

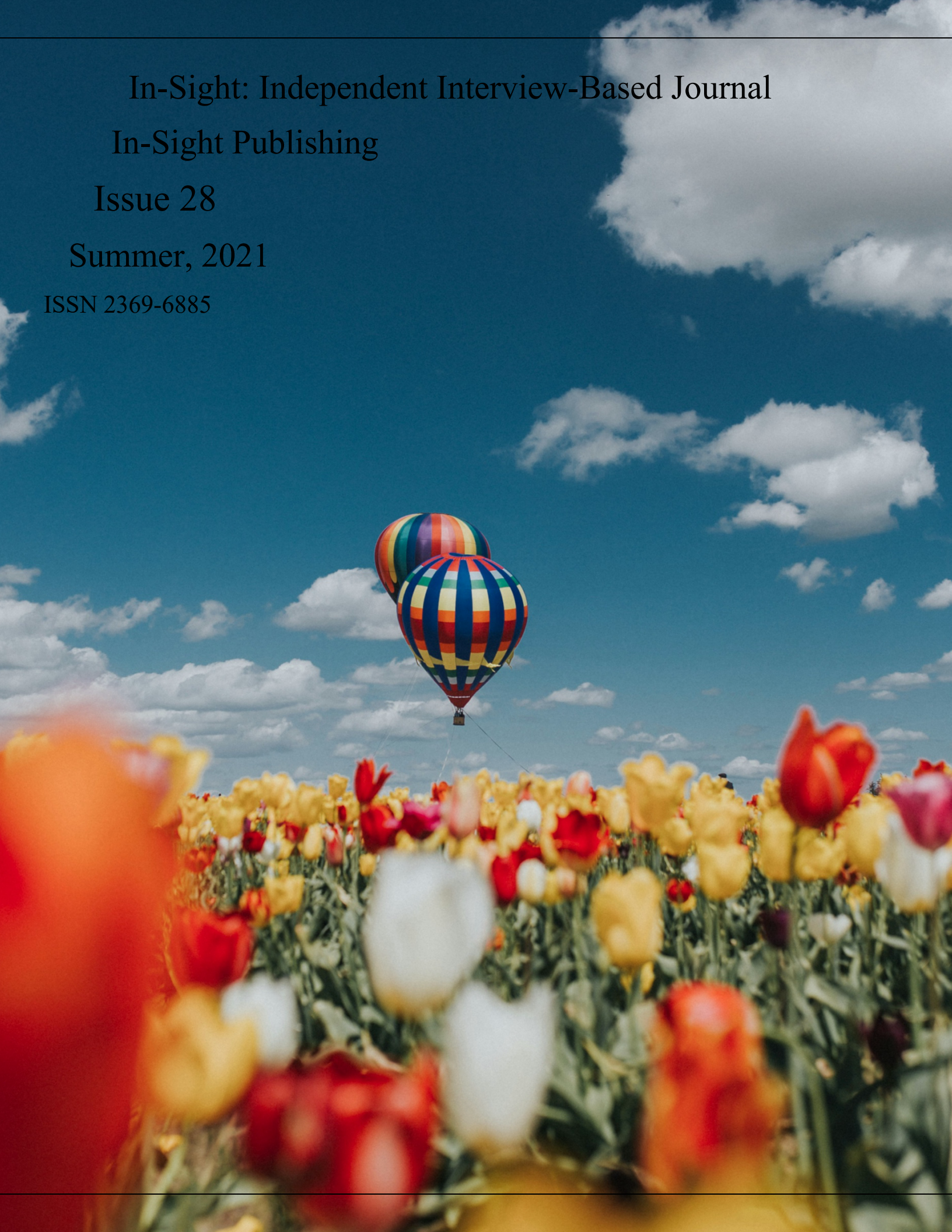
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In-Sight People

In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal

Short-form biographical sketch with name and section of the journal.

Editor-in-Chief

(Updated January 7, 2021)

1. [Scott Douglas Jacobsen](#)

In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal Advisory Board (Brief)*

(Updated January 9, 2021)

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2. [Professor Azra Raza, M.D.](#)
3. [Dr. Daniel Bernstein](#)
4. [Dr. Herb Silverman](#)
5. [Ismail Hamaamin Hamalaw](#)
6. [Dr. Kathy Bullock](#)
7. [J.J. Middleway](#)
8. [Dr. Lloyd Hawkeye Robertson](#)
9. [Marissa Torres Langseth, B.S.N., R.N., M.S.N., ANP-BC \(retired\)](#)
10. [Rod Taylor](#)
11. [Dr. Sally Satel, M.D.](#)
12. [Stacey Piercey](#)
13. [Professor Sven van de Wetering](#)
14. [Prof. Imam Syed B. Soharwardy](#)
15. [Terry Waslow, M.B.A.](#)
16. [Tim Moen](#)

Long-form biographical sketch with name, title, associations, biography, and photograph as provided.

Editor-in-Chief

(Updated January 9, 2021)



Scott Douglas Jacobsen

Founder, In-Sight Publishing

Scott Douglas Jacobsen is the Founder of [In-Sight Publishing](#) and Editor-in-Chief of *[In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal](#)* (ISSN 2369-6885). Jacobsen works for science and human rights, especially women's and children's rights. He considers the modern scientific and technological world the foundation for the provision of the basics of human life throughout the world and the advancement of human rights as the universal movement among peoples everywhere.

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Dr. Aubrey de Grey

Chief Science Officer & Co-Founder, [SENS Research Foundation](#); Editor-In-Chief, [Rejuvenation Research](#)

Dr. Aubrey de Grey is a biomedical gerontologist based in California, United States, and is the Chief Science Officer of [SENS Research Foundation](#), a California-based 501(c) (3) charity dedicated to combating the aging process. He is also Editor-in-Chief of [Rejuvenation Research](#), the world's highest-impact peer-reviewed journal focused on intervention in aging.

He received his BA and Ph.D. from the [University of Cambridge](#) in 1985 and 2000 respectively. His research interests encompass the characterization of all the accumulating and eventually pathogenic molecular and cellular side-effects of metabolism (“damage”) that constitute mammalian aging and the design of interventions to repair and/or obviate that damage. Dr. de Grey is a Fellow of both the [Gerontological Society of America](#) and the [American Aging Association](#), and sits on the editorial and scientific advisory boards of numerous journals and organisations.



Professor Azra Raza, M.D.

[Columbia University](#), Medicine, Professor; [Myelodysplastic Syndrome Center](#), Director

Dr. Azra Raza is Professor of Medicine and Director of the MDS Center at Columbia University in New York, NY. She started her research in Myelodysplastic Syndromes (MDS) in 1982 and moved to Rush University, Chicago, Illinois in 1992, where she was the Charles Arthur Weaver Professor in Oncology and Director, Division of Myeloid Diseases.

The MDS program, along with a Tissue Repository containing more than 60,000 samples from MDS and acute leukemia patients was successfully relocated to Columbia University in 2010. Before moving to New York, Dr. Raza was the Chief of Hematology Oncology and the Gladys Smith Martin Professor of Oncology at the University of Massachusetts.

She has published the results of her laboratory research and clinical trials in prestigious, peer reviewed journals such as The New England Journal of Medicine, Nature, Molecular Cell, Blood, PNAS, Cancer, Cancer Research, British Journal of Hematology, Leukemia, Leukemia Research. She is also the co-author of GHALIB: Epistemologies of Elegance, a book on the works of the famous Urdu poet. Dr. Raza has mentored hundreds of medical students, residents, oncology fellows, doctoral and post-doctoral students in the last three decades.

She serves on numerous National and International panels as a reviewer, consultant and advisor and is the recipient of a number of awards including The First Lifetime Achievement Award from APPNA, Award in Academic Excellence twice (2007 and 2010) from Dogana, and Woman of the Year Award from Safeer e Pakistan, CA and The Hope Award in Cancer Research 2012 (shared with the Nobel Laureate Dr. Elizabeth Blackburn).

Dr. Raza has been named as one of the 100 Women Who Matter by Newsweek Pakistan in March 2012. In 2015, Dr. Raza was a member of the Founder Group at Jackson Hole, Wyoming, designing Breakthrough Developments in Science and Technology with President Bill Clinton. On December 1, 2015, Dr. Raza was part of a core group of cancer researchers who met with Vice President Joe Biden to discuss the Cancer Moonshot initiative.

**Dr. Daniel Bernstein**

Tier 2 Canada Research Chair, Lifespan Cognition; Principle Investigator, [Lifespan Cognition Lab](#); Instructor, Psychology, [Kwantlen Polytechnic University](#); Inaugural Member, [Royal Society of Canada's College of New Scholars, Artists and Scientists](#)

Dr. Daniel M. Bernstein works as the [Tier 2 Canada Research Chair in Lifespan Cognition](#) for the Psychology department of [Kwantlen Polytechnic University](#). He is the principal investigator for the [Lifespan Cognition Lab](#). Dr. Bernstein earned his Bachelor of Arts at the [University of California, Berkeley](#), Master's at [Brock University](#), PhD at [Simon Fraser University](#), and did Post-Doctoral work at the [University of Washington](#). His research interests lie in “belief and memory; developmental metacognition; hindsight bias; mild head injury; sleep and dreams.”



Ismail Hamaamin Hamalaw

Novelist & Writer; Editor; Indigenous Middle East (Kurdish); Editor-in-Chief, [Culture Project](#)

Ismail Hamaamin Hamalaw is a distinguished Kurdish writer, novelist, and poet born in 1967 in South Kurdistan. He has a B.A. in Psychology and Education Science. He is a cofounder of Culture Project and editor-in-chief of its publication called Culture Magazine, a Kurdish magazine published in print and online.

Published works in Kurdish:

My Hat is Full of Rain and Flowers – Poems – 1998

The Fall of the Wolf – Novel – 2001

A Glimpse from The Myth of Clay– Novella – 2004

Beyond the Border, folding through moon forests – Novel- 2011

The Lost Acrobat – Essays – 2012

Sloterdijk From Close – Essays – 2015

The Mould of Fascism – 2019



Dr. Herb Silverman

Founding President, Secular Coalition for America; Founder, Secular Humanists of the Lowcountry; Founder and (First) Faculty Advisor, (College of Charleston) Student Atheist/Humanist Alliance; Distinguished Professor Emeritus, Mathematics, College of Charleston.

Dr. Herb Silverman is founding president of the Secular Coalition for America, founder of the Secular Humanists of the Lowcountry in Charleston, SC, and founder and first faculty advisor to the College of Charleston student Atheist/Humanist Alliance. Herb is Distinguished Professor Emeritus of Mathematics at the College of Charleston. He has published over 100 research papers in mathematics journals, a couple of books on Complex Variables, and is the recipient of the Distinguished Research Award.

Herb ran for Governor in 1990 to challenge the provision in the South Carolina State Constitution that prohibited atheists from holding public office. After an eight-year battle, Herb won a unanimous decision in the South Carolina Supreme Court, striking down this religious test requirement.

Herb has written for the Washington Post, Huffington Post, The Humanist, Free Inquiry, Humanistic Judaism, and other magazines and blogs. Herb is a recipient of the American Humanist Association Lifetime Achievement Award. Herb has appeared in debates on topics like: Can We Be Moral Without God? Does God Exist? Is America a Christian Nation? He has also debated at the Oxford Union in Oxford, England on the topic: Does American Religion Undermine American Values?

Herb is the author of *Candidate Without a Prayer: An Autobiography of a Jewish Atheist in the Bible Belt* (2012) and *An Atheist Stranger in a Strange Religious Land: Selected Writing from the Bible Belt* (2017). He co-authored *The Fundamental of Extremism: The Christian Right in America* (2003), *Short Reflections on Secularism* (2019), and *Short Reflections on American Secularism's History and Philosophy* (2020).



Dr. Kathy Bullock

Past Chair, [Islamic Society of North America-Canada \(ISNA-Canada\)](#); Lecturer, [Political Science, University of Toronto at Mississauga](#); Past President, Tesselate Institute; President, Compass Books

Dr. Katherine Bullock is a Lecturer in the Department of Political Science, University of Toronto Mississauga. Her teaching focus is political Islam from a global perspective, and her research focuses on Muslims in Canada, their history, contemporary lived experiences, political and civic engagement, debates on the veil, and media representations of Islam and Muslims. She was the editor of the *American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences* from 2003-2008, the Vice-President of The Association of Muslim Social Scientists (North America) from 2006-2009. Her publications include *Muslim Women Activists in North America: Speaking for Ourselves* and *Rethinking Muslim Women and the Veil: Challenging Historical and Modern Stereotypes*, which has been translated into Arabic, French and Turkish. She is also President of The Tesselate Institute, a non-profit research institute, and of Compass Books, dedicated to publishing top-quality books about Islam and Muslims in English. Originally from Australia, she lives in Oakville with her husband and children. She embraced Islam in 1994.

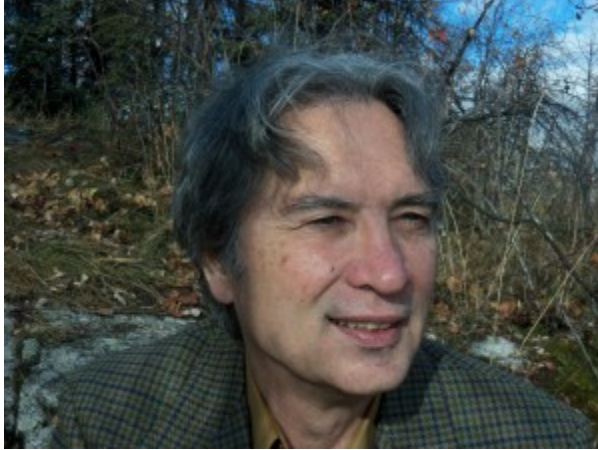


J.J. Middleway

Member, [Order of Bards Ovates and Druids](#) (OBOD); Member, [Mankind Project](#) – (MKP UK)

JJ Middleway is a Druid member of OBOD, where he served for seventeen years as tutor/mentor. He is a Celebrant, delivering ceremonies to mark Birth , Marriage and Death (Naming, Handfasting and Parting), across the full spectrum of society. His ritual and ceremonial work encompasses marking the eight seasonal festivals of the ‘Wheel of the Year’ and is focussed on a deep reverence for the Earth along with a laugh and a smile.

He developed and leads regular sessions of Enchanting the Void; a Western form of devotional chanting, geared toward the honouring and healing of the Land. He is an ‘Elder’ of several communities across UK and Europe, as well as leading singing groups and teaching extensively. His earlier claims to fame, were being born and brought up in a neighbouring street to Ozzy Osbourne, of playing maracas with The Incredible String Band and of sleeping through two thirds of Jimi Hendrix’s last ever live concert.



Dr. Lloyd Hawkeye Robertson

Lead Psychologist, [Collaborative Centre for Justice and Safety, University of Regina](#); Founder, [Hawkeye Associates](#); Vice-President, [Humanist Canada](#)

[Dr. Lloyd Hawkeye Robertson](#) is a [Registered Doctoral Psychologist](#) with expertise in Counselling Psychology, Educational Psychology, and Human Resource Development. He earned qualifications in Social Work too. Duly note, he has five postsecondary degrees, which is a lot, of which 3 are undergraduate level. His research interests include memes as applied to self-knowledge, the evolution of religion and spirituality, the aboriginal self's structure, residential school syndrome, prior learning recognition and assessment, and the treatment of attention deficit disorder and suicide ideation.

He is interested in the study of the self and cross-cultural worldviews in which selves are imbedded with a focus on Adlerian psychotherapy, humanism, cognitive-behaviouralism, and neo-Freudianism in an eclectic approach. His competences exist in counselling psychology, educational psychology (including ability assessments), and human resource development. Dr. Robertson's social work degree included specializations in lifeskills coaching and community development.

He has written on residential school syndrome, the structure of the aboriginal self, the application of memes to self-understanding, the evolution of spirituality and religion, prior learning assessment and recognition, the treatment of suicide ideation and attention deficit disorder, and works on anxiety and trauma, addictions, and psycho-educational assessment, and relationship, family, and group counselling.

His most recent book is [The Evolved Self: Mapping an Understanding of Who We Are](#) (2020).



Marissa Torres Langseth, B.S.N., R.N., M.S.N., ANP-BC (retired)

Founder and Emeritus Chairperson, [Humanist Alliance Philippines, International](#); Creator, [HAPI-SHADE \(Secular Humanist Advocacy Development Education\)](#)

Marissa Langseth is the Founder and Emeritus Chairperson to and is an avid philanthropist to HAPI ([Humanist Alliance Philippines, International](#)), the Creator of HAPI-SHADE (Secular Humanist Advocacy Development Education), a pioneer in SEC-registered and non-religious societies in the Philippines, a trailblazer in promoting education and community outreach in selected areas to promote humanism and critical thinking in the Philippines, was responsible for the very first atheist convention in South East Asia in 2012 (PATAS convention in Bayview, Manila, Philippines) and HAPI international affiliations with IHEU and FBBN, and the Creator of HAPI humanist curriculum.

Langseth graduated Cum Laude with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from the University of San Carlos in Cebu, Philippines, graduated from Lehman College (CUNY) in Bronx NY with a Masters in Adult Health Nursing where she wrote a thesis about Domestic Violence, graduated with a GPA 4.0 at College of Mount Saint Vincent in Riverdale, NY and has a Post-Master's Certificate for Adult Nurse Practitioner while also having prescriptive privileges and Board Certification.

In previous posts, she was an Adult Nurse Practitioner for UNH(United Health Group)/Evercare (1999-2015), an Adjunct Professor at Queensboro Community College (2005-2006), a Certified Emergency Room Nurse at Lincoln Hospital, Bronx, NY (1993-1999), a Nursing Care Coordinator/Supervisor (1990-1993), a Registered Nurse in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (1985-1989), a Territorial Manager for Carlo Erba (1980-1985).

Her [personal blog](#) since 2009 has been against the tyranny of the Philippine government and fraudulent banking practices, which has evolved into a page to vent frustrations around non-religious activism. She as Admin for Atheist Against Pseudoscientific Nonsense since 2016, a Member of the American Humanist Association since 2011, and a Member of IHEU since 2015.

She is featured in the books [Godless Grace: How Nonbelievers Make the World Safer](#), [Personal Paths to Humanism](#), [From Superstition to Reason](#), [An Interview with Marissa Torres Langseth, B.S.N., M.S.N.](#), and [No Outside Intelligence](#).



Rod Taylor

National Leader, CHP Canada

Rod Taylor is the [National Leader](#) of CHP Canada, the [Christian Heritage Party of Canada](#). He was born in 1951 in Minneapolis, Minnesota. In the 1960s, his family was involved in the US Civil Rights movement among other social justice issues so he was exposed to political activism at a young age. After graduating from high school in California, he moved with his parents and siblings to Vancouver, BC in 1968. He became a Canadian citizen in 1976.

Rod met his wife, Elaine in Fauquier, BC. They were married in 1974 and celebrated 45 years of marriage this past summer. They have two married children and four grandchildren. Rod has worked with his hands most of his adult life in Alberta and BC, maintaining track and roadbed for the CNR and working on farms and in the oil and gas fields and later, in the lumber industry. From 1987 until 2009, Rod was involved in lumber grading and lumber quality control in Smithers, BC, while Elaine operated a local Christian bookstore. In 2000, Rod won the BC Interior Lumber Grading Championship and spent the next 9 years teaching lumber grading and serving as QC Supervisor at Kyahwood Forest Products in Moricetown, BC, a joint venture between Canfor and the Wetsuweten First Nation.

Rod has served as a first aid attendant, a union shop steward, a secretary and chairman of workplace safety committees, a department supervisor, a director of the Bulkley Valley District Hospital Society, Chairman of the Bulkley Valley Christian Literature Society and a director, for over 25 years, of the [Smithers Prolife Society](#).

Rod has been active in both provincial and federal politics, advancing the causes of Life, Family and Freedom. In 2001, he ran as a provincial candidate for the BC Unity Party and in 2004, 2006, 2008, 2011 and 2019, he represented the CHP in the federal riding of Skeena-Bulkley Valley, one of Canada's largest electoral districts. In 2013 and 2017, Rod ran provincially as a candidate for CHP-BC, the [Christian Heritage Party of British Columbia](#).

Rod and Elaine have been members of CHP Canada since before its founding convention, with Elaine serving on the first riding association board for Skeena. Rod served as the CHP Deputy

Leader from November, 2008 until January, 2014 and in November of 2014, became National Leader. From 2009 until the present, Rod has worked full-time for the Christian Heritage Party, first as the Western Development Director and later as the National Development Director and since 2014 as CHP Leader.

Rod also participated in the creation of CHP-BC—the first provincial wing of the Christian Heritage Party—which involved the reconfiguring of an existing party, the BC Heritage Party. Rod has served as the CHP-BC Leader and for a time as President of the federal BC Council of the CHP.

Rod is committed to the restoration of justice, the defence of personal freedoms, especially freedom of speech and religion and the protection of innocent human life. He believes in the traditional family and believes that Canada's moral values and national prosperity are rooted in our Christian heritage. He reminds citizens that our Charter of Rights and Freedoms begins with these words: "...Canada is founded on principles that recognise the supremacy of God and the rule of law..." He is concerned that our freedoms are under attack and that government control and sponsorship of media will ultimately result in censorship of important ideas and perspectives.

In the Spring of 2019, Rod published his first book, [The Substance of Things Hoped For](#), a collection of his articles written over the past 10 or 15 years. He travels the country extensively, speaking and encouraging all those who are working to protect Life, Family and Freedom.



Dr. Sally Satel, M.D.

Lecturer, Medicine, [Yale University](#); [W.H. Brady Fellow, American Enterprise Institute](#)

Dr. Sally Satel is a resident scholar at AEI and the staff psychiatrist at a local methadone clinic in D.C. Dr. Satel was an assistant professor of psychiatry at Yale University from 1988 to 1993 and remains a lecturer at Yale. From 1993 to 1994 she was a Robert Wood Johnson policy fellow with the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee.

She has written widely in academic journals on topics in psychiatry and medicine, and has published articles on cultural aspects of medicine and science in numerous magazines and journals. She has testified before Congress on veterans' issues, mental health policy, drug courts, and health disparities.

Dr. Satel is author of *Drug Treatment: The Case for Coercion* (AEI Press, 1999), and *PC, M.D.: How Political Correctness Is Corrupting Medicine* (Basic Books, 2001). She is coauthor of *One Nation under Therapy* (St. Martin's Press, 2005), co-author of *The Health Disparity Myth* (AEI Press, 2006), and editor of *When Altruism Isn't Enough: The Case for Compensating Kidney Donors* (AEI Press, 2009).

Her recent book, co-authored with Emory psychologist Scott Lilienfeld is *Brainwashed: The Seductive Appeal of Mindless Neuroscience* (Basic, 2013). *Brainwashed* was a finalist for the 2013 Los Angeles Times Book Prize in Science.



Stacey Piercey

Founder & CEO, [Stuff2Digital INC.](#); Co-Chair, Status of Women Sub-Committee of Human Rights; Member, Standing Committee, Advocacy with the Canadian Federation of University Women; Section Chair, National Women's Liberal Commission, Newfoundland and Labrador; Member, Provincial Executive Board, Liberal Party of Canada

Stacey Piercey is a highly accomplished senior executive, business owner entrepreneur and, public policy and administration advisor. With 25 years of extensive career success in business, economics, finance, government, media and, technology. She is an asset for companies looking for insight in business problem solving, regulatory compliance and, executive advice. Her areas of expertise include communication, development, and strategy for gender, inclusion and diversity policies at all levels of government in Canada.

In her executive career, Stacey is currently in three leadership positions. As the CEO and founder of Stuff2Digital INC. she is responsible for this successful start-up management consulting corporation. She is a leader in change management best practices and emphasizes an effective program based on her experiences as a female business executive. She is currently the Co-Chair, Status of Women Sub-Committee of Human Rights and, on the Standing Committee on Advocacy with the Canadian Federation of University Women. She is Section Chair, National Women's Liberal Commission representing Newfoundland and Labrador and, a member of the Provincial Executive Board with the Liberal Party of Canada.

Stacey is the former BC Liberal Party MLA Candidate for Victoria-Swan Lake in the 2017 British Columbia provincial election. She obtained a B.A. in Economics and Business Administration from the Memorial University; and a Diploma in Accounting, Business, and Computer Applications from Eastern College.

Hobbies include listening to the radio, writing short stories and, French cuisine.



Professor Sven van de Wetering

Head/Professor, Psychology, [University of the Fraser Valley](#)

Dr. Sven van de Wetering works as an Instructor for the Psychology Department of [University of the Fraser Valley](#). Dr. van de Wetering earned his BSc in Biology at [The University of British Columbia](#), and Bachelors of Arts, Master of Arts, and PhD in Psychology from [Simon Fraser University](#). His research interest lies in “conservation psychology, lay conceptions of evil, relationships between personality variables and political attitudes.”



Prof. Imam Syed B. Soharwardy

Founder, Islamic Supreme Council of Canada; Founder, [Muslims Against Terrorism](#)

Prof. Imam Syed B. Soharwardy is the first Muslim Canadian who walked across Canada, more than 6,500 km, leading the Multifaith Walk Against Violence. (April 14 to October 27, 2008).

Imam Syed Soharwardy was born in a highly respected religious family in Karachi, Pakistan. His father, Allama Syed Muhammad Riazuddin Soharwardy (May Allah shower His blessings upon him) was a famous Islamic scholar and the Imam of Jamia Bughdadi Masjid, Martin Road, Karachi where he established Dar-ul-Aloom Soharwardia. Imam Soharwardy's grandfather, Allama Syed Muhammad Jalaluddin Chishty (May Allah shower His blessings upon him) was the Grand Mufti of Kashmir (Baramula). Allama Jalaluddin Chishty later migrated to Amritser (India) where he served as the head of Dar-ul-Aloom Nizamiah Sirajiah and the Imam of a Mosque.

Imam Syed Soharwardy is one of the direct descendants of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Through Imam Ja'far us-Sadiq (May Allah's peace upon him), Imam Soharwardy's lineage reaches Sayyidatunnisa (leader of all women) Hazrat Fatimah Binte Muhammad Ibn Abdullah (Peace be upon him), the wife of Ameer ul Mo'mineen Sayyidna Imam Ali (May Allah's peace upon him). His ancestors migrated from Syria to Iran where they settled in Zarrin OR Zarrindasht area in Asfahan province.

During 1200s A.H. famous sufi scholar Hazrat Syed Bahauddin Ziryani (May Allah be pleased with him) was born in this family. Later, Hazrat Syed Bahauddin Ziryani migrated to Kashmir (India) and settled, where in his fifth generation, Allama Mufti Syed Muhammad Jalaluddin Chishty (May Allah be pleased with him) was born.

Imam Soharwardy received his early Islamic education from his father, teacher and Murshad (spiritual guide) in the traditional Islamic Madrasah at Bughdadi Masjid, Martin Road, Karachi, Pakistan. Later, he graduated from Dar-ul-Aloom Soharwardia, Karachi. Mr. Soharwardy also earned Bachelor of Arts degree in Islamic Studies from University of Karachi.

Beside his Islamic education, Mr. Soharwardy earned Bachelor of Engineering (Electrical) from N.E.D. University of Engineering & Technology, Karachi, Master of Science in Management Engineering from New Jersey Institute of Technology, Newark, NJ, USA and Master of Engineering in Project Management from University of Calgary, Calgary, Canada.

Imam Syed Soharwardy was appointed as a teacher at Dar-ul-Aloom Soharwardia where he taught various subjects of Islamic studies. Later, he also served as the assistant Imam and Khateeb at Jamia Bughdadi Masjid, Martin Road (1971- 1979). Imam Soharwardy has lectured in Pakistan, USA and Saudi Arabia at various universities and institutes for over 12 years.

Prof. Soharwardy is the founder of Muslims Against Terrorism (MAT). He founded MAT in Calgary in January 1998. He is also the founder of Islamic Supreme Council of Canada (ISCC). He has authored several papers on various topics such as, challenges for Muslims in the western world, conflicts within the Muslim community, Intra and Inter religion conflicts, terrorism, political Islam, etc. Mr. Soharwardy has addressed hundreds of gatherings in Pakistan, USA, UK and Canada on various topics of Islamic faith.

Prof. Soharwardy is the Executive Imam at the Al Madinah Calgary Islamic Assembly, Jamia Masjid Noor-e-Madinah, Montreal, Jamia Riyadhul Jannah, Mississauga, Jamia Riyadhul Jannah, Edmonton and Jamia Masjid Aulia Allah, Surrey, B.C. He lectures in Montreal, Toronto, Mississauga, Brampton, Calgary and Vancouver on monthly basis. Imam Soharwardy is the spiritual leader of Jama'at Ahle Sunnat Canada and the World Sufi Mission Canada. He is also the founder of Multifaith Club of Calgary.

Imam Soharwardy has the "Ijazah" in Soharwardy, Qadri and Chishty sufi orders from his Murshad (spiritual guide), Allama Syed Muhammad Riazuddin Soharwardy, Qadri, Chishty (May Allah's blessings upon him). He is the Khalifah of his Murshad. His students and Murideen (disciples) have spread out all over the world.

Imam Soharwardy is a strong advocate of Islamic Tasawuf (Sufism) and believes that the world will be a better place for everyone, if we follow what Prophet of Islam, Muhammad (Peace be upon him) has said, " You will not have faith unless you like for others what you like for yourself." He believes that the spiritual weakness in human causes all kinds of problems. Mr. Soharwardy can be contacted at Soharwardy@shaw.ca OR Phone (403)-831-6330 OR 416-994-5467.



Terry Waslow, M.B.A.

Executive Director (Former Board Chair), [Congress of Secular Jewish Organizations](#); President, [Old York Road Genealogical Society](#); Board Member, [International Institute for Secular Humanistic Judaism](#)

Terry Waslow is the Executive Director of the Congress of Secular Jewish Organizations. Previously, she served four years as the Board Chair. She currently serves on the Board of the International Institute for Secular Humanistic Judaism and is President of the the Board of the Old York Road Genealogical Society.

Terry's Master's in Business Administration is focused on Nonprofits and her undergraduate degree is in Human Services/Counseling. She has worked for over 25 years with individuals and families impacted by physical, intellectual and/or economic challenges to build fully inclusive communities.



Tim Moen

President, [Libertarian Party of Canada](#)

Tim Moen grew up on a farm in Northern Alberta. He learned the values of freedom, hard work, responsibility, and respect for property and community. He worked as a community business owner, filmmaker, firefighter, paramedic, volunteer, and writer. In 2013, he worked with Neil Young. When Young critiqued the community and oil sands industry, Moen wrote a highly critical article stating hypocrisy in the position of Young. This gained a lot of media attention.

Moen conducted a highly visible by-election in 2014. It caught the attention of CNN, Fox News, Gawker, Reason Magazine, This Hour Has 22 Minutes, and other outlets. His experience lies in leading high-performance teams. He has a graduate degree in leadership with a thesis on ways in which high-performance teams can employ principles of libertarianism. Circa May, 2014, Moen took the reins of the Libertarian Party of Canada with a large growth in engagement, funding, and membership.

Moen has spent his career protecting life and property from mindless destructive forces. He wants to focus attention as the President of the Libertarian Party of Canada on the forces of government deemed destructive by the Libertarian Party of Canada and him. He views the government as an unquenchable entity with a thirst for money and power with the citizenry as the individuals most harmed by it.

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In-Sight Publishing

Publication Location: Fort Langley, British Columbia, Canada

Publisher: In-Sight Publishing

ISBN: 978-1-0692343

“Your life is an expression of all your thoughts.”

Publications: People/Organizations

- [*African Freethinker*](#)
- *Critical Science Newswire*
- *Freethought Newswire*
- [*In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal \(ISSN: 2369–6885\)*](#)
- [*Indigenous Middle East*](#)
- [*Question Time*](#)
- [*World Religions Journal*](#)

Publications: Overview

- [*African Freethinker*](#)
- *Critical Science Newswire*
- *Freethought Newswire*
- [*In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal \(ISSN: 2369–6885\)*](#)
- [*Indigenous Middle East*](#)
- [*Question Time*](#)
- [*World Religions Journal*](#)

Publications: Feeds

- [*African Freethinker*](#)
- [*Apostasia*](#)
- [*Critical Science Newswire*](#)
- [*Freethought Newswire*](#)
- [*Ghana's 5%*](#)
- [*In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal \(2369–6885\)*](#)
- [*Indigenous Middle East*](#)
- [*Question Time*](#)

In-Sight Publishing Overview

In-Sight Publishing began in Winter 2014. It publishes ebooks, for free and charge, and operates in independent and public interests rather than for private gains, and is committed to publishing, in

innovative ways, ways of cultural, community, educational, moral, personal, and social value that seem often deemed insufficiently profitable. It operates inside and outside of the bounds of non-profit/not-for-profit. *In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal* began in Winter 2012. It publishes interviews, articles, and issues. It operates inside the bounds of non-profit/not-for-profit. It equates to the first international independent interview-based journal. All informal statuses; all proceeds from purchases towards *In-Sight Publishing* and *In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal* in their stated objectives to advance cultural, community, educational, moral, personal, and social value.

Open, General Acknowledgement and Appreciation

In-Sight Publishing and *In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal* exist because of three identifiable sectors of support: academics, contributors, and readers. Therefore, all time and effort does have identifiable people, groups, and organizations. Each earned acknowledgement and appreciation for single or continuous, individual or group, contribution in the construction of *In-Sight Publishing* and *In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal*. Many of them without mention of name contributed time and effort to the production of the journal. Some with provision of interviewee recommendations, connection to the interviewee, assistance in social media, social networks, and academic circles, photography or portraits, time for considered and comprehensive responses to questions, and assertive, constructive, and positive feedback too. Finally, and greatest, readers give the most support. For every person, group, and organization involved in this project, we express deepest gratitude to all types of direct or indirect assistance from every side for contributions to this initiative. Your effort, interest, and time support independent publishing purposed for the encouragement of academic freedom, creativity, diverse voices, and independent thought.

