



# THERE IS ONLY ONE WEAPON AGAINST ISLAMIC BARBARIANS: EDUCATION - EDUCATION - EDUCATION

BY

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**In an article published by the German daily “Die Welt” (10.09.2016), Gilles Kerpel, a notorious French Professor in Islamology, author of a variety of books about the progress of islamism across the world maintains that „the situation in Europe may turn into a general civil war. (“Die Lage in Europa soll sich zu Bürgerkrieg entwickeln) And he concludes: *Nur Bildung löst das Problem – aber nicht nur Bildung in Europa, sondern Bildung weltweit.***

**There is indeed only *one weapon against young barbarians: education, education, education.* On a recent visit to Brussels the Dalai Lama came exactly to the same conclusion.**

## **EDUCATION NOT ONLY IN EUROPE (E.O.E.) BUT EDUCATION WORLDWIDE.**

Let us face it: the whole ambition and strategy of the jihadists is to cause the Muslim masses to join their movement in a wide and general support in favor of the creation of a Califat in Europe ruled by the sharia, the Islamic law. Their goal is to overthrow the French Republic in the first place: they hate the „laïcité“ more than anything and also the French and European way of life. They bluntly refuse to *live like God in France.*

For sure, it is possible to destroy the Islamic state military in the Middle East. But it will prove a lot less easy to destroy it in the heads of young European Muslims. So far, French education failed in its attempt as well as in all the efforts of the Republic in favor of a so called *de radicalization* of young jihadists .

*The ambition of Islamist terrorists is to build a new Caliphate on the ruins of Europe“ (Ziel der Terroristen ist es, auf den "Ruinen des alten Kontinents" Europa eine Art Kalifat zu errichten).*

Professor Kerpel is conscious that a majority of peaceful European Muslims totally disagree with such irrational ambitions. Yet, the so called Salafist ideology has progressed dramatically across Europe over the last 15 years, especially among Muslim youngsters. Gilles Kepel insists that it must be the *ambition of Muslim intellectuals and scholars as well as of Islamic organizations to combat this dangerous literal interpretation of the Koran. Some of them have the guts to do so but very few radicalized youngsters are prepared to listen to them.*



Professor Kepel blames radical Islam and Western elites for creating a fertile ground for the rise of the third-generation jihadists. He is suggesting that *“behind the jihadist eruption lie the entrenchment of Salafism the most radical proponents of which, their eyes fixed on Syria and Daesh, are aiming for the destruction of Europe through civil war”*.

He has also observed *that radical Islamists are increasingly reaching out through the various online social networks to spread their jihadist theories*. Salafists are terribly conservative in their message but frightfully modern in the way they convey it.

Professor Kepel is seen by William Dalrymple as *one of the best possible guides through the frightening labyrinth of militant Islam. A fluent Arabic speaker who has spent many years in the Middle East, he has been writing about the subject for three decades*.

### ISLAMISATION OR RADICALIZATION OF ISLAM ?

Olivier Roy, another distinguished French academic, has also a long lists of books to his name, and years of field work in the Middle East, Central Asia and the troubled French suburbs. Both experts are eagerly consulted by policymakers and *newsmakers*.

Gilles Kepel, 61, a professor at Sciences Po, the prestigious political science institute, finds much of his answers inside France — in its suburbs and their dysfunctional sociology — and in the role of Islam. Mr. Roy, 66, places greater emphasis on individual behavior and psychology in a jihadism he considers strictly marginal to Islam. Mr. Kepel sees individual youngsters as cogs in a coherent system.

Mr. Roy regards most of them as troubled people who joined the jihadist ranks to carry out recent attacks. He describes them as mostly *marginalized young men and petty criminals who use Islam as a cover to pursue extreme violence*.

