

Kafir who?



By SYED AKBAR ALI

Writer of the blog "OutSyed The Box"

Author of 2006 bestseller:

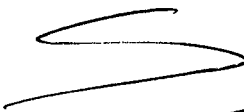
"Malaysia And The Club Of Doom - The Collapse of The Islamic Countries"

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“Kafir who?”

To YABhg Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamed,

with my deepest regards.

 Syed Akbar Ali
24/05/2016.

Syed Akbar Ali
"Kafir who?"
Cetakan Pertama 2016

Hak cipta terpelihara. Tidak dibenarkan mengeluarkan mana-mana bahagian artikel, ilustrasi dan isi kandungan buku ini dalam apa jua bentuk dan dengan apa cara sekalipun, sama ada secara elektronik, fotokopi, mekanik, rakaman ataupun cara lain sebelum mendapat izin bertulis.

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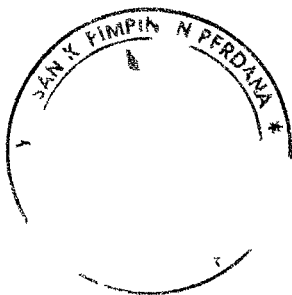
TUN DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD

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I also owe a great deal of gratitude to the millions of visitors to my blog OutSyed The Box (<http://syedsoutsidethebox.blogspot.com>) many of whom are also ardent readers of my books. They have often requested that I write more books and express my thoughts. Well here is another book and I hope the readers will find my thoughts useful.

Lastly I wish to thank my Quranic brothers and sisters for their support - those diligent students of the Quran who are rediscovering what it really means to be a good and true Muslim. There is no choice between what is super clear and that which is polluted.

Syed Akbar Ali
Bangsar South
April 2016



INTRODUCTION

'*Kafir Who?*' is a belated but necessary follow up to my book '*Malaysia And The Club of Doom – The Collapse of the Islamic Countries*' which was written in 2006. The "Arab Spring" began in 2011.

Since 2006 much has happened in the Islamic countries including Malaysia. Sad to say the things that happened have been tumultuous and not beneficial to Muslim societies around the world as a whole. Ten years later in 2016 the Islamic countries are generally worse off compared to 2006. And things are not getting any better.

The term 'Arab Spring' has become most inappropriate to describe the collapse of Islamic societies in the Middle East beginning in 2011. It is becoming the Arab Doom. The collapse of the Arab countries is getting worse. By 2015 a Third World War had broken out in the Middle East where Libya, Syria, Yemen, Iraq, Iran, Turkey, Qatar and Saudi Arabia remain embroiled in direct or indirect war and conflict or have seen their territories and populations divided along very extreme sectarian and ethnic lines.

Over 250,000 people have died in five years of civil war in Syria between the Sunnis and the Shia Alawites. Tens of thousands have died in basically a tribal conflict in Libya. Sunni versus Shia sectarian strife has claimed over 8000 lives in the Yemen.

“Casualties of the Syrian Civil War. From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia. On 17 August 2015, the United Nations put out an estimate of 250,000 that had died in the war.”

Not just in the Middle East but all over the world the majority of Muslim society is becoming more estranged from the modern 21st century world. The key words are “modern” and “21st century” – an increasing number of Muslims seem to be searching for an 11th century time warp. They seem to be shunning the freedom and independence of the 21st century and prefer a mindset which even tolerated serfdom and slavery in the earlier centuries.

Why the title ‘*Kafir who?*’ for this book? First some language :

The Online Etymology Dictionary lists the word *kafir* (n.) as follows : *from Arabic kafir “unbeliever, infidel, impious wretch,” from kafara “to cover up, conceal, deny, blot out.” Technically “non Muslim” but in Ottoman times it came to be used almost exclusively for “Christians”*



Literally *kafir* means covering something up, concealing or blocking something out. Going against something or reversing something can also be considered *kafara*.

