



EDITORIAL

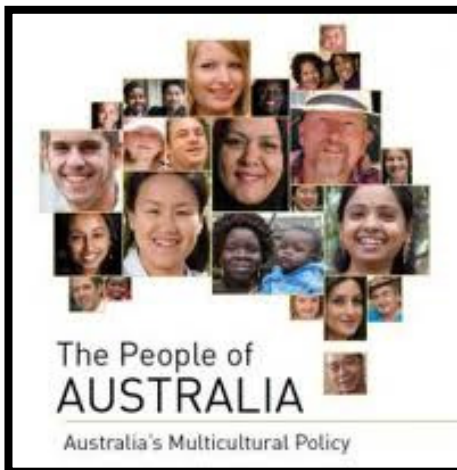
The last three months have seen continuing political unrest in North Africa and the Middle East. The people have persisted in expressing their desire for democratic reform. Some autocratic regimes have already bowed to the will of the people. Others continue to resist the winds of change, even using military forces to attack their own citizens. Libya has collapsed into civil war between the “rebels” and the “regime”. It is still too early to know how these events will turn out. We hope and pray for positive outcomes that honour the legitimate aspirations of all citizens. We endorse the *Jewish Christian Muslim Association* statement, referenced on page 3, which among other things, calls for the rule of law, equality of all citizens, tolerance for diversity and freedom of religion.

In April I had the pleasure and privilege of visiting Lahore, Pakistan, where I had worked previously. While there were impressive developments in civil infrastructure like roads and communication, there was a clear deterioration in civil society. Leaders of the Christian community whom I met expressed a sense of powerlessness in the face of the violence that had led to the assassination of the governor of the Punjab in January and a Federal Minister in March (see page 3). If powerful figures such as these were not immune, what hope for the poor?

After Pakistan, I traveled to Istanbul, Turkey, where I joined the ANZAC Study Tour organized by Affinity Intercultural Foundation. In contrast to the “Islamization” of Pakistan in recent decades, Turkey had an early history of enforced secularization. Each in its own way, both countries are seeking to find their identity in the modern world and the role of religion in the construction of that identity.

What struck me most in Turkey was the strength and vigour of civil society. We visited organizations dedicated to education, health, welfare and humanitarian relief efforts, motivated by high religious ideals, funded by private and commercial benefactors, and carried out by volunteers.

Australians too, with our recent history of migration from all parts of the world, experience the challenge of the interface between religion and society, between different religions, and between different cultures.



In recent months leaders in Europe have declared that “*multikulti*” has failed. Those comments have been picked up to fuel debate here in Australia, even though our history and our practice of multiculturalism is very different from that of Europe. Since multiculturalism is such an important topic for us and for the world, we dedicate this issue of *Bridges* to providing some

commentary, articles and references on the topic—including the federal government’s newly formulated policy—so that our readers can contribute to a more informed conversation in our homes and workplaces (see pp. 4-6).

One element of that conversation is the role of religion and religions in society, including the distorted forms that religion can take and the perverse effect this has on believers. We congratulate a former staff member of the Centre, Sr Trish Madigan OP, on the publication of her book, *Women and Fundamentalism in Islam and Catholicism: Negotiating Modernity in a Globalized World*, which is reviewed on page 7.

We wish all our readers a warm and safe winter!

Patrick J McInerney, Editor

Movie Screening *Of Gods and Men*

We were delighted to see capacity crowds for the screening of the Cannes award-winning French movie *Of Gods and Men* on Sunday 13 March at Leichhardt's Palace Cinema, for which we had provided tickets to friends and partners in interreligious dialogue. The movie has since been named best film at France's Cesar awards. Before the screening we handed out copies of the previous issue of *Bridges* which featured a review of the movie and articles on the Algerian setting and the spirituality of the monks who featured in it. A slight delay in screening was fortuitous as it gave the movie-goers time to peruse those articles. This contextualization assisted reflection on the monks' faith and courage in the face of violence. Originally the movie was to be shown only as part of the *French Film Festival* in Australia, but due to overwhelming popular demand—we like to think that our promotion in *Bridges* contributed to that!—it is now being screened in general release. Since it is such a wonderful, inspiring film about the ideal Christian attitude to Islam and Muslims we are delighted that those who missed out in March now have the opportunity to see it on the big screen. Check your local cinema guides! The DVD is also available on the internet for around A\$20.00

Lakemba Mosque Open Day

On 9 April **Fr Brian Vale** joined many other visitors for Open Day at the Lakemba Mosque. Many helpful volunteers guided them through visual displays on Islam's faith and contributions to science. Small groups were invited to tour the mosque's facilities. After an explanation by a guide of the mosque's purpose and architecture there was a frank exchange on many issues relating to Islam's faith and practices. ABC radio also attended and held live interviews with Muslim and Christian representatives.

