

The Higher Standard of Truthfulness

John Esposito's *Unholy War*, written in response to the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, is a good and useful book, and also a bad one. The reader is therefore well advised to eat the banana and dispose of the peel properly; one purpose of this review is to help distinguish between the two.

Esposito, a prolific and influential scholar of the modern Muslim world, is University Professor of Religion and International Affairs at Washington, D.C.'s Georgetown University, and the founding director of the Institute of Muslim-Christian Understanding in Georgetown's Walsh School of Foreign Service.

Unholy War addresses such questions about Islam and the Muslim world as, "Why do they hate us? Why is Islam more militant than other religions? What does the Quran have to say about jihad or holy war? Does the Quran condone this kind of violence and terrorism? Is there a clash of civilizations between the West and the Muslim world?"

Esposito's exposition of Islam is the good and useful banana. Islam, like Christianity, is a house with many rooms. Esposito's presentation of this rich complexity is admirably specific and well documented for such a short book. Take, for example, the doctrine of *jihad*, that is, struggle (in the path of God).

Jihad, for Example

There is the greater *jihad*, which is "the more difficult and more important struggle against one's ego, selfishness, greed, and evil," and the lesser, the outward struggle of resistance against ungodliness in the world. Muslims have interpreted the lesser *jihad* variously in different historical contexts, and different verses of the Koran have different contexts. There are the "sword verses," and then there is *sura* 2:256: "There is no compulsion in religion."

Some modern Shi'ite scholars say that the lesser *jihad* is "the defense of one's life, faith, property, and the

integrity of the Muslim *ummah* [worldwide Muslim community -DC]." And some say that it also includes resistance against oppression anywhere, the "defense of the oppressed of the earth."

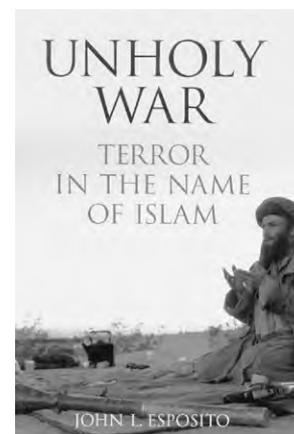
Because Islam is an entire worldview ordained by God, *shari'a* (Islamic law) "stipulates that it is a Muslim's duty to wage war not only against those who attack Muslim territory, but also against polytheists, apostates, and People of the Book (Jews, Christians, and other faiths) who refuse Muslim rule." That is, they are not required to convert, but to live peacefully in their faith communities *under Muslim rule*.

Lesser *Jihad* Modified

But, this stipulation of *shari'a* has been modified or reinterpreted by some, in important ways. One school of law, excepted from such war those lands which have concluded a truce with a Muslim government. The world's largest Muslim country, Indonesia, adopted principles of national life in the 1950's, called "Pancasila," according to which, belief in one God or supreme principle—and not Islam—is fundamental. And Abdurrahman Wahid, recently President of Indonesia and leader of the largest Muslim organization in Indonesia today, Nahdatul Ulama, has strenuously opposed the introduction of Islam into politics, or the implementation of *shari'a*.

Wahid, like some other modern Muslim leaders, including Sudan's Hasan al-Turabi, believes that *islam* (submission—to God) must reach its manifestation in governance organically, through a process of development from within the individual and within the culture. (I have departed just a little from demonstrating what is packed into *Unholy War*, by drawing material on Pancasila and al-Turabi from Esposito and John Voll's *Makers of Contemporary Islam*, 2001.)

Because *Unholy War* is so packed, the reader may get the feeling that "if it is Tuesday, this must be the Baghdad



Unholy War: Terror in the Name of Islam

by John L. Esposito
New York, Oxford University Press, 2002
208 pages, hardcover, \$25.00

Caliphate." Not to worry. It would help as follow-up, though, to read *The Makers of Contemporary Islam*, and Esposito's general introduction to Islam, *Islam, The Straight Path*.

Policy of Perpetual War

In *Unholy War*, Muslims practicing terrorism are condemned: "There can be no excuse for terrorism in the name of Islam." But not only them. In the United States, "the actions of the Attorney General and proposed Congressional anti-terrorism legislation, as well as the detention of individuals for indefinite periods without trial or access to evidence, raise deep concerns about the erosion of civil liberties. . . . The issue goes to the core of what the United States is and stands for . . . and what we might become."

