

THE WEST IGNORES HISTORY TO ITS OWN PERIL

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By Bassam Michael Madany

Two articles published on 13 December 2021, dealt with the growing advance of Islam throughout the Western world. One by Daniel Pipes, **“Migration, Islam, and Western Atonement.”**ⁱ The other article was entitled **“A Permissive Pope Only Encourages Lack of Freedom,”**ⁱⁱ was contributed by Father James G. Grant, and posted on the online Crisis Magazine. Here are relevant quotes from the thesis of Father Grant.

“The papacy of Pope Francis has been widely portrayed in social media as a radical break with Vatican and papal attitudes of the past. In 2014, Francis offered his central tip for a happy life to be ‘live and let live.’ In addition to this philosophy surrounding personal freedom and morality, Francis has false views about Islam, which he has been quick to bolster and defend. To the dismay of Catholics and other Christians living under intense Islamic persecution, the pope repeatedly calls Islam “A religion of peace, that is opposed to every form of violence” (Evangelii Gaudium).”

“In 2016 an interview for the French newspaper La Croix, the pope noted, “It is true the idea of conquest is inherent in the soul of Islam. However, it is also possible to interpret the objective in Matthew’s Gospel, where Jesus sends his disciples to all nations, in terms of the same idea of conquest” (Matthew 28).”

It’s beyond belief that Pope Francis would point to any similarity between the spread of Christianity and Islam. Has he read The Acts of the Apostles’ account of the martyrdom of Stephen, and James, the brother of John? The early Church met with severe persecution during the first three centuries, as the Roman authorities attempted to stamp it out. Its historical development was the very opposite of how Islam became a worldwide imperialistic system under successive Caliphates from 632 to 1924.

As the historian Efraim Karsh explained in “Islamic Imperialism: A History”ⁱⁱⁱ

“The worlds of Christianity and Islam, however, have developed differently in one fundamental respect. The Christian faith won over an existing empire in an extremely slow and painful process and its universalism was originally conceived in spiritual terms that made a clear distinction between God and Caesar. By the time it was embraced by the Byzantine emperors as a tool for buttressing their imperial claims, three centuries after its foundation, Christianity had in place a countervailing ecclesiastical institution with an abiding authority over the wills and actions of all believers. The birth of Islam, by contrast, was inextricably linked with the creation of a world empire and its universalism was inherently imperialist. It did not distinguish between temporal and religious powers, which

were combined in the person of Muhammad, who derived his authority directly from Allah and acted at one and the same time as head of the state and head of the church. This allowed the prophet to cloak his political ambitions with a religious aura and to channel Islam's energies into 'its instruments of aggressive expansion, there [being] no internal organism of equal force to counterbalance it.'" (P. 5)

Bernard Lewis referred to the Christian teaching about the distinction between church and state in "The Roots of Muslim Rage^{iv}" in the September 1990 issue of The Atlantic Monthly.

"If the idea that religion and politics should be separated is relatively new, dating back a mere three hundred years, the idea that they are distinct dates back almost to the beginnings of Christianity. Christians are enjoined in their Scriptures to 'render . . . unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's and unto God the things which are God's.' While opinions have differed as to the real meaning of this phrase, it has generally been interpreted as legitimizing a situation in which two institutions exist side by side, each with its own laws and chain of authority—one concerned with religion, called the Church, the other concerned with politics, called the State. And since they are two, they may be joined or separated, subordinate or independent, and conflicts may arise between them over questions of demarcation and jurisdiction."

Father James Grant was puzzled by the silence of Pope Francis towards the growing persecution of Christians living in Islamic lands.

"The indifference of Pope Francis to Christians suffering under Islamic Sharia Law has become shameful in the eyes of an increasing number of Catholics and non-Catholics alike. After the Islamic terrorist attack on the offices of French satirical newspaper *Charlie Hebdo*, the pope chose not to defend the victims, free speech, or Western civilization. Rather, he defended Islamic terrorism when he noted, "*You cannot provoke. You cannot insult the faith of others. You cannot make fun of the faith of others.*" People should expect a punch, he said, if they offend others.

"In July of 2016, again in France, an Islamic Jihadist cut off the head of a Catholic priest within his own church. The pope refused to attribute these actions to Islamic violence but rather noted, '*the true terrorism is found in Capitalism. As long as the god of money is at the center of the global economy and not the human person, this is the first terrorism.*' The reality on the ground for Christians in Islamic states is that appeasement of Islam has not made Christians safer but more persecuted than they have been for centuries. The Vatican and the papacy must more vigorously support democratic regimes throughout the world and help democracies everywhere throw off dictatorial, communist, or rabidly Islamic regimes. The appalling behavior of Iran, Syria, Hezbollah in Lebanon, and Hamas in the Gaza strip are fundamental challenges to all freedom-loving people in the world. The Vatican's failure to call out the atrocities of such regimes

to their own people, to Christians and their neighbors, is quickly suggesting a Vatican and papacy that aids evil through silence and indifference.”

I am grateful for the passionate words of Father James Grant reminding us to show genuine solidarity with all people everywhere who are persecuted for their beliefs!

¹ **“Migration, Islam, and Western Atonement,” #1737**

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<https://www.danielpipes.org/20883/the-west-tries-to-atone-for-its-great-sins>

¹ [A Permissive Pope Only Encourages Lack of Freedom \(crisismagazine.com\)](https://www.crisismagazine.com/a-permissive-pope-only-encourages-lack-of-freedom)

¹ <https://yalebooks.yale.edu/book/9780300198171/islamic-imperialism>

¹ http://www.cis.org.au/Policy/summer01-02/PolicySummer01_3.html

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