Visit to Pakistan

From 12-18 April **Fr Patrick McInerney** visited Lahore where he had previously been assigned for twenty years in the 1980's and 1990's. It was a wonderful opportunity to meet Columbans and other friends. He also attended a memorial service for the assassinated Minister for Minorities, Mr Shahbaz Bhatti (see *Items of Interest*). The many developments in the city were impressive, but it was sad to experience the heightened security in response to possible threats of violence.

[Editor: For an excellent account of the Christian minority in Pakistan see "New Targets in a Deadly Game" at <http://newsstore.smh.com.au/apps/viewDocument.ac?page=1&sy=smh&kw=%22New+Targets%22&pb=all ffx&dt=selectRange&dr=1month&so=relevance&sf=text&sf=headline&rc=10&rm=200&sp=nrm&clsPage=1&docID=SMH1103261SORA7LQVNL>]

ANZAC Spirit Study Tour, Turkey

From 19–29 April **Fr Patrick McInerney** was one of eight people from NSW on this study tour arranged by *Affinity Intercultural Foundation* with co-sponsors, PASIAD in Turkey and *Feza Foundation*. A poignant moment was visiting Hagia Sofia, a church for a thousand years, a mosque for 600 years, and now a museum. The Dawn Service at Gallipoli on ANZAC Day was a solemn memorial of the futility of war. The Ottoman architecture in Istanbul is splendid. The opportunity of visiting homes and various institutions gave insight into how Turkey has developed into a modern nation state.

Muslims and Pastoral Care

On 4 May **Fr Brian Vale** attended an excellent presentation by Muslim psychologist **Hanan Dover** which explored family, cultural and religious issues for Muslims in crisis, grief or special need. The workshop was sponsored by a group of practitioners called *Transforming Practices* and was aimed at facilitating learning for pastoral carers, health professionals, chaplains, clergy and pastoral and professional supervisors seeking to understand the various needs of Muslims.

Academic Courses on Islam

Fr Patrick McInerney and **Fr Brian Vale**, with the help of Muslim guest lecturers, completed delivery of the course *Introducing Islam* at the *Catholic Institute of Sydney* on the weekend of 7-8 May. Fifteen students from a variety of walks of life took advantage of the opportunity of this intensive course to learn about Islam and Muslims. Now all that remains is correcting the written assignments!

Fr Patrick continues the online course on Islam with seven students at the *Broken Bay Institute*. This finishes in June.

Spirituality in the Pub

"*Why Bother Building Bridges with Other Faiths?*" was the topic for Spirituality in the Pub at the *Sutherland United Services Club* on the 18th May. **Fr Patrick McInerney** from the Centre and Mrs Judith Levitan representing the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies answered the question from a Christian and a Jewish point of view respectively. Their presentations were highly appreciated by the audience and led to a very lively discussion.

Assassination in Pakistan of Mr Shahbaz Bhatti

On 2 March 2011 Mr Shahbaz Bhatti, the Pakistan Federal Minister for Minorities, was gunned down outside his home in Islamabad. Church leaders in Pakistan issued a press statement condemning the murder.

“We the Church leaders in Pakistan express our deep grief on the assassination of Mr Shahbaz Bhatti, the Federal Minister for Minorities. We believe that the country has lost in him a patriotic statesman and a campaigner for interfaith harmony. Mr Bhatti’s assassination underlines the issue of protection of religious minorities, life and liberty. The government needs to go beyond the rhetoric of ‘minorities enjoying all the rights in the country’ and take practical step to curb extremism in Pakistan.”

For full statement see:

http://pakistanchristian.tv/news/2011-03-02_Assassination_of_Mr_Shahbaz_Bhatti_a_Press_statement_by_the_Church_leaders.cfm

Archbishop of Canterbury on Mr Shahbaz Bhatti

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Rowan Williams, wrote a striking article on the assassination of Mr Bhatti in *The Times* which he concluded as follows:

“Shahbaz Bhatti died, for all practical purposes, as a martyr—let me be clear—not simply for his Christian faith, but for a vision shared between Pakistani Christians and Muslims. When he and I talked at Lambeth Palace last year, he was fully aware of the risks he ran. He did not allow himself to be diverted for a moment from his commitment to justice for all.”

