4:34)

To summarize, the objective of going through the whole process of what has been stipulated in Qur'an 4:34 is the eventual reconciliation of the married

⁴⁰ "Murtad Mama's article", *op. cit.*, p. 3

⁴¹ <http://www.bismikaallahuma.org/index.php/articles/quranic-commentary-on-sura-an-nissa-434/>

couple. The reader is advised to go through the article by Shibli Zaman to understand the full context and interpretation of Qur'an 4:34, and they would immediately realize that:

“One can opportunistically cancel out **[the intended meaning of Qur'an 4:34]** in order to twist the words as they like according to their infinitesimal understanding, but this is a dishonest polemic. If one chooses to say that a verse from the Qur'an has a heinous meaning, in spite of the absolute majority of Muslims not sharing that narrow and twisted understanding, this serves only the facetious desires of that person's own twisted, puny brain.”

2.4 CAN WOMEN BE WITNESSES IN COURT?

But the apostate in question does not seem to learn when to quit, and further says that:

“In addition, I learned things like women couldn't be witnesses in Syariah Courts and things like that.”⁴²

Let us now provide the evidence that the claim of “women couldn't be witnesses in Syariah Courts” is simply not true at all:

“...call in two male witnesses from among you, but if two men cannot be found, then one man **and two women whom you judge fit to act as witnesses**; so that if one errs, the other can remind her...” (emphasis our own)⁴³

So where is the basis for the claim that women cannot act as witnesses in a Shari'ah court? Further it is noted that:

“...in affairs concerning women exclusively such as pregnancy, birth, sexual defect and puberty, the evidence of one woman is enough. The

⁴² “Murtad Mama's article”, *op. cit.*

⁴³ Qur'an, 2:282

evidence given by scholars is the clear text of the verse which refers to economic affairs only and also criminal cases where hudood punishments are involved.”⁴⁴

As for where “...and things like that” is concerned, we shall not at this juncture bother to speculate what the apostate intended to refer to. Suffice to say that if they are willing to go as far as to contradict the correct understanding and interpretation of the issues⁴⁵ they had raised, it certainly remains to be seen as to what other biased or ridiculous understanding they would like to put forth in support of their obvious bias and hatred towards Islam. The question now is not whether the apostate has 1001 evidences (which they simply ‘allude’ to) in order to demonstrate why she cannot accept Islam, but whether they can even sufficiently furnish us with the proof that their polemic are accepted ideas by the majority of Muslims!

It should be noted that it is true that there are some so-called “Islamic” regimes that mistreat their women, but they should not be a reflection of how Islam views women. For a good explanation of the many injustices perpetrated against women under the name of Islam, please refer to this article called “*Islam, Culture and Women*” by Ruqaiyyah Waris Maqsood.⁴⁶ To find out how true Islamic rule treats women, see this article by Dr. Hasan Turabi⁴⁷ on how women were treated in the time of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

Just as the moral corruption in the West is caused by deviation from Christian teachings of morality, these “Islamic” regimes’ oppression of women also stem from the deviation; deviation from Islamic teachings on the rights of women. The fault for moral degradation is not with Christian or Islamic teachings, but with people deviating from them.

⁴⁴ Fatima Umar Naseef, *op. cit.*, p. 139

⁴⁵ *Supra* Chapter 2

⁴⁶ <http://www.islamfortoday.com/ruqaiyyah09.htm>. For other good articles, describing the true status of women in Islam, please read the following: <http://www.islamfortoday.com/womensrightsbadawi.htm>

²³ <http://www.islamfortoday.com/turabi01.htm>

CHAPTER 3: THE HEAD-COVER AND ISSUES RELATED TO IT

Having touched on the position of women in Islam according to the apostates and addressed it, let us now deal with issues related to it as well. Apostates generally make a fuss out of wearing the *tudung*⁴⁸, citing it mainly as a bothersome and an unnecessary exercise. One apostate in particular made the rather silly excuse that the humidity of the weather renders it impossible for the *tudung* to be worn continuously. She says that:

“I hate to wear the veil because it is hot and humid all year long in Malaysia.”⁴⁹

The truth is that at 30 degrees Celsius with periodical heavy rains throughout the year, there is little difficulty in wearing the *tudung* if one actually wants to. In this respect, a Malay proverb “*Kalau hendak seribu daya; tidak hendak seribu dalih*”, which roughly translates to “if one wants something (to be done), there are a thousand ways to obtain it whereas a thousand excuses can be made for something one does not want [to do]” is an apt description of the apostate’s situation. As a matter of fact, there is **no** difficulty at all in wearing the *tudung*, not even when walking under the searing heat of Makkah.



Figure 4: Muslims walking under the searing heat during a ritual of the Hajj

⁴⁸ Malaysian term for the head-cover. Ar. “hijab”

⁴⁹ “Murtad Mama’s” article, *op. cit.*

Certainly, climatic conditions are certainly not a major problem here. Interestingly, we can find apostates who cite the head-cover as the reasons for their apostasy from Islam, yet they reside in countries which climates are certainly much colder than the conditions in Malaysia, namely the United States and Canada. Why do these apostates not remain a Muslim and continue wearing the head-cover then, if climatic conditions are such a big issue for them?

Hence, the apostates' "excuse" to hide their inability to adapt to wearing the veil remains simply just that. The bankruptcy of such a claim is pretty much apparent when we realize that it is certainly not the climate that is an issue here, but the injunction of the wearing of the head-cover itself as recorded in the Noble Qur'ân itself.



Figure 5: A Muslim woman is seen with a child on piggyback along with other women in the city of Makkah

Let us now move on to another allegation of the apostates regarding the head-cover. Having "implied" that wearing the head-cover serves no purpose other than to make the wearer 'uncomfortable', one particular apostate says:

"A factor that contributed towards me leaving Islam is the fact that women HAVE to wear veils (Q 24:31). They claim it is so that men don't look at sexy women, etc. It is to protect the women from men staring at them, etc."