Design and Development

- *Phase 1*, August 1, 2012: foundation with “Independent Interview-Based Undergraduate Journal” status.
- *Phase 2*, January 1, 2013: production capacity increased with “Tri-Annual” status.
- *Phase 3*, January 1, 2014: stricture removal, both implied and actual, based on “Undergraduate” status through cessation of “Independent Interview-Based Undergraduate Journal” status and instantiation of “Independent Interview-Based Journal” status.
- *Phase 4*, January 1, 2014: increased presence through incorporation of social media.
- *Phase 5*, September 1, 2014: creation of *In-Sight Publishing*, and inclusion of reference styles in American Psychological Association (APA, 6th Edition, 2010) and Modern Language Association (MLA, 7th Edition, 2009).
- *Phase 6*, January 1, 2015: inclusion of footnotes and bibliographic references in full PDF issues, and Chicago/Turabian (16th Edition) and Harvard reference styles, and creation of the ebooks section for the first stages of construction of *In-Sight Publishing*.
- *Phase 7*, January 1, 2015: incorporation of American Psychological Association (APA, 6th Edition, 2010), Chicago/Turabian (16th Edition), Harvard, and Modern Language Association (MLA, 7th Edition, 2009) reference styles in website interview publications.
- *Phase 8*, April 1, 2015: creation of “Academic” and “Casual” sections for ebook publications. “Academic” includes footnotes, bibliographic references, and reference styles. “Casual” does not include footnotes, bibliographic references, and reference styles.
- *Phase 9*, May 1, 2015: inclusion of footnotes and bibliographic references in website interview publications.
- *Phase 10*, July 1, 2015: incorporation of common reference styles such as American Medical Association (AMA), American Psychological Association (APA, 6th Edition, 2010), Brazilian National Standards

(ABNT), Chicago/Turabian Author-Date (16th Edition), Chicago/Turabian (16th Edition), Harvard, Harvard (Australian), Modern Language Association (MLA, 7th Edition, 2009), and Vancouver/ICMJE reference styles in website interview publications in addition to one complete list of 27 reference styles (manual insertion without access dates)

- *Phase 11*, August 22, 2015: article website layout refinement: article title, biography, abstract, keywords, common reference style listing, article title, bibliography/references/reference list, footnotes, appendix 1: complete reference style listing—if any, other appendices including tables, figures, and images, and license and copyright. Updates to *Copyright*, *General Philosophy*, *In-Sight Publishing: Overview*, *Journal Overview: Section B*, and *License*.
- *Phase 12*, September 1, 2015: previous *Letter of Appreciation* appreciations moved to *Acknowledgements and Appreciation*. Major appreciations remain in *Letter of Appreciation*. In addition, the refinement of interview layout on the website: interview title, interviewee image/photograph/portrait/sketch, abstract, keywords, common reference style listing, interview title, bibliography/references/reference listing, footnotes, appendix 1: complete reference style listing, and license and copyright; refinement to interviews in full issues: interview title, interviewee image/photograph/portrait/sketch, contents, abstract, keywords, common reference style listing, interview title, bibliography/references/reference listing, appendix 1: complete reference style listing—if any, other appendices including tables, figures, and images, and license and copyright. Footnotes for each page remain in their respective page. An update to ebook inside cover with respect to mandate and copyright. All informal statuses.
- *Phase 13*, September 22, 2015: revision to format of the online publications, introduction of appendices for photographs, transformation of bibliography/references/reference list into bibliography, removal of common reference style listing, and introduction of citation style listing in place of complete reference style listing.
- *Phase 14*, November 1, 2015: Amazon purchase transition with total proceeds to co-authors and *In-Sight Publishing* and *In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal*; EBSCO contract signed by Scott Douglas Jacobsen and EBSCO to proliferate *In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal* for formal institution distribution from the P.D.F. issues.
- *Phase 15*, January 1, 2016: EBSCO co-sign completion with over 150 entries at the time; officiation of the *In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal* with continued information status of *In-Sight Publishing*.
- *Phase 16*, February 1, 2016: In-Sight Publishing “academic” books have consistent “casual” counterparts; “academic” will be free on the website to encourage independent thought with footnotes and bibliographic references for personal research, and casual will be for charge with half of interview funds given to the interviewee (and the other half to *In-Sight Publishing* efforts towards cultural, community, educational, moral, personal, and social value); some e-books will not include the delineation between “academic” and “casual.”
- *Phase 17*, May 1, 2016: Update and refine contents for Amazon Kindle products for In-Sight Publishing.
- *Phase 18*, September 18, 2016: attain and maintain 18 member Advisory Board with 1 Editor-in-Chief for the individual interview publications, free and low-cost e-books, and full journal issues.
- *Phase 19*, November 1, 2016: develop and implement early stages of novel venue for solo and collaborative article publications and interview publications in both academic and casual formats outside of the journal through In-Sight Publishing as hyperlinks compatible with P.D.F., Kindle, and iBooks.
- *Phase 19*, November 1, 2016: develop and implement early stages of novel venue for solo and collaborative article publications and interview publications in both academic and casual formats outside of the journal through In-Sight Publishing as hyperlinks compatible with P.D.F., Kindle, and iBooks.

- Phase 20, November 1, 2017: expand the range and variety of front cover options of ebooks for more aesthetic appeal.
- Phase 21, February 1, 2018: experiment with individual, unique book cover designs.
- Phase 22, March 1, 2018: continuation with the previous phase, as this worked.
- Phase 23, April 15, 2018: updates to the In-Sight Publishing *In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal* archives at the University of California, Irvine (UCI) Interdisciplinary Center for the Scientific Study of Ethics and Morality (Ethics Center) Vaughen Archives (Bettye Vaughen): <https://www.ethicscenter.uci.edu/vaughen.php>.
- Phase 24, June 7, 2018: beginnings of more journals with *Ghana's 5%* and *In Context*.
- Phase 25, June 8, 2018: beginnings of *Apostasia*.
- Phase 26, June 11, 2018: beginnings of *Indigenous Middle East*.
- Phase 27, June 12, 2018: construction of team for *Ghana's 5%*.
- Phase 28, June 24, 2018: construction of team for *Indigenous Middle East*.
- Phase 29, June 18, 2018: beginnings of *Canadian Islamic Theology Journal*.
- Phase 30, September 8, 2018: start publications of *Indigenous Middle East* and *In Context*.
- Phase 31, September 13, 2018: construction of team for *Canadian Islamic Theology Journal*.
- Phase 32, October 21, 2018: beginnings of *African Freethinker*.
- Phase 33, November 1, 2018: start publications of *African Freethinker* and *Ghana's 5%*.
- Phase 34, November 3, 2018: construction of national editorial teams for *African Freethinker*.
- Phase 35, December 1, 2018: add years sections in Ebooks tab.
- Phase 36, January 1, 2019: increase of the available chronologies on the website.
- Phase 37, June 1, 2019: experiment with more published ebook material with 2 ebooks published at this time.
- Phase 38, July 1, 2019: collect and compiled disparate written professional productions of insufficient size in a single publication to complete an individual ebook for publication as an ongoing series entitled "Book of Stuff," as, humorously, a book with stuff in it.
- Phase 39, August 1, 2019: alteration of copyright interior of ebooks and further work to expand co-authors.
- Phase 40, January 2, 2020: an experimental bilingual ebook with prominent ex-Muslim and Founder of the Council of Ex-Muslims of France, Waleed Al-Husseini, entitled [*Crépuscule des idoles: Conversations avec un Franco-palestinien sur le sécularisme*](#).
- Phase 41, February 1, 2020: increased collaborative efforts with others for co-authored books.
- Phase 42, February 1, 2020: ongoing collecting and publishing of extant materials in various publications with small collections insufficient for an entire book alone collated and published as the *Book of Stuff* series.
- Phase 43, February 1, 2020: ongoing refinement and advancement in the sophistication of the ebooks.
- Phase 44, February 1, 2020: ongoing connections between ebooks on In-Sight Publishing main site for free and Amazon Kindle ebooks for low-cost with connection back to the original In-Sight Publishing website.

- Phase 44, April 12, 2020: updates to the Advisory Boards and Update to progress on publications, including *African Freethinker*, *Apostasia*, *Ghana's 5%*, *In Context*, *In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal*, *Indigenous Middle East*, *Question Time*, and *World Religions Theology Journal*.
- Phase 45, May 1, 2020: incorporation of Publication Chronology for each publication with publications.
- Phase 46, May 1, 2020: inclusion of more article submissions of a variety of authors, including more experimental large-scale discussion groups published together.
- Phase 47, May 8, 2020: experiment with the removal of the number of the questions to simplify some of the interview questions and response presentation.
- Phase 48, September 1, 2020: introduction of new series and changing of some of the formatting of the interviews and the articles.
- Phase 49, January 1, 2021: experiment with a dual-series single issue, "Issue 24.A, Idea: Outliers & Outsiders (Part Twenty) & Issue 25.A, Idea: Land of Fire and Ice: Islandia, Snelandia, and Insula Gardari (1)."
- Phase 50, January 1, 2021: creation of section "D" for *In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal* as a separate section of the formal issues devoted to group discussions, i.e., 3 or more participants with the "3 or more" inclusive of the moderator.
- Phase 51, January 1, 2021: introduction of yearly renewal invitations to Advisory Board to maintain up-to-date consent of use of name and profile for *In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal*.
- Phase 52, January 1, 2021: updates to various sections of the website copy in content and in the formulation of the structure of the publications and the websites.
- Phase 53, January 1, 2021: improved sophistication and organization of the journal issue contents and form.
- Phase 54, February 12, 2022: creation of the Jacobsen Bank as a repository of every article, interview, published or republished, in part or in whole, by the Founder of In-Sight Publishing.
- Phase 55, September 1, 2022: new codification structure for journals.
- Phase 56, January 1, 2023: introduction of more diverse content inclusive of educational content and submissions from outside ongoing.
- Phase 57, January 26, 2023: elimination of two (2) defunct experimental journals *Ghana's 5%* and *In Context*. Completion of most of the [Jacobsen Bank](#), extant as a living repository of written works by the Founder.
- Phase 58, April 8, 2024: Attain permission from select individuals and organizations for republication permissions while maintaining or honouring current ones: James Haught (Editor Emeritus of [Charleston Gazette](#), deceased July 23, 2023 aged 91), Dr. Lloyd Hawkeye Robertson (Founder) for [New Enlightenment Project](#), Ian Bushfield, M.Sc. for [British Columbia Humanist Association](#), Dan Barker (and Annie Laurie Gaylor) for [Freedom From Religion Foundation](#), and by Michel Virard for [Association humaniste du Québec](#).
- Phase 59, May 5, 2024: Foundation of [Freethought Newswire](#).
- Phase 60, May 17, 2024: Additional permission from Dr. Herb Silverman for [Secular Coalition for America](#), Nicole Carr of *The Humanist* for the [American Humanist Association](#), and Doug Thomas for [Secular Connexion Séculière](#), following in the footsteps of Phase 58.
- Phase 61, May 24, 2024: Foundation of [Critical Science Newswire](#) with another partnership with [National Center for Science Education](#), dissolution of *Apostasia*.

- Phase 62, May 28, 2024: Additional permission from Leonard Presberg of [Association of Secular Elected Officials, Inc.](#), following Phase 58 and Phase 60.
- Phase 63, May 29, 2024: Additional permission from Kevin Bolling of [Secular Student Alliance](#), following Phase 58, 60, and 62.
- Phase 64, June 1, 2024: Additional permission of Andrew Copson from [Humanists UK](#), following Phase 58, 60, 62, and 63.
- Phase 65, June 15, 2024: Additional permission from [Ex-Muslims of North America](#), following Phases 58, 60, 62-64.
- Phase 66, June 22, 2024: Additional permission from [Humanists International](#) following Phases 58, 60, 62-65.
- Phase 67, August 2, 2024: Additional permission from [Military Religious Freedom Foundation](#) following Phases Phases 58, 60, and 62-66.
- Phase 68, December 24, 2024: Integration with governmental services for an established In-Sight Publishing ISBN (978-1-0692343) with the restructuring of file formats from PDFs to ePubs for distribution through Apple Books for low cost, incorporation of author page in books, reframing and structuring of book license and copyright and relevant book information inside books, and transference of select 1st edition books as second editions into new format and distribution cycles alongside new project 1st editions books in new format.

Future phases will incorporate donations, paid (low-cost) ebooks, more ebook listings, and re-design and transformations of *In-Sight Publishing*.

In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal

In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal exists as the first international independent interview-based journal. Submissions remain international and interdisciplinary for interviews, articles, and others. Individual publications throughout the year: January 1 to May 1; May 1 to September 1; September 1 to January 1, and so on. Each publication on the 1, 8, 15, and 22 of the month. Tri-annual full issue publications on “Spring,” “Summer,” and “Winter”: January 1, May 1, and September 1, respectively.

General Philosophy

Where imperatives, utility, and virtues interrelate, and where accuracy/authenticity implicates honesty, credibility implicates integrity, fairness/balance implicates justice, and news judgment implicates prudence, honesty, integrity, justice, and prudence converge on the ethical utility in the moral imperative of truth. Truth necessitates honesty, integrity, justice, and prudence. Academic freedom permits the possibility of truth; academic freedom necessitates destitution of dogma or obfuscation. An ability to question anything, pursue implications, and express these implications in spite of harboured biases and fear of backlash. All without alteration or omission to discover knowledge. *In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal* aims to attain academic freedom through its core interview format.

Advisory Board

Advisory board remains an associative, international, and voluntary collective of individuals invited to join the journal based on accomplishments, credentials, or unique attributes. A minimal commitment to provide feedback on *In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal* and recommend *potential* interviewees. Interview views do not equate to positions of Advisory Board members at individual or collective levels.

Format, Overview

In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal formatted by subjects or ideas per issue. Each issue divides into interviews (A), submissions (B), responses (C), group discussions (D), and educational series (E).

Sections A, B, C, D, and E

- Issue titles imply format, e.g. “Issue 1, Subject: Psychology,” “Issue 2, Idea: Epistemology,” and so on. Interview, submission, response, and group discussion, sections segmented by issue content. Interviews specified by “A”; submissions specified by “B”; responses specified by “C”; group discussions specified by “D”; educational series specified by “E,” e.g. “Issue 1.A, Subject: Psychology,” “Issue 2.B, Idea: Arts,” “Issue 2.C, Idea: Denmark’s Mythology,” “Issue 3.D, Idea: Islamic Scripture in Context,” “Issue 4.E, Topic: Secular History,” and so on.

Subject Issues

- Interview sections contain *only* experts from *one* discipline with emphasis on *a subject*, e.g. “Psychology,” and so on. Submission sections contain *only* experts from *one* discipline with emphasis on *a subject*, e.g. “Psychology,” and so on. Contribution exceptions permitted with sufficient reason sent to the Editor-in-Chief.

Idea Issues

- Interview sections contain *many* experts from *many* disciplines with emphasis on *an idea*, e.g. *Women in Academia*, *Outliers and Outsiders*, and so on. Submission sections contain *many* experts

from *many* disciplines with emphasis on *an idea*, e.g. *Women in Academia*, *Outliers and Outsiders*, and so on. Contribution exceptions permitted with sufficient reason sent to the Editor-in-Chief.

Frequency

- Individual publications throughout the year: January 1 to May 1; May 1 to September 1; September 1 to January 1, and so on. Each publication on the 1, 8, 15, and 22 of the month. Tri-annual full issues publications on “Spring,” “Summer,” and “Winter”: January 1, May 1, and September 1, respectively. Frequency dependent upon material quantity and completion dates. **Multiple delayed completions will accelerate the publication rate until issue fulfillment.**

Interview Guidelines (A)

An overview of the interview process for this section.

Research

- Preliminary research required for interview solicitation. If interview consent obtained from interviewee, a **typical, but not absolute, minimum of one day to four weeks** for comprehensive research. This includes purchasing, acquiring, and processing articles, audio-visual material, books, interviews, social media material, and their respective synthesis to produce questions. Some thematic series of interviews may incorporate more standardized or generic first question sets based on consistency in the individual backgrounds and narratives to justify it. Each more standardized or generic first question set can vary with further feedback about it.

Consent

- Interviewees either provide written or verbal consent based on an interview request. Written or verbal consent relate to the interviewee having the power to deny/accept the interview, and for final decision of publication as a single interview on the website or in the full issue publication with all other issue-interviews in PDF and on the website. It remains casual in consent. See *Copyright* for information on ownership of publications.

Conducting

- Interview form depends on interviewee preference: email with text in email, email via *Microsoft Word* or *Open Office* file, in person, phone call, question set, Zoom, Skype, Google Hangouts, have been utilized in the past. Most prefer question sets in email via *Microsoft Word* or *Open Office*. Most questions mix standardized and specialized formats. Standardized for consistency of journal format. Specialized for relevant-to-interview questions. All questions have design to elicit in-depth and full responses from interviewees.

Editing Stage One

- Editing consists of the interviewee’s original interview with minimal editing to keep the intended meaning and message of the interviewees intact, even where certain answers may contain controversial or ‘politically incorrect’ statements, opinions, or information.

Editing Stage Two

- Interviewer sends draft back to the interviewee to confirm the originally intended meaning and message seem sustained to the satisfaction of the interviewee. If the interviewee requires any further alterations, omissions, or edits, the interviewer repeats the cycle of edit to confirmation of accuracy of message and meaning to re-edit until the interviewee evaluates the final version of the interview as sufficiently accurate to their intended meaning and message. Any major editing consists of corrections to grammatical and/or spelling errors. This editing aims to optimize the correspondence between the interview and the interviewees intended message and meaning to the satisfaction of the interviewee.

Submission Guidelines (B)

Material

- Contributor status access restricted to undergraduate students, graduate students, instructors, professors, and experts. Each submission considered on appropriateness of grammar and style, comprehensiveness, coherence, and originality of content.

Scope

- Depending on the issue, the accepted submissions consists of articles, book reviews, commentaries, poetry, prose, and art.

Submission

- It must not have publication or pending publication elsewhere. For exceptions, sufficient reason should be sent to the Editor-in-Chief along with the material. For written scholarly material, it must be in 12-point font, Times New Roman, 12-point font, single-spaced, 6-point after spacing, and with APA or MLA formatting. Length of material ranges from 500 to 7,500 words. Material should be sent to the following:
 - Scott.Douglas.Jacobsen@Gmail.com

Response Guidelines (C)

Responses to interviews (B) or essays (B) must have the following format:

Material

- Preferable for respondents to have experience or expertise in area relevant to interview or essay content.

Scope

- Response material should relate to current or prior issue on specific points in one essay or article.

Submission

- Responses must have the following format: APA format, Times New Roman, 12-point font, single-spaced, 6-point after spacing, citation of interviewee and each 'Question-and-Answer' section of response (maximum of 5), and reference list of relevant articles, books, prior interviews, watching of video material, reading of social media material in APA. Length of material should range from 500-1,000 words, exceptions will have consideration with appropriate reasons provided to the Editor-in-Chief. Material should be sent to the following:
 - Scott.Douglas.Jacobsen@Gmail.com

Group Discussion Guidelines (D)

Individuals gathered together based on a theme to discuss particular ranges of issues or the specific theme. Mostly accomplished through email group discussions with a minimum of 3 people with the "3 people" inclusive of the moderator or interviewer. Individuals can recommend group discussion topics or will be invited. In either case, the separate section becomes a new advancement to fractionate the content of *In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal* into more distinct units.

Educational Series Guidelines (E)

A specified topic proposed and mutually agreed to pursue for an extended duration with a relevant subject matter expert. These develop in a manner of increasing complexity over time from introductory, intermediate, to advanced content, or in terms of a historical developmental timeline of the topic.

Research Ethics

In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal does not answer a research question. Interviews hold control over final published responses for as accurate a representation as possible of an interviewee as possible. Hence, zero mandatory ethics board consent necessitated by its operation. Monetary detachment

removes constraint by an institution or individual for published content, despite academic positions or alma maters for the Editor-in-Chief and Advisory Board. Please see *Internal and External Funding* for monetary information.

Internal and External Funding

Scott Douglas Jacobsen provides complete internal funding *In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal*. All internal funding includes purchasing of articles, books, chapters, prior interviews, video material, and advertising and marketing efforts of *In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal*. In the case of external monetary funding, only monetary funding not restricting academic freedom for *In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal* will have consideration. At this time, *In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal* operates with internal funding from Scott Douglas Jacobsen. A small web renewal donation from Rick Rosner before.

Attachments

Attachments means constraints or restraints through functioning out of institutions or groups. For instance, an institution or group would consist of a university, an agency, a think-tank, and/or an interest group of some form. *In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal* functions autonomous from any institution or group. This provides total freedom of content for consistency with principles of operation for academic freedom.

Advertising Policy

All advertising for the journal exists as open-access for any individual. See “Open Access” for more information.

Open Access

In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal exists as open access for online contents, where any content *In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal* becomes accessible for **reading or downloading** to any interested individual/group.

Introduction

I appreciate the support of Saba Ismail, Sudarshan Murthy, Gulalai Ismail, Uwe Michael Neumann, Simon Olling Rebsdorf, Graham Priest, Christopher Angus, Anthony Sepulveda, Salih Hudayar, Benoit Desjardins, Alisha Graves, and Lucas Isakwisa, for bringing this issue to fruition.

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Onwards,

Scott Douglas Jacobsen

Founder, [In-Sight Publishing](#); Publisher, [Books](#) (ISBN: 978-1-0692343)

Editor-in-Chief, [In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal](#), [Issues](#) (ISSN: 2369-6885)

Issue 28, Idea: Outliers & Outsiders (22)

Conversation with Saba Ismail on Mubarak Bala, Gulalai Ismail, Aware Girls, Talent, and Ethical Exemplars: Co-Founder, Aware Girls (4)

2021-05-01

Interviewer: Scott Douglas Jacobsen

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Abstract

Saba Ismail is a Co-Founder of Aware Girls. At the age of 15, she co-founded Aware Girls for the empowerment of young women in leadership capacities and to advance social change. She completed a Masters in Biotechnology from COMSATS University Abbot Asad and the Hurford Youth Fellowship with the National Endowment for Democracy. She has worked as Youth Ambassador for Asia Pacific Youth Network (APYN: 2012-2013), the Steering Committee of UNOY, and is an alumnus of the International Visitors Leadership Program in the United States. Ismail was recognized by *Foreign Policy* as one of the 100 Leader Global Thinkers in 2013. She is the recipient of the Chirac Prize for Conflict Prevention. She discusses: Mubarak Bala in Nigeria; Gulalai; most talented person; and ethical exemplars.

Keywords: Aware Girls, Humanism, Mubarak Bala, Saba Ismail.

Conversation with Saba Ismail on Mubarak Bala, Gulalai Ismail, Aware Girls, Talent, and Ethical Exemplars: Co-Founder, Aware Girls (4)

Please see the footnotes, bibliography, and citation style listing after the interview.

Interview conducted July 2, 2020.

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: There's the ongoing case It is one of the areas where secular Humanism of Mubarak Bala in Nigeria. This is a very took off in the 21st-century.

common people who are cofounders of organizations, presidents of organizations. How is Saba Ismail[1],[2]: We have gotten support in a good way from our friends and supporters. People this being received in the United States, which is that we know. We have really good supporters from known as a hub of Humanism?

senator Schumer's office, and others. We have got really good support.

Also, there were senators who actually said things on their Twitter publicly supporting the case. Senator Schumer wrote letters when our father was abducted from the high court. He was made a missing person, abducted, and disappeared.

It was the pressure from the U.S., including U.S. senators and State Department. Any support kept our parents safe to some extent. We were told by many people and friends around that it's because we have the support, international support, in the form of the stories coming up on the *New York Times*, senators' offices, and others – high level support, is the reason our parents are alive.

Gulalai and our parents would not be alive anymore. Having a voice when people know you as a credible person, also, I want to mention this. Gulalai didn't become famous in the last two years. She has been well-known before.

He got a prize in the U.S. Congress in 2013. She got the Shirac Prize in 2013. There was all this international recognition. That is good on the one side. Yet, not everyone will get this recognition and encouragement at such a huge international level. What do you do with other humanists, where people may not know them?

They are not internationally known. It becomes hard to make sure that they are safe, to make sure that they are going through due legal procedures. We are lucky in this. We had a very credible history of 18 years of work.

People saw us when we started as teenagers. People saw us growing up and evolving in Pakistan and outside of Pakistan. I think, definitely, when someone has become part of this theme for decades, almost two decades.

They know what kind of person you are and what values and principles you stand for. That's why people are still with us. There were several institutions, several organizations that should with us. Not because we knew them shortly or something, but because we had a really long relationship with each one of those individuals or institutions.

There are so many activists in Pakistan. Recently, I found this one doctor. She had to record a video statement for what she supported, what she said. Humanists issued a statement, recently; even though, she is well-known in Pakistan.

People stood up for her. But because she is not so well-known, she is not so safe. People have different

kinds of priorities. What I am saying, if humanists don't have the really strong support working, it is hard for them to be safe.

Our family's case, I was based outside of the States. I was not being monitored by these security agencies. I was not be surveilled all the time. Because we would go together all the time. Gulalai was going through hiding all the time.

I was going through a different experience. My parents were going through a different experience. What helped us, I had the privilege to contact and do all this communication, whether with civil society, international community, UN, diplomatic channels.

It was only because I had a really known history of work and experience and people knew me. If a lot of people didn't even know me. I also knew how to communicate my message. Who are the people who I should contact in this situation? How should I build my strategy?

I couldn't contact my parents. I didn't talk to my mother for months when Gulalai was in hiding. Her phone was taken away by security agencies. It was not safe for her to turn her phone on. When you are really disconnected, I didn't know if she was safe or if arrested, or in custody.

I couldn't talk to my mother. I couldn't speak to my father. "This happened. This many people came." That's all I could get from him. It is important for humanists and activists to build strategies. I know situations are different and know the different persecution activists face.

From my place, having a strategy, having a person as in our case, it really helped. Gulalai didn't know anything about these stories coming out of the *New York Times*. There were statements by humanists and several other institutions and Frontline, Lines for Peacebuilding, Global Observatory, FIDH, etc.

They were several statements. One day, on the day when our Imran Khan was doing his speech, we mobilized people who can go to the embassy. Every day, it would be petitions and all these supporters. Some were public petitions.

Some were open letters. All of that diplomatic work that happened, as I said. It is really important, at least from our experience, what really helped us. I was outside. I was not going through what my parents were going through.

Of course, I was in extreme stress, but I was not going through what they went through. I was in a position. I was in a privileged position. I had more

privileges compared to my parents. I was able to mobilize everything.

We did a lot of background work before Gulalai became public and filing her asylum case. We did several visits to Washington, D.C. Several before she became public. It was a lot of work. Everything she went through, where do we want to go? Who should we contact? It was making her safe.

We met with F.B.I. We met with N.Y.P.D. We met at the highest level possible that we could do with the State Department. We made sure that she was safe and that the law enforcement was on her side, so they know and everything. It was a lot of work.

Definitely, if it is not someone immediately in your family, as not every family has one person is an activist and then they have siblings and parents, people and friends should advocate for them. This is a reality for people.

If someone doesn't want to take responsibility in the family advocating for advocates, people can do it. A lot of these organizations would not have happened if I had not contacted all of these people. Because of where they would get the information, it is that it is not their intention and where they can get credible information.

I was the representative for Gulalai in all letters written for her. It is a lot of work. It is really for humanists and activists working in such environments. It is important that they are aware of the risks and should be trustworthy people who will stand up and do all those.

As a humanist and an activist, we have to go through personal trauma as well. We have to go through the trauma. We couldn't allow ourselves to be affected by the traumatic experiences. We wouldn't be able to fight if we were affected by this whole situation.

It is a mental toll. It is really stressful. There are a lot of things that humanists can learn from other humanists if they share. I am not sure if I am directly responding to the question. Also, digital security is important, especially for humanists, to ensure secure and safe communication channels.

I can even share through this email. ProtonMail is one of the safest. Signal for texting. In the process, I learned so much when I had to communicate. Even when I had to go outside, I was always at risk. There were attempts to bug my phone and my devices. It happened in that time.

Humanists' lives and communication are at risk. Even in normal life, even when they aren't being persecuted, digital communication so important.

Because of the work that we did at Aware Girls, we used to teach girls about safe online spaces, about digital security. All of that.

We were the ones working on it and how important it is. If we hadn't taken all those measures, Gulalai wouldn't have been safe. In this time, when the whole world has become a digital world, if someone doesn't say something on digital media or through a phone, it is a different world now.

In a digital world, you have to be safe digitally. You don't know if people communicate in unsafe ways.

Jacobsen: Now, I want to touch on a particular individual influenced by Gulalai and you at Aware Girls. She recently graduated from a prominent British university. Who is this young woman?

Ismail: [Laughing].

Jacobsen: How did her story, in fact, start on the ground before fame through Aware Girls?

Ismail: Actually, I think she already had the potential. The way her father brought her up. She already had the potential. When we were in touch with her, she became part of a program for domestic violence awareness.

You mentioned Malala. She took part in a program from Aware Girls. I think it was a year before being shot in the head. I don't want to take that kind of credit, saying, "Because of Aware Girls, she is Malala." She already had the potential, won awards.

She is an alumni of Aware Girls. Definitely, a very talented Pakistani girl who we are extremely proud of.

Jacobsen: Who is the most talented person you've ever met in general?

Ismail: This is a hard question because there are so many. The world doesn't have a measurement for talent. There are these IQ tests. Aside from that, we can't say, "This person has a lot of talent." Because we can learn things from people who aren't the extremely genius talented people.

Life is about learning new things. You can learn things from people around us. I can't say this is the person who is the most talented because I have met many people who are talented in many different walks of life or in the work that they do or in their personal lives.

There are many people. There are people who I have been inspired from, who I look as a strong person, as people who I can learn. I wouldn't name one person

or someone as the most talented who I have ever met.

Jacobsen: What about ethical exemplars who come to mind?

Ismail: For me, ethics are at the institutional level. I see ethics more at an institutional level. I don't

know. It raises the question, "What kind of ethics are we talking about?" It is about basic respect. I understand the question you're saying.

I wouldn't tie it to a person.

Appendix I: Footnotes

[1] Co-Founder, Aware Girls.

[2] Individual Publication Date: May 1, 2021: <http://www.in-sightjournal.com/saba-ismail-4>; Full Issue Publication Date: September 1, 2021: <https://in-sightjournal.com/insight-issues/>.

Appendix II: Citation Style Listing

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Chicago/Turabian, Author-Date (16th Edition): Jacobsen, Scott. 2021. *Conversation with Saba Ismail on Mubarak Bala, Gulalai Ismail, Aware Girls, Talent, and Ethical Exemplars: Co-Founder, Aware Girls (4)*. *In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal*. 28.A. <http://www.in-sightjournal.com/saba-ismail-4>.

Chicago/Turabian, Humanities (16th Edition): Jacobsen, Scott "Conversation with Saba Ismail on Mubarak Bala, Gulalai Ismail, Aware Girls, Talent, and Ethical Exemplars: Co-Founder, Aware Girls (4)." *In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal*. 28.A (May 2021). <http://www.in-sightjournal.com/saba-ismail-4>.

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Harvard, Australian: Jacobsen, S. 2021, 'Conversation with Saba Ismail on Mubarak Bala, Gulalai Ismail, Aware Girls, Talent, and Ethical Exemplars: Co-Founder, Aware Girls (4)', *In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal*, vol. 28.A., <http://www.in-sightjournal.com/saba-ismail-4>.

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Vancouver/ICMJE: Jacobsen S. *Conversation with Saba Ismail on Mubarak Bala, Gulalai Ismail, Aware Girls, Talent, and Ethical Exemplars: Co-Founder, Aware Girls (4)* [Internet]. (2021, May 28(A). Available from: <http://www.in-sightjournal.com/saba-ismail-4>.

Conversation with Mr. Sudarshan Murthy on: Member, World Genius Directory (2)

2021-05-08



Interviewer: Scott Douglas Jacobsen

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Abstract

Mr. Sudarshan Murthy is a Member of the World Genius Directory. He self-describes as follows:
 “My name is Sudarshan Murthy. I am 41 years old male from Bangalore, India. I have studied Master of Pharmacy and working in the research and development of Nutrition Products for general wellness and disease-specific products. I am a creative individual and published research papers in journals and also published books on [appropriate strategies](#) for [curing acidity and ulcers](#) of the stomach and intestine. I have developed a product called [Glucovita Bolts](#) which is a chewable tablet of Glucose and Vitamins and Minerals for energy and reduction of fatigue. This product can be taken by individuals who suffer from chronic fatigue. My hobbies are numismatics, philately and travelling. My interests are astronomy, reading books, solving IQ tests, understanding the secrets of ancient knowledge particularly Indian Vedas which I believe is a storehouse of profound knowledge on various aspects of life and the cosmos.” He discusses: grandfather; proposed medicines; importance of education; missing out on meeting with close relatives; education; innate

ingenuity; Mysterium; theories or ideas; Newton; Leonardo Da Vinci; Sushrutha; Bhaskaracharya; “deep observation”; the mind of a genius; the more promising paths; order; the disagreements among “different religions”; scientific principles; eternal mysteries; rule utilitarianism; situational ethics; politics; tripartite metaphysical formulation; and societies.

Keywords: Bhaskaracharya, family, genius, Isaac Newton, Leonardo Da Vinci, metaphysics, order, Rule Utilitarianism, Situational Ethics, Sudarshan Murthy, Sushrutha.

Conversation with Mr. Sudarshan Murthy on Grandfather, Education in Family, Regrets, Newton, Da Vinci, Sushrutha, Bhaskaracharya, Science, and Ethics: Member, World Genius Directory (2)

Please see the footnotes, bibliography, and citation style listing after the interview.

