



XXV International Scientific
Conference of Turība University

**THE AGE OF INSECURITY:
FROM RISKS TO GROWTH**



THE ROLE OF ISLAM IN 'RADICAL ISLAM': An Evaluation of Phenomenon and Terminology Accuracy

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Relevance



There's a critical need to clarify misconceptions surrounding Islam and its teachings, which are often misrepresented or misunderstood in the context of extremism. The research is needed to counter Islamophobia by providing a nuanced understanding of Islam, differentiating between the religion itself and the actions of a minority of its adherents who engage in extremism.

Main questions

- Is the terminology "Radical Islam" accurate and appropriate?
- How does wrong Islam related terminology influences discrimination, especially in Europe?
- What role does Islam actually play in the phenomenon described as "Radical Islam"?

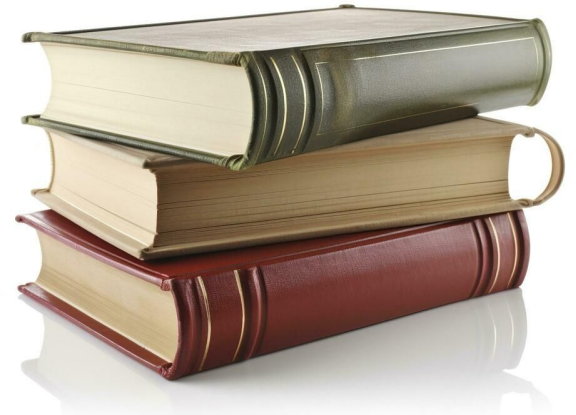
Objectives

- Clarify the Relationship Between Islam and Extremism
- Analyze the Accuracy and Implications of the terminology
- Promote Interfaith Dialogue and Understanding
- Contribute to a More Informed and Empathetic Public Discourse

Methodology



- Literature analysis
- Document analysis
- General Scientific Approaches
 - : Induction
 - : Deduction
 - : Synthesis
- Legal interpretation methods, where feasible



Terminology

- Political Islam
- Islamism
- Islamic fundamentalism
- Radical Islam
- Extremism

Radical Islam = Extremism ?



The Peterloo Massacre by Richard Carlile, 1819

What is Islam?



- Monotheistic, global religion
- Prophet Muhammad
- Main sources - Quran, Hadiths, Sunnah

Today, the various sides in the struggle to interpret the *real* Islam—increasingly one of the theaters in the cultural wars in America and Europe—selectively pick and choose their data and subsequently filter these data through the prism of the Islam they desire to create. Liberal Muslims construct a liberal Islam;¹ persons highly critical of Islam create an Islam at odds with the West;² individuals who seek a pluralistic America or Europe construct an Islam that fits effortlessly into their agenda;³ and those who reject such pluralism find no problem imagining an Islam that both is opposed to and seeks to undermine the values of the West.⁴

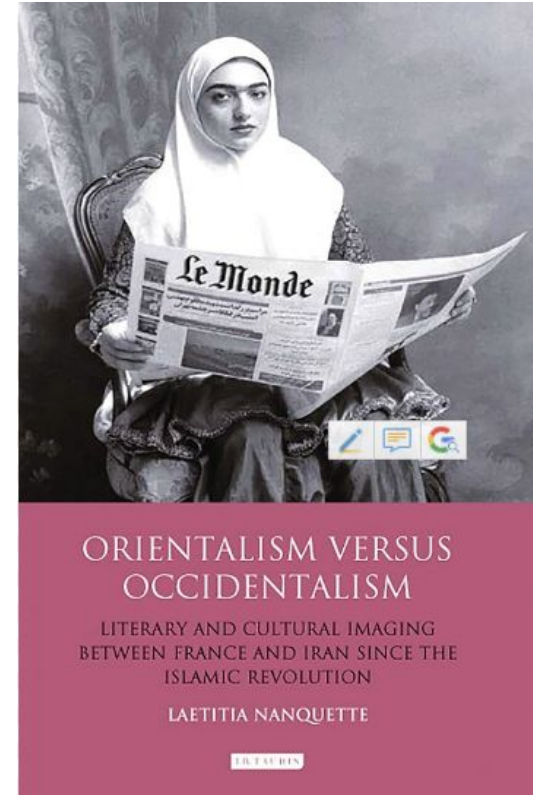
(Hughes, 2013, p 2)



Christian Research Institute

Occidental perspectives

- Colonialism and Postcolonialism
- Orientalism
- Eurocentrism
- Political ideologies



Courtesy of the authors

Occidental perspectives (2)

- Colonialism and Postcolonialism
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Jean-Léon Gérôme, Prayers In The Mosque, 1892.