It is interesting to note that the apostate in the very next paragraph then tries to make a "complaint" about being 'sexually aroused' whenever she gazes at the men.

“Well hey, there are Muslim men that turn me on/get me sexually aroused and they don’t have to wear a veil and cover up!”

This is in reality a very cheap cop-out. Perhaps the apostate had not read the Qur’anic verse properly on the matter, when it says:

“...tell the believing women **to reduce some of their vision** and guard their private parts and not display their adornment.”⁵⁰ (emphasis our own)

Further, where the men are concerned, they are also instructed in an earlier verse to “...reduce some of their vision and guard their private parts.”⁵¹ It is also reported in an authentic hadith that the Prophet Muhammad once said that for a man to glance once at a woman is excused, but to stare at her for a second time is a sin.⁵² This is thus the guideline of modesty that Islam exhorts all believing men and women to practice in their daily lives.

Let us demonstrate how silly the above “logic” by the apostate really is. Suppose I was driving one day on the road and required to stop at the traffic light when it turns red. Yet I decided to simply drive on past the traffic light without stopping. At the same time, a policeman saw me beating the red traffic light and flagged me to stop and tried to hand me a ticket for this traffic crime.

Now imagine how it would be if I were to give the following sequence of “logic” to not stop at the traffic light when it turns red:

- (a) I do not like to stop at the traffic light when it turns red
- (b) Well, hey, I saw several people beating the traffic light when it turns red in the past, and they didn’t get a speeding ticket!
- (c) Conclusion: **I don’t have to stop at the traffic light when it turns red.**

⁵⁰ Qur’an, 24:31

⁵¹ Qur’an 24:30

⁵² Reported in *Sahih Muslim*, hadith no 3960; also contained in *Sahih Bukhari*, no 2285

Dear readers, will the policeman give me that ticket any way, or will he be swayed by this kind of “logic”? Not only is this a circular argument, it is also projecting blame upon others who similarly have no respect for the law!

Indeed, if we were to follow the “logic” of the apostates, this is how things will be in the real world and everyone would be able to do anything they want without obeying the law. In the same way, we are expected to follow God’s Law when it presents itself and not simply refuse to obey just because one “dislikes” it.

CHAPTER 4: “VISUAL STIMULI”: THE SCIENCE BEHIND THE HEAD-COVER

Now we address the next problem: why are women required to cover themselves but the men are simply required to “...*reduce their vision*” as instructed by the Qur’an? Modern sociology, psychology and behaviorist studies have concluded that, unlike women who are not so easily stimulated, men are sexually stimulated primarily by visual stimuli. This immediately explains why men are much more gratified by pornographic material as compared to women. It is in fact true to say that the whole pornographic industry is male-dominated, namely, men produce it for men. Muslim women have been instructed to always remain modest and chaste to ensure their protection and dignity for the past 1400 years, and therefore it is interesting that modern-day psychologists are now “discovering” the power of visual sexual stimuli for men and advising women to dress appropriately to avoid “possible problems”.⁵³



Figure 6 Women wearing the head-cover inhibits visual sexual stimuli in men

Let us now discuss the scientific aspect with regard to “visual sexual stimuli” and its impact on men. In October 2001, the results of a study conducted by a team of psychologists were published.⁵⁴ The team had the brains of fourteen male subjects scanned as the subjects were viewing pictures of erotic and non-erotic nature. The conclusion reached was that:

⁵³ Rukaiyah Hill Abdulsalam, *Women's Ideal Liberation: Islamic Versus Western Understanding*, Abul-Qasim Publishing House: 1998, p. 67

⁵⁴ http://www.emory.edu/EMORY_REPORT/erarchive/2001/October/erOct.22/10_22_01sexstimuli.html

“The non-arousing pictures were blurred versions of the arousing pictures, creating images that were no longer stimulating but similar to the arousing pictures in other ways. Thus, according to the researchers, brain activation present when subjects viewed the arousing stimuli—and not present when subjects viewed the non-arousing stimuli—can be attributed to the sexual nature of the pictures.”⁵⁵

A recent Reuters report states the results of an experiment where the brains of 13 women and 11 men were scanned as they were brought to orgasm. The researchers of that experiment told a fertility conference today that when the women were experiencing a genuine humdinger of an orgasm, areas of the brain governing fear and emotion, such as the cortex, were deactivated. However, when the women faked orgasm, those areas stayed alert.⁵⁶ The results were different for men and were less conclusive, with those areas linked to emotion and fear showing less de-activation during orgasm, while other areas showed more stimulation. This observation is very important as it can be deduced from this that the function of the brain with regard to sexual stimuli in women is different from men, in the sense that brain activity does not play any role for women whereas men depend a lot on brain activity to be aroused sexually.

More can be noted about the psychological make-up of men, but we believe that our main point, namely men are much more easily aroused by visual sexual stimuli as compared to women, is proven without a shadow of doubt. This is because of the prefrontal cortex of the male brain, which slightly differs from the female brain.

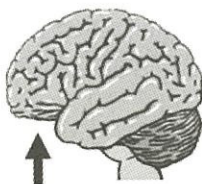


Figure 7: The prefrontal cortex of the brain (indicated by the arrow)

⁵⁵ *ibid.*

⁵⁶ “Scientists see women’s brain switched off during sex” [http://www.theregister.co.uk/2005/06/20/o_research/], 20 June 2005.

Apostates usually attempt to implicate the Qur'an for treating women shabbily. Now it is clear that the Qur'an casts the responsibility on both men and women for maintaining their modesty. If the apostates have a problem with "reducing some of their vision" when gazing at the opposite sex, then it is not anyone's problem but their own. We seriously believe that all apostates in general need a psychological check-up in order to fully comprehend the full impact of the Qur'anic verses we have cited above.

Interestingly, while the apostate wastes everyone's time by complaining incessantly about the so-called "insignificance" of donning the *tudung*, a Western author has concluded otherwise regarding the Islamic requirement for women.

