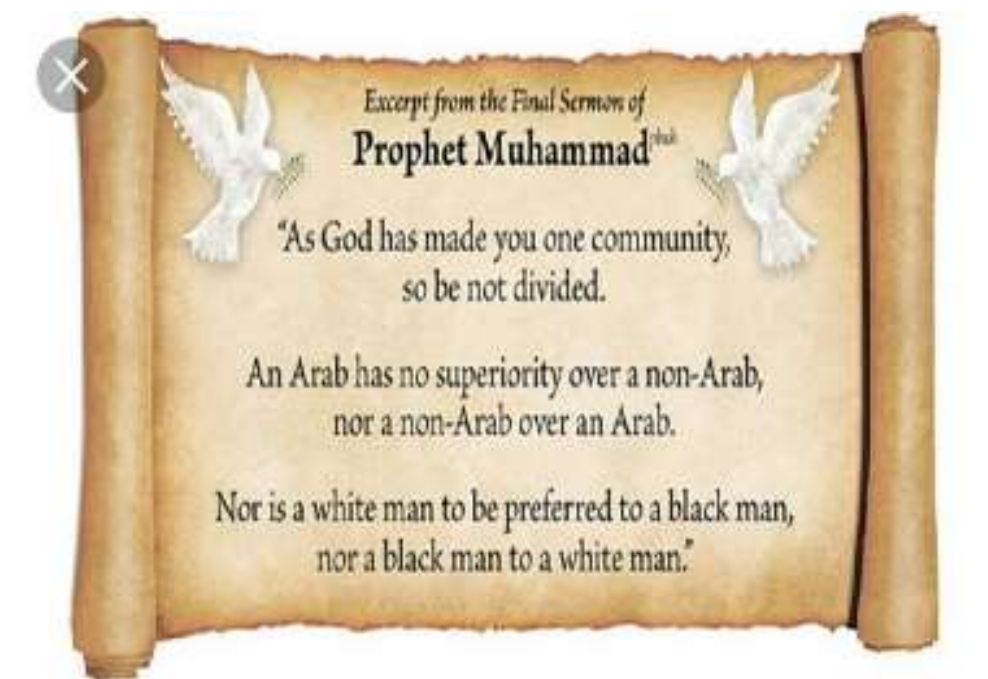




## Racism and Islamophobia

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The components of the Western thought system are the factors that feed the thought of racism. These components are: being powerful, omnipotence, subjugation of the weak, sanctification of individual passions, and matter-oriented thinking. The value system of the West is not just an understanding of racism created by periodic conditions throughout history. On the contrary, this system has been a mechanism that produces racism.

The concept of Islamophobia cannot be separated from the mentality of the West, which naturally produces racism. In the West, until the 17th century, hostility to Turks and Islam was carried out with the motive of Christianity. However, with the Age of Enlightenment, the flag of islamophobia was taken away from the church's men and given to intellectuals and social scientists who represent secular thought. In the Age of Enlightenment, the Turkish and Muslim character was no longer a religious difference and was defined as a barbaric, uncivilized, undeveloped world. Thus, the westerners took on the appearance of fighting to civilize the backward Muslims. For this reason, the idea of racism has been systematized in the era of enlightenment in the West, with a scientific cover that has nothing to do with reality.

But ideas of racism existed before the Enlightenment. For example, the Catholic Church targeted the Jews as the cause of the negativities faced by the society, from the earthquake to the plague epidemic, and then committed massacres. As another example, we can give the discovery of America. It is known that the genocide committed by Christopher Columbus (1451-1506) on the American Indians with his discovery of America. Columbus expressed how docile the natives were, with these words: "One of these would make very good servants. With just 50 men, we can easily subdue all these natives and get whatever we want."

Spanish historian Fernandez de Oviedo (1478-1557) also supported this genocide and said to relieve the conscience of his own children: "The gunpowder used against idolaters is considered incense burned for God."

Islam is against racism. Racism is rejected in many verses of the Qur'an and hadiths of our Prophet (pbuh).

