



Bassam Tibi

***BALLOT AND BULLET***  
**THE POLITICISATION OF ISLAM TO**  
**ISLAMISM**

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Centre for Studies in Islamism and Radicalisation (CIR)  
Department of Political Science  
Aarhus University, Denmark  
November 2009

## **Islamism and Radicalisation – *the Denmark School***

The ambition of the Denmark School is to remedy the fragmentation between different fields of research in Islamism. The Denmark School wants to explore the phenomena of 'Islamism' in its different manifestations and to highlight the mechanisms of radicalisation processes among Muslim youth in Europe. One of the innovative approaches is the linkage between 'soft security' and 'hard security'. While other projects mainly focus on terrorism, this project first of all focuses on Islamism. The identification of Islamism requires a distinction between three possible phases: 1) ideology, 2) movements and 3) political regimes.

The study of Islamism in international relations is usually limited to treating only one aspect of Islamism as a transnational actor, namely terrorism and the corresponding anti-terror measures. But Islamist ambitions and strategies are expressed through a number of other means, such as foreign policy, boycotts, crises, strategic alliances and perhaps even the acquisition of WMD. These must be mapped in order to provide an empirical basis for studying contemporary Islamist world views and conceptions of international relations.

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*BALLOT OR BULLET*

THE POLITICISATION OF ISLAM TO  
ISLAMISM

Professor Emeritus Bassam Tibi\*  
Göttingen, Germany

## Introduction

Since I live in three worlds – in the world of Islam (last month, I was in Jakarta, Indonesia and also in Morocco), in Europe and also in the United States – I prefer to lecture the American way and therefore I start with an anecdote, not only for the anecdote itself, but also to reveal why I lecture in this way and not in the German way. Given the fact that I'm a professor at the University of Göttingen and my affiliations in the United States I'm also A.D. White Professor at Cornell, but this is only a second position.

I didn't want to come to Germany and study in Germany, I wanted to go to study in the United States, at Harvard. My parents denied me that and they decided, when I was 18: Either you go to Germany or you stay at home. So I accepted and I did not like it, but I'm very happy that I went to Germany because I studied in Frankfurt and at that time, I didn't know the professors. But when you hear the names: The philosophers were Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno, the sociologist was Habermas, the psychologist was Alexander Mitscherlich and such stars do not exist today in Germany. They were my professors and it was a stroke of luck to go to Germany.

But the dream did not subside to go to Harvard and that happened in 1982. I had already been a professor in Germany for 10 years when I went to Harvard, but believe me, I was so frightened and intimidated and humble that my little self was to be a professor at Harvard for one year. And in my opening lecture, a one-hour lecture, I did it the German way. I had been to the United States many times before, the first time at the invitation of Edward Said, when we were still friends, but I didn't know the system. In Germany, you have a lecture, you

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\* *Bassam Tibi* is professor emeritus of International Relations. Between 1973 and 2009, professor Tibi taught at the University of Göttingen, Germany. The text is a transcript of his lecture at the Centre for Studies in Islamism and Radicalisation at the Department of Political Science, Aarhus University, Denmark on September 9, 2009.

have a prepared text, and German professors do not acknowledge this, but they rehearse it in front of the mirror, I know that. Not when they speak for students, but when they speak at international conferences. And they read everything, they articulate like at television speaker, so no mistakes, that's it. So, I completed 15 pages for the lecture and the pages were ok. This is not just my opinion, because they were published half a year later in *The Middle East Journal* in Washington, an established journal, and a sign of acceptance.

But the lecture did not go well, even though I rehearsed it at least 10 times. But I mean it's not the way of articulation, but the response was very cool and not appealing. So, after the lecture there was a dinner at the Harvard Faculty Club in my honour and the Dean of the Faculty said, "Professor Tibi, we know of your Middle Eastern background so people in the Middle East tell stories, but why do you behave and speak like a German professor?" And I asked him, "What did I do wrong?" He said, "You read the manuscript, we don't like that. No anecdotes, no jokes." And I said, "But at Harvard?" "Yes, Harvard is not Germany. We start a lecture with an anecdote or with a joke."

So, that was the anecdote so ever since that was a cultural shock. The first cultural shock in my life was on October 26, 1962 when I came from Damascus to Frankfurt and I landed and left the plane and saw hugging and kissing people in the airport. I had seen that in a movie, but not in reality, so that was a cultural shock for me, the second cultural shock in my life.

## Islam and Islamism

Having stated this, I will come to my topic: Islam, Islamism and what is this all about? And why study Islam and Islamism? Somebody like me who's a professor of international relations? This is not Islamic studies, this is not theology, this is not the study of religion. So why Islam and international relations? In fact, I have been studying Islam since I was a young boy, I memorized the Qur'an between the age of five and seven by heart so I am *hafiz*. But as a scholar, I studied – one of your professors here is so appreciative, thank you for this – I studied with Adorno and Horkheimer and so I dealt..... we said when we were with Adorno, I have to say it in German, "Ein Semester Hegel und ein Semester Marxizieren". So one semester Hegel and one semester Marx, but of course we read also other professors. So that was the history of ideas in philosophy and that was very important in my life, but then I shifted after my PhD to international relations. And I do travel regularly in the world of Islam and I noticed that Islam was coming to the surface in political terms, so I have been studying this politicization of Islam since the late 70s. And I found no audience, nobody willing to listen to me.

The day after tomorrow – today is the 9<sup>th</sup> of September – will be the anniversary of 9/11. 9/11 changed the world really and it also has changed scholarship and it changed perceptions. So people ever since are willing to listen. So the revolution in Iran, the war in Afghanistan, the war in the Middle

East, the turmoil of Islamists since the late 60s and 70s – well, it was on the front page of Western European and American newspapers, but it did not succeed to gain the attention of scholars or opinion leaders.

I can illustrate this with a story that happened to me at Harvard. I told you that my dream came true and I came to Harvard in 1982 and at that time, I was at the Center for International Affairs of Harvard University in Coolidge Hall and the director at the time was Samuel Huntington. And when Samuel Huntington found out that I was working on a book on Islam he invited me to his office and he told me, “Professor Tibi, I know your work and I thought that you were an international relations scholar, but it has come to my attention that you are doing research on Islam. And this is not our job. So, you have now a one-year contract and you can stay, but next year, I recommend you to leave us and I can give you a recommendation for the divinity school.” And I told him (well, in America, you don’t say professor Huntington), “But listen, Sam, you see I’m an IR scholar like you, I’m studying Islam from an IR perspective.” He said, “You are not convincing.” This is the real talk between Samuel Huntington and me. The same person, after 9/11, applied for a multi-million project for the study of Islam and world politics. Well, in his book, *The Clash of Civilizations*, and three years earlier, in the article, Islam was the issue no. 1, so you see the change.

Now, how was the response to 9/11? It was a watershed event that changed the way people look at Islam, positively and negatively. Edward Said, who was my friend and who brought me to the United States for the first time in 1971 – I got my PhD in 1970 and one year after my PhD, I was invited by Edward Said to co-lecture at a conference and the lecture I gave there in ‘71 was published in ‘73 in a book by Edward Said so that was my first publication in English, it was a contribution co-edited by Edward Said himself. But 9/11 and also the debate on Orientalism separated us. Edward Said said in American television, “Those people who were the perpetrators of 9/11 are a crazed gang. Crazy people. They have nothing to do with Islam.” That was one extreme. The other extreme was people who said, “This is the heart of Islam. Now Islam is finally showing its face.”

So, you have Islamophilia – Edward Said is a Middle Easterner like me, but he’s a Christian. And unlike me, he’s professor of comparative literature, I study international relations and I founded a new discipline which I called Islamology. So I know what I’m talking about, this is not arrogance. I know what I’m talking about because I’ve been working on it. A professor of comparative literature does not have the quality to talk about Islam, but he felt qualified to say that “these people are a crazed gang” while others were engaged on Islam bashing.