“That a person of such courage and steadfastness of purpose was nourished in the political culture of Pakistan is itself a witness to the capacity of that culture to keep its vision alive and compelling. And that is one of the few real marks of hope in a situation of deepening tragedy that urgently needs both prayer and action.”

For the full article see:

<http://www.anglicancommunion.org/acns/news.cfm/2011/3/7/ACNS4809>

Osama Bin Laden

US President Barack Obama announced late on Sunday 1 May that Osama bin Laden had been killed in Pakistan by Navy Seals. While there was a jubilant reaction in some quarters the Vatican called for reflection as follows:

“In the face of a man’s death, a Christian never rejoices, but reflects on the serious responsibilities of each person before God and before men, and hopes and works so that every event may be the occasion for the further growth of peace and not of hatred.”

For the full text of the Vatican statement see:

<http://www.zenit.org/article-32455?l=english>

October Assisi Peace Event

On 3 April the Vatican press office released a statement addressing plans for the 27 October day of reflection, dialogue and prayer for peace and justice in the world, to be held in Assisi, Italy. This will be the 25th anniversary of the event held there in 1986 under the leadership of Pope John Paul II. Announcing the theme of “Pilgrims of Truth, Pilgrims of Peace”, the communiqué noted:

“Every human being is ultimately a pilgrim in search of truth and goodness.... Believers too are constantly journeying towards God: hence the possibility, indeed the necessity, of speaking and entering into dialogue with everyone, believers and unbelievers alike, without sacrificing one’s own identity or indulging in forms of syncretism.”

“To the extent that the pilgrimage of truth is authentically lived, it opens the path to dialogue with the other, it excludes no one and it commits everyone to be a builder of fraternity and peace. These are the elements that the Holy Father wishes to place at the centre of reflection.”

For more details see: <http://www.zenit.org/article-32208?l=english>

JCMA Statement on Middle East

On 6 May the Jewish Christian Muslim Association (JCMA) based in Melbourne issued a statement on the current developments in the Middle East which we at the Centre endorse. It welcomes the public expressions by citizens of many countries in the region calling for democracy and demanding freedom and human rights. It also shares deep concerns for the future:

“Genuine democracy requires the rule of law, freedom of expression, tolerance for religious diversity, respect for human rights, particularly the equal rights of women, and protection for minorities.”

It calls on governments to: “give high priority to providing innovative and substantial practical assistance, as well as moral and diplomatic support, to popular movements in countries seeking to replace tyranny with democracy, while respecting the local democratic process and allowing true democracy to take hold and flourish.”

For the full statement go to the JCMA website:

www.jcma.org.au

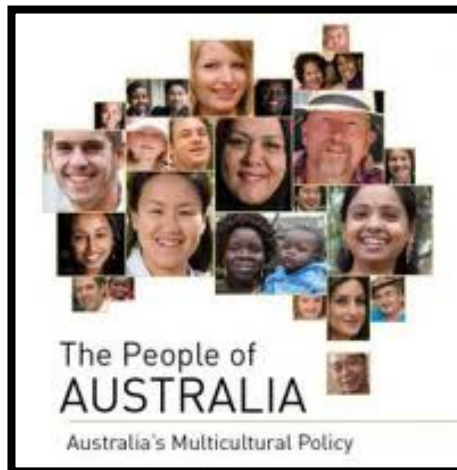
The People of Australia – Australia's Multicultural Policy

Earlier this year the Australian Government issued a new multicultural policy entitled *The People of Australia*. Multiculturalism “enhances respect and support for cultural, religious and linguistic diversity. It is about Australia’s shared experience and the composition of neighbourhoods. It acknowledges the benefits and potential that cultural diversity brings.” We quote here an extract from the policy and the four principles that guide and inform it.

Australia is a multicultural nation. In all, since 1945, seven million people have migrated to Australia. Today, one in four of Australia’s 22 million people were born overseas, 44 per cent were born overseas or have a parent who was and four million speak a language other than English. We speak over 260 languages and identify with more than 270 ancestries. Australia is and will remain a multicultural society.

Principle 1: The Australian Government celebrates and values the benefits of cultural diversity for all Australians, within the broader aims of national unity, community harmony and maintenance of our democratic values.