*“They haven’t had a militant past,”* Mr. Roy says of many of these terrorists. The problem they represent is, he insists, due to the **“Islamization of radicalism,”** a signature phrase that enrages Mr. Kepel, who leans toward its opposite: **the radicalization of Islam**. Mr. Roy observes a Muslim population that, on the whole, is *relatively well integrated*. But for Mr. Kepel, *the murderous jihadism that struck France in 2015 is the expression of an Islamist radicalization that took shape over decades because of a failure of integration*. In his book *“Terreur dans l’Hexagone,”* which appeared soon after the Paris attacks in November and sold tens of thousands of copies, professor Kepel calls this *the third generation of Islam in France, after a first generation of immigration and a second of unsatisfied political restiveness*. They have very little respect for their parents’ and grand-parents’ Islam and adopt a far more violent and integral version of the Koran. In 2005, Mr. Kepel points out, a text appeared online that founded what he describes as *the third generation of jihadism abroad*. This 1,600-page text — **“Appeal to Global Islamic Resistance,”** by a Syrian-born engineer, Abu Musab al-Suri — calls for *“civil war in Europe”* fomented by *“unintegrated”* Muslim youths.

For Mr. Kepel, this proved the playbook for the atrocities of the Islamic State jihadists that have bedeviled France.



*“If you want to comprehend their functioning, you have got to understand their background”.*

French Prime Minister Valls has put it far more bluntly: *all Salafists are no terrorists but most terrorists are Salafists.*

We tend to think the two opposite points of view are not necessarily mutually exclusive. ( [after Adam Nossiter](#) July 12, 2016)

Basically, Gilles Kepel feels deep concern about the failure of France’s power elites to create a more inclusive society for the children of post-colonial immigrants: *“new wave” Islamists refusing to shake women’s hands, fetishizing the full-body covering veil, and banning sport and music.*

Having documented the transformation of many suburban areas (the famous French *banlieues*) into separate ethnic, religious, consumer and cultural identity spaces created by Salafist radicals, Halal entrepreneurs and colluding politicians, Kepel is taking aim at this neo-fundamentalist branch of Islam and its weird effects on the cohesion of multi-ethnic, multi-cultural French society. *“Of course these jihadists are only a small minority. But their war of enclaves could not exist if there were no enclaves—and today they exist,”* he concludes.

*The jihadist genesis can be traced at least as far back as the presidency of François Mitterrand in the 1980s, Kepel writes, the marginalization of the children of Muslim immigration has opened the floodgates to “Salafization” and jihadism”.*

Keppel’s *“Terror in the Hexagon”* chronicles the road to radicalization and terrorism among a generation born in the last few decades of the 20th century *“sociologists label them Generation Y perhaps in reference to the cords that hang from their ears to their navels, drawing a kind of “Y”, and linking them intimately to the world of smartphones like a postmodern umbilical cord that can’t be cut.”*

They reached adulthood around 2005, the year of the French riots. It was also, he insists, the year marked by the online publication of (the late, former Bin Laden adviser and breakaway figure) Abu Musab al-Suri’s 1600-page call to bottom-up globalized holy war waged by disaffected Muslim youth, targeting the *“soft underbelly of West-Europe”.*

Kepel writes: *“The first jihad revolution was by fax. “With Bin Laden it was satellite TV—there is no al-Qaeda without Al Jazeera—and today it’s YouTube with its MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses) of jihadism that spread the theories, and of course the social networks, principally Facebook and Twitter.”*

*Salafism is spreading its tentacles through French society and particularly among the “retro-colonial” Generation Y, angry about their own and their exclusion from the Gallic dream.*

*“This turned out to be a fertile terrain for the eruption of French jihad, in a society where the immigrant neighborhoods were caught in tight grip between the resistible ascension of the National Front and the breakthrough of Salafism”.*



Furthermore, he keeps emphasizing the central role that Saudi Arabia has played in the nurturing of violent political Islam - and the degree to which the Wahhabi kingdom took in Islamist leaders expelled by the region's secular regimes such as Syria, Egypt and Iraq. It was in Saudi Arabia, and among Saudis engaged in the Afghan jihad, that the fatal fusion took place between ultra-orthodox Salafism and the jihadi ideas of the Muslim Brothers