In this lecture and also in my other work, my intention is to enlighten, to screen the issue and to show that a change is taking place in world politics. And that Islam, in a politicized form, is affecting this development. I was a Marxist for ten years because I studied in Frankfurt, but you see, a Marxist in the Frankfurt

School, so they used to call us in Frankfurt ‘Salonmarxisten’. Salonmarxisten à la Horkheimer and Habermas, but still we read Marx and Hegel, others probably didn’t do that, so I know the place of economy in the development of society, so I’m not an ideologist. So I’m not going to turn from Marxism to Ideologism, but Islam is becoming a motor in the development.

There is one Marxist philosopher – I hope the name is well-known to you – I am ashamed to tell you that my German students don’t know the name at this time even though this person is one of the top figures in the intellectual history of Germany, maybe in the world, in the 20<sup>th</sup> century: Ernst Bloch. Ernst Bloch wrote a book, a biography, *Thomas Müntzer als Theologe der Revolution*, and he, as a Marxist philosopher, said, “Religion in a situation of crisis could become” – this is quote unquote page 56, because I keep quoting it – “religion in a situation of crisis could become more powerful than the economic infrastructure, the basis”. And this is a statement done by a Marxist, so Islam is becoming very important and I want to understand it and I have been studying the politicization of Islam, this is the title of the lecture, since the late 70s, ahead of the revolution in Iran.

Since I’m now retiring by the end of the month, I’m now 65 and have nothing to lose – you probably know the song by Janis Joplin from the 60s when we were rebellious: “Freedom’s just another word for nothing left to lose” – and so I have nothing to lose and I can tell you that in the late 70s, I had a divorce. At the very same time I had a divorce, I acquired German citizenship which meant that I could never go back to Syria (but that’s a different story), and I left Marxism and I learnt how intolerant Marxists are, because 99 per cent of my Marxist friends gave no [...] to friendship. If you’re not a Marxist you don’t belong here, so this is Marxist tolerance. And I was in a deep psychological crisis and I went into psychoanalysis for three years, three hours every week. And in psychoanalysis, I discovered how deep Islam is in my soul, how deep is my socialization in Damascus. And this a fact which directs my life and awareness, psychoanalysis awareness. But I’m a scholar and I want to explain. Islamophobia is something alien to me. I have been accused of Islamophobia by Islamists and I will come to this in the course of my lecture.

I have published many books, but now we’re talking about Islam, political Islam and Islamism, I have had three major books published in the course of the past 20 years, all three in English. The first was a book published by University of California Press, *The Challenge of Fundamentalism. Political Islam and the New World Disorder*. And ten years after, in 2008, the book displayed by Professor Mozaffari, *Political Islam, World Politics and Europe* and I concluded my academic career in an academic year or sabbatical visiting professorship at Yale University. I returned from Yale a few months ago, and there I finished a book, *Islam and Islamism. A Study of a Significant Distinction*, and this book has been accepted for publication after a very tough reviewing by Yale University Press. And I’m going to present to you the findings of all these three books from 20 years of research in one hour!



There are many things in America that I like and actually I wanted to migrate to America after my retirement, but I will not, I decided to stay in Europe. But one thing in research in America, American people work in a group, work in teams and big research projects. And European scholars, especially the Germans, they are individuals and want to be kings, every professor his own king and they do not even show manuscripts to their colleagues because they're afraid that the colleagues could steal or plagiarize. But Americans, when they write articles or chapters, they circulate them among 20-30 people, they receive comments, and they discuss and they have big research projects.

And one of the highlights of my life – and this is not a personal story, it's related to the lecture, I'm talking here about Islam – at the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, there was a research project between 1989, before the breakdown of Communism, and 1995, “The Fundamentalism Project”. 40 scholars from all over the world, all religions, all disciplines were represented, and I was one of them. And we produced five volumes like this [showing with hands], published by Chicago University Press, *The Fundamentalism Project*. And we found that religion is coming back in a politicized form and this happened in all religions. There is no single religion – animist religions are not included, only religions with a scripture could be subject to this process – so all world religions that have scriptures, holy scriptures, were involved. And the result is a religious fundamentalism. And religious fundamentalism is a global phenomenon across all religions and it is based on looking at the scriptures, *sola scriptura*, only the scriptures, as the primary source for the formula we coined ‘remaking world order’ and ‘remaking politics’.

## Why Focus on Islam?

So why the focus on Islam? This project was accused of Islamophobia because one half of the five volumes was on Islam and the other half on all other religions, so the weight given to Islam was viewed as a kind of Islamophobia. So, Islamophobia is not a very new phenomenon or the term is not so very recent, it is old. This project is 20 years old. The focus on Islam had a rationale. Islamism, we're not talking about political Islam. Political Islam is Islamism. And Islamism is nothing else but the Islamic variety of the global phenomenon of religious fundamentalism. So, there are many names for the term: political Islam, religious fundamentalism, Islamic fundamentalism or Islamism. Professor Mozaffari is French, but he has also an Anglo-Saxon dimension and that's why – and also Danish – well, you published a book, *Civilizations and World Order*, so I assume even though I have high regard for ... we were yesterday in the Danish Parliament and one of the speakers or experts was French, Caroline Fourest, and she said, “Ce n'est pas fondamentalisme, c'est integrisme”. And I said to her, “You need to come to my course and learn something more”. Because I learnt at the Fundamentalism Project that there are different terms which denote the very same phenomenon. The French say ‘integrisme’ and they have the disease of Franco-centrism, so what they believe

is right is right for the rest of the world. But ‘integrisme’ is the French term, but others say ‘revivalism’, ‘Islamism’, ‘fundamentalism’ and what have you.

But why the focus on Islam or the Islamic variety? The reason is very simple. There are Hindu extremists, there are Hindu fundamentalists, but Hindu fundamentalists don’t want to create a world order. The Sikh fundamentalists don’t want to do that either, there are Jewish fundamentalists, they don’t want to do that either. Even among the Christian fundamentalists, Christians are universalists like the Muslim fundamentalists, but I think that they are in a way realistic that they realize that a Christian world order is not feasible, so they talk about a return of Christianity. So if you study Islamist movements, and I have been doing that for 30 years in 20 different Islamic countries – my friend and teacher, Bernard Lewis, said, “There are many experts in the United States on Islam, but they don’t speak local languages, Arabic, Turkish, Farsi. Their language capabilities do not go beyond restaurant and hotel requirements”.

Along these lines, I know many experts and professors at Harvard who read the New York Times – which is a great newspaper, but this is not enough as a source of knowledge – and then talk with authority about Islam. In order to talk about Islam, Islamism and Islamists, you have to go, talk to them, live among them and I did that in the framework of the Fundamentalism Project and I did research in 20 different countries and I have interviews in my files, 2,500 interviews with Islamists, so I know what I am talking about, this is not an arrogant statement, this is just a statement of description. And I know that they want to change the world, and they not only want to change the world of Islam. So this is the first step is *nizam al-islam*, the Islamic order, to be established in the world of Islam, and the next step is remaking the world, establishing a world order.

So if you don’t want to live in an Islamic world order you have to focus on this variety and maybe overlook Hindu fundamentalism. And the focus on Islamism is not Islamophobia. The singling-out of Islamism is not Islamophobia. But I am not blind and I see in the West that there is a sense of enmity, an image of enmity vis-à-vis Islam. If I would overlook this, I would be blind, and I am not.

So what to do, I mean the term Islamophobia is problematic and I have a section about it later. What to do? The first step, and I recommend this to you, I’m not talking to politicians, but you see, I learnt in the United States where they say, “This is a scholarly analysis and what are the policy implications?” So I’ll try to combine both here, so I recommend to you to distinguish in terms of knowledge and also in terms of policy between Islamism and Islam. So what is the distinction between them?