Religious violence

Islam

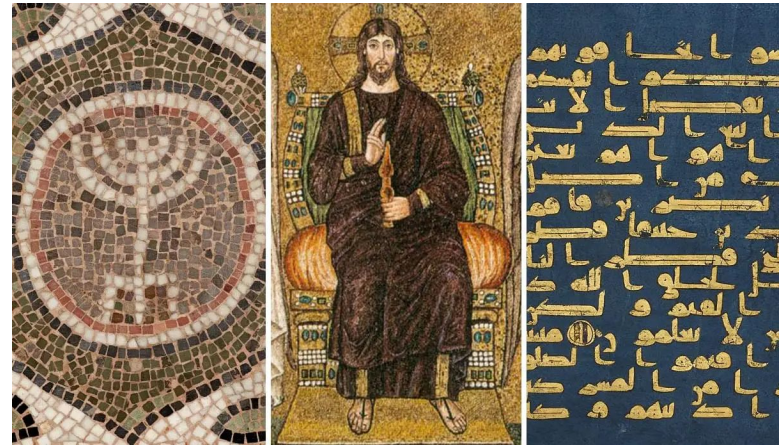
- Global security
- Al-Qaeda, ISIS, and Boko Haram
- Use Jihad as political ideology and grounds for violence
- Occidentalism

Christianity

- Not commonly attributed to radicalism
- Historic instances

Judaism

- Focused on survival and resilience
- Zionism
- Radicalism geopolitically supported



Mosaic of Menorah, 6th century CE; Mosaic of Blessing Christ Between Angels, ca. 500 AD, Folio from the "Blue Qur'an," late 9th-mid 10th centuries AD.

Islam and violence



“It should be noted that the Qur’ān (2:190) explicitly forbids the initiation of war and permits fighting only against actual aggressors (60:7–8; 4:90)” (Britannica, 2024).

Islamist ≠ Radicalist / Extremist / Terrorist

Jihad = Struggle ≠ War

“Jihad, particularly in the religious and ethical realm, primarily refers to the human struggle to promote what is right and to prevent what is wrong... Jihad, in Islam, a meritorious struggle or effort.” (Britannica, 2024).

Britannica Dictionary definition of JIHAD

[count]

: a war fought by Muslims to defend or spread their beliefs

وَقَاتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ الَّذِينَ يُقَاتِلُونَكُمْ وَلَا تَعْتَدُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ
الْمُعْتَدِينَ ﴿١٩٠﴾

Tu

Fight in the cause of Allah `only` against those who wage war against you, but do not exceed the limits.¹ Allah does not like transgressors.

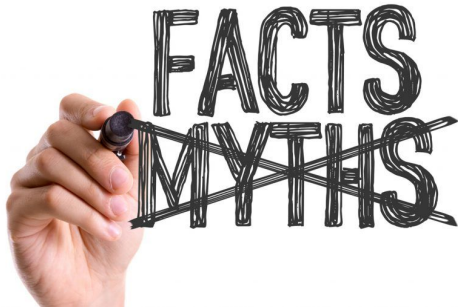
وَأَنْفِقُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَلَا تُلْقُوا بِأَيْدِيكُمْ إِلَى التَّهْلُكَةِ وَأَحْسِنُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١٩٥﴾

Spend in the cause of Allah and do not let your own hands throw you into destruction `by withholding`. And do good, for Allah certainly loves the good-doers.

Conclusions



- Definitions are abstract, unclear and often used interchangeably
- Occidentocentrism is still prevalent
- Oversimplification and Orientalism worsen the conflict and promote division
- Spread of disinformation is a serious threat



What can be improved?

- Clear definitions in international and regional frameworks
- Involvement of society into multicultural mediation
- Enriching education sphere with materials created by Muslims and non-Muslims in cooperation
- Combatting of disinformation
- Western experts should stop using Islamic terminology regarding violence, this way promoting intercultural understanding.

References



- 1) Britannica (2024b). Jihad. Encyclopedia Britannica. Available at: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Jihad>
- 2) Christian Research Institute (2023). Using the Qur'an and the Hadith as a Bridge for Sharing the Gospel. Available at: <https://www.equip.org/articles/using-the-quran-and-the-hadith-as-a-bridge-for-sharing-the-gospel/>
- 3) Hughes, A. W. (2013). Muslim Identities: An Introduction to Islam. *Columbia University Press*. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7312/hugh16146>
- 4) *Mosaic of Menorah*, 6th century CE, via the Brooklyn Museum; with *Mosaic of Blessing Christ Between Angels*, ca. 500 AD, in Sant'Apollinare Nuovo, Ravenna, via the Web Gallery of Art, Washington D.C.; and *Folio from the "Blue Qur'an,"* late 9th-mid 10th centuries AD, via the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.
- 5) Jean-Léon Gérôme, Prayers In The Mosque, 1892. Available at: <https://www.sothebys.com/en/articles/one-of-the-greatest-collections-of-orientalist-paintings-ever-assembled>



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