*The Islamists have used the internet and the Arab satellite channels with great skill. In this battle, the way that Europe's million Muslims swing will prove crucial. If suspicion and Islamophobia drives them into the embrace of the militants, we are lost. Yet, Kepel ends his book on a note of hope. Across Europe, a new generation of Muslims is becoming active in democratic politics... In this Kepel shows a kind of optimism that we don't exactly share.*

ARE MUSLIMS ACTUALLY GOING TO TAKE OVER FRANCE, AS WRITER MICHEL HOUELLEBECQ DESCRIBES IN HIS NOVEL "SUBMISSION", OR IS THIS ONLY A FICTION?

*"Submission" is a very brilliant work of fiction, and Houellebecq has an incredible novelist's flair for exacerbating the contradictions in societies. His books have an international reach and are translated worldwide. They are an embodiment of what Aristotle called catharsis, he exacerbates passions in order to purge them.*

Yet, to us, Houellebecq is making a point when he fancies that in 2030, after a difficult presidential election, left and right bind their voices and forces to prevent Marine Le Pen from becoming President of the Republic. Therefore they negotiate à coalition with the Muslim party (*Muslim Federation*) and offer him the Presidency. The newly elected Muslim President keeps refusing all ministries except one: **education**. This is of course no coincidence.

In the novel, the notorious schools of the Republic are subsequently poorly subsidized and they face steep decline in favor of the private Muslim school-networks that get financed by the Arab Petrol States. In France as well as in Belgium and in England there are already a variety of private Muslim schools. Moreover imams are insisting today that Muslims send their very young kids to Koranic schools where they are being conditioned by fanaticism from a very early age. We should bear in mind that the very first ambition of the Islamic state to teach and train a very young generation of fanatic cruel warriors inside the IS. Only the German Nazis did the same with their weird *Lebensborn* by the end of the Second World War.

*What we need now is a political class which is willing to deal with the political, social, cultural and religious challenges of jihadism, which has devastated the country with hundreds of casualties. Education and internet are their first priorities.*

Therefore, it stands to reason that firstly education and internet must be part of the counterattack.

SHOULD WE FEAR THE DANGER OF A GLOBAL WAR?

*There is already war in the Middle East. Whether or not it will reach the rest of the world or remain located in the Middle East and extend only to Europe via jihad is dependent on the price that the oil barrel reaches in years to come.*



In his latest book, called *"Terror in the Hexagon: The Genesis of French Jihad"*, Kepel makes it once more perfectly clear that *"Behind the jihadist eruption, lies the entrenchment of Salafism the most radical elements of which are aiming for the destruction of Europe through civil war,"*.

*France is one of the biggest Western exporters of jihadists who are radically rejecting common values. Therefore it is no coincidence that far-right demagogue Marine Le Pen, like Donald Trump in the US, is soaring in popularity,* goes the Kepel argument. Almost simultaneously, the Islamic State is luring a growing radicalized fringe of "desperado" 20 to 30-somethings to commit mass murder of *kuffar* ("miscreants" or non-Muslims, particularly Jews), as well as "*apostates*" ("bad" Muslims). The two extremist phenomena feed in to each other, and are even secret or overt allies.

"They both want to create a society split into two distinct groups," Kepel explains: *"For one thing, Muslims who are victims of what is relentlessly termed 'Islamophobia,' and on the other the extreme right."*

*They all express "rejection of the French elites,"* a power structure Kepel disparages as *"an aristocracy increasingly cut off from society."*

Jihadists, for their part are jubilant on Twitter about the National Front's success, Kepel points out, and they want it to win precisely because the party's politics are so anti-Muslim. *"That way there will be pogroms, all Muslims will be tempted to group under their banner of jihadism, and civil war will begin,"* he says. *"There are two objectives of terrorism: to terrify the enemy and mobilize the Muslim masses,"* Kepel insists.

## TURNING THE TIDE

All totalitarian states and movements, whether Salafist, Nazi, Soviet or Chinese, feel there is no possible *total* victory without a global conquest and absolute control of the youth.