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: As your grandfather was illiterate and living in a village without formal education, your story seems like one of triumph in spite of the circumstances. Why did he study Ayurvedic by himself?

Mr. Sudarshan Murthy[1],[2]*: My Grandfather was an orphan. He was in a small village. He then came to the city in search of a job. When he came here he was taken into the shelter by an elderly gentleman who was an Ayurvedic physician. He took my grandfather as an office boy for his clinic. My grandfather was having sharp intellect. He developed an interest in medicines and gradually became a compounder and then finally started to understand the medicines and Ayurveda under his master’s guidance. As the master’s children were not interested in Ayurveda the master started teaching Ayurveda to my grandfather. My grandfather took a keen interest in this and then started his own clinic. Since he became well-versed in Ayurveda he started developing his own medicines.

Jacobsen: What were some of the proposed medicines by your grandfather?

Murthy: He developed Ayurvedic medicines for memory, hairfall, diarrhea and high fever. He was doing clinical trials on medicines for children’s health when he suddenly expired.

Jacobsen: Between the home life, the surgeon, the doctor, and the electrical engineer, what is the importance of education within the family?

Murthy: I personally believe that education is important to get formal accreditation to start our professional practice but everything depends on our ability to apply our knowledge in our chosen education to be successful in our life. Education, by itself, cannot guarantee success in life. It is the innate ability and ingenuity which is required to succeed in our life. There are many such examples. Baba Ramdev from India who started Patanjali Ayurved became a Rs.10000 Crore company in a span of 6 years which many multinational companies have failed to achieve. He is having no

formal Ayurvedic education. He is now invited to IIT and IIM to coach students on how to achieve success in life.

Jacobsen: Do you regret missing out on meeting with close relatives in a different start when younger?

Murthy: Yes I feel bad that I was not able to meet and stay with close relatives during my younger days when intimate relationships do form and stay long-lasting. Now I am not having any close relationship which helps to build emotional strength. This makes me feel lonely and insecure.

Jacobsen: Why pursue the education in pharmacy, business administration, food and nutrition, writing, and the sciences regarding clinical trials?

Murthy: I am crazy as far as education is concerned. I am interested to learn a variety of knowledge, especially in medical field. But only technical knowledge is not sufficient to progress in life but it requires business sense also so I studied business administration.

Jacobsen: Why are internal qualities of “innate ingenuity” so often unseen or unobserved without a formal test, even by the person with the innate ingenuity? It seems counterintuitive at first blush.

Murthy: I think that the world is based on the principle of “what you see is what you believe” and every person is also framed like that. We don’t believe ourselves till we see what we have done. This is a problem with genius people. They don’t believe themselves till others make them see what they have done.

Jacobsen: Is Mysterium still extant?

Murthy: I saw the group on facebook. Mr. Monte Washburn is the admin. The name is “Mysterium Society”.

Jacobsen: Do you have any particular theories or ideas that you’re trying to advance?

Murthy: I don't have any particular theories or ideas to advance. I believe any theory which is made for common good without exploitation.

Jacobsen: What makes Newton one of the great historical geniuses, in character and in productions?

Murthy: Newton is great because he first observed the theory of gravity operating in the earth by observing and thinking why did apple fall on the ground why did it not go up. As I mentioned before this quality of profound observation is what makes a person genius.

Of course his three laws of motion and various other inventions make him one of the greatest historical geniuses.

Jacobsen: What makes Leonardo Da Vinci one of the great historical geniuses, in character and in productions?

Murthy: The same argument which I put forth for Newton applies here also. Many people know about him and his various inventions but what I admire in him is that he could write with both hands and he could write the words /sentences in their mirror image as well simultaneously. This shows his profound imagination and his ability to visualize the mirror image without actually seeing in mirror. This is an extraordinary quality of usage of his mind.

Jacobsen: What makes Sushrutha one of the great historical geniuses, in character and in productions?

Murthy: Sushrutha is considered the first surgeon of India. He was so brilliant that he could actually fit the nose to a person who had lost his nose. In those olden times, he could perform surgery when knowledge of medical science was not so advanced. This makes him one of the historical geniuses of India. Some even say that he could perform cloning and also able to fit one animal's body part into humans. Even today we don't know how this can be done without eliciting organ rejection by the body.

Jacobsen: What makes Bhaskaracharya one of the great historical geniuses, in character and in productions?

Murthy: Bhaskaracharya was an ancient Indian mathematician and astronomer who is said to have discovered gravity much before Newton. He is also known for developing various mathematical equations on algebra, geometry and trigonometry. His achievements can be found on google search. This makes him one of the historical geniuses of his time.

Jacobsen: Can "deep observation" be trained, or is it more innate?

Murthy: I believe deep observation can be trained.

Jacobsen: What explains the level of creativity in the "application of ideas that originates from the mind of a genius"?

Murthy: Let me give you an example of the Wright brothers. Every human being saw the birds flying in the air on an almost daily basis. But it was the minds of the Wright brothers who thought why humans can't fly. This gave them the idea of designing a machine like a bird having wings that can be used to fly off humans. The result we see today is the aeroplane.

This shows that geniuses can convert the ideas into reality, i.e., they not only get ideas but also know how to apply them as well.

Jacobsen: What are some of the more promising paths for the "various medical and nutrition products in the healthcare industry"?

Murthy: Hippocrates once said, "Let food be your medicine and medicine be your food". This explains that the food that we eat should be healthy and suitable for our body and mind. Also, the medicine should be in the form of food and not be a separate entity which we take only when we fall sick. The ultimate meaning I believe is that food is healthy to our body and mind i.e. it should make our body and mind fit and should act as medicine to ensure we do not fall sick. The junk foods and synthetic medicines of today are not healthy. They do harm our body in some way or the other. Many medicines are not without side effects.

Jacobsen: Why can "such order" not "happen on its own"?

Murthy: This is a mystery to me. If we the events around us happening or happened in the past it becomes clear that order did not happen on its own. This is because nature is always in the process of change. The process of constant change does not allow the order to happen on its own. For example, seasons change so do the flowering pattern and birds migration. This changes the order. Some plants bloom in winter while some die. Some viruses become active in winter while some lie dormant or die.

Jacobsen: What do you make the disagreements among "different religions" on the aspects, form, and interactions with humanity, even representations to human beings, of "this supreme intelligence" called "God"?

Murthy: There is a story about 7 blind men describing the elephant in seven different ways. All of them are partly true but none correctly describing the elephant as it is. This is what applies to different religions representing the supreme intelligence in their own ways without any knowing correct representation of God. The religions still today is similar to the blind men describing an elephant, partly correct but not wholly true.

Jacobsen: What scientific principles most intrigue you?

Murthy: One scientific principle that intrigues me and also teaches me that all are created equal is the free fall principle. When two or more objects of different masses are allowed to fall freely at the same time from a similar height they fall at the same time irrespective of their masses but our thinking says that objects with greater mass should fall first. This is the most intriguing phenomenon in science.

Jacobsen: What things about nature seem like eternal mysteries rather than problems with the potential for solution?

Murthy: There are two such things which appear as eternal mysteries of nature: – Why does the natural death occur, i.e., why do animals age and die? The second mystery is: why children born to the same parents have different life events?

Jacobsen: Why rule utilitarianism for an ethical philosophy more than others?

Murthy: Ethical philosophy is concerned with morally right or wrong and utilitarianism is based on morality which advocates actions that bring happiness and pleasure and opposes any action that causes harm. Hence any action which is done to bring happiness and pleasure automatically becomes morally right and otherwise actions that bring unhappiness and pain to all is morally wrong.

Jacobsen: What make situational ethics best for a social philosophy? Does this tie into rule utilitarianism?

Murthy: As I said before social philosophy concerns itself with social behaviour and interprets

the society in terms of ethical behaviour i.e. right or wrong and situational ethics is concerned about the particular context of an act when evaluating ethically. Both these are concerned with ethics i.e. what is morally right or wrong. Thus situational ethics is best for social philosophy as helps in evaluating morally right and wrong actions. Rule utilitarianism is concerned with actions that bring the greatest good. I believe that any actions/behavior in society that brings the greatest good for all is morally right. Thus situational ethics is best for social philosophy and both these can be linked to the philosophy of rule utilitarianism.

Jacobsen: Why should politics be above religion or beliefs of people? It seems as if a formal argument for secularism.

Murthy: The politics should be for the benefit and greatest for all. The religion or beliefs of people may not always be for the greatest good of all people but maybe only for their specific religion or belief. Secularism is something seen away from religion and not based on the greatest good for all. It is a viewpoint and not necessarily for the greatest good of all people. Politics should be for the greatest good for all and includes secularism but not necessarily secularism.

Jacobsen: What is the “spiritual” in this tripartite metaphysical formulation of the physical, the mental including emotion and perception, and the spiritual?

Murthy: Spiritual means relating to our soul and not to material or physical things. Being Spiritual means we become consciously aware that we are all one and are a part of the whole divinity which exists and surrounds us. This is something more than the sensory experience.

Jacobsen: What societies seem to fit these social, economic, political, and philosophical views in one more than others, i.e., practical manifestations of them?

Murthy: As of now I am unable to see any societies that fit all these dimensions. But if all of them come together as one society then maybe it will be.

Appendix I: Footnotes

[1] Member, World Genius Directory.

[2] Individual Publication Date: May 8, 2021: <http://www.in-sightjournal.com/murthy-2>; Full Issue Publication Date: September 1, 2021: <https://in-sightjournal.com/insight-issues/>.

*High range testing (HRT) should be taken with honest skepticism grounded in the limited empirical development of the field at present, even in spite of honest and sincere efforts. If a higher general

intelligence score, then the greater the variability in, and margin of error in, the general intelligence scores because of the greater rarity in the population.

Appendix II: Citation Style Listing

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Conversation with Gulalai Ismail on Zia-ul-Haq, Misogyny, Religion, Faith, Science, and Pakistani Politics: Co-Founder, Aware Girls (2)

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Abstract

Gulalai Ismail is a Co-Founder of Aware Girls. She has been awarded the Democracy Award from the National Endowment for Democracy, the Anna Politkovskaya Award, and recognized as one of the 100 Leading Global Thinkers of 2013 by *Foreign Policy*. She discusses: faith, misogyny, and uplifting women; science, religion, and the status quo in Pakistan; Aware Girls and Saba Ismail; and extremist organizing.

Keywords: Aware Girls, extremists, faith, Gulalai Ismail, Humanism, Islam, misogyny, Pakistan, religion, Saba Ismail, science, Zia-ul-Haq.

Conversation with Gulalai Ismail on Zia-ul-Haq, Misogyny, Religion, Faith, Science, and Pakistani Politics: Co-Founder, Aware Girls (2)

Please see the footnotes, bibliography, and citation style listing after the interview.

Interview conducted April 24, 2020.

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: In some cultures where there is some of the more extreme forms of violence against women and girls, where we see genital mutilation, infibulation, and clitoridectomy, it is mixed up between culture and faith.

How are forms of explicit misogyny in practice – let alone an attitude – reflected in religious values and in cultural values? On the other side, which religious and cultural values appear to uplift women in Pakistan?

Gulalai Ismail[1],[2]: Very interesting question, religion, Islam, has been part of our cultures and every community for hundreds of years. It has mixed with the local culture. So, faith and culture are very

strongly linked with each other. I think faith is part of the culture. It is one sub-part of the culture.

They are strongly linked to each other. The religion has changed a lot. It has influenced in so many ways. Faith has influenced and shaped the culture, the festivals, the community activities. In Pakistan, especially in the Northwest of Pakistan, I have seen – and my parents have seen – how regularly the religious fundamentalists took up more political space.

They gained more political space and gained more cultural space. So, the cultural events, the cultural festivals, were declared by the religious clerics as non-Islamic and bad. They were banned or abandoned by the people under the influenced of the religious extremists.

So many cultural events and cultural activities, which used to happen a decade ago, or two or three decades ago, they used to happen; they are not happening now. All the faith-based festivals or mostly faith-based festivals are happening now.

Even some of the cultural events have still survived, however, they are always under attack. People from the agricultural communities, especially from the Punjab, would come together and fly kites.

They would sing. They would dance. They would fly kites. Now, the festival is under attack by state actors and by the religious fundamentalists calling this un-Islamic and part of Hindu culture. Therefore, they should not celebrate it.

Pakistan is such a diverse country because many nations live in Pakistan. Every nation has their own culture. So, sometimes, the festivals are very beautiful. The languages are very beautiful. Not much has been done by the state authorities to preserve the culture and the music.

There is only one federal institute alongside the Pakistan National Council of the Arts at the federal level. These are the two state institutes, federal level institutions, working to preserve languages, music, and culture. They are just two institutes.

There is not much at the state or the culture level to preserve the beautiful parts of the culture because, in Pakistan, the resources is linked to the polices. Pakistan is a country where the resources are invested heavily in defense and security.

On the whole, it is promoting the narrative that Pakistan is a security state. The money is spent on the manta that we are under attack by India and Israel, and the Jews, are conspiring against us; India is conspiring against us. We are under attack on all sides.

Therefore, we need a stronger security and more investment in defense. So, much of the money is spent on tanks, bombs, on the nuclear bomb, education in our curriculum, children are not taught about the music, the heritage, the diversity. They are mostly taught about religion. You will find religion in English course books.

You will find religion in Pakistan study books [Laughing]. You will find religion in Islam study books. You will find religion in Urdu study books. Religion is studied so much in Pakistan. Religion and religious intolerances are taught as the thinking for the kids in education.

Religion has been a huge space in the cultural and political life. Look at the corona pandemic, in the

midst of the corona pandemic, every country of the world is asking its people and issuing guidelines to stay at home. The countries are on lockdown.

The whole world is under lockdown. The governments are asking people only to come out for necessities. Only on necessities is business ongoing. During the month of Ramadan, the month of Ramadan has started.

When it starts, even countries like Saudi Arabia, which I think is [Laughing] the epitome of a religious country, when Saudi Arabia mentions the closing of the mosques during the month of Ramadan, people have to stay at home.

The Kaaba is one of the holiest places for Muslims. It has been closed down due to the coronavirus. In Pakistan, the president invited the delegation of religious clerics before the month of Ramadan started. They had twenty demands from the government.

The twenty demands were the mosques must remain open for prayers and prayers much continue. All demands were accepted by the government. It was announced the mosques would remain open for Ramadan prayers during the month of Ramadan. That is a very dangerous president.

Pakistan does not have accessible healthcare. We have a very bleak healthcare system. If the pandemic hit us the way it has hit countries like the U.S. or Europe, then Pakistan will be seeing dead bodies on the roads. Because our healthcare system cannot afford it.

We do not have a strong healthcare system, even the strongest healthcare systems are breaking down in the pandemic. We do not have a system. The government of Pakistan, they agreed to the demands of the religious clerics at the cost of lives of the people.

During the corona pandemic, when all over the world, the media channels are inviting either the mayors, governors, who are giving briefings to people, and the doctors and medical experts. They are coming and giving information on it.

In Pakistan, every media is bringing religious leaders to talk about corona pandemic. Too much media, public space has been given to religious elements at the cost of the lives of people, at the cost of the destruction of the society of Pakistan.

Jacobsen: The former Nobel Prize winner Abdus Salam noted one thing to Steven Weinberg who he collaborated with in the past. He noted that an individual who is in many Middle Eastern

countries with Muslim heritage. They will very easily and widely accept the technological and technical masteries that are brought about by science. All of the technological marvels and wonders that one can see implemented in Dubai or in the United Arab Emirates in general, or elsewhere. At the same time, the attitude and thought process of science that brings about the findings through that methodology. Those, he noted, were very, very hard to bring to a wide audience because the religious leaders and some of the political leaders saw this, in essence, as a threat. This is according to Steven Weinberg. In that, this would be an erosive or corrosive force on fundamentalist ideologies. How is this reflected in some of the Pakistan? Not only in the press briefing with religious clerics, but also in the attitudes of the public towards technology, on the one hand, and science as an attitude, a methodology, and a set of findings, on the other.

Ismail: In Pakistan, religion has been used in so many different ways for the benefit of maintaining status quo. It goes back to the history of Pakistan. For example, in Pakistan, if you raise the question, “What does it mean to be a Pakistani?” Who are you when you say you are Pakistani? In Pakistan, the Pakistani identity has been made synonymous with being Muslim and to Islam. It has roots in the subcontinent of India. Pakistan was made for Muslims. It was a country to be made for Muslims or in the name of Islam. Religion was made for the subdivision of the Indian subcontinent in the first place. Also, it was made to define what is meant by a Pakistani. That is why you can see how religion slowly, and gradually, took a huge part in the constitution of Pakistan. Pakistan was formed in 1947, but many years later in 1956 when the first constitution was formed; Pakistan was given the name the “Islamic Republic of Pakistan.” The Preamble of the Pakistan Constitution is known as the Objective Resolution. It says, ‘This country made in the name of Islam. The country will be ruled according to Islam.’ According to the Objective Resolution, people are not sovereign units of the country. God is the most sovereign. God is the most sovereign entity. The Objective Resolution was about how it Islamic the whole country. Slowly and gradually, religion was used by religious political parties. The same religious political parties who initially opposed the formation of Pakistan. After the formation of Pakistan, those religious political parties started using religion to gain more access to politics to have more say in the decision-making.

So, religion was mainstreamed by those religious political parties. The political parties and the

military dictators were the biggest users of the religion. Zia-ul-Haq was a military dictator. His justification for overthrowing democracy and establishing a military dictatorship was Islam. He started the Islamization of Pakistan. He Islamized the laws of the country. To this day, we have not been able to recover from the Islamization of Zia-ul-Haq. He was the one who introduced many Islamic laws, which we are still part of the laws of Pakistan. They are still used. Sharia courts were established. The religious leaders have been given a role in the judiciary in the form of Sharia courts. Similarly, there is a religious council, an advisory religious council, which gives advice to the Parliament (of Pakistan). The only time the Parliament consults the religious council is when the Parliament has to legislate about women’s rights. The only time the Parliament thinks that they need to counsel these advisors is for women’s rights. Women are at the receiving end of the mainstreaming of religion in Pakistan. As I said, it has been used by Pakistan military. Then religion has been used for the strategic interests. The military establishment of Pakistan along with the political parties have used religion as a strategic asset. For example, when Pakistan had been supporting Taliban in Afghanistan. Religion was used to recruit people for Jihad.

There are hundreds of madrassahs, hundreds of jihad training institutions, founded all over Pakistan, so people could be brainwashed and trained for jihad in Afghanistan. The school curriculums were changed all over Pakistan. More religion was inserted in the curriculum. The narratives of jihad could be promoted. They are still part of the curriculum. Those jihad materials are still part of the curriculum. So, religion has been used by the military establishment and the political parties. They have been using religion to enjoy more control at the cost of destroying the social fabric of the society. As I said to you, religion is a big part of the curriculum; so, critical thinking skills are not part of the curriculum. People are never given – children, young people – the skills to criticize, to question. Criticism or raising questions, the whole school culture in built in a way that students are discouraged from raising questions. Students are not encouraged to raise questions; they are discouraged from raising questions and from critical thinking skills. So, religion has been used to maintain status quo in Pakistan. Throughout the previous decades, the military establishment, and mainstream political parties, have mainstreamed religious political parties. Most of the terrorist organizations in Pakistan. They try to emerge in the form of political

parties. They run their election campaigns. They secure a huge amount; they will not be able to make it to the Parliament, but they secure a huge number of votes.

Jacobsen: When you founded Aware Girls, was it 16?

Ismail: Yes, I was 16.

Jacobsen: A co-founder with Saba (Ismail), what were some discussions that you can recall between Saba and you?

Ismail: While living in a girl while we were witnessing, even becoming victims, to the gender discrimination, we really wanted to do something to change it. One of my cousins was almost our age when she wanted to become a pilot. She was taken out of school and married to a person in the family who was almost twice her age. It was a time when we were very shocked and traumatized how one of our own cousins could be taken out of school and not be given the opportunity to go to school and pursue her dreams. This was the breaking point for us. We could not do anything. We discussed this a lot with our families. No one would listen to these two small girls who were discontented with the cousin's marriage. We could not do anything to stop the marriage. We wanted to do something. So, it would not happen to any other woman. We talked to women and girls in our neighbourhood, in our schools. Most of the time, when we would discuss this with girls, we would not find a lot of interest among the girls. [Laughing] Starting a revolution against the gender discrimination, most of the girls had internalized it. I think the discrimination is internalized as a defense mechanism. We were these young girls. We thought, "These young girls are not allowed to make a movement, to resist against Patriarchy. Because they are not aware of their rights." We decided to start by giving them education and awareness of their human rights. We started this campaign with the name of "Aware Girls." It was a campaign to give girls awareness and education on their rights.

Once in our head, the idea, 'Once they are aware of their rights and have some leadership skills, they will be able to speak up for their rights. We would go and the girls would have discussions about the issues faced in their daily lives. The kind of discrimination faced by them. What can be done, how they can negotiate for themselves inside of the home in their families for their rights, how to negotiate their rights, that is how it started. Once we started, of course, the more we learned. It is not just about lack of knowledge with the young girls. It is

about lack of opportunities, lack of platforms, and about a conducive environment. Girls need a conducive environment to exercise their human rights. It needs supportive families. It needs supportive communities. It needs a state there for young girls to protect their rights. We got involved in advocacy work. We were working on changing the laws. We were working on leadership skills for girls in leadership. In 2009, we started working on peacebuilding after the region was threatened with terrorism and recruitments by the Taliban or by the militant organizations.

Jacobsen: How do terrorist organizations, extremist organizations, encourage men into their ranks, women into their ranks? And how do those men and women who end up in them become slotted to particular roles?

Ismail: The recruitment was started by the state. When they wanted to recruit people for jihad. The number of madrassahs were increased, and the number of terrorist institutes were founded. The media was used by the state. The media was used to promote the narrative, the extremist narratives. The curriculum was used. In Pakistan, most of the people have been indoctrinated with a fundamentalist form of Islam. It is really easy for militant organizations and for terrorist organizations to identify the most vulnerable in the community and to reach out and recruit them. The madrassah training centers have been used to recruit people. Most of the time, these are the centers for recruitment. Mosques have been used. These militant organizations' leadership, even until now, visit mosques and introduce themselves. They ask people to come and down join them. They have been given a lot of power to do huge political gatherings. Even last year, there was a huge political gathering of banned terrorist organizations, where they asked people. They took bait. They took promises of people offering for them to join jihad. They do huge public gatherings. They recruit people through mosques and religious madrassahs. Also, they recruit people who are vulnerable, who have different issues, who like the idea of war, who like the idea of weapons, or who like the ideas of jihad.

Also, they recruit through community. There are a number of women madrassahs. Most of the women have been recruited through those religious madrassahs. For example, there was a very famous case, where a madrassah teacher was going to join ISIS along with more than a dozen students of the madrassah. She was arrested and brought. It is not just mosques and religious schools. It is, as I said, generally through community and online recruitment is done and social media is used. Our public schools

are good enough to indoctrinate people. There was a network is limited to universities, schools. They very famous case a few years back when a student have networks in the bureaucracy as well. They are from medical college. She was a student of medical in the military of Pakistan as well. Even within the college. She was recruited online for ISIS. Then she military of Pakistan, you could see. People have been indoctrinated with the idea of jihad. It is real. the incident. Women are recruited are online from Therefore, they should go for jihad. Almost every public universities, and from religious schools. The part of the society has their network, their people. militant organizations have a huge network. Their

Appendix I: Footnotes

[1] Co-Founder, Aware Girls.

[2] Individual Publication Date: May 8, 2021: <http://www.in-sightjournal.com/gulalai-ismail-2>; Full Issue Publication Date: September 1, 2021: <https://in-sightjournal.com/insight-issues/>.

Appendix II: Citation Style Listing

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Conversation with Uwe Michael Neumann on Travelling and Youth: Member, CIVIQ High IQ Society (1)

2021-05-08



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Abstract

Uwe Michael Neumann developed a love of photography when he got his first camera, a Polaroid, at the age of eight years old. From 1982 to 1988, Neumann diverted from photography, studying

law at Cologne State University. But his love of photography, driven by curiosity and the desire to see new things and discover and show their beauty, always called him back. He conducted his first photo tour in Provence, France in 1992. In 1998 he visited New York where he further developed his photographic style; experimenting with verticals and keystone/perspectives. Launching into the field of international cooperation he combined his daily work with his photography in Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Estonia, Georgia, Finland, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Norway, Poland, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Sweden and Ukraine. In November 2014, Neumann attended the wedding of a daughter of the Sultan of Fouta Djallon, Princess Janina, in Fouta Djallon, north-west of Cameroon. There he met and became friends with the famous French photographer and producer, Alain Denis who inspired him to become a professional photographer, instructing him in portrait and landscape photography. After his life-changing visit to Cameroon in 2014 Neumann returned there in February 2015 taking photographs of Central Africa's unique nature and everyday life, which differed greatly from Europe, and even tourist destinations in Africa like Kenya and the Republic of South Africa. During his stay in Central Africa, he lived in Yaoundé, Cameroon and travelled frequently to Equatorial Guinea, the Central African Republic, Gabon, Chad and Congo Brazzaville, among the poorest countries in the world. He also visited and photographed Algeria, Kinshasa (Democratic Republic of Congo), Benin, Kenya, Egypt, Mauritania and the Republic of South Africa. Neumann focused on often-overlooked treasures in nature, the environment, and beauty in places seemingly dominated by poverty. In October 2017, Neumann returned to Berlin and worked on over 90,000 photos from Africa, launching his first exhibition in May in 'Animus Kunstgalerie', Berlin. In October 2018 his exhibition 'Inner Africa' in GH 36 gallery in Berlin was focused on Central Africa displaying not only a huge variety of photographs, but also traditional masks from different regions. In 2019 and 2020, other exhibitions at Bülow90, Berlin and Nils Hanke, Berlin followed. In Ghent, Belgium, he was a speaker at the European Mensa Meeting 2019 on Africa and presented some of his works. He was also invited to present his works in the online exhibition e-MERGING art i S T S. and again at GH36 in the exhibition No Time. [One of his photos](#) was on the title page of the Norwegian magazine Dyade in 2019. His photos have also been featured several times in the online Magazine Foto Minimal & Art. In December 2021 his works were part of an exhibition at Basel Art Center in Basel, Switzerland. He discusses: background, photography, Yaounde, and the high-IQ mental lifestyle.

Keywords: Cameroon, IQ, photography, Uwe Michael Neumann, Yaounde.

Conversation with Uwe Michael Neumann on Travelling and Youth: Member, CIVIQ High IQ Society (1)

Please see the footnotes, bibliography, and citation style listing after the interview.

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: So, we are here today with Uwe Michael Neumann. If individuals are in some of the High IQ communities and examine some of the biographical and online information, the one thing that comes straight to the fore, for me, is the extensive amount of travel that you've done, in terms of doing the photography. So, I guess my first question would be, did you travel very much as a youngster? When did visual arts, photography become very important for you?

to speak. The modest background, so, the only trouble we had was through Austria in the holidays mostly when I was a kid. And also, later as a student, I couldn't afford travelling too much. So, actually, when I was studying law for five years, I couldn't travel anywhere. I didn't travel at all.

And so, when I made my first money, I started travelling to France and then I started at some point working in southeastern Europe. So, I very often took my camera with me. And I saw a lot of

Uwe Michael Neumann[1],[2]*: Yes. They became important for me. I was always a visual type. And I got my first camera, I think, when I was eight or so. That was a Polaroid, you could press the button and then the photo came out at the bottom of the camera. So, yes, I was not continuously doing photography, but from time to time. But I was always interested in that. So, yes, I was not so much travelling because my family was not particularly with the science, so

different small countries here, but they are quite different to Germany because they have been part of the Soviet bloc somehow. So, they have a different development. I was also in Albania, which was completely isolated during the Cold War. They were allied with China, at least formally. And then somehow this developed, and at some point, I wanted to go to Africa. My ex-wife and me, we had friends there. It came up. I also made friends in

central Africa. Also, some years before I had been at a conference in Bordeaux, in France. And for me, as a German, it was very interesting to see when you went at the French conference. They have guests or they have corporations with their former colonies.

So, I was at a conference of the French trade union, but there were many people from Africa because they are connected still. And I don't know the exactly how that goes exactly, but they are also involved in – let's say they were there. So, I made friends with a guy from Mali. I still have the contact now. It was 20 years ago. We are still writing each other. So, I'm also interested in how it's going on there because when you follow the official media, you don't get so much information about, not so much precise information, about certain countries or Africa. So, I was always keen to work on that. At some point, I got the contract to work there for three years as a project leader. So, I also, of course, took my camera with me and started taking pictures of Africa.

Actually, before we were invited to a marriage of an actual princess and an actual sultan, so, in Cameroon, you have these official structures or the modern state structures, but you have also the traditional structures. So, you have also the sultan of a region in the northwest. So, he's also a senator. So, he has two functions. He has a state official function and then he's also officially the sultan. We were invited to a marriage of one of his daughters, a princess. And it was really like a fairy tale, somehow. When I worked there, my house was in Yaounde. My office was in Yaounde, which is the capital of Cameroon, but I was also responsible for the five other countries (Chad, Congo Brazzaville, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, Zentral African Republic).

So, I did a lot of traveling not only by plane, but also by car. We went through the jungle. We went through the borders; and we passed the border controls. So, that is quite an interesting experience. When you come from Europe, you could at least travel before corona without any problems. You just drive over the border; and there was no border control anymore in the last years. And in Cameroon, Africa, there is really strict border control that takes you one hour to get through, let's say. And they have their procedures and their forms; and it's very slow. And they have fences; and it's like in the Cold War, basically. So, yes, that reminded me a little bit

of the wall because when I was young, with my family we went to East Germany. It was also like that. You had to apply in advance a month before to go to East Germany.

And you have to prove that you have relatives there and you had to change money. And then there was really a border wall; and there were fences; and there were controls. It was taking lots of time, half an hour, one hour,. The fence, of course, and it's unimaginable. Now, you just go through; and you don't see anything anymore. But there was a real wall, of course. So that was also very exotic because the lifestyle, the way of living in the former German Democratic Republic (GDR), was completely different from all the Western countries. So, for us, when we went to the Netherlands or to France, it was like, "Okay, this is different." But the style of life, the living, the system of works, was similar, but in the GDR; it was completely different.

For instance, you couldn't just go in the shop and buy something because, very often, there was nothing to buy; and people were standing in line outside the shops. And then, sometimes, they even didn't know what's inside, what they are selling, but they just bought it to trade it in later with their friends. So, they trade it. They made barter trading. So, they bought something, which they could exchange with somebody to get something so very basic. It's not for us, of course; it's not a foreign country, but it was very exciting to go there and was very different at that time. So, yes, basically, that's how it went. I guess you contacted me because of my membership in Mensa, and so on. And, of course, the good thing about these High IQ societies is that you get to know people from all over the world.

During the first phase of the Covid pandemic, we were having talks not on Zoom, but on a similar thing we'd see. It was running for 24 hours. So, when we were in our evening time, the first people from Canada showed up. So, that was also very fascinating.

Jacobsen: Really like zoological specimen.

Neumann: Yes, I'm very interested. I think that's typical for high IQ people. You're interested to see new things and to meet new people, and so on. You easily get bored at some point. So, the daily routine, it's difficult to keep for us.

Appendix I: Footnotes

[1] Member, CIVIQ High IQ Society.

[2] Individual Publication Date: May 8, 2021: <http://www.in-sightjournal.com/neumann-1>; Full Issue Publication Date: September 1, 2021: <https://in-sightjournal.com/insight-issues/>.

*High range testing (HRT) should be taken with honest skepticism grounded in the limited empirical development of the field at present, even in spite of honest and sincere efforts. If a higher general intelligence score, then the greater the variability in, and margin of error in, the general intelligence scores because of the greater rarity in the population.

Appendix II: Citation Style Listing

American Medical Association (AMA): Jacobsen S. *Conversation with Uwe Michael Neumann on Travelling and Youth: Member, CIVIQ High IQ Society (1)* [Online]. May 2021; 28(A). Available from: <http://www.in-sightjournal.com/neumann-1>.

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Conversation with Gulalai Ismail on International Humanitarian Law, Human Rights, North Waziristan, and Being the Most Dangerous Person in Pakistan: Co-Founder, Aware Girls (3)

2021-05-15

Interviewer: Scott Douglas Jacobsen

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Abstract

Gulalai Ismail is a Co-Founder of Aware Girls. She has been awarded the Democracy Award from the National Endowment for Democracy, the Anna Politkovskaya Award, and recognized as one of the 100 Leading Global Thinkers of 2013 by *Foreign Policy*. She discusses: reportage in North Waziristan; most dangerous person in Pakistan; Pashtun Tahafuz Movement; human rights and humanitarian law; freethinkers; most dangerous woman; and a lifelong commitment.

Keywords: Aware Girls, freethinkers, Gulalai Ismail, human rights, North Waziristan, Pashtun Tahafuz Movement.

Conversation with Gulalai Ismail on International Humanitarian Law, Human Rights, North Waziristan, and Being the Most Dangerous Person in Pakistan: Co-Founder, Aware Girls (3)

Please see the footnotes, bibliography, and citation style listing after the interview.

Interview conducted April 24, 2020.

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: You did some rights work and reportage in North Waziristan looking at the cases of women who were raped or sexually assaulted by security forces of Pakistan. What were some of those findings? And what was some of the protest you gave over those acts of the police forces? Also, what was the reaction of the police force or the state forces?