The following verses in the Quran talk about reversing (*kaffiru*) peoples' ills:

*..and it will **reverse** from you some of your ills. And Allah is well acquainted with what you do (2:271)*

*(wayu-**kaffiru**-ankum-min-saiyyi-aatikum-wallaahu-bimaa-ta'maloona-khabeer - 2:271).*

In the following verse charitable deeds help to reverse (*kaffara*) peoples' ills:

*He (Allah) will **reverse** from them their ills and improve their condition (47:2)*

*(**Kaffara**-anhum-saiyyi-aatihim-waaslaha-bala-hum- 47:2).*

In both verses above the words *kaffiru* / *kaffara* are used to indicate the reversal or the changing of some situation.

However in the language of religion, it has always been simply believers versus disbelievers. Among the world's Muslims, a *kafir* is someone who is not a Muslim. So Christians, Hindus

Jews and all other non Muslims are technically *kafirs* or disbelievers. It has a religious connotation.

If we leave religion aside and look at the real world that we live in today then another understanding of *kafara* or rejector comes into view.

2015 saw another mass exodus of refugees from more Islamic countries. Since 2011 over 6 million mostly Muslim refugees from Afghanistan, Pakistan, Syria, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, South Sudan and other Islamic countries have left their homes and fled to other countries for survival. In the summer of 2014 more than 250,000 refugees from strife torn Pakistan fled for safety into Afghanistan. For decades it had been the other way around.

In 2015 close to a million refugees mostly from the Middle East braved rough seas and difficult journeys by land to reach the safety of Europe. The Muslim refugees were largely given safe passage and assistance by the Europeans to reach countries that were ready to receive them. Italy, Germany, Austria and some countries in Scandinavia were among those who extended great assistance to these Muslim refugees.





So here the western countries in Europe who are mainly Christian in character were able to **kaffara** or reverse the really unfortunate condition of the Muslim refugees.

The Muslim refugees were escaping with their lives from a system in their home countries that had **kaffara** (reversed or rejected) proper civilised behaviour by taking to war and killing each other.

The Muslim refugees were desperately trying to reach the Christian civilisations in Europe with the hope that these European countries would help to **kaffara** or reverse their own terrible misfortunes.

Clearly then as per the two verses of the Quran mentioned above, the words **kaffiru / kaffara** can mean quite different things from how we normally understand what or who is a **kafir**.

Along the way in this book I will also reiterate the view that in the Quran there is no Arabic word to exactly describe the English word 'religion' – a word which has its roots in the Latin of christendom. The Quran addresses 'Islam' as a *deen*. A *deen* means a "way of life".

So the title of this book '*Kafir who?*' seeks to ask who in the real world is rejecting what and to whose detriment.

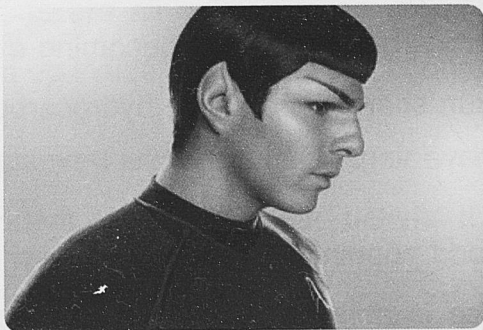


PART 1

CHAPTER 1

“NON SCIENTIFIC TRUTHS” DO NOT SOLVE REAL WORLD PROBLEMS

Having been raised in the futuristic optimism of the 1960s I can see that the 21st century is really making come true what we, as children of the 1960s, first regarded as the science fiction of creative writers and Hollywood scriptwriters. *Star Trek* and *Space 1999* gave us the impression that the future was not just science but different hairstyles too. In the future the human being would get a complete makeover.



Then Neil Armstrong's moon landing in 1969 established the reality that having both feet on the moon was as true as having

both feet on the ground. Science had made the Hollywood scripts possible. It could be possible to make all our scientific dreams come true.

Science and technology have really taken off and are making human life a true miracle here on Earth. What was scientific fantasy in the 20th century is now everyday reality. Life has become quite limitless, boundless and bounteous when the human being applies his mind to science to its maximum capacity.

The latest output of science and technology in the 21st century is an outpouring of oil and gas from the Earth. Science is not only unlocking vast quantities of oil and gas trapped in the previously inaccessible regions of the Earth's geology but it is also creating tremendous efficiencies and savings in the burning of hydrocarbon fuels. It is becoming evident that the Earth will not run short of producing hydrocarbon fuels. **Peak oil** is no more.