*"O people! Indeed, We created you from a male and a female, and divided you into nations and tribes so that you might know each other. Surely, the most valuable and superior of you in the sight of Allah is the one who fears Him the most. Surely, Allah is All-Knowing and Aware of everything."* (Al-Hujurat, 49/13)

*"Believers are only brothers. So make peace between your brothers and fear Allah that you may receive mercy."* (Al-Hujurat, 49/10)

In his Farewell Sermon, our Prophet clearly stated that racism is prohibited:

*“O people! Your Lord is one, and your father is one. You are all children of Adam. Adam is from the earth. Just as an Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab or a non-Arab over an Arab, red skinned people do not have superiority over black, and black has no superiority over red skinned people. Superiority is only in taqwa, fearing Allah.”*

Because of this feature, Islam spread rapidly among the weak and poor people. This frightened the western colonialists. The fact that these virtues brought by Islam was partially reciprocated by the people of the West mobilized the dominant powers of the West and Islamophobia was supported at full speed. This is the pitiful situation the West has fallen into. It is in vain that the Western imperialists try to get rid of this situation by provoking people against Islam. The West will fall under the propaganda and defamation they make against Islam, they will lose all their power and they will be condemned to come under the virtuous domination of Islam again. History shows this.

### **Founders of Racism Idea**

The person who founded the theory of racism is the French philosopher Count Joseph Arthur de Gobineau (1816-1882). In his book, “On the Inequality of the Human Races”, this person divides people into white, yellow and black races. According to him, while the western white race has a pulling power, the yellow and black races show the repulsive power, so throughout history, the founders and carriers of civilization have been the western white race. He argues that the yellow race, which he includes us Turks, and the black race, which he considers humanoid rather than human, cannot be civilized, just like animals.

These distorted ideas, which Gobineau put forward as scientific, gave the European colonialists, who were going to plunder the world, the justification they wanted. Encouraged by these ideas, the European imperialists considered themselves civilized and undertook the mission of bringing civilization to the underdeveloped yellow and black races. Thus, the actions of plundering and usurping the underdeveloped countries of the world were put in an ostentatious cover.

Philosopher Voltaire (1694-1778), considered the torch of French intellectuals, also put forward ideas of racism. Although he appeared to be a humanist, he did

not like the people who are out of the western white people. Because for him inequality was natural. In Voltaire's book "The Customs and Spirits of the Nations" it is written: "Just as the common hound differs from the thoroughbred hound, the negro race is a different type of human being than we are. If they don't have intelligence different from what we understand, this breed is said to be very low."

Another person who shares these views is the French social scientist Montesquieu (1689-1755). This person, a thinker who fought for the construction of a free society, defined freedom only by focusing on the western white people. Because races beyond whites didn't really interest him. He expressed his exclusionary view of other races with the following sentences: "No one accepts the idea that God, the wisest being, could have placed a soul, especially a good soul, in a black body."

Western thinkers do not admit that they are in conflict while expressing these racist views. While they claim to be libertarian and humane, it doesn't matter how they view non-whites. British thinker John Lock, who reduced this to a simple formula, said: "Man is white!"

In the history of European thought, almost all of the thinkers from Gobineau to Locke, from Nietzsche to Schopenhauer have made analyzes based on race. The basic paradigm of all is Lock's proposition "Man is white". For them, being a humanist was actually tantamount to holding the white race superior.

## **Racism and Genocide**

In the process called geographical discoveries, very bad examples of racism were witnessed. The port cities of England were the departure points of the ships engaged in the slave trade. By the 17th century, one out of every four ships sailing from England's famous port of Liverpool was carrying slaves. It was normal to trade in slaves. Buying and selling people seemed very natural to them. Because slaves were not white people. They saw the slave trade as a scientific and natural right for themselves, for the white race.

Historians say that about 15 million black people from Africa were enslaved and taken to America from the 16th to the 19th centuries during geographical explorations. Garaudy says: "Westerners have committed an unprecedented

genocide in the world, killing more than 100 million Native Americans. After that, they committed another mind-blowing genocide, killing at least 100 million Africans during the 300-year slave trade.” Acting on this fact, it would not be wrong to say that the most important issue encouraging the genocides, which is a shame document in World History, is the idea of racism produced by the westerners.

Some of the genocide events in history are as follows:

1) With Columbus stepping into the land you call al-Salvador, the Spanish and Portuguese colonists, in particular, destroyed millions of Aztec and Inca peoples with terrible massacres. Other western states, which entered through the door opened by these two states, did not lag behind the Spanish and Portuguese. Especially after the establishment of the United States of America, the nomadic tribes of North America, which we know as Native Americans in our language, were literally subjected to genocide.