Gulalai Ismail[1],[2]: It was January 2009, when I saw a video on the internet. It was a video of a small boy. Maybe, he was 11 years old. His name was Hayat. In that video, the young boy was saying that he was from North Waziristan. He was saying that his brothers had been picked up months ago by security agencies. However, their home was continually barged into by the security forces. His mother was harassed regularly. He was so fed up with it. When this video came out, there was a lot of anger about the issue of harassment by security force. The security forces tried to shut down the woman. They tried to claim this was a lie, etc. The mother of the little boy, she presented herself in a local council meeting with local elders. She gave a testimony. She said, 'It is true.' She is regularly getting harassed by security forces. Home is regularly getting barged into by security forces. Her husband and son have already been taken by the security agencies, as in missing persons. Victims of forced disappearances. As a women's rights activist, I felt a responsibility. When she spoke about sexual

harassment, in a tribal area, where women do not have access to public spaces, where there are not enough schools and the literacy rate is really low with women's less than 10%, they do not have access to media. There is not internet.

The government has still not given the right of the internet to people of Waziristan. There is not internet over there. It is a complete information blackout area. A woman who is so brave and courageous stood and spoke out against sexual harassment. As a women's rights activist, I felt a responsibility to go visit her and show solidarity with her. To tell her, she is not alone. I, along with other women activists, I went there to meet her. When we went there, dozens of women came to see us. We were told a number of stories of sexual harassment by the security forces. Also, some of the women claim that some women have been abducted by security forces. Those women have never been given back. They have not been returned to their families. We got to know the story of the woman who was part of a later incident. It was a policy of the state security agencies. It happened regularly. It was a common policy. The women from the area, it is such a taboo for a woman to be in public spaces all around Pakistan. Every woman in Pakistan is not comfortable to be on media. They are not even allowed by the men in the community and the family to be on the internet or to give any interview. This one woman was very brave. She had a small piece of paper with 25 lines on it. She said that she wanted to give the media an interview. Her husband had been picked up by the security agencies. The security forces keep barging into her home. They come and harass her every time. She drew one line on this paper for every incident. She had this paper with 25 lines marking every time of the harassment by the security forces.

This helps us know sexual harassment is either a policy or the security forces keep on enjoying immunity for the crimes committed against women in the areas, where they are engaged in military operations. Of course, in Pakistan, the mainstream media is not allowed to cover any issues in which people are critical of the Pakistani military. Also, the mainstream media is not allowed to give coverage to any activist of the movement known as Pashtun Tahafuz Movement. We were not given coverage. The story was not given coverage on any mainstream media. Of course, there are some channels like *Voice of America* or *Europe Radio*, which gave coverage to the story and gave voice to the issue. We also wrote letters to the international commission on the status of women to take notice of it. To make sure justice is done, the reconciliation

commission should be established. Nothing was done. Instead, activists who went there. I went there. I started experiencing harassment by state authorities. A few days later, I was arrested from a protest. We were doing a protest against the murder of a peace activist. Right from there, I was arrested. We were all arrested, who were doing the protest. I was made a missing person. I was kept *incommunicado* for almost 48 hours, for two days. My family did not know where I had been kept. No one was given any access to counsel, to a lawyer. Soon after it, the crackdown started against me, which never ended. I was released. Even then, I was released only after immense international pressure. Even after the release, the crackdown did not stop.

Then when I highlighted the issue again in May of 2019, I highlighted the issue when protesting against the rape and murder of a 10-year-old girl in Islamabad, which is the capital of Pakistan. We were protesting this. She was raped and murdered by someone in the neighbourhood. The police had not lodged a complaint of the girl gone missing. When the girl had gone missing, they went to the police to find their girl and file a complaint. The police refused to take the complaint, 'She must have eloped with someone. So, we won't take the case.' A few days later, she was found dead and raped. Then the hospitals were not even willing to do her post-mortem. So, a protest was happening. Civil society was doing a protest against it. In the protest, I highlighted the issues of sexual harassment in North Waziristan. [Laughing] For that, I was booked under a case or clauses under the anti-terrorism laws of Pakistan for defaming Pakistan military and for promoting ethnic violence, for engaging in treason, which is a life sentence. I do not know what they would have done if they had arrested me. Soon after the speech, I became the most wanted terrorist in Pakistan. I was highlighted as a terrorist, as someone who is a terrorist. Soon, they started raiding our homes. The digital surveillance was started. My parents were under digital surveillance. The raids were not any raids.

We are talking dozens of commandoes and police who raid our homes, check our homes, every corner of the home, harassing my sister and siblings and parents who were home; they took our mobile phones. We had CCTV cameras installed in our home. Those were taken from our home. Every few weeks, our home would be raided as if it were the home of the biggest terrorist or the headquarters of the biggest terrorist organization in Pakistan. Similar raids were done on my relatives' homes. Soon, we got to know. My name was put on some state kill list. I was on a blacklist. Before that, my name was

added on some personal special interest list. I used to be investigated, interrogated, by the counter-terrorism department of the special investigation agency of Pakistan. It was non-stop for more than a year. It has been a non-stop harassment by the state. I risked disappearances, booking me in cases of terrorism. It has been crazy. The past one-and-a-half year has been really crazy.

Jacobsen: If stated to Pakistan as the most dangerous person, let alone women but person, in the country, many people know the name and know the purported crime. I would assume statements were made in public by them, about you, about then movement you are involved with, or about your organization. If any, if my assumption is correct, what were they?

Ismail: The movement has always been presented very negatively in the mainstream media because the mainstream media is not allowed to invite us or members of the movement. They discuss us. They portray us as traitors. In April, it was the 29th of 2020. The director of the ISBR, the media public relations wing of Pakistan military. The director or the spokesperson of the Pakistan military, he did a press conference and threatened the PT movement saying, 'The time is up for the PT movement. It is time for action.' His famous sentence, "The time is up for PTF." Shortly after the press conference and the statement about strict action taken against us, and we've crossed the red line and will not be tolerated anymore, many videos emerged online on YouTube saying, "The time is up for Gulalai," and two others. This was the kind of statements that were given about us. They were always threatening and outrageous statements against our basic rights, our fundamental rights. Besides this, when I was still in hiding because of the situation created for me, my life was at risk. Imran Kahn was visiting the United States. He was giving a speech in the United States Institute of Peace. He was asked about me and the crackdown about me. He started using the question as an excuse to promote more propaganda against the movement. He did not answer the question and promoted more propaganda against us over there.

One of the unfortunate situations for us is the political leadership have not come forward. In a way, they should have come forward in support of the movement. They have not come forward against the crackdown against us, in the way they should have come down against the crackdown against us. The political parties did not take a strong stand in support of the movement because, in Pakistan, the elections are engineered by the Pakistan military agency. Anyone critical of the military agency are

afraid that they will not win and will not be able to get into the Parliament. They do not put themselves in trouble by questioning, or issuing support in solidarity with people like me or the movement. It is unfortunate. If there was any talk, then it was negative and only negative statements of propaganda.

Jacobsen: For the Pashtun Tahafuz Movement, what is the history there? Of course, you have Pashtun heritage. However, in Pakistan, this is a particularly sensitive issue. One, as you have noted, among many others with some overlap and, in other ways, not. What is the status of the movement? What is the trajectory?

Ismail: The history of the movement is after 9/11, the militant organizations started to organization in the Northwest of Pakistan. The state let them organize. The state hesitated and let them have access to resources because they were a strategic asset of Pakistan. They tried to establish Islamic state in Pakistan. They were killing people, even attacking the government institutes. Military operations started against them. Many more military opens have been dozen affecting millions of people. Millions of people are displaced from their homes. Most of them were displaced on very short notice. Not enough support was provided to the people who were displaced. They were not even given the label of Internally Displaced people. Because when you are given the label, the certain rights apply to IDPs, Pakistan avoided it, even called Intermittently Displaced People., or ITTPs or something to prevent them from having rights of displaced people. Thousands of families, even today, are living in those camps. They are not able to return to their homes. The camps were more like concentration camps. They are guarded by the military, the Pakistani military. They are not controlled by civilians. The civil society is not allowed to enter the camps and meet with the people inside the camps. Political parties are not even allowed to visit these camps. Only the military controls it. Landmines were used, which are against international law. No landmines, no excuse can be used to fill whole villages with landmines, even if you are doing a military operation. However, dozens of people have lost their lives. Dozens have people have been disabled because of the landmines.

Then extrajudicial killing is another phenomenon that emerged. Extrajudicial killing was done not just in the tribal areas of Pakistan, but all over Pakistan. When killed extrajudicially, they would be labelled "terrorists" rather than be given a free and fair trial. Hundreds of them were killed in fake police

encounters. They were not real police encounters. They would be abducted, tortured, and killed, and then dumped, and then a fake police operation or encounter would be staged. Then this would be labelled the “terrorist running away, so he was killed by the state.” Most were killed extrajudicially and were innocent people who do not have any link with a terrorist organization. Thousands of innocent people were killed extrajudicially. If you look at the whole military set of operations, not a single leader of these terrorist organizations was killed in these military operations. Who were these people? These were never shared with the public. Who were these terrorists who were killed? How did the Pakistani military come to the conclusion that this person was a terrorist? No kind of information was given to this day. No one knows, never even names have been given, the information has not even been given to the Parliament. There is one parliamentarian who belongs to the Pashtun Tahafuz Movement.

He has raised questions in the Parliament. He asked the Defense Department to give him the list of the terrorists killed in military operations because more than a dozen have been done. He wants the list. Not even the list of names of people has been provided. Similarly, extrajudicial killing and enforced disappearances became a big phenomenon. Most of the people, even if someone is not innocent, you cannot make them a victim of enforced disappearance. So, thousands of people became victims of enforced disappearances. They are brought to internment centers. They are not given the right to a free and fair trial. They are not given the right to access family. They are not given the right to access to a lawyer. Once someone has gone missing, I have met families whose family members are missing *for years*, for 10 years, for 14 years. They do not know where they have gone. Enforced disappearance is another issue with targeted killings too. The local head witness and the Pakistan military, itself, has allowed terrorist organizations to organize in their villages and to kill the local people. No action will be taken against the terrorist organizations, except in the name of military organizations crimes were committed. All of the human rights abuses were committed by Pakistan state military during the war against terror.

Jacobsen: With the lack of transparency with the public comes the basis for a lack of accountability to the public and to the international community, especially around human rights and humanitarian law, what is the status of freedom of expression and freedom of the press in Pakistan?

Ismail: If you speak about the tribal areas of Pakistan, then there is complete informational blackout. There is no T.V. There is only in some parts where you can listen to radio. No T.V. and no internet, the Pakistani government and the Prime Minister of Pakistan speak so much about the lockdown of Kashmir. He speaks so much against the shutdown of internet in Kashmir. In the tribal areas of Pakistan, this has been like this forever. I do not if internet was ever even given to the tribal areas of Pakistan. So, there is complete informational blackout in the tribal areas of Pakistan. In the rest of Pakistan, the situation for freedom of expression is really difficult. It is dire. There is no freedom of expression for voices of dissent. People who are dissidents. People who think differently; people who are critical of the state policy. In Pakistan, only religious clerics have freedom of expression. Only terrorist organizations have freedom of expression. Only banned terrorist organizations have freedom of expression. Human rights activists and common people do not have freedom of expression. If they dare to use freedom of expression, like my father, then they are booked for cases for terrorism or cybercrime. The cybercrime case filed against him because he has been accused of speaking against the government. In the whole civilized world, you would not put someone in prison because they are being critical of the government. The FIR of my father says that he has been charged for cybercrime because he has speaking against the government. So, the regressive laws like cybercrimes laws and anti-terrorism laws of Pakistan are used against voices of dissent. I am not the only dissident. I am not the only human rights activist who had to flee the country to save my life. Many dissidents have to flee the country, to leave the country, to save their lives. There is a huge community where so many people had to leave Pakistan because it was no longer safe for them living in Pakistan. It was because of their political opinions. They were no longer tolerated in Pakistan for their political opinions.

Jacobsen: How many cases of humanists and others of a similar freethinker stripe, given the information blackout when bad things happen to them, whether injury, death, or otherwise, simply go unnoticed via the information blackout?

Ismail: I do not know how many cases go unreported, Scott, to be honest; because if there is no information, I don't know the real figures. However, based on the religious fundamentalism and the support militants have enjoyed, I am sure many cases go unreported. The data available, I am sure this is unrepresentative and the persecution by state authorities and by the community is much greater.

Jacobsen: Are you still considered the most dangerous woman from Pakistan?

Ismail: Well [Laughing]...

Jacobsen: ...[Laughing]...

Ismail: ...just last week, Pakistan submitted an appeal in the court asking to cancel the appeal of my father, as he was booked on a cybercrime case. He is on bail now. But Pakistan is trying to cancel the bail of him. He has been tortured and persecuted because he is my father. In January when my mother received a letter, she is on the Exit Control List. This is based on my being the most dangerous person in Pakistan.

Jacobsen: This title, the most dangerous woman in Pakistan, whether a formal title or informally

implied, is going to follow you for the rest of your life. This is not something that just goes away.

Ismail: Yes, I think those who are ready for war. Those who support terrorism. Patriarchal institutions too, I am glad that they see me as the most dangerous person.

Jacobsen: [Laughing].

Ismail: They should be really, really afraid that, now, they have a strong woman who is out there to expose their agenda [Laughing].

Jacobsen: [Laughing].

Ismail: She will not sit back. Until, they are all held accountable. I am glad that they think I am dangerous.

Appendix I: Footnotes

[1] Co-Founder, Aware Girls.

[2] Individual Publication Date: May 15, 2021: <http://www.in-sightjournal.com/gulalai-ismail-3>; Full Issue Publication Date: September 1, 2021: <https://in-sightjournal.com/insight-issues/>.

Appendix II: Citation Style Listing

American Medical Association (AMA): Jacobsen S. *Conversation with Gulalai Ismail on International Humanitarian Law, Human Rights, North Waziristan, and Being the Most Dangerous Person in Pakistan: Co-Founder, Aware Girls (3)* [Online]. May 2021; 28(A). Available from: <http://www.in-sightjournal.com/gulalai-ismail-3>.

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Conversation with Assistant Professor Simon Olling Rebsdorf on Background, Work, Philosophy, and High-IQ Societies: Assistant Professor, VIA University College (1)

2021-05-15

Interviewer: Scott Douglas Jacobsen

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Abstract

Professor Simon Olling Rebsdorf is an Assistant Professor at VIA University College and a prominent member of the high-IQ communities. He discusses: growing up; a sense of an extended self; the family background; experience with peers and schoolmates; purpose of intelligence tests; high intelligence; the extreme reactions to and treatment of geniuses; the greatest geniuses in history; a genius from a profoundly intelligent person; some work experiences and educational certifications; more important aspects of the idea of the gifted and geniuses; the God concept; science; tests taken and scores earned (with standard deviations); the range of the scores; and ethical philosophy.

Keywords: background, culture, family, IQ, physics, Simon Olling Rebsdorf, society.

Conversation with Assistant Professor Simon Olling Rebsdorf on Background, Work, Philosophy, and High-IQ Societies: Assistant Professor, VIA University College (1)

Please see the footnotes, bibliography, and citation style listing after the interview.

Updated with edits from Kathy Kendrick of ISPE.

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: When you were growing up, what were some of the prominent family stories being told over time? like to be, instead of who we are. However, this is a risk as well as a cerebral human condition.

Dr. Simon Olling Rebsdorf[1],[2]*: [My private weblog is here: <https://humanlifelab.wordpress.com>]

The midwife dragged me into this worldly place in the city of Odense, Denmark, in 1971. Looking back from this halfway vantage point, I still wonder whether retrospective selection of milestones or turning points in our consciously remembered life story do in fact contribute to changing our own self-images into a narrative of someone we would rather

When my parents got divorced, I was five and my big brother was nine years old. The divorce took a lot of energy, especially when my age was around 10 and 14. In this period, my parents had quarrels—legal cases about custody rights. Thinking about my grandparents is more comforting. My grandfather was a creative man full of ideas. He was a craftsman working at a lathe, in his own shop business in the attic in central Copenhagen. Very ingenious and skilled. During the Second World War, he decided to hang a hand grenade on the back of the front door to the shop, just in case German Nazi SS troops were to enter the courtyard. Illegally, he crafted little

pieces for weapons of the Danish Resistance Movement. He was never caught. This is probably the most prominent family story, which was told many times.

Jacobsen: Have these stories helped provide a sense of an extended self or a sense of the family legacy?

Rebsdorf: In some sense, yes. Resistance against authority and a critical mind have been heralded as the norm and a necessary attribute of family members.

Jacobsen: What was the family background, e.g., geography, culture, language, and religion or lack thereof?

Rebsdorf: Danish. My father was born in 1930 in the southern part of Jutland, the Danish peninsula, in a city called Ødis, close to Kolding. My late father's brother was concerned with genealogy and made a family tree dating back to the 1600s. During World War 2, my father's family hosted a young boy, who was a member of Hitler Jugend—the nazi boy scouts—but the boy's parents had managed to escape Germany, and in Denmark, they had found my father's family to host the boy for some time. I remember my immediate shock when my father told me that had he been raised in Germany instead of in Denmark, he might as well have been a conscientious Hitler Jugend boy. His point was a cultural relativist one, and I understood this immediately after some explanation. My father is now 90 years old. He has always played classical music and jazz—he plays the violin, and he is the reason that I have learned to appreciate and play music myself since the age of 5, when he forced me to take violin lessons.

My father at age 17 went to Copenhagen to study pharmacy. He ended up becoming a fresh-water researcher, even publishing in *Nature* once. I found out about this in 2018, without his ever letting me or my family know! How typically humble of him, not mentioning it. In 1999 he co-authored a paper on “[Regional Trends in Aquatic Recovery from Acidification in North America and Europe](#),” Volume 401 Number 6753 pp513-622 (it's on page 575, name: A. Rebsdorf), on behalf of the National Environmental Research Institute in Denmark.

My mother was born in 1945 and grew up on the island Zealand, close to the Danish capital, Copenhagen, in a city called Hillerød. Her father, my granddad who owned a lathe shop, was extremely protective of his youngest daughter, and was known to hire a private eye to follow her on dates. My dad lived across the street from them and

they fell in love. They had two children—Morten, my big brother, in 1967, and me in 1971. In 1976, they got a divorce and have had several other girlfriends/boyfriends since. My mother studied to work in a kindergarten and has done so all her life. She is now retired. My mother has always been the more creative kind, having us dress up, play, dance, draw and just live out ourselves and our curiosity.

Throughout my life, I've had a general feeling that my free choices were ok, no matter what they were. Later in life I've realized the importance of this and the role this general outlook has had on my life and life choices.

Going to lower elementary school in the hamlet Bryrup in the middle of the Danish peninsula Jutland, I had a great time until control was lost due to the separation of my parents. Looking back, mathematics, English, natural sciences, music, and the Danish language seemed quite easy and all-interesting, but they were not trivial topics to me.

Music was the exception. Playing instruments and singing was effortlessly intuitive to me. I played everything by ear and frowned inside when the other kids could not play the right rhythm or worse, couldn't remember what we played last week. This was a walk in the park for me. I learned the music notations system three times in my life—and forgot it three times. I never really made use of musical scores. The music has always been kept safely in my mind's ear, and my head is always full of music and sounds.

My dad forced me to play the violin from age five, and later I turned to piano, then electric bass, drums and guitar, now upright bass and piano. Today I am grateful to his stubborn demands of weekly rehearsals in my room. Music has always been my thing. However, whenever I was good at something, I kept this experience to myself.

[\[https://humanlifelab.wordpress.com/music\]](https://humanlifelab.wordpress.com/music)

The Nordic Law of Jante completely imbued my upbringing and schooling: A pattern of group behavior, that negatively portrays and criticizes individual success and achievement as unworthy and inappropriate, is what usually made me keep my successes to myself. But it also made me try to do better. I never told anyone when I was good at something. Never. I didn't want to appear as the archetypical, annoying smart-guy.

Regarding religion: My upbringing has had a clear lack of religion. It is a mystery to me why I was baptized at all. More about this ecumenical topic below.

Jacobsen: How was the experience with peers and schoolmates as a child and an adolescent?

Rebsdorf: I didn't perceive myself at all as the brainy child who could read prematurely or solve math problems years ahead of the norm. And if I was, I would never have known, let alone been told. I was just a pretty happy little brother with a creative pre-school teacher mum and an academic dad researching fresh-water resources. I loved being left on my own to discover the universe. Philosophizing, as I learned later, was my favorite activity, and my mind was a lively place, an inner world not accessible to others. It was my own world. It provided a sense of control. And nobody ever entered it.

I wholeheartedly believed that everybody else in kindergarten and elementary school was likely to have similar individual inner worlds just like mine, filled with colored numbers, friendly creatures of music, physical sensations of huge, imaginary bubbles of tension when pressing together my middle and index finger, as well as inner dialogues and discussions with imaginary people. This was my world, a warm place of structure, texture, and ethereal, rhythmic sounds and shapes. Later in life, I learned that perhaps my assumption wasn't true for all the people around me, and this was perhaps one reason why my peers sometimes talked about boredom—a mental state completely uncharted by me.

Five years after my parents' separation, an important milestone unearthed. A bipolar 'Barbarossa' artist befriended my mum, and they became lovers. With his long red beard and spiky hair, this manic-depressive, psychopathically bent artist painter completely took over my mum, deprived her of all her self-esteem to his own personal, economical gain by spending all her money on his art production. Emotionally, this became a very dark period of four years for a happy kid full of inner life from the outset. But at the same time, intellectually, it became four vital years of research and tremendous learning for me. Despite Barbarossa's bad characteristics and ill temper, he cracked the physical universe more open for me. Perhaps he embodied a provocative counter-movement against the Law of Jante, which ultimately educated me. A ten-year-old, I flipped through his subscription issues of the *Scientific American*, and I mimicked transmission gears from technical manuals using LEGO technique. He taught me Goethe's theory of colors, how to play card games, how to draw human faces using charcoal, and he introduced me to the artist M. C. Escher, promptly turning the Dutch mathematician and

painter into my favorite artist, owing to his impossible geometrical works, which I copied and developed further. As a result, mathematical topology became a burning interest of mine, but I just didn't know the technical term at the time. It all took place on a completely intuitive level by way of paper origami and drawings, e.g., of the three-dimensional shadows of the tesseract, a mathematical four-dimensional cube, or attempts to draw the four-dimensional one-surfaced manifold known as the Klein bottle.

One vital problem was that it all happened in a state of complete loneliness. Emotionally, I closed myself down for self-protection, as Barbarossa took advantage of my mother, so I was left to myself a lot. I philosophized in a great cherry tree, looking down on passing cyclists, often falling asleep between two thick, supporting branches. I craved sacrosanct places for myself, making caves in the woods and hugging my impartial, natural friends, the trees. I had too many feelings everywhere around me, so I reduced the emotional complexity by creating my own quiet spaces and letting curiosity lead the way.

Only last year, with the help of a cognitive psychologist, I discovered former obsessive tendencies, which I had completely forgotten. The loss of control by proxy of my run-down mother turned into obsessive activities to provide some feeling of control. I counted everything countable around me; I pressed my fingers together to feel myself; I had obsessive thoughts of fate; constantly, yet quietly, I was beating complicated rhythms with my fingers and toes—and then came a horrid fear of darkness.

In addition, I also became a proficient liar. Children of divorce are perfectly loyal to both their parents, and to me this simply meant lying to them—but then I also began lying to my teachers and classmates. I made up immense scaffolds of lies taking up a lot of mental energy. I took my lying to the next level when my parents fought over legal custody of me and my big brother. In the '80s, in Denmark, the mother usually won such legal custody disputes, despite any father's stubborn fight against it. My own father fought persistently, which I got to know only later in life. Sadly, the dispute also turned my father from an academic into an alcoholic academic.

I was so good at lying and setting up façades that none of my teachers believed what I had gone through. But finally, and luckily, my mother left the inspirational yet unhealthy crackpot artist. Today, I believe that the four emotionally dark years also provided me with an intellectual strength and mental

capacity that I would never have been without. Perhaps I should thank my mother for her emotional dispositions towards the infamous Barbarossa, even if I have become a skilled liar and professional coward as a by-product of that period.

Thomas—an odd one out in my class—and I became friends throughout the last two years of elementary school. And we formed a closed sphere not very open for others. I managed to play cowboys and Indians with my classmates, but with Thomas, there was an opening into a common discovery of the universe by creating and drawing comic magazines, practicing British dialects, dressing up as detectives, role playing, producing soundscapes with a ghetto-blaster and cassette tapes, or creating neologisms for fun. Soon we decided to seat ourselves in the front row in physics/chemistry classes, just to break with the present anti-scientific culture in the class. It worked. Quickly I got better at the hard sciences, and I remember my great preparations for the exam—and my utter disappointment that my friend Thomas didn't invest the appropriate energy into the topics.

High school was not favorable for my self-worth. I couldn't decode the system of reproducing facts from the blackboard. What got me through high school was the seven hours of music lessons and playing in numerous bands on the side. Also in high school, I teamed up with the odd one out, Martin, and in this way I found my investigative companion. Together, we found our own motivation outside our classes. We made up a system of linguistic babble creation that turned into a smash-hit at our high school parties. On stage, we read aloud a new text sounding like normal sentences, yet made no sense whatsoever. Our brief success was likely due to the deliberate incorrectness of the prose as compared to all the rational orderliness crafted by the teachers. Socially, I managed to hang out with the popular people due to my merits as the most proficient bass-player—and a “world-famous” babble creator. In retrospect, I regard my high school years as a sort of social compensation for an energetic period of research and investigation prior to high school. If only high school could manage to embrace curiosity and out-of-the-box thinking. My sacred inner world from lower elementary school had been partly sacrificed during high school, and it took me years to gain access again.

Another milestone was a library book on astronomy—and sheer luck. I have never had a plan. Curiosity and immediate lust have been my life guide, and I have always been at a complete loss of direction or ambition in life. An important value

transferred from my poor grandparents via my mother and then to me is this: money doesn't matter. I still believe this to be very true, at least when you are a Scandinavian kid built into an expensive tax system, world-class healthcare safety, great job opportunities, and very low crime rates. My high school result was poor, below average. I had somehow lost my academic grip from elementary school. I sucked. And a downward spiral resulted in low self-esteem and lack of trust in the future. All seemed dark and pointless. I worked in odd jobs and sensed my father's silent frustration of missing future avenues. After high school, when working as an unskilled painter of some locker room walls at the local gym, I secretly read a large book on astronomy from the municipal library. At nights, I drew the night sky constellations and studied stellar creation. I had eaten all sorts of popular science books since age nine. I devoured the astronomy book in the restrooms of the gym as well as during passionate reading marathons in my rented abode. Completely alone. Whenever the gym manager came to check up on me, I managed to hide the book and lie to him about some technical difficulties hampering my painting progress. I just couldn't believe that the gym manager believed my lies. But I was a pro, so it worked.

And the astronomy monograph had a momentous impact. The necessary passing grade averages were low for many natural sciences studies at university, such as astronomy. This was my luck. I enrolled at the Faculty of Sciences at the University of Copenhagen. And moving to a college in the capitol was my fresh start.

I felt very alone while in Copenhagen, and I seriously thought about just killing myself. But I didn't have what it takes, luckily. And then came the intelligence test. Much of my bad luggage and suicidal tendencies due to loneliness and academic failure were swiftly wiped away after passing the Mensa test. Indeed, even love life became a reality a few years after practicing the art of flirting. And then I met my wonderful congenial, my wife Charlotte.

My ensuing authorship and research highlights included a six-month research visit at the Astronomy and Astrophysics Department, University of Chicago, including a stay at the Yerkes Observatory in Wisconsin, but also an affiliation with the Morris Fishbein Institute of social sciences. In 2009 I published a 500-page monograph on the history of modern astrophysics in the US and in Denmark entitled *The Father, the Son, and the Stars*. In addition, I published two PhD-based peer-reviewed

research papers in the Cambridge periodical *Journal for the History of Astronomy*, co-authored two master thesis-based peer-reviewed research papers in the renowned Oxford periodical *Studies in the History and Philosophy of Modern Physics*, and a peer-reviewed article in the international history of science periodical *Centaurus*. Another rich experience was the co-authoring of a textbook on creative idea development for the teaching of bachelor students of innovation management at the Aarhus School of Business. But my hot dream remains the completion of a literary fiction novel as well as having some of my short stories published. One day, I left academia and have tried many sorts of positions since then. After heading the European Space Agency's Danish education resource office in Denmark and working as project manager and fundraiser at the House of Natural Sciences, I was appointed assistant professor at VIA University College, teaching and researching higher science education. This seems to be the right spot for now. Our kids are 8 and 10, and it's like life cannot cease to keep educating me.

Jacobsen: What is the purpose of intelligence tests to you?

I have never managed to find a very good response to this question. Having always been rather ambivalent about IQ tests, I have tried to live with this inner dilemma. This means that I tend to think, still, that the urge to belong to a high-intelligence society is just a Freudian mechanism in order for the insecure snowflake to find some force and energy from like-minded poor things like myself. But at the same time, I tend to feel that like-mindedness rather strongly, and this feeling cannot be ignored, either. The clear over-representation of megalomaniac super-narcissists within many esoteric high-IQ circles and societies tells their own story of the Freudian mechanisms at work. I have never met so many arrogant brain-bragging and apparently self-contained people as I have met in high-IQ societies. At the same time, I have made some deep and rare friendships that I would never be without. Perhaps the sea of brain-braggers is the price of finding congenial soul gems out there.

The history of intelligence tests is dubious and not only very flattering. However, the idea is interesting and the value of a measured intelligence in one way or another cannot be ignored. The issue of cultural bias (and many other biases) is very important to constantly articulate. History tells us sad stories of some of the apparent pitfalls hidden in the process of defining intelligence.

High mental capacity is there, though. Its existence is indisputable. It is a great responsibility to host high mental capacity "under the helmet," and I am full of gratitude and humility. Sometimes it feels like a straitjacket to constantly remind myself that time is of the essence and that action is needed in the real world.

I have been a Mensa member many times—and then I've terminated my membership again. I stopped as a member of Mensa recently once again. I fail to see that the society does good in the world outside this club. It is too closed—but I am fully aware that this legitimizes its existence to many members. In turn, I am very ambiguous about Mensa and also about many other high-IQ societies. Disillusion is perhaps what is my issue with them. The intention seems to always be the same—good ambitions and hopes for lively activity to change the world to a better place. The question is, what ends it really serves. In a broader perspective, do all these digital (and somewhat physical) societies provide us all a better world in any way? Hardly.

And how does an exclusive club manage to do anything inclusively to—or for—the world? If we really want to make a change, and not just share funny pictures and anecdotes (and make fun of all the low-IQ idiots making our lives miserable, as some members seem to believe) how do we organize in order to take steps in this direction? This bugs me these days.

To what extent are the high-range (and medium-range) IQ societies representations of real life, and to what extent are they esoteric circles of narcissistic megalomaniacs with low self-esteem in which they can feel better than in the idiotic low-IQ world. This outlook is somewhat harsh, I know. But this kind of sentiment is exactly what I felt in some of these clubs I have frequented.

On the other hand, of course, are the many interesting discussions that can be had with like-minded people, and clearly this serves ourselves very nicely. Self-service is just not enough for me anymore. We need a bigger perspective. Supporting members to get out of their safe esoteric circles and act in the real world might be worth considering.

Another problem: The idea of genius. If the concept of genius is to be taken seriously, we don't need a list of current "geniuses" whose only achievement that counts is a formal intelligence test. As a PhD in science studies and the history of science and technology, this is not how genius should be defined. This is not the kind of extraordinariness the world needs, in my view. Genius has its linguistic

origin from the Latin verb that means “I breed.” So, from a linguistic perspective, a genius displays unique creative power. There is no necessary connection to a high IQ, although there could probably be a common quantity of creative persons within high-IQ circles. But it seems clear that you’d also find a common quantity of people displaying creative power from other parts of society, and hence also from non-high-IQ circles. The role of creative power played by nature, nurture, acquired skills, hard work, and experience is, of course, unknown. Investigations of rare creative composers indicate that many years of practice are a prerequisite for the creation of masterpieces. A high IQ would clearly not be sufficient, and probably completely irrelevant. I fear that some members of many high-IQ societies tend to exaggerate the role of mental capacity with relation to the concept of genius. And remembering that the mark of a genius often goes hand in hand with deeply felt admiration, some insecure and non-creative people with impressive high-IQ raw scores may elevate themselves to pedestals that they/we clearly didn’t deserve.

My name figures on the World Genius Directory (160 SD15), but I fail to see why, exactly. There seems to be a set formal IQ limit of 145 SD15. By this somewhat empty definition, I am a genius... But society should be the judge, not a formal IQ test. What is my standing unique gift to mankind? What is my creative power, in comparison to the great masters? I may have displayed some creative power—see my [“Creating Stuff” webpage](#), for example; but apart from two lovely children, my creations are not to be heralded by future generations as something magnificent. My [PhD dissertation](#) is probably the most important (scientific) contribution, which also has some creative power built in; but more important, this is the result of hard work and not genius. Earning a PhD is by no means unique anymore.

So, high IQ should not stand alone, clearly. It needs to be combined with other traits, such as creativity or high skill performance, talent, and hard work. IQ and skill are not at all necessarily correlated. High IQ might even induce laziness on the poor soul getting a high raw score. Humility works better, I think.

Jacobsen: When was high intelligence discovered for you?

Rebsdorf: A key turning point in my life was passing a Mensa test in 1993 at my first year as an astronomy and physics student at the Niels Bohr Institute, University of Copenhagen. Passing the test

transformed me from a low-achieving, near-suicidal, rather lonely and insecure young man into a higher-achieving, self-confident student with an increasing amount of self-respect.

I left the Mensa club the same year, though, and I distanced myself from the esoteric society by presenting my experience at social meetings as a botched taboo event not worth taking seriously. The Danish Mensa society was rather small at the time, and I even made fun of the people in the club and, immaturely, I called them losers. This judgment was perhaps partly due to my cultural background in terms of the infamous Law of Jante, but, ultimately, the blame is clearly on me. As Seneca had allegedly and wisely stated, “When you judge, investigate.”