"Western culture has a roving eye. Male sex is hunting and scanning: boys hang yelping from honking cars, acting like jerks over strolling girls; men lunching on girders go through the primitive book of wolf whistles and animal clucks. Everywhere the beautiful woman is scrutinized and harassed. She is the ultimate symbol of human desire. The feminine is that-which-is-sought; it recedes beyond our grasp. Hence, there is always a feminine element in the beautiful young man of male homosexuality. The feminine is ever-elusive, a silver shimmer on the horizon... **Islam is wise to drape women in black, for the eye is the avenue of Eros...**" (emphasis our own)⁵⁷

It is hence not only surprising, but also pleasing to see that a non-Muslim has recognized a very important principle that addresses the differences between men and women. She in fact concludes that the draping of women in Islam "is wise...for the eye is the avenue of Eros", meaning eroticism or sexual desire but not necessarily love.

⁵⁷ Camille Paglia, Sexual Aggression and Nature, *"Sexual Harassment-Confrontations and Decisions"*, p. 119

CHAPTER 5: WHEN APOSTATES BECOME SHAYKHS

5.1 THE ISSUE OF ISLAM AND TERRORISM

It is unfortunate that Islam has always been portrayed negatively as the “religion of the sword” in the West, despite the fact that there are over 1 billion Muslims living in both the U.S. and Europe. Since the unfortunate event of 9/11 attacks in 2001⁵⁸ on the World Trade Centre in New York and the Tube bombings in London (7/7)⁵⁹ in 2005, the enemies of Islam rejoice in yet another event with which to debase the Muslim Ummah. It does not matter at all to them that Muslim organizations around the world condemn this terrorist attack as being against the fundamental principles of Islam itself. It is simply another “proof” to them that Islam teaches violence. Never mind the fact that the Prophet Muhammad himself explicitly forbids the killing of innocent civilians, women and children. He also encourages Muslims to forgive the Jews and Christians if they have committed injustices against Muslims.⁶⁰ The famous Egyptian poet, Ahmad Shawqi, puts it best when he said:

*War for returning rights is your law;
for medicine is derived from most deadly poisons.*

Certainly, indiscriminate killing is unjustified in Islam. How could there be any, in the light of the following verse:

“He who has killed one innocent soul, it is as if he has killed all humanity. And he who has saved one soul, is as if he has saved all humanity” (Qur’an, 5:32)

⁵⁸ The Council on American – Islamic Relations (CAIR) had issued a document on behalf of American Muslims condemning the September 11 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center. This document is available online (<http://www.cair-net.org/html/911statements.html>).

⁵⁹ A revert to Islam, Muhammad Ridha Payne, has recently established a site called “Not In The Name of Peace!” (<http://www.notinthenameofpeace.com>), which is a collection of articles, photos and poetry from Muslims around the world, to denounce the London bombings.

⁶⁰ c.f. Qur’an 2:109, 3:159, 5:8.

We wonder how the Muslim extremists behind the attacks will be able to reconcile their actions with the noble verse above.

The apostates, predictably, are no different in promoting this stigmatization of Muslims, whether consciously or otherwise. One apostate stated the following in his “testimony” in leaving Islam:

“I cannot agree with a violent religion that claims to have a ‘most merciful’ god. I am now personally an Atheist and i now see the world in a whole new different better way.”⁶¹

More of such similar attempts we shall see in the following paragraphs, insha’allah.

5.2 UNDERSTANDING THE CONCEPT OF WAR

Despite the advancement of modern communications and technologies such as the Internet, the Western public is still in the dark about what Islam really teaches about warfare. It must however be noted that a proper use of force can usually take place within a system of law which is enforced by a legitimate authority. Wars and violence are often the result of a lack of existence of such a system of law and a legitimate authority to enforce it.

Our apostate in question, however, takes advantage of this confusion and decided to take issue with the following verses from the Noble Qur’an:

“all this fighting the non-believers (Q 9: 29, Q 9:123), keeping captives (slaves) and having sex with them (Q 4:3), etc.”

Such allegations are not surprising, considering the influence of Islamophobia and the perspective of moral chauvinism, which inhibits the apostates’ mental cognizance to function properly in comprehending the above verses and its related contexts.

Let us look at the examples the apostate had supplied. In understanding these verses, it should be noted that where the issue of “fighting the non-believers”

⁶¹ “Fadhail”, taken from “[apostatesofislam](#) website.

is concerned, they generally deal with specific contexts of war.⁶² Regarding the permission for Muslims to wage *jihad*⁶³, Sheikh Sami al-Majid says that:

“The answer to this is that *jihad* in Islamic Law can be waged for a number of reasons, but compelling people to accept Islam is simply not one of them. The reason why *jihad* was first permitted in Islam was so the Muslims could defend themselves against persecution and expulsion from their homes.”⁶⁴

Hence just because Islam allows for Muslims to fight in self-defense, it does not automatically mean that Muslims should be continuously fighting or waging a battle with those who do not accept Islam as their religion but are on good terms with the Muslims. It should be noted that such an application does not apply to the apostates, as they are to be dealt with separately and are distinct from non-Muslims.

Ironically, such polemic is not uncommon amongst the enemies of Islam. A Christian missionary website made the following statement:

“Thus, *jihad* and *qital* can barely be distinguished, since the means (swords) and the goal (submission or death) of fighting are the same in both verses.”⁶⁵

Jihad can barely be distinguished from *qital* (battle or actual fighting)? If this claim of the Christian missionaries and apostates alike is correct, then the following hadith must ordain on Muslims to fight by conducting a suicide mission against their own selves or by choking themselves to death:

“The mujahid is he who performs Jihad against his own self.”⁶⁶

⁶² For example, Sura’ at-Taubah (the 9th chapter of the Qur’an), which deal with the polytheists of Makkah after the time to punish them for their treacherous behaviour presented itself.

⁶³ Often mistranslated as “holy war” by Western Orientalists and media, *jihad* is actually a cognate from *jahada*, which essentially means “struggle”.