2) The massacre, recognized by the United Nations as the first genocide of the 20th century, was carried out between 1904 and 1907 within the borders of present-day Namibia. At that time, Namibia was a colony of the German Empire. When the people started a rebellion movement against the Germans, the Germans defeated the rebels and drove them with their families into the desert, where they were killed by thirst or by drinking water previously poisoned. The number of killed indigenous people is around 100 thousand.

3) Jews by the Nazis during World War II, they suffered genocide and 6 million Jews were killed. Is the westerner right, who says that the Nazis are a bunch of psychopaths? There is no way the Nazis would appear out of nowhere. In this genocide, the intellectual infrastructure of the Nazis was the thoughts produced by European thinkers since the Age of Enlightenment. It is a common shame of all western thinkers that these racist ideas, presented as pseudo-science, were put into practice by the Nazis. To say that a handful of psychopaths committed this genocide in order to avoid this shame cannot relieve western thinkers of responsibility.

Because, before the Second World War, racist totalitarian movements rose by western pens and took their place in the minds of the whole of Europe. Darwin's book "The Origin of Species" became Hitler's bedside book. It is accepted by all sane people that Hitler was influenced by Darwin's racist views.

4) After the end of World War II, Muslim Algerians celebrating with Algerian flags were shot with machine guns by the French army and police, and 45 thousand unarmed Algerian civilians were executed where they were seen and captured. However, France systematically massacred civilian Algerians until 1968, when Algeria declared its independence. Historical records say that France killed more than 1 million Muslims during its 132-year occupation of Algeria.

5) In 1995, more than 8 thousand Bosnian Muslims in Srebrenica were killed by Serbian militias. The main target of this racism is Islam and Muslims. Muslim societies in Europe could not be digested. Unfortunately, NATO soldiers of the Netherlands also supported this genocide.

The idea of expressing oneself by hating the other in the western thought has spread to the whole west like a virus. Unless these viruses are destroyed, Islamophobia cannot be prevented. As a result, wars in the world do not end. However, when Allah Almighty turned this behavior of the west on themselves, it was witnessed in history how the west destroyed each other. Today's Ukraine-Russia War is an example of this.

In the post-Cold War period, racist approaches were intensely observed in European Union countries. In the European Union countries, xenophobia and racist formations entered the parliaments by forming parties. These parties also found supporters in civilian life. Today, political parties described as the far right in Europe keep themselves on the agenda over racism and anti-Islamism. This causes the rise of islamophobia in the west.

It is natural to show the refugee movement towards European countries as the cause of these developments. As a result of the wars in the Middle East, Muslim refugees who wanted to go to European countries increased. In the face of this, western people have been concerned about protecting their cultural identity. For this reason, there has been a tendency towards far-right parties. The attacks of September 11 and the actions of organizations such as Al Qaeda also caused this. However, these attitudes of western people, known as Islamophobia, but actually anti-Islam, have deeper historical and cultural roots. All this is a part of the value system of the west, which has not been able to live without enemies throughout history.

## **Islam and Turks Fear in Europe**

The first point of departure for the fear of Islam and Turks in Europe and its negative perception is the battle of Manzikert. Roman Diogenes, one of the most important figures of Christian European civilization, was defeated by Sultan Alpaslan in 1071. Thereupon, the calls for the Crusades, known in history, began. The first Crusade against the Muslim Turks was started in 1095 at the call of Pope II Urban. The Crusades belong to the childhood years of European civilization and mentality. With these wars aimed at alienation, Europe found its social identity and political identity. These movements continued in later times and peaked during the Ottoman Empire. The conquest of Istanbul in 1453 and the second siege of Vienna in 1689 were two breaking points for Europe.

Europe has two minds when competing with other countries. These are strategic mind and cultural mind. Professor Muhittin Ataman states the following in an article on this subject:

“Over time, modern Europe has had two minds - the strategic mind and the cultural mind - competing with one another. The first of these is the strategic mind, the legacy of the Greco-Roman (Roman and Greek) understanding. The cultural mind is Judeo-Christianity (Judaism and Christianity). When the economic and political interests of the European countries are prioritized and stability is ensured in Europe, strategic reason dominates. However, in times of socioeconomic and political crisis, the cultural mind comes to the fore. When the cultural mind comes to the fore, as it is today, Muslims and Turks are excluded and described as enemies.”