I still fail to remember what made me take the life-changing Mensa test back in 1993. For long, this has been a conundrum to me, as I didn’t regard myself to be either intelligent or high-achieving or in any way particularly mentally capable at that time. For years after the test result, I kept telling myself that I had just rehearsed to becoming skilled at passing the test. I thought that I had simply managed to “cheat” the test. But knowingly, I somehow unconsciously forgot the tremendous impact it had had on all my future performances in natural sciences and an ensuing career of many different interesting employments with the guiding principle of increasing the scientific literacy in society.

Jacobsen: When you think of the ways in which the geniuses of the past have either been mocked, vilified, or condemned if not killed, or praised, flattered, platformed, and revered, what seems like the reason for the extreme reactions to and treatment of geniuses? Many alive today seem camera-shy—many, not all.

Rebsdorf: Their views have conflicted with common zeitgeist (original composers like Arnold Schönberg or Karlheinz Stockhausen)

religious dogma (examples are legion, sadly, e.g., Giordano Bruno and the Catholic Church, Galileo Galilei,... or [the 1277 Condemnation of Aristotelianism](#)), or

social/cultural norms (artists like painter Picasso, composer John Cage).

In addition, within scientific circles, breaking with scientific standard models/normal science has oftentimes resulted in expelling researchers from the scientific community, until a theory had proven strong enough to survive as a new paradigm.

Some examples of self-proclaimed new scientific paradigms are to be found in high-IQ circles. One example is the so-called TDVP theory hailed by its own authors as a new paradigm. I have co-written a highly critical article about this—it is to be found at my research publication overview at [ResearchGate](#). In this article, my co-writer and I discuss central aspects of “Triadic Dimensional-Distinction Vortical Paradigm” (TDVP) by Vernon Neppe and Edward Close. In my opinion, the scientific discipline of physics is the most important part of the study of reality (ontology), almost by definition. It appears that some of the most important premises in TDVP are incorrect. It follows that if the basic premises are wrong or meaningless, the whole “paradigm” must be considered to be wrong and meaningless. I question whether or not this proclaimed paradigm-changing framework, in fact, represents a scientific theory, whether the theory is meaningful and substantiated, or whether it is something else.

This is one example, I think, within high-IQ circles, of the display of a lack of humility and perhaps even of disrespect for the scientific profession. The authors behind TDVP should not be the ones to claim the theory to be either ground-breaking or paradigmatic. This job is saved for the scientific community, the test of nature, and history. My, and others', critical claims opposing their theory have been completely rejected by the authors, which is another clear display of their lack of understanding of the negotiation element of the scientific process. Enough about this. Just an example.

Jacobsen: Who seem like the greatest geniuses in history to you?

Rebsdorf: The canon of the greatest geniuses is easily googled. Figures like Goethe, Da Vinci, Galilei, Newton, Descartes, Kant, Einstein, Bill Gates, Elon Musk, and Donald Trump (pun intended) often heralded with a bit of envy by many aspiring intellectuals as the embodiment of their wettest dream: to make huge profits by means of mental capacity. Some other names:

- Georges Lemaître, cosmologist and priest, consciously embracing religion and rationality without mutually confusing or mixing the two incommensurables
- Jens Martin Knudsen, late Danish physicist and life-on-Mars enthusiast
- Nicole Oresme, late French medieval natural philosopher, of whom I've written [an article](#)
- Ole Rømer, Danish discoverer of the speed of light, which should have been named after him

Niels Bohr, for his creation of a creative research environment in the 1920s leading to the Copenhagen Interpretation of Quantum Mechanics

Steward Brand, for his early premonition that we need to think on the long term

Fyodor Dostoevsky, for his fictitious creativity and introspection and clear display of the human condition

Thom Yorke, iconoclastic and uniquely creative bandleader with a faint singing voice yet rare composing ability

Avishai Cohen, the most brilliant double bass virtuoso and composer of the present: exceptional creative ability

Donald Trump, a political genius, but only if you ask himself. In other words, who has got the right to define genius?

Jacobsen: What differentiates a genius from a profoundly intelligent person?

Rebsdorf: We need an unambiguous definition of the term *genius* first. Utilizing a thesaurus definition of genius, i.e., “exceptional intellectual or creative power or other natural ability,” the difference either stands out as pretty clear or means the opposite. It depends on your use of the logic “or” in the definition. So, having tested to be highly intelligent puts a person potentially into the pool of geniuses. Yet it might not be enough. Also, some display of unique creative power or other natural ability is required for the person to qualify. Unless you take the “or” literally. And then you can form a long list of geniuses by simply collecting the names of people with rare IQ test results. This has been done already and can be found on the website “[World Genius Directory](#).” Once fascinated by this possibility, I also ended up on that list with a result of 160 SD15. Yet it is of course likely that my range is somewhere else. Perhaps below, perhaps above. No one knows for sure. And nobody really cares. So, in my view, a high IQ raw score is clearly not enough to qualify as a genius. You need some special super power, creative or other rare ability. Otherwise, how does great professional skill make a genius, like genius jazz players or classical music composers? Some cases might be found in the intersection between profound intelligence and rare creative ability. Mozart or Bach is a likely example, although we will never know their mental ability or intelligence quotient, will we?

More interestingly, a genius might just be a “truly great person.” My wife would be one of the best examples.

Jacobsen: What have been some work experiences and educational certifications for you?

Rebsdorf: Do you mean passed formal exams and work experience? That's all listed here:

Work

2020 – **Assistant Professor** | VIA University College, Denmark

2017 – 20 **Head of [ESERO Denmark](#) & Project Manager** | House of Natural Sciences, Denmark

2017 – 20 **Danish delegate representative** | European Space Agency Advisory Committee on Education

2010 – **External University Examiner** | Science & Technology Faculty, Aarhus University (AU)

– Philosophy and History of Science, Higher Science Education & Science Communication

2015-2017 **Publishing Editor** | Aarhus University Press, Aarhus, Denmark

2013-15 **CCO (Chief Communications Officer) & Project Manager** | House of Natural Sciences

2012-13 **Communications Consultant** | Regional Hospital Central Jutland

2010–11 **Writing Consultant** | Niels Bohr Institute, University of Copenhagen

2008-12 **Information Officer** | International Centre for Research in Organic Food Systems, Ministry of Environment and Food of Denmark

– Research communication and research coordination
– Secretary of ICROFS' National Programme Committee in the period 2008-2010

2007-08 **High School Physics Teacher** | Eux, Viborg, Denmark

2004-06 **Postdoc** | Centre for Science Education, Aarhus University

2001-04 **PhD Graduate** | Centre for Science Studies, Aarhus University

2000-01 **Creative Idea Developer** | Danish Technological Institute, Denmark
– Facilitating idea development, project management, advising inventors, negotiating with companies and inventors on intellectual property rights.

Education

2018 **International Business Academy—IBA Kolding** | Fundraising Manager
Academic Education in Communication and Dissemination: Fundraising & lobbying, strategic fundraising and partnerships, financing opportunities, financing, 10 ECTS, grade: A.

2014 **NGO-Project Management** | Project Management, Leadership, Coaching and Strategy

Practicing project management: Resource management, team management, conflict management, personal management, 10 ECTS, grade: A.

2008 **Higher National Diploma in Journalism** | Danish School of Media and Journalism
Media studies, press law and ethics, language in the media, journalistic idea development and research, journalistic dissemination, presentation techniques.

2004 **Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Natural Sciences (Science Studies)** | Science & Technology

2001-2004 **PhD Graduate** | Centre for Science Studies, AU, Aarhus University

The PhD project ([Amazon](#)) was a study of the development of astrophysics in the 20th Century. Focusing on the Danish professor of astronomy Bengt Strömgren (1908-1987), in the USA, formerly known as “The Great Dane” amongst scientists, the dissertation is a biographical study, investigating Strömgren's life in science and the development of astronomical and related fields. The project includes institutional and technological developments and the international astronomical networks of scientists and science-politicians. At the same time, it is a comparative study of two local contexts, the Danish and American observatories and the scientific networks of the field of astrophysics.

2000 **MSc in Physics** | Science & Technology, AU
– Teaching skills of high school physics

1998 **BSc in Physics** | The Niels Bohr Institute, University of Copenhagen

Jacobsen: What are some of the more important aspects of the idea of the gifted and geniuses? Those myths that pervade the cultures of the

world. What are those myths? What truths dispel them? platforms. Below you have it all—a long and not very interesting list:

Rebsdorf: I have already embarked on this question ≥ 160 , SD 15: above.

Jacobsen: Any thoughts on the God concept or gods idea and philosophy, theology, and religion?

Rebsdorf: I belong to the agnostic and atheist branch, but certainly NOT anti-theist. The world needs no more missionaries, religious or anti-religious. E.g., Richard Dawkins' choir of non-believers is not productive. Mocking religious people is futile. Science and religion are incommensurable in the sense that a rational argument is given little weight by the faithful, and the religious narrative is given little weight by the rationalist. What we need is mutual respect—and the freedom to believe and think what we want, as long as it is not illegal, and as long as we can keep it to ourselves (or at least away from educational institutions) and stop brainwashing our offspring and the young generations.

I hope that my own children, now aged 8 and 10, will choose *not* to be baptized (most likely there is just one realistic alternative to choose from: the Christian Lutheran), but it is completely their own choice. I have shown them the world map of religions just to present the clear display of hefty cultural-geographical bias—and we have discussions about the roots and apparent needs of religion, the idea of god and the concept of creation *ex nihilo*, the humanly biased need for a primus motor and our dislike for infinity before and after the ever-flowing present moment. Kids love these kinds of subjects, if we hear them out.

Jacobsen: How much does science play into the worldview for you?

Rebsdorf: Very much. Working for increasing the scientific literacy as well as the interest and motivation for science and technology has been a guiding principle and the core of my professional working life since 2000. It is important and meaningful to me. And science leads the ways when it comes to training critical thinking, a commodity in general decline. We need a new enlightenment.

Jacobsen: What have been some of the tests taken and scores earned (with standard deviations) for you?

Rebsdorf: Life-time member of a number of intellectual societies (links given)—a crazy collecting hobby of mine, mostly involving puzzle-solving but also some (digital) socializing on online

- Listed in the [World Genius Directory](#), 160 SD15, even though I am most certainly not a genius (just ask my wife), as also stated above. I was just once narcissistically fascinated to figure on that list.

• [4G High IQ Society](#),

• [Profundus](#),

• [Leviathan](#),

• [EPGSIG](#) Facebook Group,

[150; 160], SD 15:

• [SPIQR](#),

• [Misty Pavilion Society](#),

• [Egregius](#),

[140;150], SD 15:

• [ISI-S](#) (distinguished member),

• [Glia](#), Paul Cooijmans' test raw score: 153 SD 15.

• [The International Society for Philosophical Inquiry](#) (Senior Research Fellow, Social Network Administrator, selected member of the society's Committee on Ethics),

• [CIVIQ](#),

• [Magnus](#),

• [Uber](#),

• [Torr](#),

[132; 140], SD 15:

• [Poetic Genius Society](#), composed of intellectually gifted individuals with a passion for poetry,

• [Intertel](#) (2017-18),

• [Mensa](#) (member on and off since 1993, currently not member),

• [Top One Percent](#),

< 132, SD 15:

• [Callidus](#),

• [Synapse](#),

• [Literarians](#)—The New Literarian Society aims at nurturing the poetic, artistic and belletristic spirits of its members, like Poetic Genius Society

• [Supernova Society](#),

• [Atlantiq Society](#),

- [Spacetime Society](#),
 - [Polymaths and Polymathy](#) Facebook Group,
 - [International High IQ Society](#) (2017-18).
- [Numericore test result.](#)
- Jacobsen:** What is the range of the scores for you? The scores earned on alternative intelligence tests tend to produce a wide smattering of data points rather than clusters, typically.
- Rebsdorf:** See above. In short: $132 < X < 161$ (SD 15)
- Jacobsen:** What ethical philosophy makes some sense, even the most workable sense to you?
- Rebsdorf:** I am not sure how to interpret this question. If you mean which established (or home-spun) moral philosophies that I tend to cling to, then perhaps—and somewhat surprisingly to many—a selection of the fundamental tenets formulated in *modern satanism* (Yes, but in an iconoclastic version completely devoid of the ridiculous biblical embodiment of evil named Satan) combined with Kant's moral philosophy are good picks. Philosophical, ethical ideas could thus be turned into a human virtuous practice by including the message of the following inspiring moral principles:
- *Beneficence, Least Harm* (what is right and good): One should strive to act with compassion and empathy toward all creatures in accordance with reason. Not only existing creatures, but also past and future, unborn creatures (the lack of action on a basis of empathy for unborn generations is one of the greatest challenges of our time, technologically as well as ethically, I believe).
 - *Nature:* As completely dependent on—and intricate parts of—Nature, all humans should strive to act accordingly with respect and humility
 - *Justice:* The struggle for justice is an ongoing and necessary pursuit that should prevail over laws and institutions. Still, we need to abide by the law, national and international
 - *Respect for Autonomy:* The freedoms of others should be respected, including the freedom to offend (and take the consequences). To willfully and unjustly encroach upon the freedoms of another is to forgo one's own. Respect different views of virtue.
 - *Human Knowledge Morality:* One should take care never to distort scientific facts to fit one's belief
 - *Human Fallibility:* People are fallible. If one makes a mistake, one should do one's best to rectify it and resolve any harm that might have been caused.
- Some very important virtues and imperatives are also found in many religions, but in my view those to some extent include messages comparable to the above practical working tenets.
- *Deontology and Virtue:* The rightness or wrongness of actions does not depend on their consequences but on whether they fulfill our duty, the categorical imperative

Appendix I: Footnotes

[1] Assistant Professor, VIA University College.

[2] Individual Publication Date: May 15, 2021: <http://www.in-sightjournal.com/rebsdorf-1>; Full Issue Publication Date: September 1, 2021: <https://in-sightjournal.com/insight-issues/>.

Appendix II: Citation Style Listing

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American Psychological Association (APA, 6th Edition, 2010): Jacobsen, S.D. (2021, May 15). *Conversation with Assistant Professor Simon Olling Rebsdorf on Background, Work, Philosophy, and High-IQ Societies: Assistant Professor, VIA University College (1)*. Retrieved from <http://www.in-sightjournal.com/rebsdorf-1>.

Brazilian National Standards (ABNT): JACOBSEN, S. *Conversation with Assistant Professor Simon Olling Rebsdorf on Background, Work, Philosophy, and High-IQ Societies: Assistant Professor, VIA University College (1)*. In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal. 28.A, May. 2021. <<http://www.in-sightjournal.com/rebsdorf-1>>.

Chicago/Turabian, Author-Date (16th Edition): Jacobsen, Scott. 2021. *Conversation with Assistant Professor Simon Olling Rebsdorf on Background, Work, Philosophy, and High-IQ Societies: Assistant Professor, VIA University College (1).*” *In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal*. 28.A. <http://www.in-sightjournal.com/rebsdorf-1>.

Chicago/Turabian, Humanities (16th Edition): Jacobsen, Scott “*Conversation with Assistant Professor Simon Olling Rebsdorf on Background, Work, Philosophy, and High-IQ Societies: Assistant Professor, VIA University College (1).*” *In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal*. 28.A (May 2021). <http://www.in-sightjournal.com/rebsdorf-1>.

Harvard: Jacobsen, S. 2021, ‘*Conversation with Assistant Professor Simon Olling Rebsdorf on Background, Work, Philosophy, and High-IQ Societies: Assistant Professor, VIA University College (1)*’, *In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal*, vol. 28.A. Available from: <<http://www.in-sightjournal.com/rebsdorf-1>>.

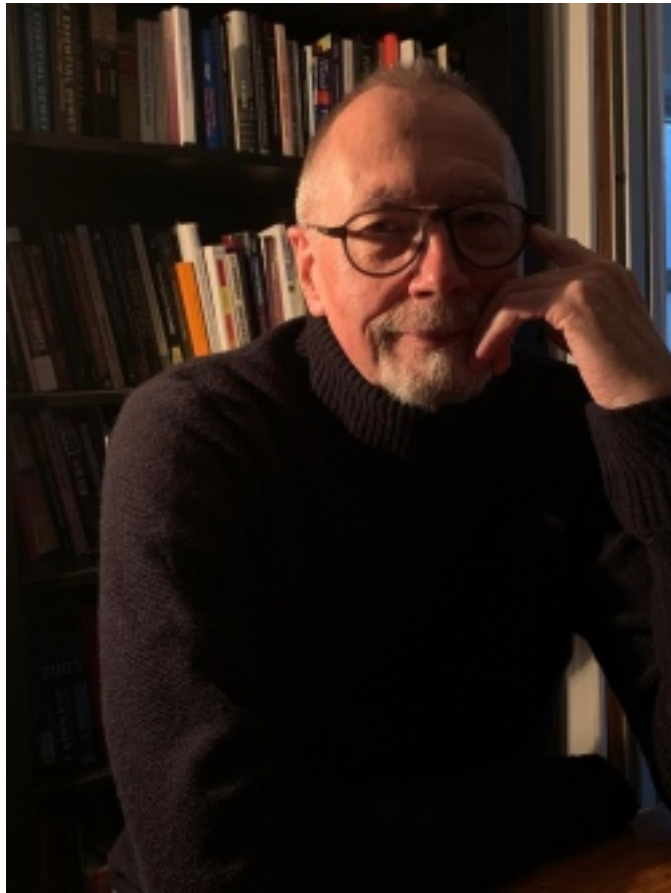
Harvard, Australian: Jacobsen, S. 2021, ‘*Conversation with Assistant Professor Simon Olling Rebsdorf on Background, Work, Philosophy, and High-IQ Societies: Assistant Professor, VIA University College (1)*’, *In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal*, vol. 28.A., <http://www.in-sightjournal.com/rebsdorf-1>.

Modern Language Association (MLA, 7th Edition, 2009): Scott D. Jacobsen. “*Conversation with Assistant Professor Simon Olling Rebsdorf on Background, Work, Philosophy, and High-IQ Societies: Assistant Professor, VIA University College (1).*” *In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal* 28.A (2021): May. 2021. Web. <<http://www.in-sightjournal.com/rebsdorf-1>>.

Vancouver/ICMJE: Jacobsen S. *Conversation with Assistant Professor Simon Olling Rebsdorf on Background, Work, Philosophy, and High-IQ Societies: Assistant Professor, VIA University College (1)* [Internet]. (2021, May 28(A). Available from: <http://www.in-sightjournal.com/rebsdorf-1>.

Conversation with Distinguished Professor Graham Priest on Family, Education, and Opening One's Eyes to the Wider Intellectual World: Distinguished Professor, Philosophy, City University of New York (1)

2021-05-22



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Abstract

From the [professional website for Professor Priest](#): “Graham Priest grew up as a working class kid in South London. He read mathematics and (and a little bit of logic) at St. John’s College,

Cambridge. He obtained his doctorate in mathematics at the London School of Economics. By that time, he had come to the conclusion that philosophy was more fun than mathematics. So, luckily, he got his first job (in 1974) in a philosophy department, as a temporary lecturer in the Department of Logic and Metaphysics at the University of St Andrews. The first permanent job he was offered was at the University of Western Australia. He moved to Australia when he took up the position, and has spent most of his working life there. After 12 years at the University of Western Australia, he moved to take up the chair of philosophy at the University of Queensland, and after 12 years there, he moved again to take up the Boyce Gibson Chair of Philosophy at Melbourne University, where he is now emeritus. While he was there, he was a Fellow of Ormond College. During the Melbourne years, he was also an Arché Professorial Fellow at the University of St Andrews. He is a past president of the [Australasian Association for Logic](#), and the [Australasian Association of Philosophy](#), of which he was Chair of Council for 13 years. He was elected a Fellow of the [Australian Academy of Humanities](#) in 1995, and awarded a Doctor of Letters by the University of Melbourne in 2002. In 2009 he took up the position of Distinguished Professor at the [Graduate Center](#), City University of New York, where he now lives and works. Graham has published in nearly every leading logic and philosophy journal. At the last count, he had published about 240 [papers](#). He has also published six [monographs](#) (mostly with Oxford University Press), as well as a number of [edited collections](#). Much of his work has been in logic, especially non-classical logic, and related areas. He is perhaps best known for his work on [dialetheism](#), the view that some contradictions are true. However, he has also published widely in many other areas, such as metaphysics, Buddhist philosophy, and the history of philosophy, both East and West. Graham has [travelled widely](#), lecturing and addressing conferences in every continent except Antarctica. For many years, he practiced karatedo. He is a third dan in [Shobukai](#), and a fourth dan in Shitoryu (awarded by the head of style, Sensei [Mabuni Kenei](#) in Osaka, when he was training there). Before he left Australia he was an Australian National [kumite referee](#) and [kata judge](#). Nowadays, he swims and practices taichi. He loves ([good](#)) [opera](#), [jazz](#), and [60s rock](#) ... and East Asian art.” He discusses: the family background; the larger self; early formation; adults, mentors, or guardians; being someone who hardly ever reads anything; pivotal education; formal postsecondary education; being a Distinguished Professor of Philosophy at the CUNY Graduate Center; the main area of research; and advice to aspiring philosophy students.

Keywords: Cambridge, City University of New York, family, Graham Priest, logic, philosophy, upbringing.

Conversation with Distinguished Professor Graham Priest on Family, Education, and Opening One’s Eyes to the Wider Intellectual World: Distinguished Professor, Philosophy, City University of New York (1)

Please see the footnotes, bibliography, and citation style listing after the interview.

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: For this opening session for the series, I would like to begin with an analysis of the family background of you. The ways in which you became choate, philosophically mature. You made a mark in the philosophical world. A history and a trajectory stems from somewhere, not simply talent or insight. What’s family background or lineage, e.g., surname(s) etymology (etymologies), geography, culture, language, religion/non-religion, political suasion, social outlook, scientific training, and the like?

Professor Graham Priest[1],[2]: I was born in 1948 in the UK, and grew up in post-WW2 South London. I was a working-class kid, and an only-child. My father (George Priest) was a manual labourer in a power station, and my mother (Laura Priest) was a homemaker, though she did part-time

jobs sometimes, to help make ends meet. Neither was well educated, but my father worked long hours to support the family, and my mother was very loving. I could read before I went to school. We had no phone, car, or even TV (till I was a teenager). There was nothing that you would call high culture in my home. So, I had no idea of art, classical music, drama—and certainly not philosophy.

My mother was a Christian. I have no idea of my father’s religious views: he never spoke about them. I was brought up as a Christian. The church was a Congregationalist one. (I believe that this is now part of the United Reform Church.) Congregationalism was Protestant, not as heterodox as Quakerism, but further in that direction than other Protestant groups such as Methodists and Baptists.

In those days, there was an exam called the *11 Plus*. Kids who did well in this were creamed off and sent to Grammar Schools. These were state schools, but were academically oriented. I was lucky enough to pass and went to John Ruskin Grammar School in Croydon. When I was there, I discovered an aptitude for mathematics and decided to go to university to study it. This was made possible for working class kids, since the post-WW2 Labour Government had abolished university fees. At least, they made them payable by local government bodies while providing a cost of living grant. So, my going to university cost neither myself nor my parents anything. I applied to several universities and was accepted by St John's College, Cambridge. My schoolteachers told me that I would be a fool to turn down a place in Cambridge. So, I accepted and went there to read mathematics.

Jacobsen: With all these facets of the larger self, how did these become the familial ecosystem to form identity and a sense of a self extended through time?

Priest: Going to Cambridge was an eye-opening experience for me in many ways. Perhaps most importantly, I was taken out of my working-class culture and put in a highly intellectual and educated one. So, my eyes were opened to art, drama, philosophy, and restaurants—things. Many of the kids came from wealthy families who had gone to public schools, which is what the British call a private school. It was the first time I had mixed with such kids. So, I was brought face to face with the British class system for the first time: the privileges of wealth, power, and the British establishment. I developed a love/hate relationship with the place.

Next, taken out of a Christian environment, I started to think about my religious views more critically. I concluded: no rational ground for the belief in a god, much less a Christian god, exists. For a powerful example, the extraordinary amount of gratuitous suffering in the world strikes me as much of a knock-down argument against the existence of such a god as anything can be. So, I became an atheist, which I am to this day.

In matters academic: I was studying with a bunch of kids. All of whom were very smart. I realised that many of them were much brighter than me. However, an old school friend put me on to mathematical logic. I became fascinated by the subject. It was not really taught in the mathematics degree, so in my last year I changed to philosophy. In Cambridge, the study of a degree is called a *tripos*. A tripos has two parts. (Don't be fooled by the name, it refers to a three-legged stool that

students sat on when they were examined in the old medieval university.) I had done Part One of the maths tripos in my first two years, and in my final year I did Part Two of the philosophy (called *moral science*) tripos, which was the logic option. This taught mathematical logic, but, of course, many of the philosophical issues that surround the subject too. I was at a disadvantage in studying these because most of my peers had already studied two years of philosophy. But when it came to technical matters, I had an advantage because of my mathematical training.

At Cambridge, I met Annie. The woman who became my wife. Our son was born about a week before my final exams. After Cambridge, we moved down to London to different colleges of London University. I did an MSc in mathematical logic, and then a doctorate in mathematics in the same area at the London School of Economics.

By the time I finished this, I was aware of two things: first, that I would only ever be, at best, a mediocre mathematician; and second, that philosophy was a lot more fun than mathematics. I applied for 52 academic jobs in my last year as a research student, and got nowhere. I was about to take a job with the British Gas Board as a mathematician modelling gas-flow, when two temporary university jobs came up at the last moment. One was at the City University of London in the mathematics department; the other was in the philosophy department at the University of St Andrews. And for me, it was a no-brainer. I took the philosophy job. Why they offered the job to someone with virtually no background in philosophy, I still have no idea (though I remain grateful to this day!). They didn't even have me teaching logic. I taught the philosophy of science.

I continued applying for permanent jobs in the UK for my two years in St Andrews, without success. The first permanent job I was offered was at the University of Western Australia, in Perth, Australia. We decided that we would go there. We thought that we would be back in a few years—and I did apply for several jobs back in the UK, without success. In effect, we had emigrated. I became one of the happy band of Australian philosophers.

Jacobsen: Of those influences, what ones seem the most prescient for early formation?

Priest: Clearly, those things engendering a love of mathematics and philosophy in me. I guess I have to say, also, my working-class background, which has given me a deep distrust of the status quo, in philosophy, politics, and everywhere else.

Jacobsen: What adults, mentors, or guardians became, in hindsight, the most influential on you?

Priest: That's hard to say. For a start, my mother for her love and nurturing. My high school maths teacher, R.D. Pearce, who communicated the beauty of mathematics to me. One of my supervisors in Cambridge, Sue Haack, who engaged me in the philosophy of logic. My Ph.D. thesis supervisor, John Bell, who showed me, amongst other things, what it was to be a good teacher.

Jacobsen: As a young reader, in childhood and adolescence, what authors and books were significant, meaningful, to worldview formation?

Priest: I hardly ever read anything.

Jacobsen: What were pivotal educational – as in, in school or autodidacticism – moments from childhood to young adulthood?

Priest: My being able to read before I went to school was clearly an enormous factor in my education. Falling in love with the beauty of mathematics, and realising that I was quite good at it was another. I do remember reading one book, which struck me before I went to university: Alan Watts' *The Way of Zen*. The immediate effect was to make me take to heart the fact that there were religions other than Christianity. Also, that there were smart people who endorse these. More amorphously, I was attracted to a number of ideas of Zen, as Watts described them. These didn't have a great effect at the time, but they must have lodged somewhere in my brain, since I happily turned to the study of Buddhist philosophy later in life.

Jacobsen: For formal postsecondary education, in academia, why select LSE, and then Melbourne for the academic path?

Priest: London because I could do an MSc in Mathematical Logic there, and LSE because I could work with John Bell, whom I met as an MSc student, liked, and got on well with. As I said, after that I had a temporary position in St Andrews, but the first permanent job I was offered was at the University of Western Australia. I was there for about 12 years when the chair of philosophy (chair on the British/Australian sense, not the North American sense) came up at the University of Queensland. I was ambitious; I applied and got it. About a dozen years later, the Boyce Gibson Chair came up at Melbourne University. This was the oldest chair of philosophy in Australia, and the then Dean of Arts said he wanted the new chair to regenerate the department. (It had fallen a bit into the doldrums.) All this appealed to me. I applied and

got the chair. To tell the truth, I had had it with the University of Queensland by that time. It had been taken over by a self-serving bureaucracy. This had destroyed collegiality (which I value greatly) and introduced top-down line managerialism. Academic values were no longer important, managers were fixated only on money—and climbing the bureaucratic ladder. Melbourne had maintained its older academic values. I was at Melbourne for about 12 years. By the time that I left, the malaise that had affected the University of Queensland had effected Melbourne as well. (Indeed, such managerialism had taken over, and still maintains its hold on, all the Australian Universities, though this is not the place to go into how and why this happened.) I had become tired of fighting rear-guard actions (which I had done at both Queensland and Melbourne). So, when I was offered a job at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York, I was happy to jump ship.

Jacobsen: As a Distinguished Professor of Philosophy at the CUNY Graduate Center, what tasks and responsibilities come with the position?

Priest: I teach one graduate course per semester, usually on whatever I choose. I also supervise Ph.D. dissertations by any student who asks me. On top of that, I run a weekly logic and metaphysics research seminar, and often go to other research seminars. Sometimes, I perform administrative roles, such as on the departmental admissions committee. Most of the rest of my time is spent on research, writing books and papers. In connection with that, I frequently travel within North America and overseas to give talks and attend conferences. Finally, there is “service to the profession”: refereeing journal articles, writing references for job applications, reports on promotion and tenure applications, reports on grant applications, etc.

Jacobsen: What are the main area of research and research questions now?

Priest: Philosophy is an enormously broad area, with many sub-areas: logic, metaphysics, epistemology, philosophy of science, philosophy of language, philosophy of mind, ethics, aesthetics, social philosophy, political philosophy, history of philosophy, to name but some of the more standard ones. Research in many topics in all these areas is highly active. There is no hope of going into details in any sensible way here. I, myself, have many different areas of research interest: logic, the philosophy of logic and mathematics, metaphysics, socio-political philosophy, Buddhist philosophy, the history of philosophy—and again in many different parts of these. You can get a more detailed sense of

some of the questions I have been engaging with from the publications page of my website:

www.grahampriest.net.

Jacobsen: If you could give advice to aspiring philosophy students with an interest in metaphilosophy, what would it be for them?

Priest: It would be the same as I would give to students with an interest in any other area of

philosophy. Find some questions that engage you.

Try to figure out how you would answer them.

Reading a few good philosophers who have thought about the questions is always helpful. Then write it up. (That always helps to get your thoughts straight.)

Make your answer clear, and your reasons as cogent as possible. Don't confuse obscurity with profundity, or simplicity with superficiality.

Appendix I: Footnotes

[1] Distinguished Professor, Philosophy, Graduate Center, City University of New York (2009-Present).

[2] Individual Publication Date: May 22, 2021: <http://www.in-sightjournal.com/priest-1>; Full Issue Publication Date: September 1, 2021: <https://in-sightjournal.com/insight-issues/>.

Appendix II: Citation Style Listing

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Chicago/Turabian, Author-Date (16th Edition): Jacobsen, Scott. 2021. *Conversation with Distinguished Professor Graham Priest on Family, Education, and Opening One's Eyes to the Wider Intellectual World: Distinguished Professor, Philosophy, City University of New York (1)*. In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal. 28.A. <http://www.in-sightjournal.com/priest-1>.

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Philosophy, City University of New York (1) [Internet]. (2021, May 28(A). Available from:
<http://www.in-sightjournal.com/priest-1>.

Conversation with Christopher Angus on Family, Background, Life, Philosophy, Being Christian, and Love: Member, ISI-Society (1)

2021-05-22

Interviewer: Scott Douglas Jacobsen

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Abstract

Christopher Angus is a Member of the ISI-Society. He discusses: growing up; extended self; family background; youth with friends; education; purpose of intelligence tests; high intelligence; extreme reactions to geniuses; greatest geniuses; genius and a profoundly gifted person; necessities for genius or the definition of genius; work experiences and jobs held; job path; myths of the gifted; God; science; tests taken and scores earned; range of the scores; ethical philosophy; political philosophy; metaphysics; worldview; meaning in life; source of meaning; afterlife; life; and love.

Keywords: Christian, Christopher Angus, family, ISI-Society, metaphysics, philosophy, politics.

Conversation with Christopher Angus on Family, Background, Life, Philosophy, Being Christian, and Love: Member, ISI-Society (1)

Please see the footnotes, bibliography, and citation style listing after the interview.

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: When you were growing up, what were some of the prominent family stories being told over time?

Christopher Angus[1],[2]*: Any such stories mainly revolved around being farmers living in a rural community within the larger context of Canada's stories and Canada's relationship with the rest of the world.

Jacobsen: Have these stories helped provide a sense of an extended self or a sense of the family legacy?

Angus: I'm no longer involved with farming, but yes they have. My roots are still there, and after having lived in a fairly large city for a while, I am now back in a rural area of our province.

Jacobsen: What was the family background, e.g., geography, culture, language, and religion or lack thereof?

Angus: My family came from western Canada (western Manitoba to be more exact), with a typical prairie culture and the English language. They were Protestant (United Church of Canada). It was a culture steeped in rural activities such as hockey, camping, hunting, sports, motorcycles, snowmobiles, and the like.

Jacobsen: How was the experience with peers and schoolmates as a child and an adolescent?

Angus: It was fairly good, so far as these sorts of things go. I've heard horror stories from others that I did not experience. However, I was suffering from insomnia and hypoglycemia for most of my life, so I wasn't always functioning at full IQ potential. The

hypoglycemia is under control, but the insomnia still afflicts me.

Jacobsen: What have been some professional certifications, qualifications, and trainings earned by you?

Angus: I have a certificate in graphic arts, as well as some other smaller things. I'm mostly self-taught in film, more specifically animated film.