Principle 2: The Australian Government is committed to a just, inclusive and socially cohesive society where everyone can participate in the opportunities that Australia offers and where government services are responsive to the needs of Australians from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.



Principle 3: The Australian Government welcomes the economic, trade and investment benefits which arise from our successful multicultural nation.

Principle 4: The Australian Government will act to promote understanding and acceptance while responding to expressions of intolerance and discrimination with strength, and where necessary, with the force of the law.

For the full text of the Australian Government Policy see http://www.immi.gov.au/media/publications/multicultural/pdf_doc/people-of-australia-multicultural-policy-booklet.pdf

Multiculturalism in Australia

1600 Students, 69 Languages, One School

This was the headline for a feature article by Justin Norrie on pages 8 and 9 of the Sun-Herald on Sunday, 15 May 2011 and referred to Arthur Phillip High School in Parramatta, NSW. The article quotes University of Adelaide demographer, Professor Graeme Hugo, looking at the broad representation of language groups within schools:

“You could say western and south-western Sydney is the most multicultural and integrated place in Australia. I think you would struggle to find anywhere else in the world like it, for that matter.”
The principal, Lynne Goodwin, said there were occasional clashes between students ‘but they’re never really on grounds of race. They are just the normal things kids argue about. Generally there’s amazing, harmonious interaction among all our kids.’”

Review: Essays on Muslims & Multiculturalism

Peter Kirkwood reviews this book in the *Weekend Australian*, 9-10 April 2011. Its contributors are all prominent academics and public intellectuals who represent diverse cultural and faith perspectives. The editor, Raimond Gaita, is professor of philosophy at King’s College London and the

University of Melbourne. In his introduction he explains the “assimilationist ideal of multiculturalism” that he espouses and believes that Australia is a highly successful multicultural nation. The book is published by Text Publishing, 232pp, \$32.00.

Fundamentalism

On page 7 there is a review of Patricia Madigan’s book, *Women and Fundamentalism in Islam and Catholicism*. Father Gerald Arbuckle SM, in a blog about fundamentalism and ways to counter it, writes:

“Fundamentalism is a form of organized anger as a consequence of the unsettling consequences of rapid social and religious change. How are we to react to this without becoming caught up in the anger ourselves? I suggest three ways of proceeding.”

His three suggestions are:

1. Claim our authority as members of the Church
2. Acknowledge deficiencies in the Church
3. Nurture faith in prayer

For further detail on each of these points see <http://www.cathnews.com/article.aspx?aeid=26277>

It was heartening to see the large numbers visiting Sydney's Lakemba mosque on their recent Open Day. Australians of various ethnic backgrounds poured into the mosque to meet Muslims face to face and to find out for themselves something about the faith and practices of Australian Islam.

The guide in my small group was obviously a fervent, practising Muslim, proud of his religion, and, like many Australian Muslims I have met, sad and a little angry at the "bad press" a small percentage of their population have given them both here and overseas.

The variety of people who turned up that Saturday morning reflected the diversity of Australia's population today and those in the group I joined seemed to hold important questions which went beyond mere curiosity in a different religion.

Greg Sheridan published an article in "The Australian" on 2 April 2011 titled "How I Lost Faith in Multiculturalism".¹ He described many good things about Australia's diversity of cultures and the behaviour of most Muslims but admitted to a "crisis of faith" in multiculturalism after moving to Belmore, a suburb next to Lakemba:

"Three dynamics interacted in a noxious fashion: the growth of a macho, misogynist culture among young men that often found expression in extremely violent crime; a pervasive atmosphere of anti-social behaviour in the streets; and the simultaneous growth of Islamist extremism and jihadi culture."

On 23 March 2011, in an article in the Sydney Morning Herald titled "Anti-Muslim Tub-Thumping Helps Extremists",² Rachel Woodlock referred to the futility some Muslims experience when faced with fear-mongering as "blocked progress", adding:

"That is, while most Muslims can buttress themselves against prejudice, seeking support through various sources of well-being, a minority will seek maladapted solutions. Some turn to gangs and criminality; a small number will join militant religious groups that provide them with a sense of connection and identity."