⁶⁴ “Let There Be No Compulsion in Religion”, [english.islamtoday.net](http://www.islamtoday.net/english/showme2003_special.cfm?cat_id=29&sub_cat_id=607) [available online at http://www.islamtoday.net/english/showme2003_special.cfm?cat_id=29&sub_cat_id=607]

⁶⁵ <http://www.answer-is-lam.org/Authors/Arlandson/sword.htm>

It is true that Islam allows warfare, but it is only to be executed when:

- (1) Muslims are suffering persecution simply because of their practice of the faith,
- (2) When people are oppressed and silenced in the pursuit of freedom, and
- (3) When people's land are forcibly taken away from them.

While Islam does not encourage war, it certainly does nothing to promote it either, even despite its various calls for retaliation if Muslims were to be attacked.

Islam never views waging war as being "holy" but only as a necessary tool in order to achieve peace. It is indeed unholy to instigate violence, but that does not mean that any and all acts of warfare are wrong. There are violence which are senseless and not right at all, and there are violence which is unavoidable and justifiable. By defining the uses and limits of warfare as we can see in the verses from the Qur'an and the Prophetic tradition above, Islam is clearly against the former but allows the latter only in certain and limited cases.

5.3 KEEPING CAPTIVES AND SLAVERY IN ISLAM

As for where keeping captives and the institution of slavery are concerned, it should be noted that Islam never started this social system. Islam was not the only social and spiritual order that had 'legalized' slavery, as other nations and religions such as the Greeks, Judaism and Christianity have practiced it before Islam. This institution was a system upon which the economic conditions of many nations during the early days of Islam were dependent. One needs to only read a recognized textbook of Sociology to find this. Hence:

"...it was not wise for any reformer to abolish it [slavery] all at once and by one stroke; otherwise it would be strongly opposed and disobeyed. The wise and effective course, was, therefore, to somehow

⁶⁶ For example, Sura' at-Taubah (the 9th chapter of the Qur'an), which deal with the polytheists of Makkah after the time to punish them for their treacherous behaviour presented itself.

recognize it and to limit its resources on the one hand and to open wide the gates through which the slaves can escape from their bondages, on the other hand. That was the course which the religion of Islam has, wisely, taken.”⁶⁷

It is therefore correct to say that while Islam indirectly recognizes the institution of slavery, it has always been its goal the eventual abolishment of this institution.

Suffice to say that if the apostates had indeed bothered to check out an authoritative translation and commentary of the Qur’an; or at the very least visited authentic Islamic websites that give the proper information; and the works that discusses the issues they raised, instead of relying on the pre-conceived, second-handed information which they glean from Islamophobia rhetoric, there would be no need for us to educate them in matters concerning the correct interpretation of the verses stated above.

⁶⁷ A.D. Ajijola, *op, cit.*, p. 45

CHAPTER 6: A TIRADE OF ANTI-ISLAM POLEMIC

6.1 REFERENCE TO POLEMICAL WEBSITES

It is clear that where the apostates are concerned, they had been considerably influenced by anti-Islam rhetoric popularized on the World Wide Web. This can easily be postulated from what one apostate said as follows:

“After reading the Faith Freedom International and ISIS website and confirming it by reading a translation of the Koran in English (translated by a Muslim!) and other translations online, **I realized that there is more crap in the Koran than I have thought...**”⁶⁸ (bolded emphases are our own)

The apostate unabashedly decides to insult the religion of at least 1.3 billion people in the world by referring to their Holy Book as “crap” (a highly insensitive statement) and expects no reaction from them. So what if the translation obtained by the apostate was translated by a Muslim? Such behavior should not be surprising, considering the influence of Islamophobia that inhibits an apostate’s mental cognizance in comprehending the Qur’an and the projection of their own problems upon it.

As for the websites the apostate had recommended, it needs to be noted that there are various other Islamic websites which deal with the issues that had been raised in these Islamophobic⁶⁹ websites. Some of them are listed as follows:

Σ <http://www.bismikaallahuma.org>

Σ <http://www.islamic-awareness.org>

Σ <http://www.noorullah.org>

Σ <http://www.backtoislam.com>

⁶⁸ “Murtad Mama’s” article, *op. cit.*, p. 3

⁶⁹ Irrational fear or hatred for Islam. See Wikipedia entry on “Islamophobia” (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Islamophobia>)

Σ <http://www.mereislam.info>

Σ <http://www.bukanliberal.org>

Truly, if the apostates were actually sincere, they could have researched these websites and many more through search engines such as Google⁷⁰ and various others.

6.2 INSECURITY AND PROJECTION OF OWN PROBLEMS

But the apostates' relentless tirade does not end here. They still see it fit to project their disdain towards Islam by blaming their psychological insecurity upon their former co-religionists. For example, one such apostate says that:

“My “husband” said that they know their religion is nonsense. So, anyone who tries to reveal this is somehow “changed” or killed to avoid more people knowing that it is nonsense.”

Yes, and we know of a man who was bitten by a genetically-modified spider by the name of Peter Parker a.k.a. Spider-Man who tried to stop a looney who calls himself ‘The Green Goblin’ from taking over the world. If this sounds ridiculous to the reader, then try pondering upon the rather pointless anecdote above.

Is it not impossible to note that this is simply a case of the pot calling the kettle black? It is an elusive anecdote that proves nothing except that her “husband” is as ignorant as she is. Has the apostate actually bothered to demonstrate that Muslims generally “know that their religion is nonsense” or at the very least tried to show evidence that conclusively leads to the summation that Muslims habitually “change” or “kill” people in order to “avoid more people knowing that it is nonsense”? As anyone can see, the apostate has not. This is because

⁷⁰ <http://www.google.com>

the apostate very well knows that the rhetoric stinks of the very same anti-Islam tirade that Muslims have been stigmatized with and had vocally denounced for years.⁷¹

6.3 MANIPULATION OF HADITH EXEGESIS

After turning away from the Qur'an, the apostate attempts to attack the hadith collections. The apostate says:

“Even the Hadiths have a lot of inhumane stuff and I don’t think they should be considered 100% true as they are based on what he or she said hundred years ago.”⁷²

Although the apostate had not offered us some examples of these so-called “inhumane stuff” in the hadith collections, we do have a basic idea of what the apostate meant and we attempt to answer the objections to some examples of these hadith as follows. This is by no means an exhaustive list and we have only given several examples which we have shortlisted for the sake of brevity.