The cultural mind of Europe has penetrated the Muslim Turks into the subconscious of Europeans as the most important other. Even today, we hear this in the mouths of some politicians. These connotations of marginalization were frequently encountered in the process of Turkey's full membership to the European Union. In fact, European politicians have repeatedly stated that Turkey will not be admitted to the EU even if it fulfills all the criteria. For example, EU commission member Frits Bolkestein said, "If Turkey is admitted to the EU, the defeat in Vienna 300 years ago will have no meaning". For this reason, it was agreed that Turkey should not be admitted to the EU.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the "red" threat was replaced by the "green" threat. Thus, Muslims who were deprived of political power were

declared as the other. S. Huntington's "Clash of Civilizations" thesis has prepared a scientific cover for this marginalization. There have been many incidents in the last 30 years in which Huntington's thesis was promoted. Expressions such as "Radical Islam", "Islamic Terrorists" and "International Terrorism" have always appeared in the statements of western politicians and intellectuals. This fear is an issue built by western states. In reality, this fear makes no sense politically or militarily. After the attacks on the twin towers in the USA on September 11, 2001, Islamophobia and anti-Islamism were extended to the entire Islamic Ummah by certain artificial organizations.

After the economic crisis in the West in 2008, there has been an explosion of social problems. These economic and political problems triggered the economic crises and the Turkish and Islamic hostility that was already present in the western human consciousness started to get stronger again. As the economic crisis threatens the young population in Europe with unemployment, it has increased the youth's anxiety about the future and undermined their confidence in the political authority. As a result of this, it has been realized that young people tend to extreme ideas. This economic crisis caused the weakening of the middle class in Europe, and the link between the rich and the poor was severed. This situation disrupted family life in Europe and people became lonely. A large proportion of European children live with or without a father, with only their mother or father only. A significant number of children born in Europe were born out of wedlock. In many European countries, this rate has exceeded 50%. This situation shows that there is a great shock in the foundation of the structure of European societies. Large masses of people experiencing social problems have turned to radical and extreme ideas due to economic difficulties. At the end of this, the views of nationalism and racism were strengthened and xenophobia reached its peak. As a result, the EU has lost its economic and strategic appeal. With Britain's exit from the EU, the EU weakened and signs of many problems were seen. Political parties in Europe put xenophobia at the forefront instead of the economic measures they were considering. In many countries such as England, Germany and the Netherlands, Islam and Turks have been directly targeted. Political parties tried to gain votes through enmity against Turkey. European societies hold foreign powers and foreigners responsible for their crises. As a result of this, they inflict the burden of these problems on refugees, Muslims and Turks.

Social segments other than the white race and Christian Europe faced discrimination and xenophobia. The first to be confronted with this hostility are Muslims living in their own communities. The admiration of Muslims' religious values and virtues by western people disturbs them and increases their fear of Islam. Although Islamic civilization does not represent a global power today, they continue to be the nightmare of Western people due to the superiority of social values and virtues. For this reason, it is certain that Muslims and Turks will be subject to othering and segregation of countries in the future. This process can only be prevented by the re-dominance of the European strategic mind in politics. It is very difficult for this to happen in the near future. For this reason, it is expected that the West's anti-Islam and hostility will continue to increase. It is certain that these actions will harm their own society and people rather than Muslims and Turks.

### **Racist Terrorist Acts in Europe**

While places of worship such as mosques and synagogues have been damaged in tens of racist terrorist attacks, which have been categorized as individual crimes in Western countries in recent years, Muslims and refugees are also exposed to physical attacks in the public sphere. Unfortunately, in the last five years, there has been a 320 percent increase in racist terrorist acts in Western countries.

Although the racist attacks in different countries seem independent of each other, the political and ideological infrastructure of the hate language and racist actions reflected on the streets has been formed over many years. It is not a coincidence that the increase in racist attacks coincided with the strengthening of racist parties, especially in Europe, and the greater visibility of racist rhetoric in the media and public opinion. The case files, which are categorized as individual crimes and which are decided not to be prosecuted, unfortunately encourage people and groups who are preparing for such action.

We are witnessing that the immigration movement, which led to an increase in the Muslim population in Europe, and the ideology of racism, which has a strong foundation in European history, gathers supporters again. Especially after the events of September 11, it can be said that racism experienced its renaissance through the religion of Islam in Europe.

