

Pauline Paradigm:
A radical response for a radical time,
post 911
Sopron – 2005
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Where is the growing problem today, post 911?

Radical Islam.....

Who are they?

- Many say Radicals are:
- Not Muslims
- A fringe group
- Therefore, Irrelevant

How do Muslims define themselves?

In 2001, in the UK:

By 2002: Radicals had risen to 25%

By 2003-2004: No polls were carried out.....

(source: Peter G. Riddell and Peter Cotterell, *Islam In Conflict*, Leicester, England: IVP, 2003, chapters 10-12, and page 193. Also a lecture by Riddell on the theme, "Muslim Views on the World" held at the London Institute for Contemporary Christianity, and sponsored by the London Lectures Trust, October 23, 2003)

Radical Islam is Growing:

Poll on radicalisation

by Pew International (March 2004)

- Turkey = 31%
- Morocco = 45%

- Jordan = 55%
- Pakistan = 65%
 - (80 million out of 140 million!)

So, what is the solution for these group of Radical Muslims?

- **Radical Christianity!**
- **Radical Methodolgy!!**

Why? Because we follow the same Paradigm, and therefore can understand them best!

- **Like them we also have Two Sources:**
 - 1) They have the **Qur'an & the Traditions**
 - We have the **Bible**
 - 2) They have **Muhammad**
 - We have the **Lord Jesus Christ**

Yet, since 911 there is a dilemma in missionary circles:

What missiological methods should we use with radical Muslim groups?

PRESENT DAY CHRISTIAN METHODOLOGIES

Two Strategies:

- **Dialogue:** The art of learning how to talk or carry on effective discussions with people of other faiths.
 - Irenic/Friendship evangelism:** Coming together through shared relationships.
 - Contextual:** Breaking down social barriers to the Gospel, by incarnating oneself in the local context.
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- **Debate:** Using the conventional format of public debate.

Proclamation: To proclaim Christ by speaking and/or preaching.

Confrontational: Openly challenging the issues of belief of the other person, using literature, media, etc...

Dialogue - Irenic

- ‘Friendship Evangelism’
- Using Web Relationships, Charities
- Defensive

Premise:

- Need for peace between faiths

Methodologically, only use Inter-faith dialogue

- Apologetics alone
- Traditional Method
- Most popular Method

Problems:

- Few come (i.e. Interfaith Forums in the UK)
- Fewer are convinced
- They start out apologetical
 - Much of the onus falls on us
- They quickly become polemical
- Most of us are not prepared to take polemics on
- We come off as weak, defensive, unconvincing

Debate - Confrontational

- Internet
- Literature
- Public Debates
- Speaker’s Corner

Premise:

- Need for persuasion
- Methodologically, defend & challenge the opposition
- “The best defense is a good offense”
- Using both Apologetics & Polemics
- Modern, in its infancy, and Controversial

Critique of Debates (Colin Chapman)

- Attacks against Islam sometimes degenerate into polemics, resulting in nothing more than a 'tit-for-tat' criticism of Christianity by Muslims, and vice versa.
- Debates appealed too much to the reason and the intellect, and not enough to the heart
- Christian debaters are not aware of the latest Biblical critical research ongoing in the West, and so became helpless when Muslim opponents use them.
- Debates are conditioned by the social and political context in which we work, i.e. freedom in Europe to be critical.
- We should question the validity of public debates which concentrate entirely on theological issues at the expense of the many social and political issues which both Muslims and Christians share in common
- Responding in a polemical fashion merely mimics the agenda of the Muslim protagonist, which merely forces the Christian on to the defensive, and we fall into a scriptural paradigm we probably don't even accept ourselves.
- Colin argues for a complete cessation of polemics itself, believing it to be not only disrespectful, but unloving.

Does Dialogue go far enough?

**Is there not a need now to move beyond its strictures,
post 911?**

May we use Confrontation?