6.3.1 Is it illegal for Muslims to sell dogs?

The apostates quote a hadith as follows:

Bukhari, Volume 3, Book 34, Number 299:

“Narrated ‘Aun bin Abu Juhaifa: My father bought a slave who practiced the profession of cupping. (My father broke the slave’s instruments of cupping). I asked my father why he had done so. He replied, “The Prophet forbade the acceptance of the price of a dog or blood, and also forbade the profession of tattooing, getting tattooed and receiving or giving Riba, (usury), and cursed the picture-makers.”

Claim: The apostates objected to this hadith by categorizing it as containing a “High Level of Nonsense”.

⁷¹ See for example Fred Halliday, “Islam in the West: The Causes of Prejudice”, interview by Abdullah Humouda, *Arab News*, June 22, 1995, p. 11

⁷² “Murtad Mama’s” article, *op. cit.*

Refutation: The apostates have not given a reasonable explanation as to why they believe this hadith is regarded as “high level of nonsense” when it is clear that Islam discourages the keeping of dogs as pets and this hadith is in line with what Islam has taught all along. The Prophet forbade the sale of dogs by Muslims in order to realize this discouragement. Indeed, the onus is upon the apostates to inform us what criteria did they use to show that this hadith is “nonsense”. The fact that they have failed to do so is evidence that they themselves are not aware of Islam’s discouragement of keeping dogs as pets and are themselves filled with “nonsense”!

6.3.2 Were monkeys really punished for adultery?

Another hadith was brought under the scrutiny of the apostates:

Bukhari, Volume 5, Book 58, Number 188:

Narrated ‘Amru bin Maimun: “During the pre-Islamic period of ignorance I saw a she-monkey surrounded by a number of monkeys. They were all stoning it, because it had committed illegal sexual intercourse. I too, stoned it along with them.”

Claim: The apostates objected to the above hadith by saying as follows:

“Since when did monkeys start getting married? Was Mushmmad[sic] really so insane that he participated in stoning a monkey for adultery?”

Refutation: On closer scrutiny of the above-recorded hadith, anyone proficient in the sciences of the hadith (*ulum al-hadith*) would immediately see the fallacy of such a claim when the *matn* (text) and *isnad* (chain of transmission) of the hadith is studied. Firstly, the person who uttered the above words was not the Prophet Muhammad himself, **but by one of his Companions** by name of ‘Amru bin Maimun^(R). The hadith is categorized as *mauquf* (lit. “stopped”), meaning that it is a saying traced to that of a Companion^(R). Therefore, since it is clear that this hadith is **not** a saying of the Prophet, much less ascribed to him, it cannot be a basis for a ruling in Islam.

The points we have made should make it clear that ‘Amru bin Maimun was relating his thinking or perception **prior** to the advent of Islam – namely, how he had foolishly believed that even monkeys had committed adultery! It happened during a period whereby the pre-Islamic Arabs would indulge in the most detestable acts such as burying their daughters alive and doing the *tawaf* while they were naked. Thus this means that Islam has elevated the status of mankind by making them more rational and mindful of their actions, a conclusion that the apostates would certainly not like to admit.

6.3.3 Muslim cannot inherit from non-Muslims

We provide a third example of how the apostates misuse the hadith.

Muslim, Book 011, Number 3928:

Usama b. Zaid reported Allah’s Messenger (may peace be upon him) as saying: “A Muslim is not entitled to inherit from a non-Muslim, and a non-Muslim is not entitled to inherit from a Muslim.”

Claim: The apostates object to this hadith by saying that it contains a “Medium Level of Nonsense”.

Refutation: Considering the godless ethic which the apostates who turn either agnostic or atheistic are prone to adopt, it is of no surprise that they see all religions in contempt and since Islam was the religion they were brought up with, they exhibit extreme hostility towards it. That is why they fail to see that each religion is governed by their own laws for its believers, and Islam is no exception. As Islam is a way of life with its own code of ethics and morality, it is of course only natural that Islam adopts guidelines in terms of inheritance, which is called *faraid* in Islamic jurisprudence terms. The same is noted in other religions such as Judaism and Christianity. Surely the apostates do not expect those of other faiths to inherit their wealth to others that do not belong to their faith? As the hadith above clearly highlights, it is not possible for a Muslim to inherit wealth from a non-Muslim and likewise a non-Muslim is not entitled to inherit from a Muslim. It is deception for the apostates to highlight the first part but fail to highlight the other!

Hence we have shown some of the typical polemic which the apostates are prone to when attacking the hadith. It should be noted that the apostates simply pick the hadith can be interpreted in the bias of what they intended to draw a crude caricature of a remote, backward and ugly Islam, when in reality this is not so. Other hadith traditions which the enemies of Islam have polemicised and which we have responded to can be viewed online.⁷³

6.4 MISCELLANEOUS

It is sometimes claimed by those who have an axe to grind against Islam that the religion is merely a 'cult'. The implications of this allegation would reduce Muslims to the status of mere 'cultic' followers and not as adherents of one of the world's major religions. Our response to such claims is to appeal to Max Weber's "Sociology of Religion", whereby a cult is defined as "a religiously specialized subgroup within a society, a 'sect' or a church."⁷⁴ This definition in itself refutes the allegations of those who reduce the status of Islam to merely a "cult".

Furthermore, it is stated in *The Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English* that the word "religion" is defined as "belief in the existence of a supernatural ruling power, the creator and controller of the universe, who has given to man a spiritual nature which continues to exist after the death of the body."⁷⁵ This clearly befits Islam's doctrines and eschatology which upholds the doctrine of *al-tawheed* as its main principle.

