

**The Triumph of the East?
Who are the real winners?**

by

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Oxford Cross-Cultural Research Institute

A Muslim Think Tank in the West

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Article in the Spectator

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The Triumph of the East? Who are the real winners?

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Article in the Spectator.

On reading Mr Anthony Browne's article '*The Triumph of the East*' in the Spectator, I thought the numerous contradictions and clichéd composition was unworthy of a response. However, after seeing Mr Browne try to defend himself on the BBC Newsnight programme (5th August 2004) by regurgitating chunks of his article, I decided that a brief clarification on a few crucial points was necessary after all. This article, which has numerous similarities to Daniel Pipes's (1990) article¹ 'The Muslims are Coming! The Muslims are Coming!' is centred around a single theme that Muslims are out to conquer the world through immigration and proselytising, and the West should put a stop to both by reversing the tide through a twenty-first century anti-Muslim pogrom.

Fear of Proselytising

From a Christian and Muslim perspective, the answer to a question of whether one should proselytise is quite clear, but for people like Anthony Browne and Daniel Pipes, the concept appears somewhat difficult to grasp. Followers of Islam and Christianity believe in the truth of their faith and see it as their responsibility to share their faith with others. Hence, Christians and Muslims feel encouraged to proselytise on the basis of a simple logic; *if one has something they believe is good, they should not be selfish with it*. Sharing one's faith with fellow human beings is part of religious kindness and generosity, unless of course one does not consider others worthy of one's faith for racial or other reasons. Proselytising in Judaism is discouraged.

The crucial question about proselytising is whether those who are being invited have the right to reject. In Islam, the right to reject is guaranteed in the words of God. He says in the Quran '*there is no compulsion in religion*'². Therefore, people are free to accept or reject Islam when it is presented to them. Mr Browne *et al* fail to see the contradiction in their claim that Islam is a vile and dangerous religion whilst at the same time emphasising the fact that thousands of freedom loving Westerners are adopting it as their faith. Muslim migrants in the West do not wield swords to bring people into Islam, nor are they in control of the large sections of the mass media through which people are constantly brainwashed with '*spin*' and misinformation. Coming to Islam is a choice people make out of their own free will. So why is this being made into a problem now?

False statistics

The statistical claims Mr Browne includes to prove that Islam is the fastest growing religion in the West are highly misleading and at best questionable if one

¹ Pipes, D., (1990) *The Muslims are coming! The Muslims are Coming*, National Review.

² *Al-Quran*. Surah Al-Baqarah (2) verse 256.

restricts analysis to the traditional meaning of the term 'religion'. When one looks at the bigger picture, one finds that Western society is not defined only by organised religion but by an array of competing belief systems, of which Islamic belief only accounts for a miniscule proportion. The whole idea that Islam is the fastest growing belief system in the West is a fallacy created and promoted by people with an agenda. For every one Westerner that accepts Islam, the Muslim community loses ten followers to agnosticism. As a community, we are struggling to keep the next generation in the faith. The statistics of drift are undoubtedly alarming, and every week I receive several letters and telephone calls from distraught parents asking for help and advice in bringing their sons or daughters back to faith. I am sure that my experience in this is not unique.

Taking over the world

The Muslim world has been under an iron grip of military domination for decades. Muslims are persecuted in some Muslim countries for practicing their faith and seventy percent of the world's refugees are Muslims. Despite this, we are being warned that Islam is about to take over the world. If Mr Browne were, as he would like us to believe, a competent journalist, he would acknowledge the fact that rhetoric in the Middle East is a two way street. Living in the shadow of Israeli oppression and witnessing its ability to dupe the major nations of the world into supporting its plunder of Palestinian land day after day understandably causes emotions to boil over into rhetoric. For millions of Muslims, the utterance of strong words is the only source of comfort in which they can indulge. In reality, if we want to know who is conquering whom, one should ask Palestinian children, "who is taking over their world?" In all likelihood, they will point to the Israeli tanks poised above the rubble that was once their home. In his selective survey of plans for conquering the world, Mr Browne, for the sake of objective and balanced journalism, could have highlighted the impact of a notable list of pro-Israel neo-conservative projects³ on the Muslim world. An appropriate example would be Professor Paul Eidelberg⁴, a professor of political science, president and co-founder of the Foundation for Constitutional Democracy in the Middle East as well as the president of the Yamin Israel Party. He is also a member of the Advisory Council of the Ariel Center for Policy Research and of the Editorial Board of one of Israel's premier journal, *Nativ*, to which he is a frequent contributor. Professor Eidelberg argues for a Hebraic world in his policy paper entitled "*The Clash of two Decadent Civilizations, towards an Hebraic Alternative*"⁵ The executive summary reads:

Part I discusses the decadence of Islamic civilization. Part II discusses the decadence of Western civilization. Part III discusses the basis of Hebraic civilization, showing how it transcends East and West. Part I portrays Islam's decline as rooted in *hate*. Part II reveals the West's decline as rooted in *indifference*. Part III reveals Hebraic civilization as rooted in *Hesed* – kindness. What is called the "West" today is not equivalent to Western civilization. The latter has been eroded and emasculated by multiculturalism and feminism. The Great Books of Western civilization no longer set the tone of higher education in the West. The quest for the True, the Good, and the Beautiful have been replaced by relativism. Pop culture is the result. Spread abroad, it threatens Islam. In reacting to this threat by means of suicide bombers, Islam reveals itself not only as a

³ For further reading see "Project for The New American Century" www.newamericancentury.org/

⁴ He (Ph.D. University of Chicago), is the author of many books including *The Philosophy of the American Constitution*, *A Discourse on Statesmanship*, *Beyond the Secular Mind*, and *Judaic Man*. Professor Eidelberg, who lives in Jerusalem,

⁵ Policy Paper published by the *Ariel Center for Policy Research* (ACPR). <http://www.acpr.org.il/>

religion driven by hate, but a religion that has exhausted its original creativity. Islamic absolutism, like Western relativism, ends in nihilism. It is in the clash between Western relativism and Islamic absolutism that we are to understand the world-historical necessity of Hebraic civilization, whose restoration awaits the establishment of a New Israel!

Although I have serious reservations about the authenticity of the Protocols of the Elders of Zion, Professor Eidelberg is as authoritative as you can get. Far from being the emotional statement of a religious scholar under trying circumstances who has no position or say in government, Professor Eidelberg is an influential player in Israeli politics. Given his view that a Hebraic civilisation will raise from the ashes of a clash between the West and Islam, should we not then speculate on reasons for the recent quality meltdown in global intelligence reports? Perhaps more tellingly, one should question Mr Browne's intention in cherry picking from millions of lectures and hundreds of thousands of Imams' statements that could be misused to intensify a clash of civilisations.

The wider context should be clear. Mr Browne should consider the implications of his shabby journalism and the possibility that he could be accused of being a cog in a pro-Israel strategy designed to dupe the West into a proxy war against Islam on multiple fronts for the benefit of Israel, a campaign that fears that if Muslims continue to develop strong and active communities in the West, support for unjust Israeli policies could dwindle.

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