

HATRED RISING LIVING ISLAM IN A HOSTILE WEST



Overview and Analysis

Shafiul Huq



In this talk...

- Context in which we see the rise of far-right groups across the West
- Relationship between “far-right” and “mainstream”
- How both contribute to rising anti-Muslim sentiment

The Left & The Right



The Left & The Right

What is the difference?

The Left & The Right

- Political Correctness
- New Left used the term in 1960s to establish lines between what was offensive and what was not.
- Since the 1980s, used by the Right in derogatory sense: policing of language to hide inconvenient truths.

(Encyclopaedia of Politics)

Political Correctness

- Far-right leaders meet in Germany day after Trump sworn in as president
- Geert Wilders:
 - Yesterday, a new America. Today, hello Koblenz, a new Europe!
 - The people of the West are awakening. They are throwing off the yoke of political correctness.

Political Correctness

Trump on rising Islamophobia:

“We could be very politically correct, but whether we like it or not, ***there is a problem*** [...] Now, to solve a problem, you have to be able to state what the problem is or at least say the name. She won't say the name and President Obama won't say the name. But the name is there. It's ***radical Islamic terror.***”

Political Correctness

- Apparently censors any discussion on real problems facing the West:
 - Muslims are a security threat
 - Muslims are imposing their culture
 - Muslim do not want to integrate
- Outspoken politicians now breaking the silence

Political Correctness

“I’m opposed to wearing headscarves in public places. That’s not France. There’s something I just don’t understand: the people who come to France, why would they want to change France, to live in France the same way they lived back home?”

– Marine Le Pen

Political Correctness

“We are in danger of being swamped by Muslims who bear a culture and ideology that is incompatible with our own.”

– Pauline Hanson

Political Correctness

- Muslims – one of biggest problems facing the West?
- Far-right popularity hinges on anti-Muslim rhetoric.
- Why do these groups have much traction these days?
- May be they offer some certainty in uncertain times

Modernism Vs. Globalisation



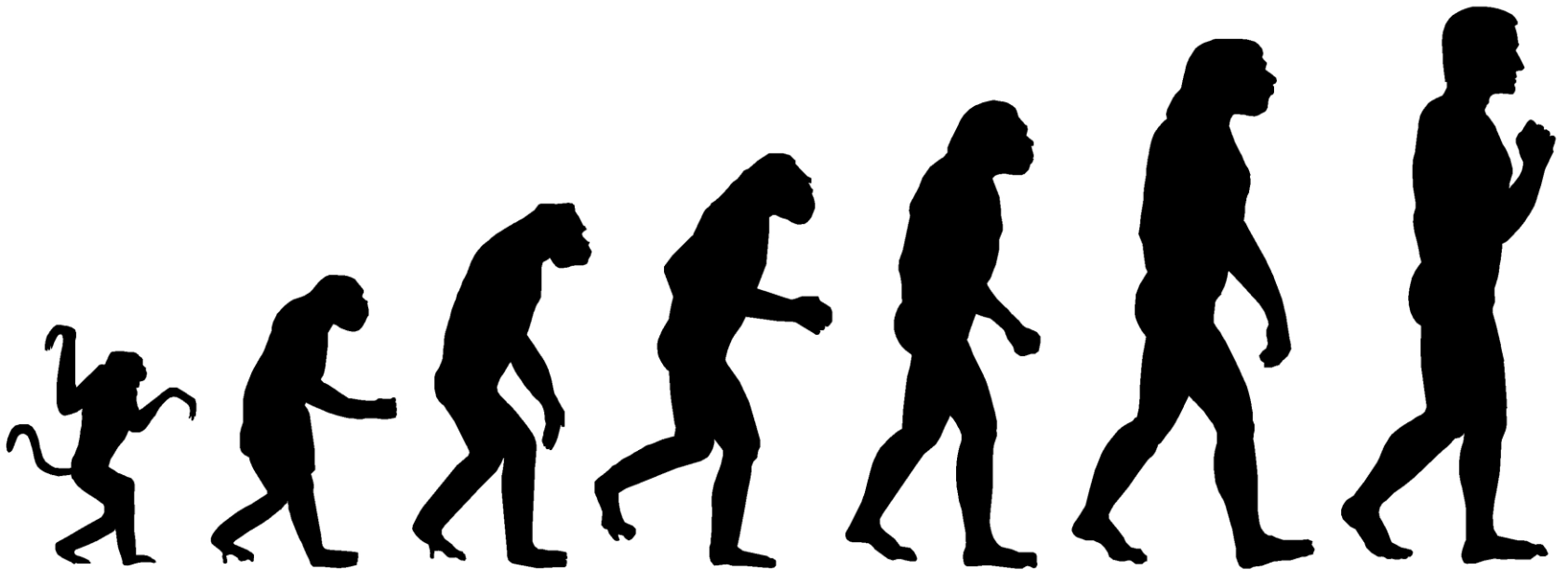
Modernism

- The culture of modernity
- What is the story of “modernism”??
- “Modern” West Vs. “Backward” Islam
- Modernism tells us the story of...

Modernism



Modernism



Modernism

- The story of “progress”
- Modern Science: Evolution from apes to man
- Cultural theory: From primitive to modern societies
- The Modern West – the most advanced civilisational form of human societies

Modernism

- Lemert: “... *the reality of things is that things can and will get better.*”
- Is the world really a better place, and is it really getting progressively better?
- Our global realities increasingly bring to question the modern culture’s progressive ideal.