Some apostates also allege that because of the hadith mentioning that Muslims will be divided into various groups, which is a reason for leaving Islam anyway. However they fail to understand that there is the concept of *al-walaa 'wal bara*⁷⁶. Muslims have in the past understood that there can be differences between groups of Muslims. They have learnt to be tolerant with the differencing *fiqh*

⁷² <http://www.bismikaallahuma.org/index.php/articles/category/hadith/hadith-exegesis>

⁷³ Max Weber, *Sociology of Religion*, p. xxxvii

⁷⁴ *The Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English* (2nd Edition, Oxford, 1968), p. 828

⁷⁵ Enjoining the common good and forsaking differences.

disputes through this concept. So frankly it does not really matter if there are “70 sects⁷⁷ within the OIC”, as the majority of Muslim nations are Sunni with the exception of Iran.⁷⁸

⁷⁷ We have personally never heard of “70 sects” within the Organization of Islamic Conference as some of these apostates claim. Had they ever conducted a proper study or published the results of a research that conclusively proves that Muslims “within the OIC” had been numerically split into “70 sects”? We await the apostates’ answer on the matter!

The closest we can relate to this allegation of the apostates is their confusion regarding a Prophetic tradition which says that Muslims would be split into “73 sects” (a figurative number denoting the various divisions between Muslims, and not to be taken literally). A proper exegesis of this tradition can be noted online [http://islamtoday.net/english/showme2002.cfm?cat_id=30&sub_cat_id=599]. Suffice to say that we believe that the apostates had obviously confused the literal meaning of this tradition (which **does not** necessarily “exclude” one “sect” from the other) with the state of the Muslim *ummah* today. See also Isma’il Raji Al-Faruqi, *Al-Tawhid: Its Implications for Thought and Life*, IIIT: 1992, pp. 153-154

⁷⁸ It should be noted that the Shi’ites consist of less than 10% of the total 1.3 billion Muslims around the world, the overwhelming majority being the Muslims adhering to the *fiqh* (jurisprudence) of the Sunni schools of thought.

CHAPTER 7: WHAT DO THEY *REALLY* KNOW ABOUT ISLAM?

We are beginning to see how the apostates obviously have a *mala fide* intent, but this certainly does not constitute a strong *prima facie* case for their apostasy. We also wonder exactly to what extent the apostates actually *know* about the religion they claims to follow in their early days. Here we shall address some simplistic notions that they claim invalidates Islam.

7.1 IRRATIONALITY IN ISLAM?

One particular apostate begins by stating:

“I recall one day (probably when I was about 11 yrs old) the Koran teacher was telling me we should believe in Allah, the prophets, the 4 books, etc. I asked him whether we only have to “believe” in them without knowing if they exist? “Yes” he responded, “we must believe in them without knowing if they exist”.”

An anecdote that does not prove anything, considering the young age the apostate was when this incident happened. Perhaps the religious teacher in question was merely trying to simplify things for the apostate without going into details. However, the absence of evidence is not evidence. The apostate is apparently making the assumption that since God and His angels cannot be seen through human perception, the only “logical” conclusion is that they don’t exist. It is this assumption which is actually “irrational” in the logical sense, for it is not beyond human science to accept that there are things which cannot be perceived in a material form (such as light, for example).

It should be noted that faith in the Islamic sense has always been understood as faith with a moral and intellectual basis. A.D. Ajijola says:

“...faith in the Islamic sense is not a mere intellectual assent to a certain dogma or a subjective emotional response to a great personality but a volitional and dynamic reaction to belief in one God who stands for a great moral ideal of the highest perfection and the Hereafter, a belief which fully assimilates both intellectual and emotional responses. It is at once an affirmation of a truth and surrender to the truth affirmed. Apart from the first, it would be blind; apart from the second, it would be of no political significance.”⁷⁹

Hence the Islamic faith is totally rational in its essence. So much for ‘implications’ which the apostate had wanted us to accept.

7.2 ISLAM’S POSITION TOWARDS NON-MUSLIMS

Now we move on to the next allegation of the apostate regarding Islam’s position towards non-Muslims. The apostate claims:

“In all schools, the teachers used to teach us that all non-Muslims (kafirs) are going to hell (Q 48:13).”

Ironically, the apostate’s parents are right. No one is god to judge who shall taste the punishment of the Fire or otherwise. Then again, the apostate’s “alleged” teachers (assuming this anecdote is true) are not totally incorrect either, because it is indeed true that the *kaafir* (lit. “one who rejects the truth”) will be punished in Hell. Who are the *kaafir*, however? We do not know, unless their actions are clearly against the truth of Islam. Are all non-Muslims *kaafir*? The answer is maybe and maybe not. Are all of the non-Muslims damned and will go to Hell? Again the answer is maybe and maybe not. But are actions such as the worship of multiple gods, disbelief in a Creator God, inciting hatred towards Islam and Muslims, etc. the characteristics of the *kaafir*? The answer is yes, definitely.

⁷⁹ A.D. Ajijola, *The Essence of Faith in Islam*, Islamic Publications Ltd, Lahore: 1978, p. 17

This is a matter of personal belief or disbelief. It is all up to the individual to choose for oneself. God Almighty said in the Qur'an that there is no compulsion in religion⁸⁰. But on the other hand, God has given us the free choice to choose from what we have before our own eyes. Once that choice is made, then everyone is justly rewarded or punished by God. Hence it is incorrect to say that a non-Muslim is synonymous with being a *kaafir*, as the apostate alleges.

It should be noted despite the underlying differences between a believing Muslim and the *kufaar*, the Heaven vs. Hell doctrine, etc., Islam does accept the fact that there would be Muslims who would be punished for their sins in the Fire. However, this is merely a temporary abode for them, while the punishment for the *kufaar* is continuous and eternal.

This situation does not influence this author's decision about Islam, or instill any doubts as to its truth, as the author is convinced that the Islamic concept of *tawheed* is what Islam is really all about.