- Must look at:
- Model of **Jesus, Paul**, or the early church in the **1st Century**.
- Early **Christian/Muslim polemics** from the 7th- 9th centuries
- 19th century Model: **Dr. Carl Pfanders**
- 20th-21st century Models: **Revisionists...**
- Post 911 Model: **HPCF...or SWAD?**

7TH-9TH CENTURY CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM DEBATES

(Leo Levond, John of Damascus, al-Kindi, etc.)

Participants:	(date of debates)
Patriarch John I vs. 'Amr al-'As	639 AD
Leo III vs. 'Umar II	719 AD
John of Damascus vs. Saracens	752 AD
Patriarch Timothy 1 vs. Caliph Mahdi	781 AD

Religious Dialogue of Jerusalem	800 AD
al-Kindi vs. al-Hashimi	820 AD
Nicetas of Byzantium	875-886 AD
'Ali Tabari's Book of Religion and Empire	855 AD
Al-Jahiz's Reply to the Christians	869 AD

Further Muslim Polemics:

(Ibn Hazm)	(1064 AD)
(Al Ghazali)	(1058-1111 AD)

What the debates tell us:

- In the 7th century Christians and Muslims knew little about each other.
- Debates were first used for the purpose of winning converts.
- Then moved on for the purpose of challenging the credibility of the other's beliefs.
- Not used for better understanding.
- It is only with al-Kindi vs. al-Hashimi (820 AD) that we finally find a sophisticated polemic challenging the emerging Qur'an, and an emerging hagiography of the prophet,

Content of ideas :

- Evidences a progression in these dialogues.
- **Muslim challenge:** From the outset is **two-fold**:
 - Authority of **scripture**, both the Torah and Injil (Amir, Umar II, Mahdi, and especially Ibn Hazm)
 - Divinity** of Christ (Amir, Umar II, Mahdi, al Hashimi, and Ibn Hazm)
- **Christian challenge:** when it was used:
 - Authority of the **Qur'an** (Leo III, al-Kindi, and Nicetas)
 - Authority of **Muhammad** (Leo III, John of Damascus, and al-Kindi)

Methodology:

- Also a progression
- **Early Christians** in Byzantium were **firmer**, more **forthright**, and **less inhibited** in their presentations (i.e. John I, Leo III)
- **Later Christians** living under Muslim rule were **more careful** (i.e. John of Damascus, Timothy I)

- **Muslims:**
 - Very few lived under Christian rule
 - Thus were: **Aggressive, and Dismissive**

19TH CENTURY CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM DEBATE (Carl Gottlieb Pfander: 1803-1868)

- Did face-to-face interactions, in the bazaars, letter writings, tracts, books, & *Munazara* - debates
- The Great **AGRA MUNAZARA** (Debate) **April 1864**
- Maulana Rahmat Allah & Dr. Muhammad Wazir Khan vs. Carl Gottlieb Pfander & Thomas Valpy French
- Debate was lost due to 1Jn.5:7-8, and French's admission of 1000's of copyist errors.

The Legacy of Pfander

- **Maulawi Imad ud-Din**
 - Attended the 1854 munazara to give support to Rahmat Allah and Dr. Wazir Khan, converted after 1857, due to this debate
 - For thirty years, from 1860s until the 1890s, became the Reverend of Amritsar, notable missionary-author, publishing over 20 publications in refutation of Islam, and participated in many Munazara confrontations (Zwemer 1941:223; Stock 1899:160-171,562-563; Powell 1993:288).
- **Maulawi Safdar Ali**
 - Due to the 1864 debate, converted to Christianity.
 - Became a member of the India Education Department, and one of the leaders in the ongoing Munazara confrontations with Islam. (Zwemer 1941:223; Stock 1899:160-171,562-563 Powell 1993:288)