She finished on an optimistic note with the following observation:

¹ <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/how-i-lost-faith-in-multiculturalism/story-fn59niix-1226031793805>

² <http://www.smh.com.au/opinion/society-and-culture/antimuslim-tubthumping-helps-extremists-20110322-1c54o.html>

"The good news is that we can cut the oxygen that fuels the flames of their fanaticism by actively countering anti-Muslim paranoia. It has been argued that fundamentalist religious groups lose their ability to competitively peddle their wares in societies in which there is religious freedom and the state ensures social services are provided to all - this means facilitating the settlement and integration of Islam and Muslims in Australian society. It is precisely because Islam is not inherently violent, as is demonstrated by the productive and peaceful lives that the vast majority of Australia's 340,000 Muslims pursue, that permitting them to build and maintain the infrastructure of their communities - mosques, schools and businesses - alongside other religious and secular groups, will provide protection against violent extremism."

It seems to me that a large portion of multicultural Australian society has already built firm foundations of good will and acquired various skills as they have weaved relations of friendship and dialogue with people of other cultures and faiths over many years. Like in any relationship, there are moments of growth and regression. We can become tired, more tentative or even acquire feelings of despair when only "bad news" is featured in the media. It may be timely to remind ourselves that the weaving of relationships has always required effort and will require ongoing effort to keep developing our cross-cultural skills. Relating across the boundaries between cultures and faiths is not a "natural" human phenomenon and we can sometimes have a "crisis of faith". To improve our development as individuals and as a society we need to plan encounters and create opportunities to reach out to people of other religions and cultures.

We are learning more about the difficulties and challenges of accepting that we all live in one world. Writing about human interdependence, in an article entitled "Right of Reply: Jewish-Muslim dialogue Works", published in the *Jerusalem Post* on 21 March, Marc Schneier stated:

"Even when we do not share a common faith, we share a common fate, and our single destiny must strengthen our bonds of concern, compassion and caring for each other."

I am glad I attended the Open Day at Lakemba Mosque. The Muslims I spoke to were friendly, courteous and willing to engage in discussion. The young man who guided our group in the mosque was a little defensive about his faith at times, but the warmth with which he spoke of his faith and the strength of his commitment touched me and encouraged me to speak more openly about my own faith as a Christian. Open Day at the mosque reminded me of the value of keeping "open" to people of other faiths.

Multiculturalism is a term so broad that it can mean anything to anyone. To its opponents multiculturalism means unabashed cultural relativism, the erosion of Australian identity and the imposition of alien values on the Australian people. Of course, the opponents of multiculturalism never actually offer any evidence to support these assertions.

If one does look at multiculturalism in Australia a very different picture emerges. Australia is a secular country that has only one legal system and one official language. Multiculturalism in Australia is about letting people keep parts of their former culture provided that there is no conflict with the laws of the land.

The events of the past week have brought multiculturalism into the spotlight again. Personally, I am willing to give Scott Morrison the benefit of the doubt on the question of racism. But the politician from Cronulla is in dire need of an etiquette lesson. To make nasty remarks about the costs of flying grieving people to Sydney to attend their families' funerals on the day of those funerals was reprehensible. To say nothing of the fact that one of the people that Morrison was referring to was a nine year old boy who was burying his parents.

The critics of multiculturalism have a lot to answer for. To begin with there is the question of intellectual honesty.

Very often the critics of multiculturalism use the most aberrant examples of behaviour from migrants to discredit multiculturalism. As Bob Carr noted, the types of migrants involved in planning terror attacks in Australia constitute 'a telephone box minority.' Similarly, focusing on the spectre of ethnic gangs to attack multiculturalism, without acknowledging the existence of non-migrant gangs, or the socio-economic reasons that explain youth violence, is dishonest.

Regardless, we do have an adequate legal framework to deal with any particular problems that might arise from within any migrant community. Any behaviour that goes beyond the boundaries of our law can be dealt with within our legal system.

The critics always seem to ignore positive examples of multiculturalism. They never mention successful people like Hazem El Masri, comedian Ahn Do, academic and commentator Waleed Aly, Tanveer Ahmed or the numerous doctors, lawyers, accountants and so on who are either migrants or the children of migrants. The true face of multiculturalism is that of all the honest, hard-working Australians from a wide variety backgrounds.

The critics have conflated Australian multiculturalism with that of Germany or Britain. Angela Merkel might say that multiculturalism in

Germany has failed. But given Germany's guest worker system and citizenship laws that were based on blood and ancestry, one might think that it's not multiculturalism that has failed. Unlike Britain, Australia does not have large migrant communities that have no contact at all with mainstream society. Such people might exist here, but in the main most migrants are integrated in some way or another into Australian society.