Globalisation

- Globalisation has exacerbated the gulf between the have's and the have-not's.
- Not just between rich and poor countries, but within wealthy nations themselves.
- The gap between 3rd world and 1st world poor is gradually closing!!

Globalisation

- Roubaix, one of the poorest towns in France:
 - Once a centre of France's thriving textiles industry
 - Factories shut down since 70s due to foreign competition
 - Now 45% (40,000) of population below poverty threshold of €1,008 a month
 - 30% unemployment rate compared to national avg. 10%
 - Many of them said they would vote for Le Pen

“Crisis of Legitimacy”

- Piero Ignazi writes in a paper published in 2003:
 - Link b/t declining confidence in system and rise of far-right
 - 95% across Western Europe accept democracy as ideal
 - Only 57% are satisfied with the workings of democracy
 - Less than half express confidence in national legislature

Far-right Populism

- The Far-right capitalises on such negative public sentiments
- They offer an anti-establishment voice:
 - Trump critical of Washington establishment
 - Le Pen against “unregulated... wild, savage, globalisation”

Far-right Populism

- Superficial politics!
- Problem is never the system!
- “But the intruder who corrupted it”
- The migrant, the Muslim etc.
- Get rid of them to restore balance and order!

Far-right & the Mainstream

- Mainstream ostensibly rejects far-right racism
- Yet do take their issues seriously in policy-making
- Hanson openly supports Trump-style “Muslim ban”
- Lib. Gov’t introduced questions in the citizenship test specifically targeting Muslims
- Presence of Muslims in Australia needs to be specifically controlled.

War-on-Terror & rising anti-Muslim sentiments



Growing anti-Muslim sentiments

Causes:

- Not necessarily just the Far-right
- Climate of fear created by the mainstream
- War on terror paints Muslims collectively as terrorists

Obama: Pro-Muslim?

- Criticised for refusing to use term “Islamic terrorism”
- “What I have been careful about ... **is to not lump these murderers into the billion Muslims that exist around the world... who are peaceful**”
- The epitome of political correctness!
- His policies don’t distinguish b/t “terrorists” and “peaceful” Muslims

Obama: Pro-Muslim?

- 26,172 airstrikes on seven Muslim countries in 2016
- Conservative figures due to lack of reliable data
- “Strike”: can involve multiple airstrikes dropping dozens of bombs targeting multiple sites
- Minimum of 3 bombs an hour!
- Official civilian death count for entire 8 years: **64-116!!!**

Obama: Pro-Muslim?

- The U.S. “in effect counts all military-age males in a strike zone as combatants... unless there is explicit intelligence posthumously proving them innocent.” [*New York Times*]
- **Guilty unless posthumously proven innocent!**
- **All Muslims are treated as “terrorists”!**

Obama: Pro-Muslim?



Obama: Pro-Muslim?

- Abdulrahman killed in U.S. drone strike in Yemen
- 16 years old
- U.S. citizen
- No links to any “terrorist” organisations

Obama: Pro-Muslim?

“I would suggest that you should have a far more responsible father if they are truly concerned about the well being of their children. I don't think becoming an al Qaeda jihadist terrorist is the best way to go about doing your business.”

- White House Press Secretary, Robert Gibbs

Obama: Pro-Muslim?

- Pew Research Centre survey shows that 58% of Americans support drone strikes. Why??
- Recall Obama's distinction b/t Good/Bad Muslims?
- “Good” Vs. “Bad” Muslims rhetoric inevitably criminalises all Muslims
- Mahmoud Mamdani:
“Unless proved to be “good,” every Muslim was presumed to be “bad”

Good/Bad Muslim – Australian Context

- Hanson: You can't tell a good Muslim from a bad one!
- Although criticised by many, this is precisely underlying logic that governs our relation with broader society.
- Even the “politically correct” mainstream parties operate under this hidden assumption!

Good/Bad Muslim – Australian Context

- Lib. Govt. under Howard joined war on terror
- Destroyed an entire nation based on a lie (which Howard calls “errors in intelligence”!!)
- Dr Haneef fiasco politicised by John Howard and then Immigration Minister Kevin Andrews
- Liberals introduced anti-terror laws that squarely target Muslims
- Further strengthened by Labor

Good/Bad Muslim – Australian Context

- Immigration Minister Peter Dutton: Mistake to allow Lebanese Muslim refugees into Australia
- Treasurer Scott Morrison on “Muslim ban”:
The world is “catching up to Australia.”
- Foreign Minister Julie Bishop: Turnbull gov’t would support the U.S. in implementing its “strong immigration and border protection policies”

Good/Bad Muslim – Australian Context

- Bi-partisan support for anti-terror laws, de-rad programs etc. that target Muslims
- HTA campaign on CVE: Testimonies of Muslims being harassed, detained, Muslim homes raided
- **All this under leadership of mainstream, not far-right!**

Far-right & Mainstream

- Anti-Muslim atmosphere created by mainstream
- Far-right exacerbates this fear and takes it to its logical conclusion:
 - Muslims are the problem
 - Ban Muslims, Hijab, halal food, mosques, Qur'an!
- Explicit racism of Far-right makes mainstream seem tolerant
- Mainstream pursues similar policies to far-right