## The Distinction between Islam and Islamism

I mentioned this anecdote in the Danish parliament yesterday: I was consulting the American army in 2002 with five other experts. And one of the generals

stood up and asked me, “Professor Tibi, I am a military man, I am not a scholar and honestly speaking, I will not read your books because I don’t have time to read your books. So can you explain to me in two phrases how I can distinguish between an ordinary Muslim and an Islamist? Is this possible? If you can do that then I will accept you as an authority in the field.” That was very challenging and I told him, “I think it’s possible. If you ask a Muslim, ‘Is Islam for you a faith’ – in Arabic, *imân* – ‘or is Islam a concept of order?’” The Islamists use for this, in Arabic, *diin wa dawla*, the unity of state and religion. “And if he says that Islam is a political order, he’s an Islamist. If he says that Islam is a faith, then he’s an ordinary Muslim.” And I think that this is the line, this is a clear line. So sometimes it’s difficult to distinguish between what is Islamic and what is Islamist, sometimes these things are blurred. And in reality they are also blurred, but I think that there are also clear lines of distinction.

So what is Islam? Islam is a cult, in Arabic, *‘ibadat*, Islam is a faith, *imân*, and Islam is also a cultural system in the anthropological sense, because unlike Christianity or other religions, Islam is an organic religion which has provisions for everything in life, eg. I’m here in Europe – in the United States I probably I wouldn’t do it because you have to be careful about these things – there are provisions in Islam for how to have a sexual intercourse, in detail. So this means that Islam is not only a cult and a faith, it’s also a cultural system that covers all, and I underline the word *all*, aspects of life.

But still, Islam is not a political system. There exists a political ethics in Islam, but Islam is not a political system. And this idea is something new. The Caliphate is something else. If you read the most authoritative book on Islamic law by Joseph Schacht, he was a German, but moved, fleeing from Hitler, to the UK and he was the most distinguished professor in this field at Oxford University, and his book, *Introduction to Islamic Law*, is still *the* basic in the field and on pages 56-58, he describes *siyasa* means politics and old Arabic *syasa* doesn’t mean politics, but administration, safe administration. And he shows clearly with evidence that there has been a distinction between shari‘a and *siyasa* so the political system was in a way secular, but legitimized by religion. So the Caliphate was a despotic system, but it was not a totalitarian system. Islamism is a totalitarian ideology and the political system that the Islamists want to establish is a totalitarian system. And in the Middle East, there was no totalitarianism, the first totalitarianism was Nazism and Communism.

Yesterday, at least six people at the conference at the Danish parliament argued or stated that Islamists want to restore the Caliphate. You can read this even in scholarly books published in the United States. And they say, “What do the Islamists want? They want to restore the Caliphate.” This is not the case. And if you read the documents of the Islamists, they do not use the term [... *khalafat*]. I haven’t seen it and I said yesterday that I have a seven-room apartment full of books and many shelves about Islamism in Arabic and in Turkish, and I read these books and I didn’t find the term [... *khalafat*], restoration of the Caliphate. They talk about *nizam al-islam*, the Islamic

system, and the word *nizam* is new Arabic. It did not exist in old Arabic. There's a verb, but the noun *nizam* did not exist in classical Arabic. The term and the content of the term are new. So Islamism is a political ideology, it is totalitarian, it is the pursuit of a political order that did not exist in Islamic history. It is something new.

## Islamism

So, how to understand and how to explain Islamism? I summarize here my book which will be published next year by Yale University Press. The first chapter is called "How to understand Islamism?" Well, Islamism has a variety of components – I cannot cover all here because the time is running – and I presented only one third of my presentation, but I speak fast. You see, I was for ten years commentator on Islam and the Middle East in ZDF [Zweites Deutsches Fernsehen] and I speak very fast and people told me, "You speak too fast. People have difficulty following you and in television you have to talk slowly." And I started to talk slowly, but the problem is that after a few seconds, I lose control and speak fast. And some people said that I'm cheating because you know, when you get a comment of one minute, sometimes of 1.30 minutes and at the most two minutes, and I was able to present material for which you needed five minutes. And they said, "You are cheating, you speak fast to present more material". But I will be fast in the presentation to end up on time. At Harvard, they say, "If you don't end on time, we assist you to stop". And in ZDF, they say, "Continue talking, we take the camera away".

So what is Islamism all about?

There are issue areas, and I cannot cover them all, but I have selected three of them and from inspiration I got at lunch with you, I added

- 1) Islamism is an invention of tradition
- 2) Islamism is a claim for a return of history and
- 3) Islamism is an agenda of purity and authenticity.

And I'll explain these and what I'm saying is not a construction, I'm not constructing anything. I have studied and read what the Islamists have produced of literature, I talk to them, I study their grey literature, ie. their unpublished literature. And these issue areas are all covered and in the book, this is all footnoted, so this is not allegations, this is research findings.

I had a fight, you know in America, when you publish a book, I published last week my last German book, *Euro-Islam. Die Lösung eines Zivilisationskonfliktes* [*Euro-Islam. The Solution of a Civilization Conflict*], and two editors – there is only one scholarly press in Germany, only one in a country of 83 million people, believe it or not, Die Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft in Darmstadt – two editors read the book and they liked it and it was published and came out last week. The American book I had been working on for a while, there was a first round of reviewing by four

anonymous reviewers. They read and they are very tough, they make not only criticism, one of them said, “This book should not be published.” So then you have to present an argument against that and then you have the editorial board of Yale.

## The Invention of Tradition

So now to the invention of tradition. I argued that Islamists invent tradition and they introduce something that did not exist in Islam. And therefore, there’s a distinction between Islam and Islamism. Islamism is an invention of tradition. Islam is history, cultural history, political history and what have you. The reader said, “If professor Tibi were right then the Prophet Muhammad would be the first Islamist and this is not the case”. So I had to present more evidence, and I’m thankful for this, to make the argument stronger on two areas, on the Shari‘a and the Jihad. The word Shari‘a occurs only once in the Qur‘an. And I’m *hafiz* so I can quote the original [...] (this is surah no 45, verse 18). And it means: “We have given you Shari‘a, morality, so follow it”. There is no mention of Shari‘a any other place in the Qur‘an. And in my interviews with Islamists, I found that 95 per cent don’t know this fact. They say that the Shari‘a is fully explained in the Qur‘an, fully outlined. But this is not the case.

If you study Shari‘a, Shari‘a has three meanings. One meaning is in the Qur‘an: morality. In history, in the history of Islam starting with the 8<sup>th</sup> century, schools of law evolved and they developed an understanding of the Shari‘a as a civil law and also as a penal code. But the only reference of Shari‘a to politics is that the Caliph is the custodian of the Shari‘a, ie. the custodian of the maintenance of Islamic morality. But in his practical actions, he pursued *siyasa*, and *siyasa* was separated from Shari‘a.

Islamists argue that Shari‘a is the constitution of the Islamic state, and I mean, constitution is democracy, but their constitution is totalitarian, because the Islamist Shari‘a abolishes the separation between public life and private life and it establishes a political concept that knows no contradiction to it. This is an invention of tradition.

Jihad in the Qur‘an is not, like some people say, it has nothing to do with violence, it is just self-exertion – this is not true. Jihad includes the concept of *qitâl*. *Qitâl* means violence, physical fighting and it is an integral part of Jihad. However, resorting to violence is, according to the Qur‘an, 1) bound to rules and 2) to be used to limited targets. So, I cannot attack somebody in the name of Jihad without a prior warning. That’s why the president of the American Association of Middle Eastern Studies, Juan Cole, who is a philologist and not a social scientist said that, “al-Qaeda has nothing to do with Islam for had Bin Laden complied with the Shari‘a, he would have been compelled to make 4,000 phone calls to the people who worked in the World Trade Center to tell them, ‘I’m coming, I’m warning you’. And he did not do that!” He did this in a keynote address at one of the meetings at the Association and I thought, “This

man is crazy, joking or is he stupid?” And I think the latter applies. And then he said, “Because he didn’t make these 4,000 phone calls, what he did is not Jihad.”

And then, limiting the target: According to the classical Islamic doctrine, you are not allowed to attack unarmed people, first pre-warning, then don’t attack unarmed people, no killing of children, no killing of women, no killing of elderly people. No indiscriminate killing. This is the classical Jihad.