"In the teachings of Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allâh be upon him), faith in One God is the most important and fundamental principle. It is the bedrock of Islam, and the mainspring of its power. All other beliefs, commands and laws of Islam, stand firm on this very foundation; all receive strength from this source. Take it away, and there is nothing left in Islam."⁸¹

This basically summarizes the teaching of Islam. Suffice to say that even if the apostate had never met a single Muslim with a pleasant attitude, it does not mean that a Muslim with a pleasant attitude had never existed or that those individuals whose attitudes stink to the highest heavens and yet claim to be Muslims are practicing Muslims in the fullest sense of the word. Nor does this mean that the apostate cannot befriend non-Muslims and count them as among the apostate's dearest friends, and yet retain Islam and its practices as a way of life.

However, our apostate still decides to reduce the matter to a child's logic and says:

⁸⁰ Qur'an, 2:256

⁸¹ A.D. Ajijola, *ibid.*, p. 55

“Why is it that good people go to hell and bad ones go to heaven? Just because of what religion they follow? Not everyone is given the same chance to learn Islam. I realized my true friends in secondary school were never Muslim.”⁸²

Now we begin to see the contradiction. On what basis does the apostate had judged that all the apostate’s non-Muslim friends are categorically the “good people” and the hated Muslim friends are the “bad ones”? We are, of course, not asserting that non-Muslims are “bad” or that they “deserve to go to hell”. But this type of simplistic rationalization makes us wonder whether the apostate had already formed a pre-conceived bias regarding Muslims, and subsequently Islam in general, despite what the apostate says to the contrary.

⁸² Murtad Mama’s” article, *op. cit.*

CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSIONS

In the previous chapters we have attempted to analyze the dominant ideas that form the basis of the apostates' rejection of Islam and their contempt for Islamic ethics. We have also discussed the common polemics and objections often raised by the apostates by reviewing several apostates' testimony found on the Internet as well as on several online discussion forums. To briefly recap, we have noted that:

- (a) The apostates speak about the so-called "difficulty" in the practice of Islamic ethics, particularly the wearing of the head-cover; of which we have previously addressed.
- (b) The apostates touch on the so-called "problems" with the Islamic treatment of women. This has been sufficiently dealt with and most of their assertions regarding the status of women in Islam were proven false and untrue.
- (c) They confuse basic Islamic understanding with what they "think" is correct for them, but which does not necessarily mean that it is so.
- (d) They resort to anti-Islam polemics that are being constantly rehashed *ad infinitum*, and there are various Muslim websites that specifically answers their allegations.

Hence we have shown that, in essence, the apostates' rejection of Islam is not due to any rational or convincing reason, but merely on the basis of their personal emotionalism and external influences from the baseless propaganda circulated and disseminated by some websites over the Internet which has no other purpose other than to direct all hatred and discrimination towards Muslims in general.

Truly, Muslims obey the Almighty God, and only He is our Guide. He instructed His will through the Messenger of God, Muhammad ﷺ and we hear and obey him ﷺ as well. This is the true quality of a Muslim, insha'allah.

It basically all boils down to the conclusion that some of the reasons for the apostates' misconceptions are due to the fact that:

1. They have not fully comprehended Islam, despite claiming to have religious education in the matter.
2. They have a tendency to not separate the teachings of Islam from the words and actions of a few who identify themselves as Muslims.
3. They are too impressed by (and embrace) the propaganda that is currently being conducted against Islam.
4. They do not examine the socio-economic and political factors.

It should be noted that the above observations are equally true for a majority of the apostates from Islam in general. That their view of Islam has been tainted by deep ignorance, hatred, paranoia and xenophobia is no big secret, and the polemics parroted by apostates in general is, *ipso facto*, a confirmation of their current condition.

And only God Almighty knows best.

APPENDIX: LETTERS TO MALAYSIAKINI

First Letter

Have zero tolerance for apostasy⁸³

Mohd Elfie Nieshaem Juferi

Dec 8, 04 1:40pm

I refer to the letter⁸⁴ "Apostates angry with Islam or government?"

I, for one, am aware of the website that Shairul Fazleena is referring to. Although she asserts that she is not endorsing the apostates' cause, let us state here very clearly that her suggestion that the Malaysian government should 'review' their policy with regard to apostates is tantamount to mocking the *deen* itself.

It is without a doubt that apostasy is a very serious offence in Islam, and there are no 'ifs' and 'buts' about it. However, individuals like Shairul are from the flock of 'liberal Muslims' who prefer to abandon the Qur'an and Sunnah injunction with regard to apostates in favour of their 'values' from the West concerning freedom of religion.

True, Islam does espouse the freedom of religion (Qur'an, 2:256). Freedom of religion, however, is not to be confused with freedom to simply leave the religion and put the Muslim Ummah in jeopardy.

Let's put it this way. Singapore is not Malaysia. If Muslims in Singapore want to tolerate apostasy at their whim and fancy, it is their business. That they are so far apart from the practice of Islam speaks for itself.

Shairul's whimsical fancies about Islamic laws not being 'relevant' anymore in this day and age are a sign of how the liberal Muslims think. And just because

⁸³ <http://www.malaysiakini.com/letters/31978>

⁸⁴ <http://www.malaysiakini.com/letters/31819>

there is no implementation of these laws is not an excuse to do away with them in totality. They claim that they accept the Qur'an as a Divine Book and yet they attempt to insult its laws at every juncture. It certainly sounds very hypocritical to me.

As a Muslim living and residing in Malaysia and one who believe in the implementation of Islamic values as a way of life, legitimizing apostasy would be detrimental to the Islamic values as practiced by Muslims in Malaysia.

There should be zero tolerance to apostates and apostasy from Islam, and this should remain the official policy of the government of Malaysia.

Second Letter

Apostasy: the Prophet has spoken ...⁸⁵

Mohd Elfie Nieshaem Juferi

Dec 17, 04 3:39pm

It is with great interest that I read the flurry of responses to my letter entitled "Have zero tolerance for apostasy".

