Islamism and the Exploitation of Women

The events in Paris are unfortunately all too familiar in the 21st century. I think in some corners it is still perhaps a bit shocking that events like the storming of Charlie Hebdo and the killing of civilians do not actually take place more often than they do. In my line of work, this is the foundational conundrum of secret success: intelligence communities around the world actually do a stellar job of ferreting out literally hundreds, if not thousands of ideas, intentions, and full-on strategic plans to wreak havoc and create terror on the streets of various cities every single week. Preventing them is their solemn duty. Crowing proudly about it is not. And so we are stuck in a world where any time something like this happens we all wring our hands and wonder what our world is coming to and why can we not protect our people better when in fact we already are. There is a price free society pays that no authoritarian or theocratic dictatorship usually ever has to worry about.

And that is an important issue: the price of freedom. It is uttered so often in the West it has almost become a cliché, which is a shame, for it hides a very important distinction between societies that honor and adore principles of freedom and more conservative societies that not only don’t trust their own people, the leaders clearly don’t trust themselves either. In this particular context, the adaptations and reinterpretations made by particular radical Islamist groups that feel emboldened to kill civilians, to take incredible leaps of logic from the Koran to everyday decisions in real life, and to feel justified in forcing their interpretation of what is right and just and proper on to all others regardless, is what so many in the West are having a hard time reconciling. On the one hand, the United States has spent over a generation trying to become more mindful of the ways in which it is still not an inclusive society and that its melting pot mythology may really be just that: mythology. The events surrounding and leading up to the protests in Ferguson, Missouri prove that quite readily. But there is something powerful and affirming and simply HOPEFUL about a society that can actually engage and rage, as I like to call it: no one with a thoughtful brain and erudite mind can ever sincerely call the United States a truly equal and truly fair society. But what it is is a place where people can vehemently and even violently disagree but never have that violence percolate to such a level that the very foundations of society collapse in on themselves from the weight of mutual ignorance, prejudice, hatred, resentment, and cynicism. I do not find American society perfect at all. But I find the possibility to engage and rage, without overt fear of random and arbitrary death and destruction because of it, to be a stellar quality commendable for all societies. But, alas, it is not found within all societies and that is truly the world’s problem.

And the simple fact is I am disgusting tired of people with power taking their own personal weaknesses and fabricating flawed logic so as to tyrannize others who do not suffer from the same insecurities. For example, I am a great admirer of the general Islamic principle of physical modesty and not being wantonly or rudely sexual. It is easily arguable that modern Western society has indeed gone a bit overboard on this, with this world of instant communication where ‘chats’ turn into ‘selfies’ which turn into ‘nudies’ which turn ultimately into empty and fleeting exchanges of unimportant social interaction. It is one thing to be standing on the position of modesty, but quite another to terrorize women because you are not able to control your own urges or are worried about the baseness of your own gender. Which, no matter how ardently radical clerics debate it, is exactly how the world should see any command that compels women to shield themselves entirely from the eyes of men. This is not a command that preserves modesty, for modesty is most certainly achievable with other forms of reasonable dress. This is also not a command that sanctifies the proper relations between men and women who do not know each other, for proper
social etiquette and communication should not have to mean a woman cannot be physically seen in public by a man. No, all of these so-called edicts and necessities to supposedly instill modesty and proper behavior is really just a diatribe about men, by men, in fear of men, while GLORIFYING THE DISGUSTINGNESS OF THE WORST MEN. These particular radical Islamists are, in essence, saying that since they themselves cannot be trusted with their own carnal instincts and urges, WOMAN must be compelled to save MAN from itself, and in so doing she saves herself from inevitable harassment, intimidation, and rape (because, apparently, the natural carnal instincts of men are to do these vile and heinous things to women, whether their conscious minds or moral hearts agree or not).

This is what I find so egregious and, quite frankly, pathetic. Society is never advanced when the rules institutionalized for said society pander to not just the lowest common denominator but the basest of human character. Instead of looking to your religion and faith to elevate you above your basic instincts and evil thoughts, these radical Islamists are surrendering to their own flaws, giving up the fight as it were, and demanding that the female part of the species take upon its shoulders all of the burden. In this small instance it means the voluntary elimination of social interaction and fashion freedom. This is not what Western society should wring its hands over, trying to ‘understand the other’ as so many try to do in the aftermath of such horrific crimes like Paris. I think instead sometimes it might be best to remind ourselves that in a world of freedom and liberty everyone is indeed entitled to hold their own opinions. But not everyone is entitled to force those opinions onto others. Especially when those opinions are not just against freedom and common sense, they are in fact hindering the proper social and sexual evolution of men in general. Believe what you want. You have that right. But if what you believe is heinously and hellaciously stupid and uncivilized, based upon your own fears and insecurities, then no, my friends, no you are not allowed to mask those weaknesses under the false guise of flawed logic and mutated religious faith.

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