In the modern re-interpretation of this concept, it is done by the grandfather of Tariq Ramadan. Tariq Ramadan is well-known, he’s the speaker of Islam at the moment in Europe, highly accepted, but his grandfather is the founder of Islamism, Hassan al-Bannā. And Hassan al-Bannā, in his [book] *On Jihad*, he re-interpreted Jihad as Jihadism. And he says, “We are not committed to rules because we cannot prevail while keeping these rules”. So, the limitation of targets was abandoned, the compliance with rules was abandoned, so Jihad becomes terrorism. But Jihad in the Qur’an, and also in Islamic history, was *not* terrorism. It’s a use of violence, but it is a kind of classical warfare. And the Qur’an, I would say, is in line with Clausewitz’ theory of war. It’s a regulated war between states, it’s a regular war, but the war of the Jihadists is an irregular war. Many people say that this Jihad is guerilla war, but this is also wrong. It is irregular war, so you see, this is an invention of tradition.

## The Return of History

Then, the return of history.

I am a friend of Fukuyama. When Fukuyama published his book we didn’t know each other, but we met after that and Fukuyama today, even though he is very proud of his book and has not dissociated himself from his book, *The End of History*, he knows now the limit. Of course, I’m speaking to an educated audience so you know the book and you know that Fukuyama, first in an article and then in a book after the end of the cold war, stated, “The end of the cold war is the victory of Western values and this victory of Western values, liberal democracy and a free market, is the end of history”. I mean, rhetorically speaking. At that time, Islamism was in place, but he didn’t know of it. Now, he knows of it and he also knows that Islamists say that the East-West conflict distracted from the real conflict. The real conflict is between us and the West, and the West took the place of Islam as a leading civilization and we want to reverse history and restore or re-establish the *siyadat al-Islam*, the supremacy of Islam. And so, the programme of the Islamists is a return of history which means a return to Islamic glory. This is also an invention of tradition.

The last area of invention of tradition is to say that Islam is a clean religion, Islam is pure and this purity of Islam has been damaged or, to use an ugly word, contaminated by Westernization of Islamic civilization in the course of the past hundred years. And Islamic revival means to de-westernize Westernization, and the opposite is de-Westernization, to de-westernize the

world and to purify Islamic civilization from western impact. And therefore they have an agenda of purity. This is also an invention of tradition. The reality is that those of you, and I hope there are many among you who know a bit about Islamic history, they know that Islam was a leading civilization in the Middle Ages, and the height of Islam, the very height of Islamic civilization, was between the 9<sup>th</sup> and the 12<sup>th</sup> century and in this period of time, Muslims were open-minded to the extent that they adopted almost everything positive from other civilizations. They adopted Hellenism, from the Greek legacy, they adopted mathematics from Indian culture, they adopted the running of an order, because the Arabs had no order prior to Islam, they adopted the running of a state order from the Iranians, from the Sassanids, etc., etc. It means that the glory of Islam was based on cultural borrowing from others, from other civilizations. And this is a feature of Islam. And our Prophet said, “And seek for knowledge, even in China”. And the Prophet knew Chinese honoured Muslim, that means the Prophet provisions learning without limitations. And the Islamists say, “Muslims can learn only from Muslims. And when you take something from non-Muslims, you contaminate Islam”. This is a bad invention of tradition.

## Distinctions within Islamism

Now, back to differentiation. I hope that the first differentiation came across: Islam and Islamism. Islam is a faith, Islam is a cult, Islam is a cultural system, but not a political ideology. Islamism is a political ideology and a pursuit for a world order. Islamic state as the first step, next step: world order.

I also made a distinction between Jihad and Jihadism. Jihad is a classical warfare in Islam, Jihadism is terrorism.

But there are also important distinctions within Islamism and these are not well-known in the West, and the lack of knowledge today in Europe and even more in the United States is dangerous for the policy, not only for the knowledge, but for the policy. There's a basic distinction within Islamism: There are Jihadist Islamists and there are institutional Islamists. And you know, in social science, we say that to generalize, you have to acknowledge there are commonalities, but the commonalities are to be substantiated through recognition of diversity. So, within a phenomenon you can observe a commonality and a diversity. So within Islamism, there's a commonality. The commonality is Islamic governance. All Islamists believe in Islamic governance as the major target. And if somebody does not believe in Islamic governance, then he or she is not an Islamist.

The French expert on Islam, Olivier Roy, coined the term ‘post-Islamism’ and it has now become very fashionable. And even a lady yesterday in Copenhagen spoke of the end of Islamism, which is nonsense because Islamism would come to an end if these people would abandon the idea of an Islamic order. But Islamic governance is the major or core issue of Islamism. Without this core

issue there can be no Islamism. So, all Islamists operate on the assumption – or they have no assumption – on the belief that Islamic governance is the target. But the way to this goal differs.

### *Ballot and Bullet*

The Jihadists believe in terror and they think that to wait and to go through the institutions is a long [way], one should not do it. There's a term in Marxism that says that 'revolutionaries are impatient people'. That's why they want to have a revolution because revolution is a short way. So the Jihadists are Islamic revolutionaries in the sense that they want to have a short way, the way of violence.

The institutional Islamists accept to forego violence, they say, "No violence, no terror. We work peacefully in institutions." Even in democratic institutions, and they even accept democracy. And there are many people in the West, and I say, "They have not come to you and have taken courses with you in political theory". Democracy has two legs. One of them is the philosophy of democracy and the other is how to administer democracy. Democracy is a box, the *ballot* box, the procedure of elections. And democracy is a philosophy of life. It is a political culture. The Islamists adopt the ballot box. For the Jihadists, the philosophy is the *bullet*. And the philosophy of the institutional Islamists is the ballot box, but they abandoned only the bullet. But they do not accept the values of democracy, such as pluralism, civility, individual human rights. And now, in the United States there's a Washington-based group, the Washington Initiative, which says, "We must co-operate with peaceful Islamists, these are moderate Muslims, they do not commit violence, they forego terror and that's why they are our partner." But they are not our partner because they do not accept the philosophy of democracy.

So, this distinction within Islamism between institutional and Jihadist Islamists is very important, as a major issue is Jihadism. So there are two wars: the war of terror and the war of ideas. I'll return to the war of ideas and move to the last third of my presentation.

What do Islamists want? If you read some basic literature about terrorism, you'll find that terrorists are [hawks] and they want to create havoc. So these are crazy people. This is the understanding of Edward Said: a crazed gang. Well, if they were like this, there are two methods: Either you bring them to psychiatry or to court and then jail them. That's it. But to deal with Jihadist terrorism is a much tougher thing. It's not psychology because they are not [hawks], and they do not want to create havoc, they have a rationale in their actions. They want to *remake* the world. Islamists want to remake the world. This is not havoc.



## Islamophobia?

So, why are we singling out Islamism and not addressing other varieties of terrorism and also fundamentalism? If you read the book by Mark Juergensmeyer who's a professor at the University of California Santa Barbara, *Terror in the Mind of God*, you'll find that there are Jewish, Hindu, Tamil, Muslim terrorists, so Muslim terrorists are not alone. But why are we singling out those people? We who deal with this issue? "We" is not myself, but professor Mozaffari is among the "we" and there are many others – why is the group of scholars singling out Islamism? Is this Islamophobia?

The rationale is that what Islamists do affects all other Muslims because they believe in a universal proselytization. They believe that Islam is a religion for the entire humanity. Even though the Qur'an says to Muslims, "I have my religion. When I talk to unbelievers, tell the unbelievers, 'You have your religion, and I have mine'". So that's it. I take the Qur'an here by word, it's not pluralism, but I read my understanding of pluralism into it. I know that this is [...] so I do it as well. So universal proselytization, [...] (I was professor in Sudan and something happened to me. If you want to hear the story, I will not tell it now, perhaps in the debate). A Muslim is obliged to proselytize, if he doesn't do that he's not a Muslim. (And the story in Khartoum, if you want to hear it, ask me in the debate.) So, I say that I don't do that, I don't want to convert you to Islam. I want to talk to you, but I don't want to convert you to Islam. And then the Islamists say, "Then you are not a Muslim." I forego violence and they say, "You are abandoning provisions that exist in the Qur'an." And I do not impose my thinking on others. But Islamists proselytize, Islamists are violent, and on a world scale, Islamists impose their ideas of order on others. That's why the singling out of Islamism has a rationale.