The higher issue that is not addressed, however, is the existence of a *policy* to induce a 100-year "Clash of Civilizations," which the oligarchical families have put on the agenda to keep themselves in power, given the onrushing collapse of their financial system. This is the higher issue behind the terrorists and the actions of Attorney General Ashcroft. But this question is Esposito's banana peel (although, of course, he

is opposed to such a clash).

What is amiss, is Esposito's treatment of the Inevitable Clash thesis, as simply the mistaken viewpoint of a colleague, Samuel P. Huntington. But, Huntington cannot be understood from his published words alone, nor can he be taken in isolation. Bernard Lewis of Princeton (who first promoted the Inevitable Clash to the American public), Huntington, and Zbigniew Brzezinski work together to promote the Clash, despite the sprinkling of words they use to cover themselves.

Brzezinski, who praised Huntington's *Clash of Civilizations*, oversaw the operation that trained and armed a global Afghansi network of itinerant fighters and terrorists who were encouraged to act in the name of Islam *and* to hate the West. They were used to provoke the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, and then to push the Soviets out. It doesn't matter much what Brzezinski says about how it "just happened." By their fruits ye shall know them.

It is wrong—untrue—to cover for Brzezinski and his friends, by treating them singly as the authors of mistaken

texts. It is wrong to cover for them by referring simply to a "growing propensity among senior government officials, political commentators, and the media to see a new 'evil empire' replacing the communist threat."

When we are faced with a handful of policymakers who insist on policies that will surely set civilization itself on fire, a high standard of truthfulness is required to push them aside. Does academic collegiality stand in the way? Is Dr. Radovan Karadzic my esteemed colleague?

—David Cherry

Mozart's Age of Republican Enterprise

In the decade after the American Revolution, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was probably the most crucial individual in attempting to create a similar transformation in Europe. In the autumn of 1791, Europe, and in particular, France and Austria, had their last, best chance to wrench historical developments away from what we today know as the rage-driven, oligarchy-controlled French Revolution, a mockery of the American Revolution.¹ Mozart's powerful and beautiful presentation in his opera, *The Magic Flute*, of the "republican" proof—that every man or woman whose heart could feel love, also had the capacity to develop the mind, and to self-govern—was capturing and uplifting the general population of Vienna. His collaborators in this project, Emanuel Schikaneder's theater troupe, have been the subject of ongoing investigation by researcher David Buch.

The team of David Buch, the Boston Baroque ensemble, and Director Martin Pearlman, has once again done all friends and lovers of Mozart a service. Earlier, in 1999, this team recorded the world premiere of *The Philosopher's Stone*, composed in 1790 by the musical leaders of Schikaneder's troupe, which, as David Buch was able to prove, included Mozart. In reviewing the work at that time,² this author posed two major questions: "Why would Mozart work with a team of five composers?

And, what changes occurred in the 'sequel' [*The Magic Flute*], when Mozart assumed full control?"

Now, the Boston Baroque team brings us the world premiere recording of *The Beneficent Dervish*, created and performed (March 1791) by the same Schikaneder group, but with the exclusion of Mozart. Coming so nicely, halfway between *The Philosopher's Stone* (September 1790), where Mozart composed in collaboration with the other four, and *The Magic Flute* (September 1791), where Mozart composed alone, *The Beneficent Dervish* prompts a new, third question: "How well does this team of Mozart's collaborators do without him?"

Simply put, they do amazingly well. It is a delightful experience to hear this work. However, while my earlier comparison of *The Philosopher's Stone* to *The Magic Flute* put into relief the superior, scientific quality of Mozart's so-called "magic," the comparison of *The Beneficent Dervish* to *The Philosopher's Stone* allows the listener to hear Schikaneder's group play, as it were, while the teacher is out of the room. Without Mozart, they do veer more into the world of magic for the story-line, leaving the important transformations of the text, and of the music, for another time. But they are literate, occasionally a little inspired, and they do have fun. This is



The Beneficent Dervish
by Mozart's Circle
and
The Impresario
by W.A. Mozart
Boston Baroque, Martin
Pearlman, Director
Telarc CD, 2002, \$17.98

both a happy group, and a group that fully needed Mozart's intervention. So, today's listeners, lovers of Mozart's *Magic Flute*, can now hear two different "trial runs" of the Mozart/Schikaneder team, setting into relief Mozart's profound transformation of somewhat similar material.

Schikaneder's Troupe

In reviewing *The Philosopher's Stone*, I provided an extensive history of the collaboration of Mozart and Schikaneder in