Jacobsen: What is the purpose of intelligence tests to you?

Angus: It was mostly curiosity. I knew that I was above average, but I didn't have any idea that I would score as high as I did.

Jacobsen: When was high intelligence discovered for you?

Angus: Officially, around 6 years ago.

Jacobsen: When you think of the ways in which the geniuses of the past have either been mocked, vilified, and condemned if not killed, or praised, flattered, platformed, and revered, what seems like the reason for the extreme reactions to and treatment of geniuses? Many alive today seem camera shy — many, not all.

Angus: People are uncomfortable with, or scared of, that which they can't understand. The typical person cannot understand many of whom are classified as "geniuses."

Jacobsen: Who seem like the greatest geniuses in history to you?

Angus: I think there were interesting people in the late 1900s who became somewhat lost over time in our current cultures. Their ideas and inventions have been overlooked and even replaced by that which has set us back. Edison is an example. Also, I believe William James has some brilliant insights into psychology, the mind/body question, consciousness, etc, which were later largely lost. I think he's going to be noticed again.

Jacobsen: What differentiates a genius from a profoundly intelligent person?

Angus: The typical response is that genius is what happens when the profoundly intelligent person does something with their intelligence, acts upon it, as it were. But I think it may be more complicated than that. For instance, people can have brilliant flashes of insight and not do anything with them, or have the resources, time, or freedom, to fully pursue them.

So, I'd think genius is when intelligence works with known information in a way that brings about

something brilliant and does something fresh with that information, whether it works its way out in science, the arts, philosophy, or whatever. But I would think there needs to be the necessity of it being at least on the pathway to what is true and real, not something that a person just dreamt up that is actually utterly untenable – I've seen that in the high IQ "world".

There are surely plenty of examples of genius that we will never know about, and there's plenty that we have accepted as genius which likely is not.

Jacobsen: Is profound intelligence necessary for genius?

Angus: How do we define genius? Some would say that Michael Jackson was a genius musician and performer, but so far as I know he wasn't of profound intelligence.

I would define genius as the ability to take known information and synthesize it into something new and fresh that others haven't seen or considered before. I'd say that profound intelligence would be needed for that. Michael Jackson didn't do that as far as I can see. He had an immense talent on display, but it wasn't outside of the previous box to the extent of being genius, in my opinion.

Jacobsen: What have been some work experiences and jobs held by you?

Angus: I've mostly worked within the artist/animation field and am working on my own films.

Jacobsen: Why pursue this particular job path?

Angus: It's where my passion lies, what I'm best suited towards doing. Also, I believe it can be my voice in the world, and I believe that the arts and story can have an immense impact.

Jacobsen: What are some of the more important aspects of the idea of the gifted and geniuses? Those myths that pervade the cultures of the world. What are those myths? What truths dispel them?

Angus: I think the most important aspect of the notion of "gifted" is to realize that such people have some different needs, peer issues, and some different ways of interacting with the world, all while often still wanting to maintain some sort of sense of normalcy and safety in society. These needs are real and shouldn't be marginalized.

The myths are that people with high IQ are automatically "geniuses" who have minds that can figure many things out without error. The truths that

dispel them are the fact that so many high IQ people have differing views. They can't all be right. High IQ can help a person along in many ways, but it can also lead them down a path of getting more stuck.

Jacobsen: Any thoughts on the God concept or gods idea and philosophy, theology, and religion?

Angus: There are a lot of philosophical arguments for God being debated right now, arguments such as the Kalam argument (an updated argument of the uncaused cause), the question of absolute morality, various spiritual experiences, fine tuning in the universe, etc. I actually don't believe that any of these arguments concretely prove God's existence even if some of them have more weight than others do, although the question of where the information needed to create consciousness is quite interesting — in order to create consciousness, it surely would have had some sort of comprehension of consciousness and thus either be a higher consciousness or have come from it.

But here's the thing: although these arguments might not give solid weight on their own, none of them exist in a vacuum. They are all part of a whole. So if we look at these various arguments — and life in general — in a holistic manner, then theism becomes the most tenable (for some the only tenable) foundation by which to view the world.

Jacobsen: How much does science play into the worldview for you?

Angus: I respect science and generally understand the scientific method, but it isn't my primary inclination. I am much more interested in philosophy, theology, and of course the arts. So, I see science's value, but Scientism is far from being a trap for me.

Jacobsen: What have been some of the tests taken and scores earned (with standard deviations) for you?

Angus: Recently:

GIFT High Range IQ Test – 158 SD15

Verbatim – 156 SD15

FIQURE – 155 SD15

Jacobsen: What is the range of the scores for you? The scores earned on alternative intelligence tests tend to produce a wide smattering of data points rather than clusters, typically.

Angus: Mid to late 150s SD15.

Jacobsen: What ethical philosophy makes some sense, even the most workable sense to you?

Angus: I'm not sure if I accept any of the more "official" views on this subject. I'll suggest that a healed and healthy human psyche also has a strong and healthy light of a conscience that we should live according to. Of course some have scathed over consciences (or scathed over in certain areas) and it is for those with right conscience to influence society in different ways in response to societal concerns. I think the light of conscience is a divine light attuned to a higher law (does conscience have any validity if there isn't a higher good and thus plumb line for morality?).

Then there's the question of who has the healthy psyche and is most attuned to their conscience, but often as things unfold, this can become more apparent as society considers people's motivations. Thus, this would also leave room for some sort of reasoning as people debate the best response according to conscientious interaction with the information around them.

So, perhaps something like Divine Command Theory. Maybe a soft form of Divine Command Theory with an understanding that there is a divine light of conscience in humanity attuned to a higher goodness, and thus, moral law.

In regards to Divine Command Theory, people could argue that morality should be based on certain religious texts, but of course not everyone believes in these texts (or at least certain ones), and besides, how people interpret them is largely based on their conscience (or scathed over conscience). Added to this free societies consider religious freedoms to pursue or reject certain religious texts or views of value.

So where does that leave us? Perhaps, pursue healing and let the light in our conscience shine bright.

Jacobsen: What social philosophy makes some sense, even the most workable sense to you?

Angus: I would say that I lean towards Classical Liberalism. I reject Libertarianism because, although I believe humanity has free will in that we are not bound to a chain of cause and effect but can actually make true choices (our own causes with their own effects — which is another discussion), I do not believe that our will is separate from some mighty strong influences on it. Therefore, although we are free as individuals to some extent, we are also deeply influenced by our environments. But this shouldn't lead to a social stance which takes away

from the individual freedoms that we are capable of attaining. Therefore, I support individual property rights, unencumbered business, and the like.

Related to this, I believe in a rule of law and penitentiary system that is merciful to the human condition when appropriate, but also that treats all citizens equally, and that, when appropriate, can also come down hard on certain horrific criminal behaviour.

So, I think we should consider how strongly we are influenced and respond accordingly, but we should also consider that we do have choices to make with certain moral obligations and a conscience to help guide us and also act respond accordingly to those concerns. Of course, this doesn't lead to easy black and white answers on some issues. But a person's psyche within their community, isn't black and white. This, however, isn't to take away from the necessity of the above mentioned rule of law.

This answer dovetails a bit with my previous comment about ethical philosophy, so it might be pertinent to add that I see great value in a society or culture having an emphasis on inner healing. This would help with a lot of other issues.

Jacobsen: What economic philosophy makes some sense, even the most workable sense to you?

Angus: Capitalism and a free market makes the most sense to me. This along with a slight amount of socialism in relation to roads, law enforcement, park systems, some support of the arts, and the like.

There can be a stability with some socialism, but it also doesn't take much for it to get bogged down, and a free market is more easily corrected by the people who retain more control. Some have never lived with their freedoms having been lost and do not understand the importance of freedom. Others are currently realizing its value and how tenuous it actually is. A free market society is the best economic system to protect freedoms while it can also allow for care for the downtrodden via charities, business endeavors, etc, which work towards that end.

So I see freedom as something which should also be considered in regards to economic systems. Some societies or groups within societies put less emphasis on it than others, which is understandable as each society or sub group can have its own "personality" with different views on how much freedom is pertinent, but we should all agree to never allow it to be lost, and actively protect it.

Jacobsen: What political philosophy makes some sense, even the most workable sense to you?

Angus: I believe that the US constitution with its emphasis of putting power in the hands of "We The People" and its attempt to protect this sentiment doesn't just make the most workable sense, it may serve to help to protect freedom not only in the US, but also abroad. If the US loses its freedoms, then it won't bode well for rest of us.

Jacobsen: What metaphysics makes some sense to you, even the most workable sense to you?

Angus: I would sit somewhere between idealism (the notion that all comes out of consciousness and consciousness permeates the universe), and dualism.

I believe that there is a profound conscious aspect to the universe with consciousness being key. But I also believe that the natural world is a very real and not a mere illusion created by consciousness, as can be found in Idealism.

To put it another way. I'd align somewhat with panentheism, if one considers it to mean that higher consciousness is in and throughout a very real natural world with its own truly independent conscious creatures, but also above that natural world in a way whereby the notion is very clearly delineated from pantheism.

I'm also not sure if this would lead to animism as I don't know if all "consciousness" is necessarily the same as found in humanity, or even other creatures. For instance, a rock might have some sort of "life," but that doesn't necessarily mean that it can interact.

Jacobsen: What worldview-encompassing philosophical system makes some sense, even the most workable sense to you?

Angus: Would populism count as a philosophical system? It's of course far from my only belief, but I believe it is currently notable as I think that the rise of populism is quite pertinent to the season that we are in — considering what is being exposed — and that this movement has just begun.

Jacobsen: What provides meaning in life for you?

Angus: My faith. Any other aspect to my life has no value unless it is hinged to this in some way. Without that connection, it is ultimately empty.

Jacobsen: Is meaning externally derived, internally generated, both, or something else?

Angus: It's both, and something else. We often create meaning based on our interaction with external truths, but they are true. The human ability to do so is also an externally true element of existence. So, our creation of meaning is an attempt to grasp what is true and meaningful beyond us.

Jacobsen: Do you believe in an afterlife? If so, why, and what form? If not, why not?

Angus: Yes. As a Christian I believe in a state of conscious awareness and interaction, in a loving existence with Christ when people accept it. I've heard and read a variety of interpretations of this afterlife, and while some things said may have validity, I'm just not in the position to fully accept these views. I just don't know.

Jacobsen: What do you make of the mystery and transience of life?

Angus: Mystery leads to wonder, and part of the human endeavor is to probe into the mystery in some shape or form, but of course it always goes deeper — everything ends in mystery of some sort. We've answered some of the hows, but there's always a deeper why to these things. Why does beauty exist? Why is there something rather than nothing? Why

does love exist in the universe? Those are profound questions not enough people are asking these days, and ultimately I would say that those speak into the transience of life.

Jacobsen: What is love to you?

Angus: Different personalities receive and give love in different ways, and it's good to understand this when interacting with different people. Yet in these differing ways it isn't true love unless there is an element of self-sacrifice.

True love, like true beauty, is far beyond the superficial. Which brings an interesting question — to what extent is love related to suffering and beauty?

I mean, can one attain to a comprehension of beauty with any depth, if they have never loved and suffered?

Appendix I: Footnotes

[1] Member, ISI-Society.

[2] Individual Publication Date: May 22, 2021: <http://www.in-sightjournal.com/angus-1>; Full Issue Publication Date: September 1, 2021: <https://in-sightjournal.com/insight-issues/>.

*High range testing (HRT) should be taken with honest skepticism grounded in the limited empirical development of the field at present, even in spite of honest and sincere efforts. If a higher general intelligence score, then the greater the variability in, and margin of error in, the general intelligence scores because of the greater rarity in the population.

Appendix II: Citation Style Listing

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Conversation with Gulalai Ismail on Human Rights Defenders, Terror, the “Universal Declaration on Human Rights,” Religion, and Human Nature: Co-Founder, Aware Girls (4)

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Abstract

Gulalai Ismail is a Co-Founder of Aware Girls. She has been awarded the Democracy Award from the National Endowment for Democracy, the Anna Politkovskaya Award, and recognized as one of the 100 Leading Global Thinkers of 2013 by *Foreign Policy*. She discusses: authoritarian governments and women’s rights activists; terror and fear; the United Nations and the *Universal Declaration on Human Rights*; religion; Pakistani Islamic interpretations; a way out; Iceland; science; biotechnology and genetic engineering; biology and technology; biotechnology interests; becoming tired of a field; children’s rights documents as a youngster; and human nature.

Keywords: Aware Girls, ethics, fear, freethinkers, Gulalai Ismail, human rights, religion, terror, women’s rights.

Conversation with Gulalai Ismail on Human Rights Defenders, Terror, the “Universal Declaration on Human Rights,” Religion, and Human Nature: Co-Founder, Aware Girls (4)

Please see the footnotes, bibliography, and citation style listing after the interview.

Interview conducted April 24, 2020.

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: Have you seen prominent women’s rights activists cave or cater to the whims of authoritarian governments because it is too scary, too dangerous, or, if careerist, too liable of a threat to their stature in the society with the title of them as an activist or a rights defender?

Gulalai Ismail[1],[2]: In Pakistan, it is not easy when the state institutions are after you, start persecuting you. Not many people can still opt to continue their resistance. Pakistan has amazing women’s rights activists who are working for women’s rights. In my case, in my situation, one of

them became public in my support. A few of them were very supportive. Those who were supportive were in the background. They would not come in public. They would give me different kind of support. It was the non-Muslim public in public. Very few women’s activists and very few civil society organizations in Pakistan. They stood with me. Because they were very afraid of the Pakistan military establishment. Have I answered the question?

Jacobsen: It is a hard question. Because there are multiple layers to it. On the one hand, you did answer it. On the other hand, on some other

levels, you did not answer it. There are some cases. You alluded to them. The cases in which an individual women's rights activist will support certain things, but will not speak out and will work against the aims of rights out of fear, terror.

Ismail: See, I do not think any woman activist works against the rights. But they stay silent. I find this problematic. When an activist, when you are silent on certain issues, because people responsible for the issues are not so powerful, but then you do not question issues for which institutions are really powerful, they have to be held accountable for the issue; and, you don't speak out on it. There is selective activism. The activism depends on who is the perpetrator of the rights. If the perpetrator of the rights community are the politicians, then you are okay with it. If the perpetrators are the most powerful military institution in Pakistan, then you choose not to act and speak out on it. But then, in Pakistan, it is our 5th anniversary of Sabeen Mahmud [Ed. who was assassinated on April 24th, 2015, at the age of 40.]. She showed her solidarity on the issues of enforced disappearances and missing persons, and extrajudicial killing. She was killed. Malala Yousafzai is another one. There is another woman from Karachi, whose name I am forgetting. She was working on land rights. She was killed by the mafia. So, I will not judge so harsh. I will not judge harshly Pakistani women activists because I know it is a country where you can get killed. Women activists get killed. There are many cases where women activists have been killed. Not every woman can choose to speak up at the cost of being martyred. It is not an easy choice to flee the country, not everyone can do it. I will not judge them very harshly.

Jacobsen: That is a fair point.

Ismail: Generally, I will judge harshly civil society organizations because individuals can be at much more risk. I think civil society organizations have a huge responsibility in showing solidarity to the movement, to the rights-based movements, who are under attack by the Pakistan establishment. Civil society organizations stay silent. In Pakistan, the funding of NGO sector is strictly controlled. There are many bureaucratic barriers to the NGOs and the civil society organizations to access foreign funding and implement their projects. If you are someone who supports movements like ours, then the Pakistan military establishment, the security agencies, will not give clearance. The NGOs or civil society organizations can be suspended. There will be difficulties in accessing funds. The civil society organizations do not get funds. I think that they need

to be judged. They need to be called out, "If you claim to be human rights organizations and civil society, then you cannot stay silent while the state is persecuting activists, abducting activists. You still stay silent." That is outrageous. Most civil society organizations of Pakistan stay silent. They only stand for certain kinds of rights, which the Pakistan military approves. That is unacceptable for Pakistan civil society to work only for those human rights are acceptable to Pakistan military.

Jacobsen: Starting on December 10, 1948, as we both know, the United Nations founded, or put into force, the United Nations *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. This, to this day, remains a rather universal document, so aptly titled, and continues to maintain a force in international relations for the increase in a more just and equitable world. At the same time, there is an elephant in the room regarding multiple competing ethics in the world today, as they have in the past. One brand comes in Islamic, Jewish, Christian, Hindu, and other ethical systems, religious ethical systems. Another comes in that which can be found in the United Nations in international humanitarian law or international human rights. Either one provides a window into how human beings should be or act in the world in relation to one another based on a particular conception of human nature. With that, it does seem to boil down to transcendental traditional religious ethics versus secular international human rights morality. The latter incorporates freedom for the former with freedom of religion, freedom of belief, freedom of conscience, while the former does not because, as per the *Amsterdam Declaration* from 2002, if I remember right, stipulates the for-all-timeness [Laughing] of these transcendental traditional religious ethics. So, as you're fighting for women's rights or human rights, more generally, incorporative of women's rights, what do you note as the long-term challenges between, in the big picture, these two different conceptions of ethics that belie two different images of human nature?

Ismail: Scott, for me, it is simple. You cannot use religion as an excuse to deprive people of their human rights. The human rights mentioned in the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* are the universal guiding document for the states, governments, and for the communities. These are human rights. If any system of ethics, if any faith, if any religion, or any system deprives people from their certain rights, that is not acceptable. In the modern world, religion cannot be used as an excuse to deprive people of certain rights or to give some

extra privileges to some of society, to give one dominance to one gender or one class of people. No, I think, you cannot use religion at all. For example, religion is used to curb freedom of expression. Blasphemy laws are used to cut freedom of expression to raise questions on religion. In every country, wherever there are blasphemy laws, or laws cutting freedom of expression, or other human rights of these people because one or another religion is not happy about it, I think religions have no place in any constitution anywhere in the country. We need separation of religion from the state and the constitution because rights should not be defined by religion or as religion. Rights should be defined by the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* and not according to religion. We need not only a secular constitution and secular rights. We need to reclaim secular spaces. As with the examples of the religious fundamentalist sections of the society have gained our political spaces, we, as secular people, need to reclaim secular spaces because this world belongs to everyone, not just the political power, which religious fundamentalists enjoy. We need to reclaim that space. I think, we must be very clear. It is a time of science, rationality, and technology. Of course, it is people. It must be limited to a private matter.

Jacobsen: Are there any parts of religion that you do like?

Ismail: No.

Jacobsen: [Laughing].

Ismail: [Laughing] The festivals, [Laughing] I like. Because now, they are the only festivals. I like the festivals. People, for example, in Pakistan claim the people in Pakistan are giving, because they give a lot of money in charity, but most of the charity money ends up in terrorist organizations. Some people are more giving because of religion. When I was in hiding, my family, most of my family, is very religious. When the whole campaign started against me, it started on 23rd of May. I will be celebrating my anniversary. Maybe, you can publish this article on the 23rd of May. It was when I left home. It all started there. I am completing one year of it. They are deeply religious people. My aunts used to do a lot of Quran recitation. They prayed a lot to God for my safety. They find mental peace; they find hope in religion, in those dark circumstances. They can get some hope. When I look back, there is not anything, except the festivals.

Jacobsen: Why are the men given more power in Pakistani Islamic interpretations in general?

Ismail: In every Islamic interpretation that I have heard of.

Jacobsen: [Laughing] Correction noted.

Ismail: [Laughing] There is not a single Islamic interpretation where there is general equality as a norm.

Jacobsen: For the men, in some of these fundamentalist Islamic communities, they must put on a certain persona, a false self. This leaves them constricted emotionally and otherwise.

Ismail: It is Patriarchy. Scott, it is patriarchy and the expectations of the gender boxes the culture has set for men and women. Women must have a certain person and certain roles. Men are expected certain personas and certain roles. It is patriarchy that has destroyed both men and women.

Jacobsen: What is the way out?

Ismail: The way out is equal distribution of resources among the genders and ownership of the resources. Economic empowerment is key. The chances women will be able to get their rights is if they are economically empowered, and having more women in the political spaces. Women in the decision-making, more equal numbers of women in Parliament and state governments because that is where the decisions are made. If women are not part of the decision-making, of course, men will create laws and policies protecting their status quo and powers. Equal portions of women in the Parliament. Equal numbers of women in the decision-making and economic resources for women, too. It is the key for women. Also, the religious-based constitutions, faith-based constitutions, go against women. For women's empowerment, we need secular countries, secular states. Not just secular states, we need secular societies. If the constitution is secular, and if the society is not secular, then it will support Patriarchy and sectarian violence. It will instill mob violence on the issue of violence if the society is not secular. We need secular society, secular constitution. Also, we need welfare state, not security state, because security states prioritize or prefer war over human welfare. They use religion to implement their ideas to promote their narratives. In security states, the money is spent on tanks and bombs, and defense, and not on human welfare. We have seen this in the corona pandemic. The ways countries like Pakistan will not be able to fight back because most of the resources were spent on security, not human security. We need to redefine security and shift from national security to human security because human security is more important.

Jacobsen: For those who want a good example of a country most robust in their efforts towards

equality, I would highly recommend looking at Iceland.

Ismail: Yes, I think [Laughing] they should look to Iceland and all Nordic countries. They can look at the Prime Minister of New Zealand, Jacinda Ardern, to see how feminist leadership looks like, because the New Zealand Prime Minister is an example of feminist leadership. They can look to New Zealand too.

Jacobsen: What is your favourite part of science?

Ismail: Biotechnology, genetic engineering.

Jacobsen: Why those two?

Ismail: I was in school when I first heard of human cloning. I fell in love with the idea of human cloning. I fell in love with the idea of human cloning. Because always, we have been told God is all-powerful. He created human beings. He is the supreme power because he created human beings. I thought the idea of human cloning gave me a sense, "You know, the human brain is so advanced. It can go to the extent of technology. It can do anything. Science is great." I love the idea of genetic engineering. I love the idea of taking beneficial genes from one organism and bringing it to another organism for the benefit of the other organism. I love genetic engineering. Also, it has played such a huge role in human advancement in fighting against diseases, even in helping with pandemics as well. Biotechnology and genetic engineering have advanced human understanding. Human cloning is the best thing. It gives the idea of a human brain, how we can advance. I am not saying that we should or should not do something. I am not going into the ethics of human cloning. However, in terms of the science and the possibilities, I find this fascinating.

Jacobsen: Do you think there is any distinction, at the end of the day, between the ways in which nature produces functional systems via evolution – human beings and other organisms – and what human beings create with artificial intelligence or various manifestations of conscious design of organisms, whether animal husbandry or the aforementioned genetic engineering? Do you think there is any real distinction between the technology that we make and human beings and other biology as fundamentally just another form of technology? In other words, the line is blurred.

Ismail: I have never thought about it. However, of course, it is different. I am not very aware of the computer technology and the artificial intelligence. I am not that type of technology person. I am the [Laughing] biotechnology person. There are echo

chambers. There are proper ecosystems. I am aware of what humans have been doing to the climate, the Earth, causing global warming, how the impacts of industrialization on the ocean and ocean life. Also, we humans have been cruel to the rest of the organisms and the rest of the creatures of the world. We have not quite destroyed the planet. Of course, I cannot make a comparison between human life and artificial intelligence. I am not the right person to talk about it. I am a very naïve person on it. Yet, they seem like quite different things. What do you think, Scott?

Jacobsen: If I look at the natural world as a comprehensive system, the natural world amounts to the animal kingdom and the plant kingdom. Over time, over billions of years, hundreds of millions of years, human beings and other organisms arise. Human beings with opposable thumbs, binocular vision, flat-balled heels, bipedalism, the ability to stand upright, and very large brains in addition to the development of the neocortex, we have this ability to not only think in relatively general ways. We can then physically manifest the cognitive generalism in the environment. The best evidence of this might be the physical dominance of the surface of the Earth by the human species. The things that human beings create, we call tools. We call technology. We get those through a process called science, in general, outside of trial-and-error. Evolution via natural selection among other selection mechanisms develops functional complicated structure. Those structures yield functions. They can be plural functions, not just individual functions. In those plural functions that evolution produces through these structures that it evolves, it amounts to a form of technology. Similarly, human beings develop structures. Those have functions for us. The direction, or the idea of what those structures are for, will depend on the organism or entity using them. However, if one simply takes a designed structure that can function in diverse ways or in a single way, then it amounts to a technology. Similarly, human beings are like a three-and-a-half-billion-year-old or more iPhone. We have a bunch of function centralized in one unit, in one organism. Same with other organisms. My sensibility is such that the distinction between what we call technology and what we call biology is probably an artificial barrier, where one simply comes about via evolution via natural selection and other selection mechanisms and the other comes about by human conscious engineering. But it is all part of the same

comprehensive system. So, to me, the line is more blurred than distinct. Biology and human-created things are both technology emergent in different forms. That is what I can come up with off the top [Laughing]. So, your interest in biotechnology. Where did that start?

Ismail: That started right when I was in school and read this article on human cloning. That is where my interested started. I am still into biotechnology. I studied biotechnology for six years. I thoroughly enjoyed it. I love biotechnology. Biotechnology or sciences, too, are dedicated fields of work. You need to work in a lab. If you are a biotechnologist, it was difficult to my human rights activism because my human rights activism was a full-time job. It required travel. It required going to the communities. I was not able to sit in the lab and do human rights work. That is why I continued the work on human rights. Also, in Pakistan, we do not have research institutes as such. We have a few. The most famous research institute is about agriculture. I was not interested in the agriculture part of biotechnology. I was more interested in the human side [Laughing] of biotechnology.

Jacobsen: You know what, I have heard the same from neuroscientists and psychologists. Over time, they got tired of rats, fruit flies, and *c elegans*. They could not take it anymore. So, they left the field [Laughing].

Ismail: Pakistan is a huge producer of wheat and cotton. Most of the research was around wheat and cotton. I was not interest in spending time on wheat and cotton. If it was about a research institute about genetic diseases or more human, then I would have continued the career in biotechnology. There are very few women who will have the opportunity to work for human rights like me. I felt this is a bigger responsibility to continue the human right activism work.

Jacobsen: Do you think a lot of this interest in science and ethics came about at the same point earlier in life for you? With the interest in biotechnology and cloning on the one hand, and the interest in children's rights when your father introduced you to the children's rights documents.

Ismail: Yes, they were around the same time. There was no secret. I wanted to study science and become a scientist. When I was in school, I was in eighth grade in the chemistry class. In the books, we had physics, chemistry, and biology. Chapter 1 or 2 would be about scientists. Lists of scientists who have contributed to biology or physics, or chemistry.

All of them were men. So, I was in grade eighth. I raised a question o the chemistry teacher, "Why are you not teaching about women scientists? Why are there only men scientists in the book?" The teacher laughed at me and said, "They are waiting for you to become a scientist to include your name. You have not become a scientist. That's why we don't have a woman scientist yet." Everyone laughed at me. At that point, I was like, "If that is the case, then I am going to become a scientist. There will be women scientists in the book." It is the thing I wanted too. I was aware. There are fewer women in science than men. Although, at the time, I did not have the access to information and knowledge, which an eighth grader would have today. I was 13 or 14. I was aware of the gender discrimination in academia. I was becoming more aware. I wanted to become a woman scientist. Now, when there is the corona pandemic, I wish I had not disconnected [Laughing] from biotechnology. I wish I could volunteer in a lab. However, it has been 10 years since I studied biotechnology. [Laughing] They would not consider me legible to work in a lab on coronavirus now.

Jacobsen: What do you think is human nature?

Ismail: What is human nature? This is a philosophical question. Mostly, I think, we are a product of our societies. We are mostly the product of our environments. Whatever we learn from our environment, I do not believe people who say, "Conflict is human nature." I do not think conflict is human nature, or this or that is human nature. We grow in our families, in our communities, in certain cultures. We learn and unlearn. Learning and unlearning is a continuous process, but mostly most of the people would be products of their environment. If there is any nature, I think that is the nature. What do you think is human nature?

Jacobsen: That is a very philosophical question [Laughing].

Ismail: [Laughing] Why is it a philosophical question?

Jacobsen: It is a good question [Laughing].

Ismail: Someone who has read psychology may be better.

Jacobsen: Yes. Human nature comes from two places at a minimum. Of course, we have nature-nurture. Everyone understands that at this point. However, the human organism is an integrated system. So, we see philosophical traditions around empiricism and rationality. Human beings, though, are an integrated system with sensory input and rational faculties. As any

cognitive scientist will tell you, or simply if you look at a list of cognitive biases, e.g., Availability Heuristic, Hindsight Bias, etc., Dunning-Kruger Effect [Laughing], these are images into how the human mind is deeply flawed and incapable of certain kinds of rational inquiry as a matter of innate disposition. These could be, or can be, overcome with knowledge of them. However, not all the time. Even trained medical experts, they may not use their medical expertise, sometimes. Same for other fields or human disciplines. So, this integrated system of sensory input, limited as it is, and rationality, flawed as it is; they provide a window into what seems like a traditional philosophical divide, which, in fact, is a unified system and, therefore, should be seen as a unified philosophical system traditionally divided into two, empiricism and rationality. These are unified in some sense. They may not be 50/50. However, they are united. In that coming together, more of human nature can be something both innate, in the sense that we have certain equipment that we're born with, but also the degree to which the equipment is responsive to the environment. Then within all of that, after a certain point, human beings develop a certain ability for conscious discrimination and choice in the world. That is where things become murkier.

The idea of freedom of will, since it may exist or how one defines it, would not be boundless. It would be finite. It would be finite based on capacity limits of the human nervous system and capacity limits in terms of time. How long can someone deliberate with the finite computational system? So, this integrated system bringing together empiricism and rationality depicts a human nature. That is both limited, grounded in the empirical, capable of the rational, and potentially capable of developing a certain amount of freedom and choice while in a closed and synergistic system. So, human nature is bounded in those ways. Then to the cultural question of human nature, yes, certainly, the flavours, the colours, the sights, the sounds, those, in a manner speaking, are human nature. It may be like the linguistic facility or faculty. In that, there is a general underlying structure. Something akin to this unified system described before. What comes out of this are the various flavours of culture in the peoples, we see. Many linguists will note a very apparent, stark difference between the world's languages, written

Appendix I: Footnotes

[1] Co-Founder, Aware Girls.

and spoken, while it is belying a certain very fundamental and close similarity of the system that produces all of them. So, it is a very superficial difference, where there is a quite common system of linguistic capability. Similarly with the various things seen coming out of all forms of human culture, whether religious, political, or otherwise, I would make the same argument for the arts and music. What these are telling us are, probably, in fact, what seem like stark differences between Baroque music and Hip-Hop, they are superficial differences. So, human nature is probably functionally infinite in its capacity to have different combinations of its systems to produce cultures in large groups, but also finite in its structure given by the fact that both the sensory systems that we have, and the rational systems that we have, are, no doubt, themselves limited.

Human nature is akin to a string of premises that I am trying [Laughing] to build here from what we get by the very fact of being born human, and how we grow over time akin to the way a snowflake grows over time. Certain capacities will come online over time and produce this integrated system. The things we find in cultures around the world are reflective of a very common set of simple systems that produce – that are themselves finite – a functionally infinite variety, as we have seen over recorded human history for thousands of years among all peoples. I think, the humanist vision is akin to not looking at the superficial image of the world. Something like ignoring Plato's Cave, but leaving the cave and looking at what are the simple, finite principles that comprise human nature. So that, we can have a little more humility and a universal vision of what is a human being. It is not a universalism of ignoring the complexity or diminishing it, but valuing it as part of a common set of naturally produced parts of what make up a human being. So, human nature seems to be something both dynamic, integrated, while simple, but producing a functionally infinite set of outputs. That was a long road. I am sorry. I do not have enough breadcrumbs.

Ismail: That was a very eloquent answer.

Jacobsen: I do not have enough breadcrumbs to get home [Laughing]

Ismail: [Laughing].

[2] Individual Publication Date: May 22, 2021: <http://www.in-sightjournal.com/gulalai-ismail-4>; Full Issue Publication Date: September 1, 2021: <https://in-sightjournal.com/insight-issues/>.