Is this Islamophobia? No! But I am not blind, I repeat what I said at the beginning: There are sentiments against Muslims and the French lady yesterday spoke of racism and I said, "We Muslims are not a race. I lived in Senegal and Senegalese Muslims are black. Last month, I was in Indonesia and Indonesian Muslims look Asian. This week, I was in Berlin for a meeting on South-East Asia and I met a blonde lady and a blond gentleman with blue eyes who came from the Balkans and they were Muslim. So how can you take a blonde, an Asian and an African and say that they are one race? This is nonsense." There is no Islamic race. And this, by the way, is Nazi thinking, even the Jews are not a race. So we should abandon the idea of racism when we talk about bad sentiments or the bad image of Islam. And Islamophobia has become a weapon in the hands of Islamists. Islamists accuse everybody who criticize them or disagree with them of Islamophobia. So, Islamophobia has become an ideological weapon like the term anti-Communism during the Cold War. If you criticized human-rights violations in the Soviet Union during the Cold War you were an anti-Communist and this should not be done.

But still you have to acknowledge the bad image of Islam and we have to protect Islam from these sentiments. And to protect Islam, we have to do two things:

- Say what we are talking about, we are talking about Islamism, not about Islam. And then you make clear that you are not articulating a position against Islam.
- Change the word: This is Islam-bashing, it is not Islamophobia, and this is bad, but it is something else.

## How to Counter Islamism?

How to counter Islamism? (the last five minutes!) I do advise politicians in the United States and also in Europe and in the Middle East. I can mention one of them because I'm very proud of this. I was the adviser of the President of Indonesia, Wahid, when he was in office. And he shares my view about Islamism and I love him. Therefore, you not only present knowledge, you have to present policy as well.

How to counter Islamism?

1) It's very important to disarm Islamists ideologically and say, "You cannot speak and you are not eligible to speak in the name of Islam. You speak for yourself, for your movement." So in making this distinction between Islamism and Islam, you disarm Islamists of the weapon of claiming, "We are the voice of Islam". Say, "No, you are not the voice of Islam!"

2) Then you need a double track. The double track is, on the one hand, *dialogue*, dialogue with the people of Islam, and on the other, security. Because Islamists, even the peaceful ones among them – because if you say that only the terrorists are dangerous and the peaceful Islamists are not dangerous – people who do that have myopia. So you need a dialogue with liberal Muslims, with progressive Muslims. And the project I was running in Indonesia last month was "Debating Progressive Islam". And then the *security* approach. I said yesterday in the Danish parliament, "A terrorist could throw a bomb and kill maybe 50 people. This is very sad, but maybe one week after, people will forget it. But the institutional Islamists change from within and what they do is lasting and therefore they are more dangerous. I view peaceful Islamists, in terms of system, the political system, as more dangerous.

And therefore, we need a double track. Westerners need to know more about the world of Islam. I think the global conflict between Islamic values and Islamist values and European values is a conflict that will be with us for some decades. I do not say 'years', I say 'some decades' to come. And to come to terms with this conflict, you need, in terms of knowledge, to know more about Islam because if you don't know anything you cannot act. One of my teachers at Harvard, professor Karl Deutsch, who wrote the book *The Nerves of Government*, compared the government with a system and there's information

that flows between the top of the pyramid and the bottom of it and if this system of information does not work, the system will not work. So if you do not have the inflow and input of the right knowledge into the system, then the system will not work. So knowledge about Islam, enlightenment about Islam, there's a progressive Islam. There has even been an Islamic enlightenment. In the Middle Ages, there was Islamic rationalism and Islamic enlightenment. But there is also a reactionary Islam, not only Islamism.

And for Europe, it's very important – I developed the concept of 'European Islam' – there's no time to talk about it since I have only one minute left. So I take this one minute for the conclusion.

## Conclusion

The conclusion is that we are talking about a topic which creates a challenge to Europe. Why Europe? And not America? The inflow of Islamic migration to Europe is central. I don't have the time, but I can provide you with statistics during the debate if you ask me. But just one statistic: In the year 1950, there were 800,000 Muslims living in Western Europe, and today, 23 million. So in a period of 59 years, the number climbed from less than 1 million to 23 million and this is going on and will increase. By the middle of this century, probably 50 million. So, there's a need to integrate these Muslims – not to corner them. That's exactly what the Islamists want, then you have an army against Europe of 50 million and can never win. But if you make Muslims European citizens, you can do it.

So Europe is the main target of Islamism. And Euro-Islam is a weapon against Islamism. Euro-Islam is Europeanized Islam. And there is no decline of Islamism. I refer to three people:

First, Gilles Kepel who published a book, *Jihad. Expansion et déclin de l'islamisme* [*Jihad. The Trail of Political Islam*, 2004], in the spring of 2001 and a few months later, 9/11 took place. That was the falsification not in philosophical epistemology, but in fact.

The other scholar is Olivier Roy who talks about post-Islamism, like post-Communism, which is empirically wrong.

And unfortunately, in your country, Denmark, a senior fellow at the Danish Institute of International Affairs who spoke yesterday at the conference, Ms. Crone, said that Islamism is declining. And I said to myself when she was speaking, "You know nothing."

Thank you very much!

## Questions and Answers

*Mehdi Mozaffari:* Since I'm in charge of this seance, I permit myself to say two things. First, you are right about the Caliphate, of course. The Caliphate is not mentioned in eg Hassan al-Bannā's books, the past Caliphate, yes, but as you mentioned, Bannā uses three other terms, *dawlat al-islamiyyah* [Islamic state], *nizam al-islami* [Islamic order] and *nizam al-Qur'ani* [Qur'anic order], but not the term Caliphate. But if I understood you correctly, you said that Islamists today don't use the Caliphate as a model. You are right, but perhaps not 100 per cent because there are some thinkers like Rashid Rida and some groups, eg Hizb ut-Tahrir, that are using the Caliphate, and some minor groups, perhaps Taleban, I'm not quite sure about it. But mainly you're right.

The second point is that you talk about Jihad, but I'm sure that you know, because you're *hafiz* – that means someone who knows the Qur'an by heart – that the term Jihad does not exist in the Qur'an. Instead, the Qur'an uses the term *quitâl*.

These two things I wanted to say about terminology and now, I'll open the floor to questions and comments.

*Question:* Thank you for an interesting lecture. I was wondering what your view is on scholars, like Olivier Roy, who claim that Jihadism in Europe is a phenomenon of its own and that the radicalization processes in Europe should not at all be seen in the light of what's taking place in the Muslim world as such?

*Answer:* First of all, there's an Italian scholar, a young one still working on his PhD, but he's already an established scholar because he has published a lot, his name is Lorenzo Vidino, he's an Italian-American and works at Harvard. He published a book four years ago, *Al-Qaeda in Europe*. It's about Jihadism in Western Europe. He answers your question fully and in his view, Jihad in Europe is 'le monde en miniature' [the world on a small scale]. Jihadism is a global phenomenon and Europe is 'le monde en miniature' for this phenomenon, so it's no different. And in his view, this is very dangerous and it's a fact that's supported now. Intelligence services now find out that young Muslims, born in Europe and who never lived in the world of Islam, become emotional through the situation in Palestine, in Iraq, in Afghanistan and they become susceptible to al-Qaeda-ideology. Al-Qaeda has been able, according to the facts of Vidino, to use Europe as an area of recruitment. So recruitment of Jihadists among young Muslims in Europe. But even though these Muslims are not like in Iraq – when al-Zarqawi was in charge before he was killed by the Americans, he told them, "We have enough people. We have enough Jihadists. We need money, we need kills, but we don't need you. Stay in Europe, do not come. Stay in Europe, collect money for us and help build

infrastructure for us, but don't come, because we don't need you". But the people wanted to go and be part of global Jihad on the spot.

