

## Reflection Paper for Islam Discussion

During the course of last class, we spoke about the concept of Islamophobia, whether it is related to the religion or the people, whether it is instinctive or conscious, and whether profiling is effective or not. The part that struck me the most was the fact that some people wanted to disconnect the fear of danger from human instincts in the name of our "better selves." Some things can be controlled, but I think it would take a lot for the world to put islamophobia behind, as it will take for us to get rid of greed, and other immoral acts which are bred in our human genome.

On the topic of islamophobia related to the religion or the people, I think it has everything to do with the religion. Terrorists all over the world use Islam as backing for their actions. Like in every religion in the world, there are radicals. Unfortunately for Islam, some of their radicals still believe in the pursuit of converting the whole universe to their believe using violent methods (as is the case in Nigeria now). This is a rather unfortunate situation, and these types of actions by some Muslims are the root of Islamophobia in the world today. The way we humans understand and memorize concepts is by categorizing. It is easier to junk all people with a common religion or purpose or characteristic. It is wrong to generalize all Muslims because most of them don't have the opinion the few extremist have, but are targeted as well. We categorize to help us understand and group things together, but in this case, it is just safer to assume (in the case of Nigeria) that if you see someone throwing a bomb or explosives into a Christian Church, he is probably Muslim. To me, these assumptions are the root of Islamophobia. This categorization immediately leads to the concept of profiling, which to me is totally wrong, especially when adopted by a government which is supposed to acknowledge all its citizens.

On the topic of islamophobia being instinctive or calculated, I think that Islamophobia for those who have it is actually calculated. It is wrong in my opinion to judge anyone according to his affiliations. Affiliating yourself with a particular group firstly doesn't necessarily mean that you believe in the values

of that group, and secondly, you do not choose who affiliates himself with your group or not. For the case of terrorists who plan to destroy America or some countries in Europe, most of these terrorists call on Islam as their religion, but one will argue that they are not following the rules of their religion. The fact that they affiliate themselves with Muslims does not mean that all Muslims affiliate themselves with terrorists. Instincts come into play when we have a particular fear. It is right to be afraid of terrorists, but it is wrong to be afraid of Muslims. Since it is difficult to tell the good people from the bad people judging by their appearance or looks, we tend towards making the erroneous simplifying assumption that all Muslims are Terrorists.

In my opinion, we need to thread carefully while dealing with these situations. Every Islam phobic person has what he thinks is reason enough for him. What I think is made from my personal principles, and I do not expect the world to think exactly like I do, I might be right or wrong, but my stance is against any sort of generalization which will affiliate the innocent and the guilty, no matter how simplifying it may be.

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