Most of the respondents accuse me of being 'hypocritical', 'arrogant' and other accusations which are clearly a classical case of '*argumentum ad hominem*'. Some even went to the extent of documenting a clash of 'liberal vs radical Islam' which is not the issue I addressed in my letter.

I am even more shocked that a learned scholar such as Dr Syed Alwi Ahmad in his letter could hold such a 'liberalised' form of Islam which is tantamount to mocking the Prophet's (P) declared initiative: '*Man badhla ha deenahu faqthuluhu*' (Whoever changes his religion, kill him). Hence, I stand firm in my conviction that 'liberal Islam' is a concoction of Western liberalism and cannot be defined as Islam.

⁸⁵ <http://www.malaysiakini.com/letters/32247>

Kindly allow me to quote Dr M. Hamidullah who in his book Introduction to Islam writes the following:

'The Islamic law expressly recognizes for non-Muslims the liberty to preserve their beliefs; and if it forbids categorically all recourse to compulsion for converting others to Islam, it maintains a rigorous discipline among its own adherents.'

'The basis of the Islamic 'nationality' is religious and not ethnic, linguistic or regional. Hence, apostasy has naturally been considered political treason. It is true that this crime is punished by penalties, but the necessity scarcely arose as history has proved.'

From the above, it is clear that the Qur'anic line '*La ikraha fi d-din*' ('There is no compulsion in religion' -Sura' 2:256) is generally understood to mean that no one should use compulsion against another in matters of faith, and not with regard to its own (former) adherents, i.e. apostates and the regulation of apostasy.

Let us examine the 'ayaat': '*La ikhra ha fi d-din*' (There is no compulsion in religion). Now, what do we mean by 'compulsion'? If a Muslim were to eat pork, commit adultery and murder people, does this mean that it would be 'compulsion' if Islamic laws were imposed upon this person?

Is it 'compulsion' then to prevent Muslims from committing adultery or eating pork? The only thing that is 'contentious' here is how the 'liberal Islam' folk have interpreted this to suit their own whim and fancies.

On the claim that some apostates were 'not open to choices because they were not exposed to other religions', I for one can clearly say that this is nonsense. I myself have been brought up in a semi-liberal Muslim environment, was exposed to the Christian Bible about 10 years back, and yet I still remain a staunch Muslim and I am proud to call myself one.

It is certainly no excuse for an apostate to not have learnt Islam properly and simply to rely solely on what they have been spoon-fed at school or by their parents.

I must also address fears that I am espousing a 'Taliban', 'Sudan' or 'Saudi Arabian-style' ideology. Although I do hold that the Taliban did - in spite of their ultra-orthodox interpretations - attempt to practice Islam, I do not hold the Taliban to be Islamic.

Neither do I, in any shape or form, condone the style of Islam as practiced in Saudi Arabia or Sudan. As far as where I stand, I am simply a Muslim upholding the creed of the *Ahl Sunnah Wal Jamaah* and I will continue to struggle against all forms of distortion with regard to Islam whether it is by the 'liberal Muslims', apostates or others.

Amusing it is for some to tell me to '*... return to the 7th century*' for I am currently in my second-year of completing my degree in Computing and Information Technology (specializing in software engineering) and hence will always remain in this present age and time determined as ever to see Muslims return to proper Islamic values and practices.

As of late, there are a group of so-called Muslims, sympathetic to the West, who attempt to synthesize Western ideas and philosophy with Islam and then pass it off as how Islam should be practiced.

In addition to this, they also espouse other ideologies of various heterodox sects which existed during Islam's Golden Age, such as the *Jabbariyyah*, *Qadariyyah* and several others which are too long to list here.

I find that these people are making a mockery of what Islam is and are putting forth their erroneous interpretations and rulings which are in total contrast to mainstream orthodox Islam.

One fine example would be the issue of apostasy where they say that the religion of Muslims should be a 'free-for-all' affair. However, we can read in *Kitab al-Umm* how Imam Ash-Shafi'i (R) discussed the issue of apostasy in three long chapters, defining apostasy, the circumstances leading to apostasy and, most importantly, its punishment and how it is to be executed.

Another example would be the issue of non-Muslims marrying Muslims. One can read the Qur'ân as well as the corresponding chapters from al-Bukhari and Muslim on this issue to confirm that non-Muslim men are forbidden from marrying Muslim women unless they convert to Islam.

Instead, these 'liberal Islam' exponents come up with their own various reasoning and interpretations for this issue which they either outsource from the Western feminist movement or from God-knows-where!

These are two examples that I have isolated. There are several more but I think my point is clear on how the members of the heterodox 'liberal Islam' movement think.

It is a shame that the malaise of 'liberal Islam' is infecting the best minds in the *ummah*. This is a malaise we should blame on the Barisan Nasional government for its overemphasis on *fard 'al-kifayah* instead of balancing it with *fard 'al-ayn*.

The verse (Qur'ân, 2:256) I cited in my letter has been misused by liberal Islam adherents and apostates alike. This verse only refers to the freedom given to non-Muslims to practice their respective faiths or religious beliefs.

In short, a Buddhist is given the freedom to practice his/her religion, likewise a Christian, and so forth. A Muslim must never compel an adherent of another faith to convert to Islam as it is against the spirit of Qur'ân 2:256.

Now the issue we are discussing here is the case of apostates and apostasy. The issue is not as 'contentious' as some wish to make it out to be, as the majority of scholars have agreed that apostasy is a capital crime and is considered treason against Islam and the Ummah.

No amount of quoting from man-made laws such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (which, by the way, Malaysia is not a signatory of) will change this obvious fact.

In the end, I would like to quote from Article XIII of the Universal Islamic Declaration of Human Rights which states:

'XIII: Right to freedom of religion.

'Every person has the right to freedom of conscience and worship in accordance with his religious beliefs.'

But, I must add, not the freedom to apostatize from Islam. And only God knows best.

WHEN APOSTATES BECOME SHAYKHS...



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