So the answer for you is that it is not a phenomenon in itself, Jihadism in Europe, it is part of a global phenomenon and it is an illustration of it. And especially, how are al-Qaeda and other movements able to recruit people among youngsters who know very little about Islam? But who become emotional and susceptible to this ideology of victimization. We, Muslims, are encircled, Islam is under siege and we, Muslims, are surrounded by the crusaders and by the Jews. To look at the West as a crusader and to say that the crusaders are in alliance with the Jews, and world Jewry rules Europe and the United States from Wall Street. This is also an invention of tradition because if you look at the real history of the Crusades, when the crusaders came to Jerusalem, the Jews and the Muslims fought shoulder by shoulder to protect Jerusalem against the crusaders. And when the crusaders won, the Muslims fled to the al-Aqsa Mosque and the Jews to their synagogue. But you see, the hatred of the Jews by the crusaders was greater than the hatred of the Muslims. The Muslims were not burned, al-Aqsa is still there. The major synagogue of Jerusalem was burned, many people don't know that. The first burning of the Jews was not in Auschwitz, it was in Jerusalem by the crusaders. But the ideology of recruitment is victimization of Islam and Islam under siege by world Jewry and the crusaders, and these Muslims live in Europe, so how do they come across these things? But many of these Muslims are jobless, they are not starving, because there is no starvation in Europe, but they are susceptible to victimization because of the marginalization, so you see here how economic factors. So it's not only ideology, economic factors of social and economic marginalization coincide with indoctrination and become social politics.

*Question:* Thank you for explaining the concepts, I think this is very important to observe by the concepts and to make them clear if we look at the conflicts in politics and history. Now, to look at nationalism and neo-nationalism, Western nationalism or Arab nationalism, is that a kind of fundamentalism? And in continuation of that question, globalization is that a kind of fundamentalism, too? And do we fight about it because Muslims and Christians have the same God, that means also the same idea of unity in the world? We have the same idea of a book religion and we fight about texts and symbols, too.

*Answer:* The symbols are part of the cultural system so when they are separated from politics they have a different meaning. But when the symbols you are referring to are politicized, they acquire another meaning and also have another function. I think that you as a philosopher underline the place of concept in this thinking. I think that three concepts should be separated from one another. The concept of ethnicity, the concept of nationalism and the concept of religious fundamentalism. And I'll try to relate them to one another. They can be separated in theory, but in reality, they intermingle. But they intermingle in different ways.

In Afghanistan, the Taleban are 100 per cent Pashtun, the tribe. And so you have the Pashtun ethnicity mixing with Islam, and Islam is universalism. You see, ethnicity is an extreme localism, and Islam is an extreme universalism. So how can you bring these together, but it happens. In Afghanistan, the ethnicity of the Taleban, the Pashtuns, and the universalism of Islam are united.

This could happen to the Taleban, but this could not happen to al-Qaeda. When al-Qaeda was acting from Afghanistan prior to 9/11, there was a real factual separation between the Taleban and al-Qaeda. Al-Qaeda had 53 camps for training terrorists and the interaction between the two was very limited. I have concrete knowledge about this, I can disclose it now. When 9/11 took place, I was in Tashkent in Uzbekistan, I was consulting president Karimov and also educating his political elite in two high schools, 250 people in each, in the distinction between Islam and Islamism. And I was paid for my activities, but I had also the privilege of having access to intelligence material so there I learnt a lot about al-Qaeda. And al-Qaeda had a universalist ideology for remaking the world, and the Pashtun people of the Taleban had an ethnic identity, and they do not fit with one another. But they were political allies.

So here in this case, you have universalism, a pure universalism, al-Qaeda, I think, is pure. Because in their camps, there were Uighurs, who were Chinese, but most were Arabs, but these people were told, "You are Muslim, and you have no ethnicity". But the Taleban insist on their ethnicity.

And then in the third case, nationalism. Arab nationalism is a secular ideology. During my young years, I spent some years on research for my book, *Arab Nationalism. Between Islam and the Nation State*, and the subtitle is significant. Arab nationalists are committed to the nation state which is secular and that's why they are Muslim by faith, but politically they are not Muslim, they are secularist, Arab nationalist.

So in the case of the Middle East, there is no connection between nationalism and fundamentalism, because when the Islamists gained power – the watershed event for Islamists was not 9/11, it was the Six Day War in 1967. Israel, a small state at the time of only four million, was able to defeat 22 Arab armies. And then the Islamists say, "Why did the Jews win and why did we lose? The Jews won, because they stuck to their religion and we lost because we abandoned our religion. You are Arab nationalist, you are secular, you lost your religion and you lost the war. So we come back now to religion."

So in this case, the victory of fundamentalism was a defeat of nationalism. But there are cases like the Tamils in Sri Lanka who are nationalist. The Hindus in India are nationalist. There are cases where you have a combination of nationalism and fundamentalism, there are cases where you have a combination of ethnicity and nationalism, but there are cases of extreme universalism where Islamic fundamentalism, a universalist ideology based on Islam, because Islam is universalist, but the Islamic fundamentalists translate Islamic universalism into internationalism. And in this way, they are under the impact of Marx and Lenin – because Marxism is an internationalist ideology –

and they deny ethnicity and they deny nationalism. So the Arab part of the history of religious fundamentalism is nationalism-free.

So when we use the three concepts, I think that we could order the empirical material easily. I hope that I have been successful in doing so.

*Question:* [About including/excluding Islamists in a democratic dialogue]

*Answer:* The question is tough and it is very timely, but very challenging. Because I think that you and I share democracy and democracy means that if someone has a different approach than you do, you do not put him in jail. You have to deal with the power democratically. So, to deal democratically with fundamentalism excludes the option of putting them in jail. With your inspiration, I'll try to differentiate between concept and fact.

The fact is: Look at Algeria and Turkey. These are different models. In Algeria, they put the fundamentalists in jail or they kill them, because the fundamentalists kill you. So if you kill me, I kill you, so you speak their language. This is the Algerian model.

The Turkish model is inclusion. Actually, there were four Islamist parties in Turkey. The first three parties were forbidden and then came the fourth party and it learned from the past: Do not use Islamist terminology in your political language. Do not provide whatever evidence that could help a court to abolish you. And they have been successful and have won two elections and have ruled the country since 2002.

Now the question is – I have to accept this, I'm not happy about it, but I have to accept it because the elections were correct, they were not falsified – but if you look at what is happening now in Turkey, the AKP who are in power, accept democracy as a procedure, but they do not practice it. This is not prejudice, this is reality. There were problems when president Sezer, the former president and the last secular president of Turkey, when he left, he said, "Turkey, and the secular character of Turkey, is under threat". And there were problems about finding a new president, probably you know the story, the election of the present president Gül was a very problematic one and there were some intermediaries and mediators and they told him, "You control the parliament, you have the office of the prime minister, so find a consensus and find a president who is not Islamist, but who is secular". They said 'no'. And they abandoned the parliament, went to a new election, they got more power and they got Gül, so they do not accept pluralism. In democracy, two elements are important: pluralism and the sharing of power.

In Turkey, the AKP does not share power with the secularists, and with every office that becomes vacant, they fill it with an Islamist. So they try to introduce their people into the state, conquering the state peacefully, democratically and they are de-secularizing the country. If you want to read about this, there's an

article by a Turkish scholar, a lady, Zeyno Baran, who's a senior fellow at the Hudson Institute in Washington and she published the article in the *Journal of Democracy*, the basic, authoritative journal of democracy research, in 2008, "Turkey Divided". And there you'll find evidence presented by Zeyno Baran of what she calls the "creeping Islamization of Turkey".

And I'm here now powerless. I don't want to see Turkey being Islamized in a 'creeping' manner, but this is happening in democratic terms. And I have no answer to your question and I am not very hopeful that Islamists, in a foreseeable future, will govern most Islamic countries, but I live in Europe and as long as I live, but also beyond when I have passed away, I don't want to see them powerful in Europe and therefore, I want to wake up Europeans and tell them: Distinguish between Islamist and Muslim and prevent an Islamization of Europe. Now the term Islamization has become Islamophobic because some right-wing people have used it. But you see, because the Nazis spoke of German physics, you do not abolish physics. Physics is still there. I have a Jewish colleague in Germany who says, "We cannot abolish everything or abandon everything the Nazis touched." So because right-wing people touched the term Islamization of Europe, we are not allowed to use it. At Cornell University, I coined the formula, *Europeanizing Islam* – I'm against cornering Islam – or the Islamization of Islam.