Appendix II: Citation Style Listing

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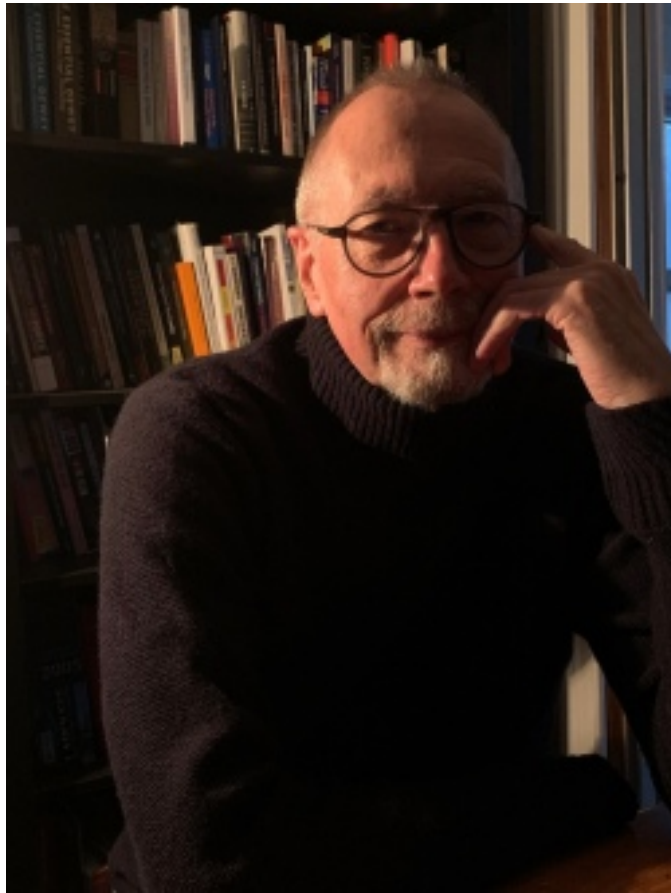
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Conversation with Distinguished Professor Graham Priest on Dialetheism, Truth, True Paradoxes, and Metaphilosophy: Distinguished Professor, Philosophy, City University of New York (2)

2021-06-01



Interviewer: Scott Douglas Jacobsen

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Abstract

From the [professional website for Professor Priest](#): “Graham Priest grew up as a working class kid in South London. He read mathematics and (and a little bit of logic) at St. John’s College,

Cambridge. He obtained his doctorate in mathematics at the London School of Economics. By that time, he had come to the conclusion that philosophy was more fun than mathematics. So, luckily, he got his first job (in 1974) in a philosophy department, as a temporary lecturer in the Department of Logic and Metaphysics at the University of St Andrews. The first permanent job he was offered was at the University of Western Australia. He moved to Australia when he took up the position, and has spent most of his working life there. After 12 years at the University of Western Australia, he moved to take up the chair of philosophy at the University of Queensland, and after 12 years there, he moved again to take up the Boyce Gibson Chair of Philosophy at Melbourne University, where he is now emeritus. While he was there, he was a Fellow of Ormond College. During the Melbourne years, he was also an Arché Professorial Fellow at the University of St Andrews. He is a past president of the [Australasian Association for Logic](#), and the [Australasian Association of Philosophy](#), of which he was Chair of Council for 13 years. He was elected a Fellow of the [Australian Academy of Humanities](#) in 1995, and awarded a Doctor of Letters by the University of Melbourne in 2002. In 2009 he took up the position of Distinguished Professor at the [Graduate Center](#), City University of New York, where he now lives and works. Graham has published in nearly every leading logic and philosophy journal. At the last count, he had published about 240 [papers](#). He has also published six [monographs](#) (mostly with Oxford University Press), as well as a number of [edited collections](#). Much of his work has been in logic, especially non-classical logic, and related areas. He is perhaps best known for his work on [dialetheism](#), the view that some contradictions are true. However, he has also published widely in many other areas, such as metaphysics, Buddhist philosophy, and the history of philosophy, both East and West. Graham has [travelled widely](#), lecturing and addressing conferences in every continent except Antarctica. For many years, he practiced karatedo. He is a third dan in [Shobukai](#), and a fourth dan in Shitoryu (awarded by the head of style, Sensei [Mabuni Kenei](#) in Osaka, when he was training there). Before he left Australia he was an Australian National [kumite referee](#) and [kata judge](#). Nowadays, he swims and practices taichi. He loves ([good](#)) [opera](#), [jazz](#), and [60s rock](#) ... and East Asian art.” He discusses: dialetheism; the nature of truth; the construction of formal logic; some classic examples of formal logical statements with a dialetheism counterpart; the strengths and weaknesses of traditional logics, paraconsistent logics, and dialetheism-based logic; formal dialetheism; systems build on top of dialetheism; true paradoxes; philosophy and metaphilosophy; and the realm of metaphilosophy.

Keywords: Dialetheism, formal logic, Graham Priest, logic, metaphilosophy, paradox, philosophy.

Conversation with Distinguished Professor Graham Priest on Dialetheism, Truth, True Paradoxes, and Metaphilosophy: Distinguished Professor, Philosophy, City University of New York (2)

Please see the footnotes, bibliography, and citation style listing after the interview.

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: Let’s step into dialetheism. What is it, fundamentally?

Professor Graham Priest[1],[2]: Contradictions are things of the form ‘it’s raining and it isn’t raining’, ‘I saw someone and I saw no one’. Melbourne could be in Australia and Melbourne couldn’t be in Australia’. A dialetheia is a contradiction that is true. And dialetheism is the view that there are such things.

Jacobsen: How does dialetheism change the discourse on the nature of truth?

Priest: There are many views in the history of philosophy about the nature of truth (that it is correspondence with reality, that it is what is verified by experience, and so on). Dialetheism does not change this discussion. In saying that some contradictions are true, ‘true’ can mean whatever

you think it does. However, it has been high orthodoxy in Western philosophy that contradictions *cannot* be true (the Principle of Non-Contradiction). Aristotle locked the view into Western philosophy with what can only be described as poor arguments (as most modern scholars of Aristotle would agree). However, virtually all western philosophers have accepted it since then. (Arguably, there have been some exceptions, such as Hegel. But Hegel’s defenders tend to contest this.) Modern dialetheism is a view of the last forty years or so; and it is exactly the view that the Principle of Non-Contradiction is wrong.

Jacobsen: With statements as both true and false, how does this alter the construction of formal logic?

Priest: Let me keep this as simple as possible. Standard systems of logic are usually based on the

assumption that statements are either true or false, not both, and not neither. They also have a notion of negation. The negation of 'the sun is shining' is 'the sun is not shining'. The negation of 'all philosophers are happy' is 'some philosophers are not happy', and so on. If A is some statement, logicians write its negation as $\sim A$. And the standard assumption is that A is true if $\sim A$ is false, and A is false if $\sim A$ is true. This setup has various consequences. One is that if A is any sentence, ' A or $\sim A$ ' is true. (A is either true or false, so one of these must hold). This is sometimes called the *Principle of Excluded Middle*.

Another is that ' A and $\sim A$ ' is false (One or other of these must be false.) This is the *Principle of Non-Contradiction*.

Clearly, if some contradiction can indeed be true, the Principle of Non-Contradiction fails.

Other consequences of the standard set up are not so obvious. An inference is something of the form 'So and so, therefore such and such'. The so and so is called the *premise*, and the such and such is called the *conclusion*. An inference is *valid* if whenever the premise is true, the conclusion must also be true. That is, it can't be the case that the premise is true, and the conclusion isn't. But given the Principle of Non-Contradiction, it can't be the case that something of the form A and $\sim A$ is true. So whatever B is, it can't be the case that A and $\sim A$ is true and B isn't. In other words, any inference of the form ' A and $\sim A$, so B ' is valid. *Everything* follows validly from a contradiction! This fact is sometimes called by its medieval name, *ex falso quodlibet sequitur*. Modern logicians more often call it by another name, *Explosion*, since it says that once one's information is inconsistent it explodes to deliver everything.

Now if ' A and $\sim A$ ' can be true, it *can* be the case that ' A and $\sim A$ ' is true, and B is not true. That is, Explosion is not valid. Modern logicians call systems of logic where Explosion is not valid *paraconsistent* (beyond the consistent).

Jacobsen: What are some classic examples of formal logical statements with a dialetheism counterpart with more sense made through dialetheism than with formal logic in traditional interpretations of the logic?

Priest: There are many of these—though, of course, they are all philosophically contentious, since dialetheism is too. The ones that most people think of first are those connected with the paradoxes of self-reference. The oldest of these is the liar paradox, a sentence that says of itself that it is false. If this sentence is true, it is false; and if it is false, it

is true. So, it seems to be both. A structurally similar, but more modern, paradox is Russell's paradox. Consider the set of all those sets that are not members of themselves. If this is a member of itself, then it's not a member of itself. But if it isn't, it is. So, it seems to be both a member of itself and not a member of itself.

Actually, I think that the most obvious examples of dialetheias concern legal situations. Suppose that a jurisdiction says that all people in class X can do such and such, and no person in class Y can do such and such. Things are perfectly consistent until and unless someone turns up who is in class X and class Y . Then, until the law is changed, that person can and can't (legally) do such and such.

There are many other examples, but let me just give you one more. There are many philosophers whose views entail that there are certain things that are ineffable—Kant (noumena), Nāgārjuna (ultimate reality), Wittgenstein (form, in the *Tractatus*, Heidegger (being)—and they explain why these things are so. Now, if they can do this, then these things must be effable as well. So, we have a contradiction. Of course, the truth of these particular contradictions depends on the philosophical views in question being correct.

Jacobsen: What are the strengths and weaknesses of traditional logics, paraconsistent logics, and dialetheism-based logic?

Priest: Firstly, the standard logic of our day was invented around the turn of the 20th century by Frege, Russell, and others, and is now called 'classical logic'. Next, in the last 60 years, we have seen an explosion of non-classical logics, driven by many different considerations. Paraconsistent logics are just one class of these. Thirdly, dialetheism is not a kind of logic, but a theory about what kinds of things can be true. It naturally motivates a paraconsistent logic, but one might be motivated to endorse such a logic for reasons other than dialetheism.

The strength of paraconsistent logics is that they can handle inconsistent data, theories, or other information, without these blowing up in one's face. Reasoners seem to do this quite naturally all the time. A weakness is that there do seem to be times when it is correct to reason in a way that is classically correct, but not so paraconsistently. The most obvious reasoning of this kind is when we reason by *reductio ad absurdum*. We assume something for the sake of argument, show that a contradiction follows, and conclude that the assumption was incorrect. A paraconsistent logician

owes us an explanation of why this is kosher, when it is.

Jacobsen: If we take formal dialetheism system of ratiocination with the appropriate symbol systems (e.g., $\neg$, $\sim$, $\wedge$, $\equiv$, $\supset$, $\perp$, $\exists!$, $\models$, and so on), can you provide some formal samples of English sentences or statements, arguments inclusive of the previous sentences/statements as premises, and the dialetheism formal representative counterparts with English-based interpretations of the “dialetheism formal representative counterparts,” please?

Priest: Expressing things in a formal language makes things more precise, but it doesn't really change matters of substance, so let's stick to ordinary English. First, a valid inference is the following: if the premises are true, then so is the conclusion. Dialetheism affects what sorts of things might *be* true, but it doesn't affect that understanding of validity. It means some of the premises of an inference can be false as well as true, but that does not affect validity. Consider an inference from ' A and $\sim A$ ' so A . If ' A and $\sim A$ ' is true, so is A ; so, this inference is valid. It makes no difference if ' A and $\sim A$ ' is false as well as true.

But this does raise the question of what interesting things might be proved from true contradictions. The place where that question has been most investigated is in the theory of sets. Let R be the set of all things that are not members of themselves (as in Russell's Paradox). And let us suppose that it is, indeed, the case that R is a member of R and R is not a member of R . A number of very interesting consequences about sets follow from this. However, many of these involve technical aspects of the theory concerning, for example, higher orders of infinity. This is not the place to go into them.

Jacobsen: What systems build on top of dialetheism, or may build on top of dialetheism, to advance the research into the system of dialetheism-based logic?

Priest: Perhaps, the most obvious are theories where paradox lurks. Theories of truth and sets are clear examples, but there are others. There's paradox called the sorites. If someone is sober, and consumes 1cc of alcohol, they are still sober. So, start with someone who is stone cold sober, if they consume 1cc of alcohol, they are still sober. So, if they consume another cc, they are still sober. So, if.... So, by the time they have consumed 500ccs (5 litres), they are still sober. That's obviously false. You can construct a similar paradox with any predicate like 'sober', which is vague in a certain

sense. How to handle this kind of paradox is highly contentious, but, certainly, there are dialetheic accounts. The idea is that between being sober and not being sober, there is a borderline area where a person is both sober and not sober.

But there are also theories where there are no standard paradoxes, but which allow for formulations where contradictions *June* arise. These include theories of topology, geometry, arithmetic. It would take several pages to go into these, so I forego this. Some theories in the history of science have used inconsistent mathematics. For example, the infinitesimal calculus from Newton and Leibniz till about the 19th century operated with a mathematics according to which infinitesimals were non-zero (at one point in a computation), and zero (at another). There are, as far as I know, no contemporary scientific theories using inconsistent mathematics. But we now have many new kinds of inconsistent mathematics, and, perhaps, some of these will find application in the future. After all, scientists will use any bit of mathematics appearing to deliver the right empirical results.

Jacobsen: Also, as you study paradoxes, what are true paradoxes in the fullest sense – no matter the system of logic applied, if such things exist?

Priest: I'm not really sure that I understand what you mean. However, there are many systems of logic—accounts of what follows from what. There is one in which nothing follows from anything. That is, for no A and B does A follow from B , in such a system of logic, you can't establish anything. *A fortiori*, you can't establish any paradoxes. Of course, that's not a very interesting point. What we want to know is what can be established in the *correct* logic.

Jacobsen: What are philosophy and metaphilosophy?

Priest: The definition of 'philosophy' is a hard philosophical question, and there is no consensus as to the answer. I think that probably the best one can do is to give examples of the sorts of questions that philosophers discuss. Questions like: Is there a god? Is reality always mind-dependent? What is it to be conscious? What is it for an action to be good? How should one live? What is the best way to run the state? What makes something a work of art? How do we know any of these things?

The word 'metaphilosophy' is a relatively new one. Its meaning is somewhat vague, but, I guess, that a metaphilosophical issue is one that reflects on what philosophy is, and how it goes about its business. The question 'what is philosophy?' is a prime

example. The term June be a new one, but metaphilosophical questions have always been an important part of philosophy. They are central to discussions in Plato, Hegel, Nietzsche, and Wittgenstein—to name just some of the more obvious philosophers who have engaged with such questions.

Jacobsen: How does dialetheism apply in the realm of metaphilosophy? This can set the stage for Part Three.

Priest: The most obvious way in which it applies is that Western philosophers have virtually always taken it as a methodological principle that contradictions are not rationally acceptable. Hence, any philosophical theories that have endorsed contradictions have been rejected out of hand. Clearly, this should not be the reaction of a dialetheist. This is not to say that a dialetheist will

accept a contradictory theory. They June well think that a consistent theory of the issue at hand is better. The matter of rational theory-choice is a complex one. The point is that a theory is not to be rejected *simply* because it contains a contradiction.

A small corollary of this is one concerning philosophical hermeneutics. I give one example. The general point is obvious. If one reads texts of Hegel, the most obvious interpretation of various of his views is a dialetheic one. Commentators of his work have often strained to interpret him in some other way, for fear of making him appear irrational. They did not need to do so. They can read his texts in a much more straightforward (and charitable) way. If one tries to force the thought of a dialetheist into the procrustean bed of consistency, what emerges is bound to be a badly distorted view.

Appendix I: Footnotes

[1] Distinguished Professor, Philosophy, Graduate Center, City University of New York (2009-Present).

[2] Individual Publication Date: June 1, 2021: <http://www.in-sightjournal.com/priest-2>; Full Issue Publication Date: September 1, 2021: <https://in-sightjournal.com/insight-issues/>.

Appendix II: Citation Style Listing

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Conversation with Anthony Sepulveda (Brown) on Abortion, Relational Ethical Quandaries, and Mothers: Member, World Genius Directory (10)

2021-06-08

Interviewer: Scott Douglas Jacobsen

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Abstract

Anthony Sepulveda (Brown) is a Member of the World Genius Directory. He discusses: abortion; the 20th and 21st century; ethical views; ethical premises about abortion; the father; religion and abortion; and secular worldviews and religion.

Keywords: abortion, Anthony Sepulveda, mother, relationships.

Conversation with Anthony Sepulveda (Brown) on Abortion, Relational Ethical Quandaries, and Mothers: Member, World Genius Directory (10)

Please see the footnotes, bibliography, and citation style listing after the interview.

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: Abortion, what is it, historically?

be considered sadistic or masochistic if they didn't want to seem hypocritical.

Anthony Sepulveda (Brown)[1],[2]*: The act of terminating pregnancy.

Jacobsen: What is it now, in the latter 20th century and early 21st century?

Jacobsen: What ethical premises seem the most important to consider regarding the gamete cells of the father, the mother, then the zygote, the blastocyst, and the foetus?

Sepulveda (Brown): The same act, if conducted under significantly safer conditions.

Sepulveda (Brown): It's most important to reduce the overall suffering of all parties involved once aborting the pregnancy has been deemed necessary. Often, abortions are conducted well before the infant is capable of living outside the womb or even feeling pain. In those cases, the only ones who truly suffer are the parents involved. Once the pregnancy has developed beyond a certain point, the birthing process is induced and the child is put into protective custody.

Jacobsen: What ethical views seem the most relevant for this subject matter?

Sepulveda (Brown): For many, abortion is no different from murder. Made all the more heinous because they equate the fetus to a healthy, living child. They are mistaken insofar as a developing fetus is not so different from any other arrangement of human cells. If anyone is so passionate about the sanctity of such minute issues, they'd have to express themselves towards all behaviour that could

In Tango's case, there was one major complication – her husband. He is not a rational man and there's no way she could hold everything together with him in the picture. Years ago he threatened my life for

simply speaking to her. So I could only imagine how far he'd go if he learned someone else had impregnated her.

It was so hard for me to tell her to, in her eyes, kill her child. I knew how hard she was willing to work to give it a good life. But I knew she'd never consider cutting her husband out of their child's life; that'd be to cruel an option in her eyes. So, I told her the truth – either everyone suffers or just the three of us will (Tango, myself and the photographer). Thankfully, she chose the latter.

Jacobsen: What ethical premises seem the most important to consider regarding the father, whether part of a relationship with the mother or a sperm donor?

Sepulveda (Brown): Most consideration is given to the mother as she has to physically carry the child and her role as parent is certain. In comparison, fatherhood can be doubted for obvious reasons. There are some arguments that men should have some say in what happens. But while it would be fair to let them voice their opinions, I believe that the final decision should be up to the mother.

In the case of sperm donors, they should have absolutely no say in what happens.

Jacobsen: What ethical premises seem the most important to consider regarding the mother?

Sepulveda (Brown): Her highest priorities are her health and safety.

Jacobsen: What ethical premises seem the most important to consider regarding the type of relationship status of the mother?

Sepulveda (Brown): Any consequences to someone's relationships shouldn't matter in comparison to the suffering of those involved. To love someone is to want them to be happy, no matter what it takes. It requires you to be humble enough to accept your position in their life and pursue what's best for them anyway.

Appendix I: Footnotes

[1] Member, World Genius Directory.

[2] Individual Publication Date: June 8, 2021: <http://www.in-sightjournal.com/Sepulveda-10>; Full Issue Publication Date: September 1, 2021: <https://in-sightjournal.com/insight-issues/>.

*High range testing (HRT) should be taken with honest skepticism grounded in the limited empirical development of the field at present, even in spite of honest and sincere efforts. If a higher general intelligence score, then the greater the variability in, and margin of error in, the general intelligence scores because of the greater rarity in the population.

To those reading – please don't judge anyone you know who's either been through or is going through this process. Rarely is it a casual option. So just keep your mouth shut and support them as much as you can.

Jacobsen: How do different religions view abortion?

Sepulveda (Brown): Many consider the act to be an abhorrent sin for which those who've committed it will be punished for eternity.

Tango is one such person. And when she expressed that belief, there was nothing I could do to disprove her religious views. Which I wouldn't have done if I could because I knew how important her faith is for her. Instead, I tried to assure her that no loving God or reasonable person would judge her unfairly. And I promised her that every year we'd take some time to pray to her child and tell it how things were going so that if our day of judgement comes, God and her child could make an informed decision.

Despite how things went, I intend to keep that promise.

Jacobsen: What about secular (agnostics, atheists, humanists, etc.) people who are "Pro-Life," so the same or similar views minus the transcendent justification or argument for the views?

Sepulveda (Brown): Their arguments are more reasonable, insofar as they're grounded here in objective reality. But their views aren't as logically valid as they think. Beyond the argument about suffering I made above, Judith Jarvis Thomson developed an excellent counterargument that I recently learned about in the video Abortion and Ben Shapiro by Philosophy Tube. It would take me longer to explain here than watch, so I'd highly recommend it to anyone interested in the subject.

Appendix II: Citation Style Listing

American Medical Association (AMA): Jacobsen S. *Conversation with Anthony Sepulveda (Brown) on Abortion, Relational Ethical Quandaries, and Mothers: Member, World Genius Directory (10)* [Online]. June 2021; 28(A). Available from: <http://www.in-sightjournal.com/sepulveda-10>.

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Chicago/Turabian, Author-Date (16th Edition): Jacobsen, Scott. 2021. *Conversation with Anthony Sepulveda (Brown) on Abortion, Relational Ethical Quandaries, and Mothers: Member, World Genius Directory (10)*." In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal. 28.A. <http://www.in-sightjournal.com/sepulveda-10>.

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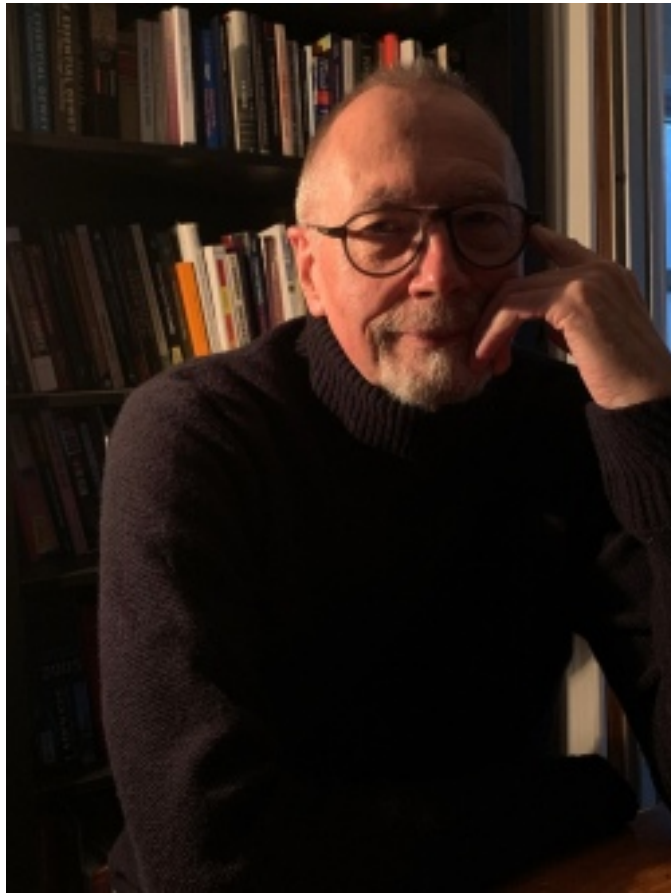
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Conversation with Distinguished Professor Graham Priest on Paraconsistency and Dialetheism, Explosion, Aristotelian Laws of Logic, and Explosions Reframed: Distinguished Professor, Philosophy, City University of New York (3)

2021-06-15



Interviewer: Scott Douglas Jacobsen

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Abstract

From the [professional website for Professor Priest](#): “Graham Priest grew up as a working class kid in South London. He read mathematics and (and a little bit of logic) at St. John’s College,

Cambridge. He obtained his doctorate in mathematics at the London School of Economics. By that time, he had come to the conclusion that philosophy was more fun than mathematics. So, luckily, he got his first job (in 1974) in a philosophy department, as a temporary lecturer in the Department of Logic and Metaphysics at the University of St Andrews. The first permanent job he was offered was at the University of Western Australia. He moved to Australia when he took up the position, and has spent most of his working life there. After 12 years at the University of Western Australia, he moved to take up the chair of philosophy at the University of Queensland, and after 12 years there, he moved again to take up the Boyce Gibson Chair of Philosophy at Melbourne University, where he is now emeritus. While he was there, he was a Fellow of Ormond College. During the Melbourne years, he was also an Arché Professorial Fellow at the University of St Andrews. He is a past president of the [Australasian Association for Logic](#), and the [Australasian Association of Philosophy](#), of which he was Chair of Council for 13 years. He was elected a Fellow of the [Australian Academy of Humanities](#) in 1995, and awarded a Doctor of Letters by the University of Melbourne in 2002. In 2009 he took up the position of Distinguished Professor at the [Graduate Center](#), City University of New York, where he now lives and works. Graham has published in nearly every leading logic and philosophy journal. At the last count, he had published about 240 [papers](#). He has also published six [monographs](#) (mostly with Oxford University Press), as well as a number of [edited collections](#). Much of his work has been in logic, especially non-classical logic, and related areas. He is perhaps best known for his work on [dialetheism](#), the view that some contradictions are true. However, he has also published widely in many other areas, such as metaphysics, Buddhist philosophy, and the history of philosophy, both East and West. Graham has [travelled widely](#), lecturing and addressing conferences in every continent except Antarctica. For many years, he practiced karatedo. He is a third dan in [Shobukai](#), and a fourth dan in Shitoryu (awarded by the head of style, Sensei [Mabuni Kenei](#) in Osaka, when he was training there). Before he left Australia he was an Australian National [kumite referee](#) and [kata judge](#). Nowadays, he swims and practices taichi. He loves ([good](#)) [opera](#), [jazz](#), and [60s rock](#) ... and East Asian art.” He discusses: Classical logic; the Laws of Logic; the contemporary dialetheic movement; Western philosophy; a dialetheism situation; a dialetheist view; dialetheism and paraconsistency; paraconsistent thinking; a paraconsistent logician and a classical logician come to common ground; and both classical logics and paraconsistent logics.

Keywords: Aristotle, Dialetheism, Explosion, Graham Priest, logicians, paraconsistency, philosophy, Principle of Non-Contradiction.

Conversation with Distinguished Professor Graham Priest on Paraconsistency and Dialetheism, Explosion, Aristotelian Laws of Logic, and Explosions Reframed: Distinguished Professor, Philosophy, City University of New York (3)

Please see the footnotes, bibliography, and citation style listing after the interview.

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: Thank you for the first and second parts to the interview. Let’s begin on some of the more substantive areas of analysis for the paraconsistent logicians. It appears to be a minority position within the professional philosophical community, but it is growing for 40 years, as you noted. Although, it may garner some more attention in form within other domains of discourse and representation, where “representation” comes to mean “modes of thought, i.e., without systematic presentation.” Something akin to the logic one might see in some Buddhist philosophy, not an original point. In Part Two, you mention the “high orthodoxy in Western philosophy.” How was this orthodoxy of Western philosophy with the Principle of Non-Contradiction locked into the Western philosophical tradition? Who are the culprits?

Professor Graham Priest[1],[2]: Well, ‘culprit’ is not really the right word, and you need to distinguish between paraconsistency and dialetheism. A logic is paraconsistent if, according to it, it is not the case that everything follows from a contradiction (The principle that everything follows from a contradiction is now usually called by the name *Explosion*.) As anyone familiar with the history of logic knows, theories of what follows from what have appeared and disappeared in Western philosophy. The earliest such theories were produced by Aristotle and the Stoics. Aristotle’s logic (Syllogistic) was paraconsistent. (He points this out himself.) And as far as we can tell, so was Stoic logic. (We have less documentary evidence of that.) Again as far as we know, Explosion surfaces in Western logic in 12th Century France. Thereafter it appears in various guises in Medieval theories of

logic. Virtually all of Medieval logic is forgotten with the rise of Humanism, and we are back to Aristotelian logic (and so Paraconsistency) for about the next 400 years. Matters change again around the turn of the 20th century when so *called classical* logic was invented by Frege, Russell, and others. According to this logic, Explosion is valid. Classical logic became, and still is, the orthodox logical theory of our day. But from its inception, various of its aspects were regarded by a number of logicians as problematic. So we have seen the flourishing of many so called *non-classical logics*. Modern paraconsistent logics are one kind of non-classical logic, and were developed independently in several different countries (indeed, continents) around the 1960s and 1970s. Since then, they have been developed and studied intensively by many logicians

Dialetheism is quite different. Dialetheism is the view that some contradictions are true. A number of philosophers before Aristotle were dialetheists. We know that because Aristotle himself tells us so. In a famous passage in his *Metaphysics*, he takes them in his sights, and defends the claim that no contradictions are true—the Principle of Non-Contradiction (PNC). That text really entrenched the PNC in Western philosophy—so much so that no philosopher after him seems to have felt the need to argue for it. There have been some dissenting voices—Hegel is the most obvious; but it is fair to say that the PNC has been high orthodoxy since Aristotle. That’s rather strange, because Aristotle’s arguments are pretty bad. The longest is so tangled that it is hard to know how it’s supposed to work, let alone that it works. And the others are clearly arguing for something else. (Aristotle appears confused.) This, incidentally, is pretty much the standard view of modern Aristotle scholars. The success of Aristotle’s arguments seems to have been more the result of his magisterial authority in the Middle Ages, than of their cogency. Of course, nearly everything Aristotle wrote has been rejected, or at least seriously problematised, since he wrote. The PNC is something of the last bastion of Aristotle’s thought, and it is only in the last 40 or 50 years, with the development of modern dialetheism, that its shaky grounds have finally been exposed.

Jacobsen: *Why have Western philosophers, almost as a matter of course or even of faith, taken on the patrilineal intellectual descent of Aristotle on the Laws of Logic? Is it convenience, not questioning, the way education has developed over centuries, etc.?*

Priest: As I explained in the previous question. Aristotelian logic was overthrown when classical

logic replaced Syllogistic. The question is better asked about the PNC. As I observed in the last answer, Aristotle’s view about everything else have now been overthrown, or at least seriously challenged. Why is the PNC the last of these? I don’t know. Something has to be last. In general, philosophers, as a collective body, are pretty good at challenging each other’s views. Though there is always a tendency to interpret historical philosophers in such a way as to make them fit in to current ideas. This tends to engender conservativity.

Jacobsen: *What sparked this revolution 40 years ago as a formal departure, in larger numbers rather than with a single thinker, from more than 2,000 years of philosophical history and thought about the principles of thought seen in the Laws of Logic inclusive of the Principle of Non-Contradiction?*

Priest: You have to understand the revolution that occurred in logic at the turn of the 20th century. This was not just a time when classical logic replaced Syllogistic. It was a time when the tools of mathematics (algebra, formal rigor, etc) had developed to a point where they could be applied to logical theorising. For some time, it was simply assumed that the applications of these techniques delivered classical logic. They do not: they can be equally applied to develop a whole host of non-classical logics, including paraconsistent logics. And the viability of paraconsistent logics undercut many of the conservative knee jerk reactions against the LNC. Without these developments in logic, I don’t think the contemporary dialetheic movement would have been possible.

Jacobsen: *On Explosion or ex falso sequitur quodlibet, the paraconsistent nature of the statements, as shown or given in Part Two. What does this mean for centuries of Western philosophical and, in fact, religious-theological thought, by which I mean systems of thinking applied to their standard domains? How might paraconsistent theories begin to envelope more and more of science, e.g., areas of emerging science and mathematics?*

Priest: Well, for the most part of the history of Western philosophy, logic has been taken to be paraconsistent, as I explained. Dialetheism is a different matter. It has been assumed that contradictions are always unacceptable. That assumption has to go. That certainly opens up new possibilities, but not as much as one might think. In many cases, to accept an area as contradictory would be entirely *ad hoc*, and not rationally justified.

If inconsistent theories ever come to be accepted in science, I think it will be because a piece of paraconsistent mathematics (of which there are now many, and a growing number, of kinds) seems to give exactly the right predications. This does not mean that the predictions themselves are contradictory. The contradiction could be buried deep in the heart of theory, or about things which are entirely unobservable.

Jacobsen: Are there any examples in American legal history in which a dialetheism situation came forward to amusing effect, in hindsight? For a South African example, one “Coloured” (South African term for mixed black-and-white race person) comedian, Trevor Noah, notes being “born a crime” because of mixed-race heritage in Apartheid South Africa.

Priest: I’m afraid I don’t know enough about the legal history of the US (or of any other country, for that matter) to answer this question.

Jacobsen: To the implied question in the statement, “Of course, the truth if these particular contradictions depends on the philosophical views in question being correct.” Are these aforementioned philosophical views correct?

Priest: Every philosophical view is contentious—almost by definition. In that way, dialetheism is no different from any other philosophical view. And one may hold a dialetheic view about many different subjects: the paradoxes of self-reference, motion, law, vagueness, the limits of language, the ground of reality. One might well be a dialetheist about some of these things and not others. I have argued for a dialetheist view about all of these things, so I take these views to be correct. But I think it is fair to say that dialetheism about any topic is still a minority view.

Jacobsen: Why is the shift in thinking about logic second and a theory first important when considering dialetheism? The theory of dialetheism as a motivator for paraconsistent logic to evolve, naturally, for reasons apart from the dialetheism itself. Is this more a sensibility and a philosophical approach than something formal and rigid? Alan Watts’ goo compared to prickles.

Priest: Well, dialetheism and paraconsistency are both theories. One is a theory about truth; the other is a theory about validity (what follows from what). In truth, all we ever have are theories about these things. Some theories may achieve consensus for periods of time; but all are fallible, and what is

accepted can change over time. As I have said, contemporary dialetheism would not have got off the ground without developments in paraconsistent logic. But dialetheism also provides a reason for taking a paraconsistent account of validity seriously. There is, then, a dialectical interplay between the two. In fact, if one’s eyes are open to it, one can see that such a dialectical interplay between logic and metaphysics is a feature of the history of Western philosophy.

Jacobsen: Could “Reasoners,” perhaps, be more aptly stated as “Parareasoners”? In that, human beings, given forms of paraconsistent thinking, are more naturally leaning on paraconsistent theories (and the subsequent logic) than classical logic and classical thinking.

Priest: Well, ordinary reasoners don’t tend to accept that a contradiction entails everything; and as experimental philosophy has shown, many “ordinary people” are quite happy to accept contradictions sometimes—for example about situations in the borderline area of a vague predicate. But we also know from studies in cognitive psychology (if we didn’t know this anyway!) that people often reason badly; and indeed, that they make systematic mistakes. So nothing much follows from that. Logic is not about how people actually reason. That’s a topic for psychologists. Logic is about the norms of correct reasoning, and what those are has to be fought out in philosophical debate.

Jacobsen: When can a paraconsistent logician and a classical logician come to common ground with a *reductio ad absurdum*? Can you give an example?

Priest: There are many different paraconsistent logics. However, for the most part, they agree on the fact that classical logic (as expressed with its usual connectives) is correct in consistent situations. Thus, for example, no one has ever found it plausible to suggest that Euclidean Geometry, or Group Theory is inconsistent. So classical logic seems fine there

Reductio ad absurdum can be formulated in many different, and sometimes non-equivalent, ways. Here is one standard form: Assume *A*, together with some other things. Establish that a contradiction follows. Conclude that $\sim A$, whilst maintaining the other things. This is a valid classical form of inference. Hence a paraconsistent logician may be quite happy with it in consistent contexts/theories

The crucial question then becomes: when is it reasonable to suppose that a context/theory is consistent? Much philosophical discussion has gone into that question. But assuming that consistency is

pretty much the norm, it seems plausible to accept that a theory/context is consistent unless and until one has specific reason to doubt this. If one is found, then one may have to go back and reevaluate matters; but that is nothing that would seem unreasonable if one is, quite generally, a fallibilist.