20th-21st Century Polemics: Revisionists

- **The Revisionist's Prime Concern:**
- **To Reassess the Classical Model**
- **Their principle Conclusions:**
- **Islam, as we know it, did not exist in the 7th century, but evolved over a period of 200-300 years.**

(Humphreys 1991:71,83-89)
- **The Qur'an probably was not revealed to one man in 22 years, but likely evolved over a period of 100-200 years**

(Rippin 1985:155;1990:3,25,60; Lester 99:44-45; Wansbrough 1977:160-163)

Looking at 1st Century Paradigms

- **Jesus** with Nicodemus (**Irenical**)
John 3
- **Jesus** in the temple (**Confrontational**): Luke 19:45-48
- **Jesus** with Pharisees (**Confrontational**): Matthew 23:13-33
- **Paul** in Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, Athens, Ephesus (**Confrontational**):
Acts chaps. 17-19
-Put in prison, whipped, stoned, & finally killed!

Pauline Paradigm

1) In Athens (Acts 17:22-23):

- -**learned** about the **Greek beliefs**,
- -**studied** the objects of their **worship**.
- -**knew** their **philosophies**
(both Epicureans [remote God] and Stoics [Pantheistic])
- -**quoted** their **writers** [Epimenedes of Crete, and the poet Arastus] (v.28).
- -After first understanding them on their level, he demonstrated the inadequacy of their ideas (v.29).

Result: 2 conversions:

Dionysius (from the Areopagus), bishop of Athens?, &
Damaris (Acts 17:34)

2) In Corinth he chose a more spiritual strategy, but dealt with a largely Jewish convert church.

Paul often used confrontation:

- **Paul** went to **Jews** in their Synagogues, reasoned with them, using their scriptures (**Acts 17:1-2**),
- went 'outside' to the **Greeks** in their territory, reasoning with them from within their traditions (**vs.17**)
- 3) In Ephesus, a pagan city; "argued persuasively" in the **synagogue** for three months (Acts 19:8)...The Jews threw him OUT!
-So, he went to the **lecture hall of Tyrannus**, a secular institution, and for 2 years, debated with Jews & Greeks, until ALL had heard the Gospel! (Acts 19:9-10).

4) In Rome, from morning till evening, for two years, he **boldly** “tried to **convince**” those who came (Acts 28:23-31).

We must remember that before he was Paul, he was first Saul,

-a learned Jew,

-a Pharisee

-a ‘Shamaite’ ...on his way to Damascus to KILL Christians!

-Then God met him in a dynamic way,

-and made him Paul,

-yet retained all his qualities as Saul...his passion, his intellect, and his knowledge of the Scriptures!

As a consequence, he obtained results using both irenic, and confrontational methods (Acts 11:34; 13:32; 17:4, 32; 18:6)

But he was a **Radical Christian**, a great example of what we need today with **Radical Muslims!**

What can we conclude?

• Was Confrontation Used?

• 1st century we find it with **Jesus, Paul** and the early Church

• 7th-9th centuries it was initially used, then dissipated, then renewed with **al-Kindi**

• 19th century we find a good example in the CMS missionary, **Dr. Carl Pfander**

So is there room for Confrontation / Polemics?

- Jesus, Paul, and the disciples used it
- The leaders of the church in the 7th-9th c. used it
- Dr. Carl Pfander certainly used it!
- The Revisionists today are using it....
- So, if it has been a tradition of the church from its very inception, and exemplified for the last 2,000 years, especially against Islam, and now employed by those from the secular world, then why should we not use it today?
- Especially against Radical Muslims, those who understand best the impact it makes

What then has been our response?

- Unfortunately, many repeat a plethora of excuses about why we must not hurt the sensibilities of our Muslims friends
- No wonder we have so few rebuttals and even fewer models to emulate.
- Some Church leaders need to take this responsibility seriously.
- Some need to lead by example.
- Or allow those of us who are ready to do so, to get on with it...
- Examples....? HPCF & FORMAL DEBATES