So what you're talking about, peaceful Islamists might come to power in this way in Egypt, in Iraq they came to power with American support. Do you know that Islamist parties rule Iraq with the help of the USA? They are now in parliament in Lebanon, they rule the Gaza Strip, they came democratically to power. You know what they have done in the Gaza Strip? In 2006, they won the election. In June 2007, one year after that – they have their own police – and then in a coup, they arrested 450 of the PLO and they have all been in jail ever since without a trial. So they abolished the opposition, they abolished the Supreme Court. They said, "We are democratically elected". But the fact that you are democratically elected, does not qualify you to put me in jail without a trial.

I don't want to see this happening in Europe and therefore, Europeans must wake up and must say, "We have to work with liberal Muslims". The French government does it. The French government works with the Imam of the Mosque of Paris for at concept of European Islam. The Dutch woke up. I don't know what's happening in your country, I know little. But it's very important to avoid the accusation of Islamophobia. When you act, you have to act jointly with Muslims so you may say, "My allies are Muslims. So I'm acting against you not as a crusader or a Jew, I'm thinking in the name of European values and my allies are liberal Muslims."

*Question:* Thank you very much for your lecture. When you can't read Arabic, you have to rely on secondary sources and I've been systematically working my way through a bibliography since our Cartoon Crisis in 2005. One of the



people talked a little bit about it, and I was wondering if you could please give us the benefit of your perspective on four people that I've been reading: Tariq Ramadan, Ali [*unaudible*] and Ed Husain? Do you know these four?

*Answer:* I know all of them, even personally. The best among the four is Ed Husain. Let's start with Ed Husain. He was a member of Hizb ut-Tahrir, he was a Jihadist, he was in jail, he was an extremely radical Muslim. And I don't know how he woke up, I know, this is rhetorical. He woke up and he now works with the British government. They received money to establish an association, this is the Column Association in London, and they work in a group of enlightened Muslims. Most of them are former terrorists, former Islamists and say, "We have been enlightened". And he wrote a book, *The Islamist. Why I joined radical Islam in Britain, what I saw inside and why I left*. And he tells his story: How he became an Islamist and how he left Islamism. And this is a wonderful book, it should be imperative to read it, especially for young Muslims to avoid this way.

You know what happened when he published the book? You know who attacked him? Of course, the Islamists attacked him, but in the first row, he was attacked by multiculturalists. And he – a Muslim who had been enlightened and had abandoned Islamism in a very difficult psychological process – was accused of Islamophobia by British liberals. This is terrible.

The most interesting among the four is Ed Husain, and the most dangerous among them is Tariq Ramadan. I'll try to be very careful because I'm prejudiced. I was in Indonesia a few years ago, and there are two parties in Indonesia, both Islamic, but not Islamist, Muhammadiyah and Nahdatul Ulama, and I was invited by Muhammadiyah, I lectured there and they told me, "Mr. Ramadan is coming." And I sat among the audience and he did not see me. And he told them (he lectured in English because he doesn't speak Bahasa) and coined a term in Arabic: Islam is superior and no one can be superior to it. And he told them, "Our Islam is the final religion to humanity."

I'll come back to your question earlier, because Islam and Christianity have something to share, you know the same God, many values, but unlike Christianity, Islam believes that Christianity is a revelation by God which is true and that's why Christians are not unbelievers. This is Islamic theology, not Islamism. Islamism is different. Islamic theology says, "Christians are believers and we have to respect them, we have to guarantee their life, but they live under us as minors, as a 'protected minority'. Because Islam is the final religion, Christianity is an incomplete revelation and that's why Islam is superior".

But Tariq Ramadan stretches this politically and says, "We are superior to others and we have to establish the superiority of Islam." The same person, two years later, commemorating the victims of March 11 – there's 9/11, and March 11 in Madrid – and he was ... and I was also in the audience and he said, "We are full-heartedly committed to pluralism."

So what is true? What he says in Djakarta? Or what he said in Madrid? And that was in 2004. In 2006, I was on a panel with him in Sweden with the Johnson Foundation, and he started to tell his tales: We are against all this, we are for democracy and so on. I told him, “Mr Ramadan, I know 17 Tariq Ramadans, which one of them is now speaking?” And I stood up and said, “For respect of myself and for respect for the dignity, I do not waste my time with you.” I packed my things, I went to the airport and I returned to Germany. And ever since, I have refused to talk with him. He’s an intelligent man and people say – and I cannot prove it – that he is based in the Muslim Brotherhood, I don’t know, but I know that he speaks the language of political Islamism most carefully, so you cannot [...] And there’s a lady, a French lady [Caroline Fourest], who wrote a book against him, *Frère Tariq*, and it has been translated into English, *Brother Tariq*. And she discloses a lot of things about him. He is not trustworthy.

But when it comes to the things published, if you look at “signandsight.com”, which is an online magazine, we have a lot of ideas, [...]. What is European Islam? European Islam, for him, – because he plagiarized the term from me – I established the term in 1992 when he was still a young boy. European Islam, for me, is a Europeanization of Islamic values in a way that I read Islamic values in a European mindset and try to establish legitimacy for these European values in Islamic terms to make them appealing to Muslims.

The idea of ‘democracy’, for instance, is European, it’s not Islamic. But I read it in a European mind and say, “There’s an Islamic legitimacy for democracy.” This is my understanding of Euro-Islam.

Tariq Ramadan, and he does it clearly, he’s not like this, it’s exact. Euro-Islam is to establish a space for Islam in Europe where Muslims live in Europe in [...] style, they live Islamic values, he means Shari‘a, and I call this ‘settlement colonialism’.

So you have two concepts: One is integration of Muslims to become European citizens and one of slow colonization of Europe to make out an Islamic diaspora space of colonial settlements. And here, I’m clear about this, I say that Tariq Ramadan is dangerous and I also tell him this in public and write it, too.

*Question:* You make a distinction that’s very interesting. What’s between the ballot and the bullet people? What you were saying was that actually the ballot people are the most dangerous ones. But how do you see the relation between the ballot and the bullet? Are the bullet people storm troopers for the ballot people or vice versa? Or do you see antagonism between the two groups? That’s one question.

The second one is, as a European, I should visit a serious problem and I should be aware of this, and when you made that point, you pointed to the influx of people coming from the Arab world, but how does that fit with the distinction between Islam and Islamism. Because the influx of people who have a faith

called Islam, should pose no problem, whereas Islamism and the 20 million people etc. and they're growing and having more children than everybody else and things like that.... Why do you see this connection, or this necessary connection that I should be suspicious of? People coming from the Islamic world entering Europe and the growth of Islamism which is the political ideology which, if I'm correct, is also growing among European converts...

*Answer:* But you know, statistically, this is insignificant, but it's a phenomenon.

*Question:* But doesn't that sort of question your distinction between Islam and Islamism when you use the number of people from Arab countries....?

*Answer:* From all over the world of Islam, not only Arab countries.

*Question:* But why do you use that as an argument? Because if I look at the political landscape in Europe, throughout Europe, I can easily see a threat coming from people who do not believe in the philosophy of democracy, but I see it from a very broad spectrum of political forces in Europe. Not only Islamism, but many other places – I mean, they are ruling in Italy! Isn't that a greater danger? Convince me that this is *the* greatest danger to Europe.

*Answer:* Ok, I'll start with the second question. And there are two responses to this question.

1) You have the Islamic diaspora, 23 million, and you have the Islamists, and the Islamists are a minority. But to say minority, this is not to avoid the alarm. But this minority is between the lowest in Germany, 3 per cent, and the highest in the Netherlands, 10 per cent. These are intelligence data. The Islamists act in the Islamic diaspora, they act in the mosques and they try to hijack the Islamic diaspora. And they claim to speak in the name of it. In Europe, with varying degrees of success. In France, they are unsuccessful because the government does not recognize them. In Germany, they are the major speakers of Islam accepted by the government are the Islamists, even though statistical data say that they are 3 per cent of the diaspora, but they represent about 10 per cent. The German government asked research institutes to find out how many Muslims support and there were about 10 per cent. But the organized Islamists themselves are 3 per cent. So, they are active in the Islamic diaspora, they make use of it, they are well organized, they are powerful in the mosques and in the [formation of opinions].