Despite the world population exceeding seven billion people, the human race is able to feed itself so much that a new disease now afflicts sizeable numbers of the human population – obesity. The few instances of famine and starvation in Africa



can be linked to insufficient application of the intellect. As long as we hold on tightly to scientific truths and the wonderful technologies it creates, the human species will live in a perpetual garden with rivers of milk and honey. We need not starve. So we need not cull the human species either. It is life alone that shall be sacred and not anything else.

On the other hand human beings must bravely and honestly think and debate how much real progress their religious beliefs have brought them? And when it comes to the Muslims in particular they must also ask themselves how much real progress their sectarian extremes have brought them? Because most certainly the Muslim is a sectarian creature who lives in huge numbers inside the narrow confines of his sect. The Wahhabi and his nemesis the Shia, the Sufi, the Ahmadi and many others are all quite different from each other, all safely wrapped up inside their various cocoons.

If they have achieved any progress in their everyday lives it is totally independent of their sectarian beliefs. It is the science and technology, modern industry, common sense and logic which sustains their lives. And which is all too often generated by other people. Their progress is not because of their own sectarian religious beliefs.

**MORALITY IS DOING WHAT
IS RIGHT REGARDLESS OF
WHAT YOU ARE TOLD**

**RELIGION IS DOING WHAT
YOU ARE TOLD REGARDLESS
OF WHAT IS RIGHT**

Because most certainly religion does not run on science, technology, common sense or logic. In Malaysia it is becoming a religious mantra among the religious folks that they cannot use logic in their religion. To them their idea of religion is devoid of science and logic. Science has to be true and truth has to be scientific. They say this is not applicable to religion.

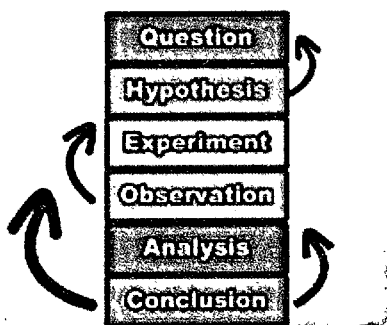
Despite such a confession they insist that their version of sectarian religions are the truth. All of them? Even when they do not agree with each other? How can this be? The only answer to this riddle is that they uphold '*non-scientific truths*'.

If there are such things as scientific truths which are an anathema to religion, then can there be such a thing as a '*non scientific truth*' without which religion cannot find its way?

The Scientific Method

In 2:111 and other verses the Quran says famously *'bring forward your proofs if indeed you are truthful'* (haatu – burhanukum – inkuntum - sadiqeen). So we must show proofs for what we say. This is certainly a scientific method.

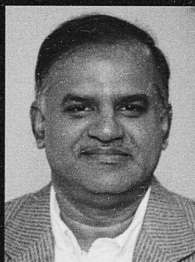
The Quran also makes another statement that supports the scientific method, *'Do not accept anything, unless you verify it for yourself. I have given you the hearing, the eyesight, and the brain and you are responsible for using them'* (17:36).



The Scientific Method

Then the Quran says,

'They are the ones who listen to all speech, then follow the best thereof. These are the ones whom Allah has guided; these are the ones who possess intelligence' (39:18).



The Author's previous books include the best seller 'Malaysia and the Club of Doom - The Collapse of the Islamic Countries' (2006) which foresaw the Arab Spring by five years. The Author is also the writer of the well known Malaysian socio-political blog OutSyed The Box.

Educated in the United States of America in management and engineering, Syed Akbar has made a career in banking, corporate finance, business and writing. He was an Economic Consultant at National Economic Action Council (2002) and was also an Advisor to the Malaysian Anti Corruption Commission (2011 - 2015). The Author speaks at conferences on Islam, the Malaysian economy, politics and is also a motivational speaker for students.

He lives in Kuala Lumpur with his wife, two sons and a daughter.

Other books by Syed Akbar Ali :

- To Digress A Little
- Malaysia And the Club of Doom -
The Collapse of the Islamic Countries
- Things in Common
- Relevance

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