Therefore, they concentrate every effort and all their energy and resources upon the (*re*) education of the young and also now upon internet. The Islamic State, as we have pointed out, is no different in that obsession.

Like them all IS, is desperately aiming at a slavish type of education that demands absolute obedience and „*Submission*“ of all youths and tolerates no critical distance.

Every ambitious alternative educational effort directed against such totalitarian *brainwashing* should therefore stimulate the critical spirit of the young urging them to think by themselves. Such education must in the first place warn the young, all the young, against the potential dangers of every moral teaching based upon the "*divine law*" demanding blind obedience and total surrender to any kind of divine authority. Liberal and liberated education, ought to stimulate and encourage every form of autonomous ethical approach expressing conviction and responsibility as was originally suggested by Kant, Bentham, Mill and their enlightened followers.

This is actually the ambition of the auto-active (*self-learning*) platform Eyes of Europe. Based on participation, E.o.E. is willing to facilitate a permanent dialogue between young Europeans (whether believers, agnostics or non-believers) across the continent in English (Globish if need be), in real time.



They must be allowed to express themselves and interact freely with each other about all possible issues including those causing anger and dissent: climate change, immigration, terrorism, soaring demography, nature devastation, you name it. And more specifically the famous *art de vivre* and especially the „ *art de vivre ensemble* i.e. togetherness.

Eyes of Europe likes to be thought of as a *Forum* that stimulates positive projects and values ( those of the host country as well as those of the homeland )that foster *togetherness* and participation.

Eyes of Europe is a democratic program and self-learning platform, a modern version of the *Greek agora* where the most diverse opinions are being expressed and discussed in mutual respect.

Like *wikipedia* it is an auto-active platform that treats (through constant mutual interactions) and transmits knowledge and information in all autonomy and liberty.

It is Eyes of Europe's ambition to train and educate citizens, neither French, nor German, nor English or Croatian citizens but cosmopolitan citizens of Europe; citizens of the world able to understand the *pros and cons* of the European Union and willing to discuss them and hence to improve them and reflect critically on the benefits as well as on the shot-comings and loopholes of our cultural model.

Admittedly, this is not without danger, as Salafists as well as nationalist populists may be tempted to use E.o.E. as a communicating channel to convey their ideas. But isn't this part of the challenge if we want to tackle the terrible crisis we are all dealing with?

The risk must be taken if we want to move out of this endless crisis that is excluding our youngsters and is exposing a whole generation to frustration and despair.

Therefore, education is dramatically needed, not only in Europe (E.o.E) but all over the world.

It looks as if E.o.E. Education provides the last possible rescue boats for the crew and passengers of a sinking Titanic.

Based on *Participatory Decision-making* it demands radical transparency. Like the *Living Labs'* philosophy it is bent to turn learners, from traditionally passive pupils into active, innovative and critical innovative actors.

E.o.E. learning is, like Service-Learning, *an educational approach that combines learning objectives with community service in order to provide a pragmatic, progressive learning experience meeting societal needs*. It also regards learning as a philosophy and a model for community development through interpersonal contacts.

EoE learning is in the first place focusing on effective European citizenship.

EoE learning has an impact on the personal and interpersonal development of the learners.

By working with people of different ethnicities, lifestyles, and socioeconomic statuses; by serving in diverse [learning environments](#), EoE learners are more likely to reduce stereotypes and increase their cultural appreciation.



E.o.E. takes knowledge outside the classroom into the real world with real people and situations.

The more I reflect on participative and co-creative education, the more I am convinced that it is a passport for the future of Europe and the world.

Us President John F. Kennedy used to say: "ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country"

Eyes of Europe is saying now to all young Europeans: "*Ask yourself what you can do together for Europe and the future of European culture and civilization.* The next big thing will be resulting from the interaction of a lot of small things with a view to regenerating politics.

Eyes of Europe is willing and trying to reenchant the prospects for the future



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