The critics frequently bemoan the loss of Australian identity. But if their sense of identity is so weak that it can be imperiled by the appearance of a Chinese sign outside a shop in Chinatown or by the appearance of a woman in a burqa, then it is the critics who have the identity problem. In some recent letters to newspapers it even sounds as if the critics are angry at migrants for not personally becoming their friends. Surely, nobody could be that emotionally needy?

The worst aspect of the critics of multiculturalism is their desire to impose their way of life on others. Cory Bernardi, a critic of multiculturalism, has campaigned long and hard for the banning of the burqa. Never mind the fact that it offends no current Australian law, nor that when the law, outside of the bounds of public decency, begins to involve itself in dress codes, it will be significantly impinging upon personal liberty. It is meant to be freedom for all, not freedom unless you are different.

The critics of multiculturalism need to learn to leave other people alone. It does not harm my sense of identity that the family living next door eats halal meat, prays five times a day and do not drink alcohol. It does not worry me that on some occasions a few people on the train might speak to each other in Cantonese. None of these things harm my life as an individual or as an Australian.

As long as I can live and work freely in this country, interacting with people from a wide variety of backgrounds, then I am a contented Australian. My personal view is that much of the anxiety over multiculturalism and immigration reflects a deeper fear of globalization. But this is all pointless.

We live in a global world where we routinely meet people from different backgrounds and cultures. To be restrained by your fears and prejudices in this world is really to shut yourself off from the beauty of a cosmopolitan society. This is deeply ironic, given that some of those critics of multiculturalism, including the ones from Cronulla, like to mutter darkly about 'ethnic enclaves.'

Re-printed with permission from the author. Original posted on *Online Opinion* on 22 February 2011 at <http://www.onlineopinion.com.au/view.asp?article=11648&page=0>.

Women and Fundamentalism in Islam and Catholicism: Negotiating Modernity in a Globalized World, Patricia Madigan. (Religions and Discourse Series, Volume 53), Oxford: Peter Lang Publishers, 2011. For orders see: <http://tinyurl.com/3hamj8j>

The analysis of the rise of religious fundamentalism has concentrated on the use of historically bound texts and formulations to support oppressive, regressive and/or violent behaviour amongst its adherents on the radical fringes of religions. Madigan refers to *The Fundamentalism Project*, a multi volume analysis of the rise of fundamentalism, noting that it is limited in its commentary on fundamentalism from a feminist perspective, a globalized economic, social and gendered reading and, in particular, the rise of fundamentalism in Catholicism.

Madigan sets about in this volume to fill the gaps. While the work is academic coming directly from her doctoral thesis, it is also very good reading as she explores these themes. Her primary thesis, in attempting to understand the failures of many to analyse modern fundamentalism fully, and argued through a gendered reading of the shape and dynamics of fundamentalism in Islam and Catholicism, is that fundamentalism consistently serves the interests of patriarchy. The ruling elites, whether in the Muslim world or the West, create a space where fundamentalism flourishes, either purposefully or as a 'happy' consequence, because it serves their power interests.

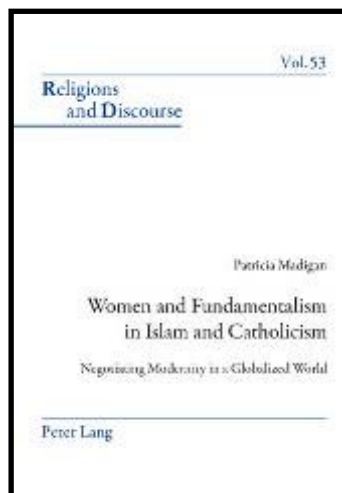
Madigan claims patriarchy is at the heart of the rise of fundamentalism in the new globalized world. She carefully tracks a historical review of this phenomenon, citing extensively Muslim and Christian scholars, as she draws a picture of modern religious fundamentalism as a way of male elites protecting their power. Madigan claims a major factor is controlling women's sexuality. Both in Islam and Catholicism it serves the ruling male elite to cast women in terms of their motherly and home-making role. Thus women become objects or a commodity in the economic, social and political world of a patriarchal structure. Women appear in the discourse as non-persons or at best as persons without a right to be actors in shaping the world.