In the racist terrorist attack on two cafes operated by foreigners on February 19, 2020 in Hanau, Germany, 9 innocent people, including 4 Turks, lost their lives. The perpetrator, on the other hand, went to his father's house and killed his mother and then himself. This grim attack is just one of many hate crimes that have targeted Muslims in particular in recent years. It is obvious that in order to prevent greater disasters, racism, which has become a collective cancer, should draw attention to the speed of its spread in Western countries and that conscientious majorities who see diversity as richness should be encouraged.

It is shared the "2017 Anti-Muslim Racism Report" prepared by the Austrian Documentation and Counseling Center for Muslims, at the press conference they held. The report found that Islamophobic attacks in the country had increased significantly last year. According to the report, while 253 attacks against Muslims were recorded in 2016, this number increased to 309 in 2017. In the report, which stated that 98 percent of the attacks against Muslims targeted women, as in the previous year, it was noted that 49 percent of the attacks were carried out in semi-closed places such as open spaces and public transport. According to the report, which classifies the attacks against Muslims and Islamic institutions under various headings, 30% of the attacks against Muslims were made with hate speech and 28% were verbal.

In the report, it was pointed out that 19 percent of the attacks included graffiti containing racist expressions against Islam and Muslims, while it was emphasized that Islamophobic writings increased significantly in 2017, which was 7 percent in the previous year. It was reminded that expressions hostile to Islam were written on the walls of mosques and similar institutions belonging to Muslims, especially in May and June, which coincide with the month of Ramadan. In the report, which shared the information that Muslim institutions are the target of attacks at a rate of 6 percent, it was stated that hate crime and discrimination are experienced at a rate of 3 percent.

In the report, drawing attention to the increase in racist attacks against Islam and Muslims in open spaces and semi-closed spaces, especially in virtual environments such as the internet, it is important for the attackers to hide their identities in the internet, open and semi-closed environments, where 81 percent of the attacks are experienced in these two areas.

Emphasizing that the “burqa ban” that came into effect in the same period, especially the general elections held in October 2017, and a controversial report on Muslim kindergartens, triggered attacks against Muslims, the report states that October is the time when racism against Islam and Muslims, especially verbal attacks, is experienced the most range was evaluated.

Elif Öztürk Adam, representative of the Austrian Documentation and Counseling Center for Muslims, in her evaluation of the report, pointed out that anti-Islamic discourse reached its highest level in the media and politics in October 2017, and stated that this situation paved the way for the increase in attacks against Muslims. She said: “Politicians need to avoid populist rhetoric. In particular, the approaches towards certain groups in the society in order to cover up some social problems deepen the existing problems experienced by Muslims. Therefore, our expectation is that both politicians and media institutions will be more self-sacrificing.”

Miss Adam drew attention to the fact that mostly Muslims born and raised in Austria are not seen as a part of the society, especially in verbal and written attacks, expressions such as "Terrorist", "Bedouin", "Islamist scumbag go back where you came from", "Muslims out" are used.

Since the early 2000s, when Islamophobia began to spread, dozens of comprehensive reports and statements have been published by many international organizations, especially the Council of Europe and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. In these texts, Islamophobia was condemned by emphasizing that it is perceived as a violation of human rights, that it should be considered as a hate crime, and that it is a kind of racism.

The Center for Combating Racism and Equal Opportunities (CECLR), headquartered in Brussels, focuses on Islamophobia; while defining it as a set of thoughts and actions consisting of prejudices and negative stigmatizations that are motivated by hatred, that try to mold Islam into a single mold such as terrorist and fundamentalist, that ignore the difference between religion and culture; The anti-racist, European People's Friendship Movement (MRAP) described the concept of islamophobia as a type of racism.

Despite all these facts declared by reports and declarations, Islamophobic discourses and actions increasingly continue in Europe and America. Because the

production of perception and the interests of power centers, which are now observed to have turned into an industry; It causes the masses to be misled and prevents the truth from being seen. On the other hand, the fact that this phobia, which is fed by othering, is a disease with historical roots, makes treatment difficult.

### **Islamophobia is Increasing in European Intellectuals**

To call today's racism and anti-Muslim hostility a temporary ideological perversion directed by angry crowds of low-income groups, as claimed in the past, is an extremely dangerous approach that underestimates the problem. We observe that Islam and xenophobia are rapidly rising among the European intelligentsia, middle and upper class, and even used in shaping and legitimizing international policies as an instrument suitable for populism in politics.

