

Open letter to Yasmin Alibhai Brown

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Assalaamualakum

I read your article "Abuse of Muslim women gets worse" with interest.

Let us establish one thing at the outset. A Muslim country is not necessarily Islamic. I hope you understand that.

In your article, you quote numerous examples of Muslim women being abused by Muslim men. You may be correct, I do not know. Your statement that "female oppression in Islamic Countries is getting worse", is manifestly wrong because there is no country in the world, Muslim or non-Muslim, that subscribes to Shariah law. Therefore, they cannot be referred to as "Islamic" by any stretch of the imagination.

The oppression of females is a world wide phenomenon and not confined to Muslim countries only. Remember the Austrian gentlemen? In our own country, the "Barbie-doll" case? Italian Prime Minister, Berlusconi's ex-wife about his "roving eye"? This is mental abuse. Oh yes, do not forget the Kwa-Zulu Natal school where teachers have been suspended for the sexual abuse of female students. A female social worker was abused by an SAPS member while she lay on the ground in Pretoria. A taxi driver was sentenced to life- imprisonment for the brutal rape and murder of a young passenger. The "mini-skirt attack at Noord Street taxi rank? A 40-year old man was killed in a mob justice attack for rape. A 20-year old British girl was raped in a police cell in Laos and is now 5 months pregnant. She has been in prison for 8 months. A doctor is being held for raping 2 patients in hospital. The list is endless. What's the point? You may ask. In all the examples I have quoted, nowhere, but nowhere is it reported that these crimes were committed in a Christian country!

May I remind you that the feminist movement has given rise to allied industries such as the day-care, fashion, fast food and pornographic enterprises? It is no coincidence that women have become worthless commodities in the market place and ultimately their enslavement by the capitalist elite.

If I understand you correctly, a mother and wife who serves tea to her husband and children, is slavery. If she provides this service to strange men, at the risk of their never-ending advances, in a restaurant, office or aircraft, she is emancipated, strange logic, don't you think?

The "progressive" career woman has a flip side that is rarely talked about, for fear of being labelled "ancient" or a "dinosaur". The reality is that she has abdicated her role as a mother and a wife. The mother will always be the centre of a solid family and hence a solid nation. Family conflicts, mental disorders, depression and bulimia are often serious side-effects of the so called free and liberated society. This "successful" career woman often loses her God-given honour and introduces deceit and tension within the family.

Ms Alibhai-Brown, women in Islam are the creatures of modesty, the hijab is their outer protection from the decadents of this life. Modesty and humility are part of the belief structure of Muslims. Women in Islam do not beatify themselves for the world to see. Attempts to force Muslim women to adopt your standards contravenes this sense of modesty.

Bibi Ayesha Laher