2) The majority of Muslims who are ordinary people, you can win them, in traditional Islamic education, you do not become a democrat. But you are not against democracy by definition. Islamists are against democracy by definition,

against the philosophy of democracy. But the young Muslims or the ordinary Muslims you can win if you have a policy. And it does not happen by itself, you have to do something about it. This is the answer to the second part.

The first question was about the blurred lines. This is really difficult, you see, there are two cases. There are Islamist parties in Malaysia that do not have militias. And the most known party in the world which is Islamist and which is ruling a country, very important for Europe, is the AKP of Turkey. AKP has no militia, but they use police against their critics, but this is not militia. But there are cases where people come to power with the help of democracy and not only have members in the parliament, but they have an army, and the best example of this is Hamas. Hamas has 33 members in the parliament in Lebanon, Hamas has four or five ministers, I think, in the cabinet. And at the same time, they have their own army, we don't know the exact number, but 5-8,000 and they control areas in west Beirut in southern Lebanon. These are areas controlled by the army, not the regular army, they do not have uniforms, it is controlled by Hamas. Last year, a helicopter of the Lebanese army that was flying over an area of Hizbollah, was shot down. And they acknowledged this, they said, "We shot it down because they are not allowed to fly over our military". But we said, "These are Lebanese people, not Israelis". But they said, "They were spying for Israel. We do not have a guarantee that they were not spying for Israel. They were taking pictures and how could we be sure that they would not pass them to Israel".

You see, how could this party be democratic which has an army? And the same thing in the Gaza Strip. Hamas came to power in democracy and they say that they are democratically elected. But they do everything against democracy.

The third case is in Iraq, the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq. This party was formed when Saddam Hussein was ruling in Iraq and it existed in Iran for almost 20 years. 20 years in Iran. And they have an army, the Badr Brigade. And when the Americans liberated Iraq from Saddam, this army of 15,000 people, in the first week, this is intelligence information, they all came into Iraq and the Americans stupidly disbanded the Iraqi army 100 per cent and the Iraqi police 100 per cent. And the core of the new army and the core of the new police were made of people from the Badr Brigade. The Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq is in the government, in the parliament, in all state institutions, but they have their own army, the Badr Brigade still exists on its own, and it's represented in the regular army and in the regular police. So I do not trust people when they talk about democracy.

Again, let's come to the concepts. There's a concept of Jihadist Islamism and a concept of institutional Islamism, analytically they are separated. But in these three cases, the theoretical separation does not exist in reality. So these people are institutional Islamists because they go to the ballot box, but they are also Jihadists because they do not abandon the bullet. So you sit in the parliament

and you have the bullet, so what are you? And here, as a scholar, I am powerless, my concepts do not help.

*Question:* What about Central Asia? [*the rest inaudible*]

*Answer:* I am proud to have field experience in Central Asia, I lived many times and also worked for and with the government in Uzbekistan mostly, but also in Kazakhstan. In these countries, you have the concept of ethnicity, a very great ethnic diversity. So, Islamism mixes here with ethnicity. And also sectarianism, Sunna and Shi'a, so Iran tries to gain power in Central Asia with the help of the Shi'i. Turkey tries the same with the help of the Sunni. And Saudi Arabia as well. So there are three powers that intervene and the governments do not like it, but cannot stop it. So the three powers are Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Iran. And al-Qaeda is very active, especially in Uzbekistan. There's a valley in the south of Uzbekistan which borders on Afghanistan, and al-Qaeda is there fully. The Uzbek government is not able to handle this issue.

But all the governments that exist in Central Asia, including the government that I know very well, but I do not share, please – if I consult a person, it does not mean that I approve what this person does – I do not approve what Mr Karimov does. So I know him, I talk to him, I know his government, and they are aware of the threat and they are willing to speak the language of violence when they are exposed to this violence.

And maybe you remember, about two years ago, there was a kind of uprising, an Islamist uprising, in Uzbekistan and it was countered with brutal violence. And this led to a conflict with the United States, because the United States complained about the violation of human rights. Then Karimov told them, "Well, you keep your human rights and you keep your troops as well. So the American troops had to leave, in retaliation, Uzbekistan and it was a loss for the Americans because it damages the position in Afghanistan.

But all these governments, in Uzbekistan, in Kazakhstan, and also in the Caucasus – last year, I was many times in Azerbaijan – and they know of the Islamist threat and they say, "If we do not counter them, like what happened in Uzbekistan, they killed about 2-300 people....." Please, please don't get me wrong, I'm a human rights activist and I highly disapprove this and I do not like it, but think about the facts. The people say, "If we don't kill them, they kill us. Had they succeeded in becoming powerful they would have killed all the families of Karimov and his supporters and gained power. So instead of letting them kill me, I kill them". This is not a good solution, but this is the situation in Central Asia and also in the Caucasus, but mostly in Central Asia – very bad.

*Mehdi Mozaffari:* And nobody asked you about the Sudanese story.....

*Answer:* Maybe I'll finish with telling the story, if you'll bear with me for two minutes, I'll make it short. Because it's not only the Islamists that are a problem, but some traditional Islamic views are value conflicts; this cannot be restricted to Islamism. If I said this, I would be dishonest because some Muslims who are not Islamists are also a problem.

I was teaching at the University of Khartoum in 1987 and one year later, the Islamists came to power in Sudan. But then, there was a democratically elected government and the prime minister whose name was also Mahdi. And then, there's the city and I hope you know that there's the Nile, the two Niles, the blue Nile and the white Nile, and they come like this and they meet in a place near the city of Khartoum and the city is called Omdurman. And it's wonderful, when you see where they meet, it's exciting. Where the two rivers meet was the campus of the Omdurman University. It is Islamic, not Islamist, but Islamic, very orthodox, and I invited to speak there about Islam and Europe and I spoke in public, you're in Africa, 500 people were listening to me in the free with microphone. And I was with the dean of the Faculty of Shari'a there and I said ....

Now, in order to understand this well, I have to tell you this: Islam, not only Islamism, Islam considers itself as a superior religion, because "religion by God is Islam" and because "Muhammad is the final of all prophets", "the history of mankind or humankind is the history of the Prophet". And the last Prophet is Muhammad, and the last revelation is the Qur'an. This is the final truth and that's why Muslims are superior to others. So Islam is the religion of nature, all humans are born as Muslims and for this adverse situation, they become non-Muslims. Now, if somebody knows Islam well, this person would become a Muslim. So this is the issue. This is the basic assumption of Islamic proselytization.

So, I delivered a lecture and I said, "Europeans are getting better. I have lived many decades in Europe, when I came to Europe, Europeans didn't like Islam, they discriminated me, but now Europeans are improving. They are opening their minds to non-Europeans, opening their minds to Islam and this is also reflected in Islamic studies in Europe. So, there's a better knowledge among Europeans about Islam, now Europeans understand Islam very well. Almost very well."

And maybe I was naïve, I forgot what I have told you. And then the dean asked me, in front of 500 people, "Professor Tibi, do you have any evidence that Europeans now understand Islam well?" And he said to me, "Out of your students who now understand Islam better, how many of your students converted to Islam?" Because they understand Islam well, so then if you understand Islam, you convert to Islam. Because Islam is the last and final religion. You see, I'm against proselytization and none of my students converted, ever. But I cannot say this in front of 500 people, if I say this, they'll say, "You are a liar. You say that your students understand Islam and

none of them converted to Islam so you're lying to us. So all that you said is wrong".

I cannot do that and I evaded his question 3-4 times, and the fourth time, he stood in front of me and he really shouted at me and he said, "Stop evading the question. Professor, now you answer my question. I repeat it a fourth time: 'How many of your students converted to Islam?'" And I could not evade anymore. And I believe in God and then I asked, "Allah, please help me!" And then I received the inspiration, "I did not count them."