It is claimed that the religion of Islam is incompatible with the identity of "European". For this reason, it is used as the most powerful marginalizing tool. On this occasion, by making a distinction between immigrants, acceptable and undesirable foreign origins are classified within themselves.

The word West and the concept of Europeanness may lead us to a uniformist thought, however, it is necessary to be cautious. When it comes to Western societies, it should be kept in mind that there are nuances in it. European countries are not homogeneous in terms of religion, culture and politics, and Muslims living in European countries do not have a homogeneous lifestyle. Muslims, who are excluded by generalization, have linguistic, sectarian and cultural differences within themselves, and they are trying to adapt to the majority society by preserving this cultural richness.

The "other", as an element that establishes the European identity, has always been in Western thought. Emphasizing the common features through religion, race and culture and separating the "other" has a deep rooted tradition in the formation of a collective identity in Europe. Establishing an identity through the other, seeing minorities as a danger and discriminating against different ideological grounds has been a common behavior in European history. The other was defined as barbarians in ancient Greece, became pagans when Christianity came, and as backward and uncivilized societies in the modern period. During

the Cold War, the Communist was the other, and in the following years, the Islamic world was fictionalized as the other.

On the other hand, we witness that Islamophobia is popularized by some well-known writers and journalists. Italian journalist Oriana Fallaci's polemic book fueling Islamophobia, the novels of French writer Michel Houellebecq who feeds artificial fears, the best-selling book by Thilo Sarrazin, Member of the Board of the German Central Bank and politician, who humiliates immigrants and sees them as humpbacks on Germany's back. Some of the books that stood on their lists for months, read by millions and sowing seeds of hatred. What these three European writers have in common is their normalization of hate crimes and discrimination against Muslims, whom they have positioned as the "other" with Islamophobia and xenophobia.

However, Europe will not be able to build a better future for itself by fighting with Islam. Islamic and Western societies need to understand each other better. It is absurd for Europe to define itself as pluralist by marginalizing Islam and as libertarian by discriminating against Muslims. Police raids on mosques, organized attacks on all values of the religion of Islam, insulting and exclusionary attitudes of high-level politicians and organizations towards Muslims both deeply upset and anger Muslims all over the world.

Led by French President Emmanuel Macron and a Dutch politician named Geert Wilders, a mob hides behind values such as freedom of expression, democracy and pluralism, constantly insulting and slandering Islam, Muslims and our Islamic values, thus provoking the entire Islamic world in an unbelievable way.

The so-called cartoon, published by the so-called Charlie Hebdo media outlet on digital media as a provocation and insult operation, has clearly revealed that the sole purpose of this mob is to escalate the tension by increasing the dose of insult day by day. The infamous caricature published by Charlie Hebdo, which can represent nothing but the dirty swamp called "Turk and Islamophobia", into which Europe is sinking a little more every day, and all the provocative actions made will not bring any benefit to Europe in the long run.

In a video published on Youtube, the artificial intelligence of Youtube, which changed the word "Palestinian" to "terrorist" in the subtitle, makes Muslims think. Racism and anti-Islamism is increasing not only on YouTube but also in Western systems. Experts are of the opinion that the problem is not technical.

Although the phrase 'Palestinian' was not touched in the other parts of the video, it is an issue that should be emphasized that the algorithm makes such a decision. It is not possible to dismiss this event as a software error.

It is also useful to draw attention to a situation that has recently appeared on Adidas' website. While the names of Christian, Buddhist, Jewish and many religions could be written on the back of the uniform you bought from the site in Germany, Islam or Muslim could not be written. Accordingly, Adidas does not accept Islam as a religion.

Such behaviors show that the West is trying to behave negatively towards Islam and Muslims with all its means. But all this is in vain. Because Islam stands very strong. The decrees revealed by Allah in the religion of Islam are valid all over the world and it is impossible to deny them. The secular world view of the West has no way of understanding this fact. Because they look at the world only from the material side. Since they cannot understand the spiritual aspect of the world, it is not possible for them to understand the absolute truth of Islam. Westerners are trying in vain. The future is in Islam and only those who are Muslims will be happy in the hereafter tomorrow.

*"... Undoubtedly, my righteous servants will inherit the earth."* (Al-Anbiya, 21/105)

*"Say to those who not believe: You do things in your way and we are doing things in our way, and wait, we too are waiting."* (Hud, 11/121,122)

For your comments and criticisms: [oryanmh@gmail.com](mailto:oryanmh@gmail.com)

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