To justify the exclusion of women from decision making in the social/economic world, the ruling elite construct from old religious formula statements to continue this oppression, but now with God's backing. Madigan shows that this often happens through a poor critical/historical exegesis of the traditional texts. There is also a good overview of Islamic and Christian scholars who hold an alternative view about those same texts showing how fundamentalist readings are hiding power interests.

Why do women seem to be complicit in their own oppression? One interesting aspect of this book is a very revealing insight into this question. Muslim women, for example, are wearing veils at a much

greater rate than 100 years ago. Madigan points out that where fundamentalism and nationalism are brought together to ward off the poverty and shame of many Muslim societies, women are trying to protect their families in a climate of fear perpetuated by disadvantage and held in place by violence or the threat of violence. In many of these countries women constitute a large pool of cheap labour. To protect the family and its essential income, woman may choose to comply rather than risk a harsher life.

Madigan also explores the causes and beneficiaries behind these oppressive practices. Colonialism, often bringing down proud self-actuating societies in the Muslim world, has been replaced by neo-colonialism in the form of economic exploitation. The arrogance and greed of the West has created a rich soil for Islamic fundamentalism to grow as the ruling elites in those countries maintain their power at the expense of other men and women. Fundamentalism claims to offer a hope to reclaim social and economic standing.



The chapter on the rise of fundamentalism in Catholicism goes to the centre of the power structure of the church – the Vatican. In a detailed study of the papacy over the last 100 years and the popes' personal histories and philosophies, Madigan clearly identifies a mainstream of fundamentalist readings of ancient texts that marginalise and de-humanise women in the Catholic church. The failure to embrace the great wealth of catholic scholarship in

historical, contextual and critical readings of biblical and ancient texts abounds. This analysis gives a wonderful insight into why this has happened as the patriarchal power structure of the church became centralised under the pope. It explores the popes' personal fears that have contributed to a rise in fundamentalist readings of ancient texts which has continued the exclusion of women from Vatican power structures. Madigan has a detailed and revealing look at the language in Vatican documents in relation to women confining women to roles while continuing to use the term "men" when describing human rights. Similarities between Muslim and Catholic fundamentalism is thus established.

This book can greatly assist those interested in understanding the rise of fundamentalism because it offers a more complex analysis of the causes and reasons it exists. It is particularly good in identifying the attraction and influence of fundamentalism in modernity and showing why it is not just an ancient problem rearing its ugly head again but this time it is deeply rooted in the modern globalized economy and its power interests.

WHAT'S COMING UP

- 12 June – **Pentecost**: celebrating the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the apostles
- 3-6 July – Jewish Christian Muslim Association (JCMA) Winter Conference, 6 July (Victoria)
- 10 July, **Abraham Conference**
 Sunday afternoon, 4.00 – 7.00 pm, Mary Mackillop Place, North Sydney, NSW
 Keynote Address: Rev Dr Daniel Madigan SJ, Georgetown University, USA
 Muslim Respondent: Prof Zeki Saritoprak, John Carroll University, USA
 Jewish Respondent: Rabbi Paul Jacobson, Emmanuel Synagogue, Woollahra
 Includes table talk and light refreshments, question and answer. \$20.00 [\$10.00 concession]
 Registrations: registrations@affinity.org.au or call (02) 9702 0789
 RSVP by 1st of July as seating is limited.
- 01-30 August – **Ramadan**: the month of fasting for Muslims
- 31 August – **Eid al-Fitr**: the Muslim feast marking the end of the month of Ramadan
- 02-04 September – **National Conference of Ecumenical and Interreligious Commissions**, Adelaide, SA
- 04 September – **Multicultural Eid Festival and Fair (MEFF)**, Fairfield, NSW
- 22-25 September – **Australian Association for Mission Studies Conference**, “Mission in a Globalised World”, North Sydney, NSW
- 27 October – **Assisi Prayer Day for Peace**: celebrating the 25th Anniversary of Pope John Paul II’s initiative, Pope Benedict XVI has called world religious leaders to Assisi to pray for peace. It is hoped that similar gatherings of religious leaders will be held around Australia
- 07 November – **Eid al-Adha**: the Muslim feast commemorating Abraham’s willingness to sacrifice his son
- 26 November – **al-Hijrah**: commemorating the migration of the Muslims from Mecca to Medina in 632; marking the beginning of the Muslim New Year
- 05 December – **Ashura**: the tenth day of the month of Muharram; Shi’ite Muslims commemorate the death of Hussain.
- 25 December – **Christmas**: celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ



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