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Islam and Eugenics

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Why not introduce into “western culture” the virus of a critique of the tyranny of the image — an iconoclastic breath from the desert? Reactionary fundamentalism has long since betrayed itself as a revolutionary force. Why not something else, the “spirit of Sarajevo” perhaps — or the castles of the Assassins...

a way this is mere “orientalism” to be sure — but then, the “Orient” has its own romanticism. What exactly is “wrong” with any of the items listed here?

The dusty remains of the Ottoman world also inspire some thought about Ottoman administration. The Osmanli were a single tribe running a vast empire & trade network from Istanbul. (In fact, come to think of it, this was the Roman Empire.) The last thing they wanted was “age-old hatreds” getting in the way of their gold bezants. Under the Millet system, every religious minority had judicial autonomy (although Islam retained prerogatives). The Byzantine Patriarch remains in Istanbul to this day. The Ottoman Empire was about taxes, not ideology or “race”. The “Young Turks” rebelled against the Ottomans in order to vent “ancient hatreds” against Greeks & Armenians, long protected under the Empire. Granted the Ottomans were monsters — but how do they look after a century of communism and a decade of Global Capital?

Inshallah, some day Sarajevo will rise again as a unique particularly in which European Moslems and European Christians (I’m speaking loosely here of communities, not professions of faith) will create in mutual tolerance & synergy a city-state of precious value, with an Islamic heritage. That would constitute an imaginal infusion, a flow of energy from the past, which would now be “our” past. This would mean far more than an empty apology for the old Ottomans, Caliphs of Islam and inventors of the fez.

Jihad

“Islam” in Europe & America? Why not? Why not enjoy it? Autonomous enclaves in Berlin, Paris, London — linked by anarcho-federalism with other autonomous zones, squats, social centers, eco-farms & free rural municipalities, & other anti-Capital entities & non-hegemonic particularities. Revolutionary difference against the idols of Moloch & Mammon, & the culture of global sameness.

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As for the Celtic part of the mixture, it begins not first with Cromwellian slavery but even earlier, according to myths and legends of the N E Coast Indian tribes. Irish monks and settlers reached Turtle Island even before the Vikings, and much more peacefully (“St. Brendan” as the prototype). Africans, too, had no doubt reached this hemisphere before Columbus. The possibility of many “peaceful trading voyages” before the military arrival of European imperialism, and even settlements like Vinland, or the “Welsh Indians” (a folktale with disturbing material evidence) must be considered in tracing the unwritten story of the “tri-racial isolates”.

In the 1970’s these groups threw off the Eugenic archetype under the influence of the American Indian Movement (AIM). They realized themselves as tribes, “nations” with identity and history. The M.O.C. respects these groups as pure Americans, in the sense that their cultures unite our real “unwritten history” & excluded heritage – Native American, African, and “white trash”! – on the basis of tribalism, racial tolerance, and “empirical freedoms”. It’s inspiring for us to think that Islamic ideals play an ancient role in this heritage.

Tulipomania

All over Eastern Europe one sees traces of the Ottomans, usually in the form of abandoned, closed, and deteriorating hamams, mosques, kiosks, etc. – a neglected heritage. It would be perfectly possible to forget the “old-age hostility” of the “borderland between Christendom & Infidelity” simply by invoking an aesthetic judgement on the beauty of these unseen ruins – why should it disturb us? Why not see and enjoy?

But this romanticism could go on to invoke the whole form of the “good things” of the Ottoman world – into gardens, tulips, calligraphy, Sufi orchestras, poetic refinement, sensuality, hashish. In

Noble Drew had racial theories but he was anti-racist. The MST believes that the Celts are an “Asiatic race” (which is certainly true in a sense), and that Persians are Moslems who are also Indo-European (which is true); therefore the MST issued passports to white people as Celts or Persians. This gave rise to various sub-groups, including (in 1964) the Moorish Orthodox Church.

The M.O.C. in the 60’s was inter-racial, inter-faith, and interested in drugs. Hashish was declared a sacrament, & a branch of the church existed at Millbrook, on the millionaire’s estate inhabited by Tim Leary, the Sri Ram Ashram, the Neo-American church & other groups. We believe in “ceremonial entheogenism”.

The M.O.C. was dormant for a while but revived in 1986 on the centenary of Noble Drew Ali’s birth. The Church today is largely a communication web among widespread friends and allies. Issues of the Moorish Science Monitor are occasionally published, and there is — of course — a web site (www.geocities.com/Heartland/Woods/4623), the Moorish Observatory, and related sites.

One view is that difference is a good thing -it allows for the practice of tolerance, communication, presence, and exchange of gifts. “Love, Truth, Peace, Freedom, & Justice”.

The War on Difference

Among the victims of Eugenics in the 19th — 20th century America were a number of groups with Islamic antecedents. The archetypal explanation of these groups proposed a “mongrelization” of runaway black slaves with Indians and renegade white serfs (usually Irish) — hence they were called “tri-racial isolates”. Some of these groups had clearly been “founded” (at least partly) by Moslem maroons (escaped slaves). The Melungeons descend from Moorish “convertados” brought as slave-labor to Florida by Spain and abandoned there. The Delaware Moors, the Louisiana Turks, and the Ben Ishmael Tribe of Ohio, all reveal Islamic connections.

“Stain your prayer carpet with wine”

-Hafez

In Persian Alchemy the two highest stages of transmutation are called Black Light (nur-i siyah) and Green/Gold. Some place one higher, some the other, but the two can also be seen as manifestations of each other. Black light is the nothingness that is also total luminescence, the dark side of god, Chaos & Old Night, the Sun at Midnight, presence of absence as light. Green/Gold (colors of the Prophet, and of the Philosopher’s Stone as “emerald in Egyptian Hermeticism) represent the other half of Hesiod’s first theogony, Eros and Gaia — Desire, and the greenness of the living world. “And the three things of this world are worthy of the gaze = water, green things and a beautiful face” (hadith). According to the Sufi, the Black Light is a beauty spot (mole or freckle) on that very face. Black & beautiful. The banners of revolutionary & esoteric Islam are black and green — although another possibility is black & red, as the Prophet said enigmatically, “I come for the black & red”. Oddly enough black and red are the colors of the goddess — reminding us that the Byzantines accused the Moslems of worshipping “a head of Aphrodite”. Also the colors of anarcho-syndicalism. A coincidence, no doubt.

Religion of the Sword

The Huntington/CIA “Clash of Cultures” model of Islam proposes it as a kind of disease that has to be kept isolated & confined. The neo-liberal “Global Market” model of the “Orient” views it as a source of raw material (such as black gold) and cheap labor that must be exploited. The resources are to be taken away, the labor is to be kept in place. Obviously Moslem immigration to the “North” does not fit well with either of these models. If Islam is a “disease, then “refugees” are a virus, penetrating borders like immune systems. But then disruptions are also inevitable, given the “logic of the

Market”. The old liberal response to the problem of immigration was to turn the migrants into Europeans or Americans, to erase their difference into sameness. The new liberal response however, relies more heavily on overt repression — isolation in “zones of depletion” — incredible proliferation of border patrols, immigration police, surveillance.

Instead of bleating a few liberal NGO-style humanitarian platitudes about the plight of the refugees (perhaps we should give them all PC’s so they can join the WWW!), I think it would be more interesting to admit that immigration really is a problem; and that Islam really does pose a threat to “Global Culture”.

Immigration at the forced/repressed pace of globalism puts unfair pressure on the hospitality of the hosts, who have their own local crisis of downsizing and privatization to deal with. Meanwhile the migrant, weather lured to El Norte by the gleam of Macdisneyfication, or simply in flight from the economic and political ruin at home (caused directly by predatory Global Capital), will be bitterly disappointed by the “freedom” of the “free” world. Any memories of the organic *communitas* in their homeland, however eroded by poverty & corruption, will soon seem utopian compared with the new poverty of the North, its racism & alienation.

On a crude level, this nostalgia gives a seductive quality to the rhetoric of fundamentalism. However, its worth considering that Islam possesses a far deeper & more sophisticated critique of “the modern world” than that proposed by the “Islamists”. In fact, more than one critique. To mention a few (without judgement or evaluation): -The militant anti-colonialist sufism of Emir Abel Kader, or the Sanussi Order of Libya — The strange “anarcho-sufism” of Col. Qaddafi’s Green Book (Qaddafi rebelled against a Sufi king, but was himself raised as a Sufi) — the Shiite socialism of the martyred Ali Shariati -the idea of the Mahdi or Redeemer as a collectivity — the ideal of Social Justice — the ban usury (which makes Global Capital impossible, of course) — the heroic Naqshbandi Order in Chechnya, resisting Russian imperialism for centuries — going back in time,

the Persian \$ Syrian Nizaris or “Assassins”, who went so far as to proclaim the Day of Resurrection, and to liberate a network of castles in the cause of esoteric enlightenment — etc. etc. — or even further back in time, the Prophet himself: professional revolutionary, guerilla leader, returned from his exile to establish egalitarian iconoclastic mystical/militant regime in Mecca... and so on.

A Green Thought in a Green Shade

Khezr, the Green Man, the Hidden Prophet, the trickster, the dream-master of all those seekers who need no other master. He drank the Waters of Life in Hyperborea and became immortal. He appears to lost travelers in the desert with water. He wears green. He might be the unknown face in any gathering. According to one version he is a water spirit, like one of the “Believing Djinn”, and wherever he walks flowers & herbs spring up in his footsteps. He should be considered the patron saint of Sufi eco-warriors — an Order should be founded in his name the Khezriyya; more militant than Greenpeace or Earth First!, but in defense of ecological agriculture as well as sacred wilderness.

My Story

The Moorish Orthodox Church is a recognized offshoot of the Moorish Science Temple, which was founded in 1913 in Newark New Jersey by Noble Timothy Drew Ali, a black man adopted into the Cherokee Tribe, who traveled as a circus magician to Egypt and was initiated in the Great Pyramid. His Circle Seven Koran is based on theosophical Christianity and genuine folk tradition about Islam in America handed down from times of slavery. Moorish Science was very successful, especially in Chicago, where Noble Drew Ali was martyred by police in 1929.