In fact, this whole idea can be used to frame formal non-monotonic paraconsistent logics which coincide with classical logic in consistent situations. (An intensive study of such logics has been made by the Belgian logician Diderik Batens and his school in Gent. He calls them *Adaptive Logics*.) This is not the place to go into the technical details.

Jacobsen: Do philosophical theories or logics exist incorporative of both classical logics and paraconsistent logics?

Priest: Yes, this may be done in different ways. In answer to the last question I explained one way.

Another is as follows. Paraconsistent logics and classical logics tend to agree with each other (though not invariably) when it comes to logical operators other than negation. So one may have a logic which behaves as usual for these, but which has two negation symbols. One behaves classically (“Boolean negation”); one behaves paraconsistently. Such logics can be used for many paraconsistent purposes, but not, for example, for handling the paradoxes of self-reference. Standard semantic and set-theoretic principles deliver a contradiction which uses Boolean negation, and so everything follows.

The question then becomes: which is the “real” negation? It is not at all clear what this question means, or how to go about answering it. There has been a good deal of debate amongst logicians—paraconsistent and otherwise—about this matter. But, again, here is not the place to go into the matter.

Appendix I: Footnotes

[1] Distinguished Professor, Philosophy, Graduate Center, City University of New York (2009-Present).

[2] Individual Publication Date: June 15, 2021: <http://www.in-sightjournal.com/priest-3>; Full Issue Publication Date: September 1, 2021: <https://in-sightjournal.com/insight-issues/>.

Appendix II: Citation Style Listing

American Medical Association (AMA): Jacobsen S. *Conversation with Distinguished Professor Graham Priest on Paraconsistency and Dialetheism, Explosion, Aristotelian Laws of Logic, and Explosions Reframed: Distinguished Professor, Philosophy, City University of New York (3)* [Online]. June 2021; 28(A). Available from: <http://www.in-sightjournal.com/priest-3>.

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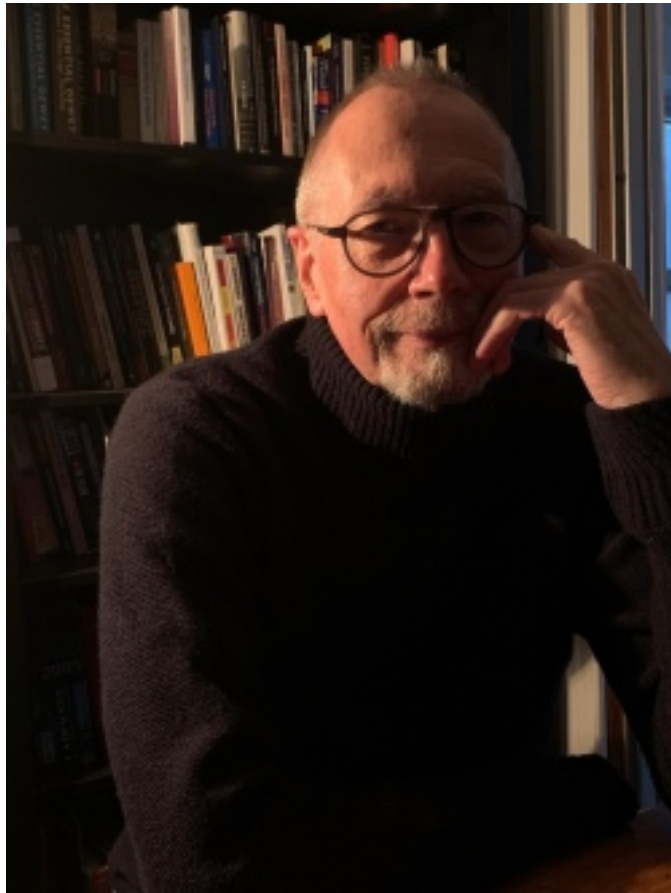
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Conversation with Distinguished Professor Graham Priest on Indian Logics, Nāgārjuna, Gottlob Frege and Peter Geach, and the PNC and the PEM: Distinguished Professor, Philosophy, City University of New York (4)

2021-06-22



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Abstract

From the [professional website for Professor Priest](#): “Graham Priest grew up as a working class kid in South London. He read mathematics and (and a little bit of logic) at St. John’s College,

Cambridge. He obtained his doctorate in mathematics at the London School of Economics. By that time, he had come to the conclusion that philosophy was more fun than mathematics. So, luckily, he got his first job (in 1974) in a philosophy department, as a temporary lecturer in the Department of Logic and Metaphysics at the University of St Andrews. The first permanent job he was offered was at the University of Western Australia. He moved to Australia when he took up the position, and has spent most of his working life there. After 12 years at the University of Western Australia, he moved to take up the chair of philosophy at the University of Queensland, and after 12 years there, he moved again to take up the Boyce Gibson Chair of Philosophy at Melbourne University, where he is now emeritus. While he was there, he was a Fellow of Ormond College. During the Melbourne years, he was also an Arché Professorial Fellow at the University of St Andrews. He is a past president of the [Australasian Association for Logic](#), and the [Australasian Association of Philosophy](#), of which he was Chair of Council for 13 years. He was elected a Fellow of the [Australian Academy of Humanities](#) in 1995, and awarded a Doctor of Letters by the University of Melbourne in 2002. In 2009 he took up the position of Distinguished Professor at the [Graduate Center](#), City University of New York, where he now lives and works. Graham has published in nearly every leading logic and philosophy journal. At the last count, he had published about 240 [papers](#). He has also published six [monographs](#) (mostly with Oxford University Press), as well as a number of [edited collections](#). Much of his work has been in logic, especially non-classical logic, and related areas. He is perhaps best known for his work on [dialetheism](#), the view that some contradictions are true. However, he has also published widely in many other areas, such as metaphysics, Buddhist philosophy, and the history of philosophy, both East and West. Graham has [travelled widely](#), lecturing and addressing conferences in every continent except Antarctica. For many years, he practiced karatedo. He is a third dan in [Shobukai](#), and a fourth dan in Shitoryu (awarded by the head of style, Sensei [Mabuni Kenei](#) in Osaka, when he was training there). Before he left Australia he was an Australian National [kumite referee](#) and [kata judge](#). Nowadays, he swims and practices taichi. He loves ([good](#)) [opera](#), [jazz](#), and [60s rock](#) ... and East Asian art.” He discusses: Indian logics; Buddhist tradition; against dialetheism; Gottlob Frege and Peter Geach; the traditional splits between realists and the anti-realists, and the idealists and the constructivist; most significant developments from this challenge to the Aristotelian logic; upcoming projects.

Keywords: Dialetheism, Gottlob Frege, Graham Priest, logicians, Nāgārjuna, paraconsistency, Peter Geach, philosophy, Principle of the Excluded Middle, Principle of Non-Contradiction.

Conversation with Distinguished Professor Graham Priest on Indian Logics, Nāgārjuna, Gottlob Frege and Peter Geach, and the PNC and the PEM: Distinguished Professor, Philosophy, City University of New York (4)

Please see the footnotes, bibliography, and citation style listing after the interview.

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: In ancient Indian logics, However, any view which holds that some things are there were four possibilities: true, false, both true and false accommodates dialetheism. and false, and neither true nor false. How does this mesh well with the dialethetic approach to knowing?

Professor Graham Priest[1],[2]: Well, it’s not quite as simple as that. Views on the truth values differed in Ancient India. The Hindu Nyāya philosophers held that there were just two (*true* and *false*), as did some of the later Buddhist philosophers, such as Dharmakīrti and Dignāga. Earlier Buddhist philosophers held that there were four (*true*, *false*, *both*, and *neither*). (This is the *catuṣkoṭi*.) Jain philosophers held that there were seven! (This was the *saptabhaṅgī*.) One of these was *indescribable*. Whether this was a form of both or *neither* is unclear.

Jacobsen: The Mahayana Buddhist tradition through Nagarjuna states all is real and not real, both real and not real, and neither real nor not real. Why is this a statement about the world rather than a mystical incantation about some ineffable property?

Priest: Well, interpreting Nāgārjuna is a vexed question—both within Buddhist traditions and amongst modern scholars. And it is not clear how this passage is best interpreted. But it is standard in Buddhist thought that there are two realities (*satyas*). There is the conventional reality of the world as we actually experience it, and the ultimate reality of how things actually are. Probably the best interpretation of this passage is that some thing can be real (conventionally), not real (ultimately), both

real (conventionally) and not real (ultimately), and neither real (ultimately) nor not real (conventionally). All rather mundane, I'm afraid.

Jacobsen: Why are arguments *against* dialetheism focused on negations? Any examples?

Priest: Well, a dialetheia is a pair of statements of the form A and $\sim A$. There isn't much to focus on except negation! Some people have argued that the truth of $\sim A$ rules out the truth of A , as a matter of definition. Clearly, such an argument is question-begging and worthless.

Jacobsen: How would you properly respond to them?

Priest: See the previous question. More generally, how negation works and what properties it has been controversial throughout the history of Western philosophy/logic—and no more than now.

Jacobsen: Gottlob Frege and Peter Geach argued, I think, the rejection of X means the acceptance of $\sim X$. Why is the adjoining not necessarily correct or so obvious to bring together?

Priest: Yes, they did, though note that rejection is not the same as negation. Negation is an operation that applies to a sentence and delivers a sentence with different content. Assertion and denial are actions you perform *with* a sentence. But even without worrying about dialetheism, the Frege/Geach view is clearly false. One often finds that one's views are inconsistent in a way that one hadn't realised. (It's common in a discussion of any complexity.) One discovers that one asserts A and $\sim A$. In the second assertion, one is clearly not denying A . That is, after all, what one accepts (until one changes one's views). Once one brings dialetheism into the picture, matters become even more obvious. I assert that the liar sentence is true and I assert that the liar sentence is not true. In the latter assertion I am obviously not denying that it is true; for that is exactly what I think it is.

Jacobsen: Given some of the prior commentary, how do paraconsistent thinkers – ahem – think about the traditional splits between realists and the anti-realists, and the idealists and the constructivist?

Priest: Well, dialetheism is neutral on this question. It says that some contradictions are true. It says nothing about whether truth is to be construed realistically or anti-realistically. As far as paraconsistent logic goes, there are many of these. Perhaps some are more realism-friendly, and some are more antirealism-friendly—though this depends

on how you think these metaphysical views play out logically. Thus, for example, suppose you think (misguidedly, I believe) that the Principle of Excluded Middle is characteristic of realism, and its failure is characteristic of anti-realism. There are both paraconsistent logics with and paraconsistent logics without the PEM.

Jacobsen: What have been the most significant developments from this challenge to the Aristotelian logic notions or interpretations of meaningfulness, validity, rationality, and truth?

Priest: Well, oddly enough, this changes virtually everything, and virtually nothing. Because the PNC is a principle that has tightly circumscribed nearly everything in Western philosophy, removing it opens up a wide vista of new possible positions on nearly everything; from metaphysics to ethics to the philosophy of mind, to philosophical hermeneutics, to aesthetics. Actually, I think this is a rather exciting development in philosophy.

On the other hand, one thing we have learned is that giving up the PNC changes virtually nothing. All the old theories of meaning are still possible; validity can still be defined in terms of truth preservation, or specified in terms of a bunch of rules of inference; to be rational is still to 'apportion your beliefs according to the evidence' (as Hume put it); and all the old theories of truth are still available and viable—to whatever extent they were before. In a way, this all makes it even more puzzling as to why so many philosophers have felt that the sky would fall in if some contradictions were permissible.

Jacobsen: Finally, any upcoming projects or books, or other paraconsistent philosophers for others to look into – plug, plug?

Priest: The book I currently in the process of writing is on socio-political philosophy, and has nothing to do with paraconsistency or dialetheism (or, more generally logic and metaphysics). After that, I have in mind a book on nothingness, which will certainly deploy paraconsistency and dialetheism.

There is so much written on paraconsistent logic now, that it is a long time since I have been able to keep track of it all. Even the literature on dialetheism is now so large that I'm not aware of all the things that are happening. So let me just flag one book in press. This is coming out with Oxford University Press, hopefully later this year. It's written by Yasuo Deguchi, Jay Garfield, Bob Sharf, and myself. It's called *Whereof one Cannot Speak*, and it's on dialetheism in East Asian philosophy—mainly Chinese and Japanese Buddhism.

Jacobsen: Thank you for the opportunity and your time, Professor Priest.

Priest: You're welcome.

Appendix I: Footnotes

[1] Distinguished Professor, Philosophy, Graduate Center, City University of New York (2009-Present).

[2] Individual Publication Date: June 22, 2021: <http://www.in-sightjournal.com/priest-4>; Full Issue Publication Date: September 1, 2021: <https://in-sightjournal.com/insight-issues/>.

Appendix II: Citation Style Listing

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Conversation with Prime Minister Salih Hudayar on Background to East Turkistan, Uyghur Muslims, and China: Prime Minister, East Turkistan – Government-in-Exile (1)

2021-07-01

Interviewer: Scott Douglas Jacobsen

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Abstract

PM Salih Hudayar is the Prime Minister of East Turkistan (Government-in-Exile) and the Founder of the East Turkistan National Awakening Movement. He discusses: background, persecution, and the context for Uyghurs now.

Keywords: China, government-in-exile, Muslims, Prime Minister, Salih Hudayar, Uyghurs.

Conversation with Prime Minister Salih Hudayar on Background to East Turkistan, Uyghur Muslims, and China: Prime Minister, East Turkistan – Government-in-Exile (1)

Please see the footnotes, bibliography, and citation style listing after the interview.

Interview conducted October 20, 2020.

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: So, let's start from the beginning, naturally, in terms of some of the upbringing for you and some of the family background, what was some of the family history told to you as a youngster, or even as you discovered a little bit later in your life?

PM Salih Hudayar[1],[2]: So, my first interaction with the Chinese government and the Chinese Communist Party was a very unfortunate interaction. I was four years old at the time. It was 1997. Months after the Chinese government had crushed the Ghulja uprising or the Ghulja protests, which we call the aftermath of the massacre. In February of 1997, thousands working people in Georgia, the former capital of the former Soviet republic, went out into the streets to protest the Chinese government execution of those independence activists. This resulted in the massacre in which the Chinese

government killed hundreds of people and arrested thousands just in Ghulja, and then engaged in a massive security lockdown across the entire area in which Amnesty International estimated that they came around 100,000 people during that year.

One of those people that were detained – in the northwest, in my hometown – was my uncle, who was only 17 years old at that time. His crime was that he had read a book, a legal political book, and one of our neighbours followed and someone followed. We don't know if it was one of our neighbours, but someone found it and they reported him, then were arbitrarily detained by the Chinese government. They came in knocking on our doors with two truckloads of soldiers armed with automatic weapons, shovels. They were trying to find the book. Because if you have any illegal things, you bury them, even if it's a book. The

Chinese government knows about it. They were able to find the book. Then they were trying to get my uncle to confess to being part of a political organization. My uncle refused because he was not a part of any organization.

Then they woke everyone up in the hall. I was the youngest one at that moment. I was four years old, and they pointed a rifle to everyone's head including mine, and threatened to kill us if my uncle didn't confess his crimes. My grandmother, my father had fled in 1995 after a demonstration. My grandmother said, "This is your older brother's trust to us. He needs to survive. You tell them what they wanted to hear." So, he confessed to being part of some political organization. He spent ten years of his life in prison. So, that was my first interaction, and growing up four years old. In my hometown at that time, there weren't any Chinese civilians. The only Chinese civilians there. There were Chinese security forces, custom patrol, which you see to this day.

So, hearing from the older generation, they want to talk openly about it. I would hear them talking about the force. I didn't know that the Chinese, mostly the Russians, because they talked about how we had a country and it was the Russians. So, I thought for a long while. So, I came to the U.S. I thought that the Chinese were actually the Russians. Then I fled in the US with my family and political refugees. My father was able to obtain refuge here in the U.S. in 1997. We came to the U.S. in 2000, on June 14, 2000. My father was the most influential person in terms of informing me about the fact that we were an independent country before. I knew we weren't Chinese. I knew they were foreigners. I knew that they were occupying our land.

Unfortunately, as I mentioned earlier, I mistakenly thought they were Russians. But I have this desire to resist and to regain our freedom, because, again, no four-year-old in any part of the world should have a gun pointed at their head for political reasons or being carried out by – I wouldn't call it a mistake, but – reading a book by one of their relatives. My father, when we came to the U.S., the first thing he taught me was he told me, "I thought that you can come here and live and forget about your relatives, your country. But I brought you here so that you can become educated and you can take the opportunity and the education that we learned from here to help free our country."

My older brother was enrolled in a civil air patrol program. Now, he's in the Navy, the U.S. Navy, for a little over a decade. I tried to go to the military academy, at West Point Military Academy. But, at the time, I was in the U.S., but because of the

medical issues; I had emergency appendectomies with this problem, which led to a medical discharge. So, that questioned my whole military career. But again, I was like, "No, there have to be other ways that I can help. Let me study politics. Let me do something, struggle for my people to freedom and our country's independence." In the summer of 2017, right after I finished my bachelor's, I started the East Turkistan National Awakening Movement with like-minded young leaders and came back here in the United States advocating for not just our human rights, but our political rights.

Because if we don't have political rights, there's no way that we can ensure our human rights. The last time that I was able to communicate with anyone inside East Turkistan was when they started locking up people in the concentration camps. My grandfather from my mother's side, who told me in July 2000, "Don't call us anymore. I'm too old to go to school, so stop calling." "School" is a sick euphemism. A code word for "concentration camp," which China calls the "education camp." So, we found ETNAM. We began to lobby for the Uyghur Act, which recently was signed into law. We were in the right with the Uyghur Act. We organized a massive demonstration in front of the U.S. Capitol for over a month and every day, Monday through Friday from 9:00 to 5:00, to get their attention to pressure Congress to accept our proposal for the Uyghur Act, to recognize and sanction the Chinese officials for their crimes, we wanted the U.S. Congress to recognize Turkistan as an occupied country like Tibet.

We want the US government to recognize four objectives that we have put to the Chinese officials sanctioned and to get the Uyghur Act passed, to get recognition of the genocide and recognition of our occupied countries that we have. We have achieved two of those goals so far, and we are continuing to push for the other two goals, because at the end of the day, without our own independent state like we had before; these atrocities and oppression, it just shows that the pressure will not ever end. No country is going to guarantee our human rights more than China will claim it. But we have the best China. In fact, that we have the best human rights in the world. But I think of millions of our people are suffering from sterilizing our women, separating millions of children from their families, executing people, stealing their organs, forcing our women to marry Chinese men, forcefully collecting the DNA of over 36 million people, and imprisoning more than three million people in concentration camps and prisons.

I personally, myself, have over 100 relatives that have been detained. Four of them, the ones that I was lucky enough to get information out through other contacts in Central Asia. I discovered; I found the four of them were killed as of April 2019. The others, I don't know if they are dead. I don't know if they're alive. That's how many of us are in the West, many of us in the diaspora. We don't even know if our family members, any in Turkistan, are alive, really don't know if they are alive or if they are dead. In some cases, we find out a year or two years later that they died inside the concentration camp, but China says they die from pneumonia or they die from health conditions. It's not okay. People are going in and dying.

So, this is a genocide in the 21st century. That's why independence is the only way to ensure our people's survival is the only way to ensure our people's basic human rights. Governments around the world,

people talk about human rights all the time. Have they done anything? They have actually done anything to stop the atrocities. The governments know what's going on. They have more information than we do about what's going on. The number of people that are dying; the number of people that are in the camps; all the intelligence agencies, they know it. But they are keeping silent on this because most of them; it's not in their interest.

So if other governments can't guarantee our human rights, the only government that will be able to do that is our own government once we regain our independence. This is why it's necessary for our people's survival. When we were an independent nation, no foreign power, no government was able to

Appendix I: Footnotes

[1] Prime Minister, East Turkistan (Government-in-Exile); Founder, East Turkistan National Awakening Movement (ETNAM).

[2] Individual Publication Date: July 1, 2021: <http://www.in-sightjournal.com/hudayar-1>; Full Issue Publication Date: September 1, 2021: <https://in-sightjournal.com/insight-issues/>.

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Conversation with Prime Minister Salih Hudayar on Human Rights, Uyghurs, Kazakhs, Turkic Peoples, and Politically Motivated Racism: Prime Minister, East Turkistan – Government-in-Exile (2)

2021-07-08

Interviewer: Scott Douglas Jacobsen

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Abstract

PM Salih Hudayar is the Prime Minister of East Turkistan (Government-in-Exile) and the Founder of the East Turkistan National Awakening Movement. He discusses: human rights; concentration camps and re-education camps; politically motivated racism.

Keywords: China, Chinese, colonialism, government-in-exile, Prime Minister, Salih Hudayar, Turks, Uyghurs.

Conversation with Prime Minister Salih Hudayar on Human Rights, Uyghurs, Kazakhs, Turkic Peoples, and Politically Motivated Racism: Prime Minister, East Turkistan – Government-in-Exile (2)

**Please see the footnotes, bibliography, and citation style listing after the interview. **

**Interview conducted October 20, 2020. **

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: With regards to human rights in some of the major human rights organizations in the world today, what has been some of their commentary? What has been some of the work that they have done in regards to these issues around the order of the Kazakhs and other Turks or people who have been locked up in those camps?

Salih Hudayar[1],[2]: So many human rights organizations like Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, have raised the issue to the human rights as a political one. From the human rights perspective, engaging in atrocity, I think the world and the ambassador need to call for sanctions. However, with sanctions, even the terminology that is used is very important, whether referring our

people or referring to our country as Turkistan, a lot of these organizations like Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, incorrectly refer to us as Chinese Muslims or Muslims in China, because we always – and other Turkic people, are Turkic people in that context because we don't see ourselves as Chinese. We are not Chinese. We don't have any cultural, historical, linguistic ties to China or the Chinese people.

So, that's something that needs to be corrected. This is something that we have been pushing them to do. Another issue is the term "Chinese," which they used to describe our homeland in a Chinese colonial term, meaning "territory" or the meaning "frontier." It's a humiliating term. Nobody refers to Tibet as "Chinese." Nobody except China, like China

renamed “Tibet” to “Tibet Autonomous Region,” nobody uses that term but China. But you see, most of the governments across the world and human rights organizations and media incorrectly referred to our country as “Chinese.” Therefore, in a way, supporting the Chinese narrative is supporting Chinese colonial efforts, we have been urging people to recognize or refer to our country as “Turkistan” because that’s what we call it.

And whether you look at historical map, if you pull up a map from a hundred years ago of China or surrounding areas or of Asia, you will clearly see that it’s written “East Turkistan.” We were an independent country up until December 22nd, 1949. We were known as the East Turkistan Republic. It was short lived and we lasted for about five years before the Chinese communists came. Previous to that, we had declared independence in 1933 as the Turkistan Republic, and that lasted six months into Soviet intervention. But before 1884, we were known as East Turkistan.

Jacobsen: I also want to focus on some of the terminology around some of the actions, human rights violations or abuses, that have been happening in these particular cases. So, the one that stands out probably for most people in a lay person’s perspective would be “concentration camps.” For those who make the association, they will make the association to the National Socialists in Germany in World War Two. What is the overlap here in terms of the terminology of “concentration camps “in Nazi Germany, in World War Two, and in the cases here of “genocide” ongoing in East Turkistan?

Hudayar: So, the overlap is that the purpose of why these people are being put in the. For example, the Nazis, they demonized the Jews and sent them to these concentration camps, like the same way the Chinese government is demonizing the Uyghurs and sending them to the concentration camps. The structure of the concentration camps, there is barbed wire fencing blocked by watchtowers. These are all things with high walls. In some cases, these things are prevalent. You can’t get out of it. You’re not formally charged with a crime. So, it’s not a prison, where you’re actually charged with a crime and being sent there. The only crime that you have is that your status as an Uyghur.

And just like under the Nazis, the only crime is that where you were, or in most cases you are, Jewish and, in some other cases, you were sympathetic to Jews or you were homosexuals or you were something else – enemies of the Nazis. Just the terminology that China uses, calling them “enemies

of the people,” “enemies of the state and the people,” this is the way China portrays our people as we’re the enemy of China and its people. So, therefore, we have to be destroyed. We have to be, as one Chinese official stated, “eradicated.” To this day, they’re continuing to build more and more camps. The Chinese government claims that it’s for re-education; that we’re receiving political language education. The same thing that the Nazis did to reprogram them. Even the propaganda that they showed to the Western world during World War Two, what they said when people heard of these reports, the Nazis set up the stage camps to have the Jews working as in building, working in factories, looking like a productive member of the society, were happy and singing and dancing and playing sports.

And these concentration camps, the same thing that China has done with taking them to specific locations that they created purposely for propaganda purposes and literally having our people sing and dance and clap hands. While clapping their hands, they were saying, “If you’re happy... clap your hands,” in English; by using words like we’re just a bunch of circus monkeys, every time they put out these videos of dancing and clapping and singing and saying, “Hey, we are happy.” This is the same propaganda that the Nazis did as well to dissuade the world from to hide the atrocities that it was committing.

Jacobsen: If you have this case of more than a million Uyghurs, Kazakhs, and Turkic people, basically, having to undergo these kind of actions and ‘re-education,’ in the concentration camps, it’s Chinese citizens on the other side or military personnel. This is a very explicit form of politically motivated racism.

Hudayar: Absolutely. For a long time, since 1954, the Chinese government, because initially when they took over our country, our top leaders including our president, defense minister, general, chief of staff, our secretariat, foreign minister, we don’t know if they actually died in a plane crash or if they were executed and then that was staged like a plane crash. But they were killed. Then the Chinese and the Soviets, they forced the remaining leaders to sign a five-year treaty, which the Chinese communists would help us develop and modernize our country and withdraw their forces. In 1954, when the five-year mark came, the Chinese government now set up the paramilitary, Xinjian Production and Construction Corps. A paramilitary force to colonize, to secure the borders and colonize East Turkistan.

But since then, they've been spreading this. They've been revising history, stating that East Turkistan has been a part of China since ancient times and that our people are a Chinese people who were invaded by foreign barbarians and brainwashed into thinking that we were different people. So historically, the Chinese have viewed us as barbarians. The way that they've been portraying it. Even the shooting of the Mulan, the story of Mulan in East Turkistan near a concentration camp, that's not coincidental. If you look at the story compared to the original film and the film that was produced this year, you can see that it's clearly targeting our people, the Uyghur as a bunch of barbarians, because the name of the guy. The antagonist in the movie is Barbarian, who is called their leader: Bora Khan. Bora in our language means "wolf." Khan means like "the king." The king of wolves, historically, in ancient Chinese texts, we were referred to as the wolf people because that was our totem. In fact, that was our imperial flag, like it symbolizes us. So, it was targeting that. the fact that the antagonist in the movie Bora Khan he's trying to get revenge because the Chinese they killed his father and they took over their lands. This is the political message in there that the American and the Western audience doesn't get. But, the Chinese audience, they understand. They get the political message. So, it's a deep rooted historical issue. It's not something that just happened starting in 2017. This goes back to 1949, even beyond that.

Appendix I: Footnotes

[1] Prime Minister, East Turkistan (Government-in-Exile); Founder, East Turkistan National Awakening Movement (ETNAM).

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Vancouver/ICMJE: Jacobsen S. *Conversation with Prime Minister Salih Hudayar on Human Rights, Uyghurs, Kazakhs, Turkic Peoples, and Politically Motivated Racism: Prime Minister, East Turkistan – Government-in-Exile (2)* [Internet]. (2021, July 28(A). Available from: <http://www.in-sightjournal.com/hudayar-2>.

Conversation with Dr. Benoit Desjardins, M.D., Ph.D., on Background, Academics, Intelligence, Science, and Philosophy: Academic Physician; Member, Mega Society (1)

2021-07-08



Interviewer: Scott Douglas Jacobsen

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Abstract

Professor Benoit Desjardins, MD, PhD, FAHA, FACR is an Ivy League academic physician and scientist at the University of Pennsylvania. He is a member of the Mega Society, the OlympIQ Society and past member of the Prometheus Society. He is the designer of the cryptic Mega Society logo. He is member of several scientific societies and a Fellow of the American College of Radiology and of the American Heart Association. He is the co-Founder of the Arrhythmia Imaging Research (AIR) lab at Penn. His research is funded by the National Institute of Health. He is an international leader in three different fields: cardiovascular imaging, artificial intelligence and cybersecurity. He discusses: growing up; extended self; family background; youth with friends; education; purpose of intelligence tests; high intelligence; extreme reactions to geniuses; greatest geniuses; genius and a profoundly gifted person; necessities for genius or the definition of genius; work experiences and jobs held; job path; myths of the gifted; God; science; tests taken and scores earned; range of the scores; ethical philosophy; political philosophy; metaphysics; worldview; meaning in life; source of meaning; afterlife; life; and love.

Keywords: academic physician, Benoit Desjardins, intelligence, Mega Society, science, University of Pennsylvania.

Conversation with Dr. Benoit Desjardins, M.D., Ph.D., on Background, Academics, Intelligence, Science, and Philosophy: Academic Physician; Member, Mega Society (1)

Please see the footnotes, bibliography, and citation style listing after the interview.

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: When you were growing up, what were some of the prominent family stories being told over time?

Dr. Benoit Desjardins[1],[2]*: Nothing interesting. A very ordinary family, trying to stay afloat financially. I found out on my wedding day that my father was adopted, which added mystery to the family for the first time in my life. But I chose not to investigate further out of respect for his wishes.

Jacobsen: Have these stories helped provide a sense of an extended self or a sense of the family legacy?

Desjardins: No, not much of a legacy. My family history did, however, make me prioritize financial stability as one of my main goals in life.

Jacobsen: What was the family background, e.g., geography, culture, language, and religion or lack thereof?

Desjardins: French Canadian, catholic, I grew up in Montreal. I was a first-generation college student, although I never really attended college and was fast-tracked directly to medical school and graduate school. We were not a very religious family. A priest had cursed my mother to get a physically disabled child when she was pregnant with me because she missed mass, and my parents then dissociated from the church. I was fortunately not born with any handicaps.

Jacobsen: How was the experience with peers and schoolmates as a child and an adolescent?

Desjardins: Not great. I was not good with human interaction. I was a bit of a recluse, although I did attend school but did not have many friends. I went to an all-boys high school. I only became comfortable interacting with girls a few years after high school. Now I have a wife and kids. Happily married for 34 years.

Jacobsen: What have been some professional certifications, qualifications, and trainings earned by you?

Desjardins: My path was unusual. I was fast-tracked to medical school in Canada because of my exceptional intellectual abilities, skipping college. But medical school did not satisfy me intellectually. So, after medical school, I received a very prestigious Award to pursue four simultaneous graduate degrees in the US, combining Pure Mathematics, Artificial Intelligence, Formal Philosophy (Logic), and Theoretical Physics. I called this my “intellectual interlude”. I then completed the medical curriculum (internship, residency, fellowship) to earn a living as an academic physician. So, I have an MD degree, a PhD degree, half a dozen Masters, and medical post-graduate training certificates. I also completed several additional certifications on the side, like recent certifications in hacking and cybersecurity. I love to learn new things, and these certifications force me to learn new fields very thoroughly.

Jacobsen: What is the purpose of intelligence tests to you?

Desjardins: Their purpose is to attempt to evaluate intelligence. I just take those tests for fun as I love to solve complicated problems.

Jacobsen: When was high intelligence discovered for you?

Desjardins: It was in high school since I was pretty much a recluse before that.

Jacobsen: When you think of the ways in which the geniuses of the past have either been mocked, vilified, and condemned if not killed, or praised, flattered, platformed, and revered, what seems like the reason for the extreme reactions to and treatment of geniuses? Many alive today seem camera shy – many, not all.

Desjardins: It usually depends on the mindset of the society in which they live. If it is not open to new ideas or non-traditional ideas, geniuses get vilified, sometimes imprisoned (e.g., Galileo), or killed (e.g., Socrates). On the other hand, if it values new ideas and risk-takers, geniuses get praised or platformed (e.g., Gates, Jobs, Musk).

Jacobsen: Who seem like the greatest geniuses in history to you?

Desjardins: One hundred billion humans ever lived on Earth, so out of those, there were quite a few geniuses throughout history. Here are a few: Socrates, Galileo, da Vinci, Einstein, Darwin, Newton, Aristotle, Turing.

Jacobsen: What differentiates a genius from a profoundly intelligent person?

Desjardins: Extreme creativity and long-term focused effort characterize genius. Profoundly intelligent people are much more common, and most don't amount to much in life.

Jacobsen: Is profound intelligence necessary for genius?

Desjardins: Profound intelligence is usually a left-brain process. Extreme creativity is usually a right-brain process. So no, it's not necessary.

Jacobsen: What have been some work experiences and jobs held by you?

Desjardins: The main path I followed is that of an Ivy League academic physician and scientist. But I have always pursued multiple sidelines in parallel. For example, one of my current sidelines is being a hacker and a cybersecurity specialist.

Jacobsen: Why pursue this particular job path?

Desjardins: Early in my life, I sought an intellectually challenging career, which generated

good financial security income. However, I quickly realized that such a career did not exist or was very difficult to find. So, I decided to pursue two careers in parallel. I picked academic medicine to generate income and pursued many other activities in parallel to provide an intellectual challenge.

Jacobsen: What are some of the more important aspects of the idea of the gifted and geniuses? Those myths that pervade the cultures of the world. What are those myths? What truths dispel them?

Desjardins: There are many myths. For example, the myth that gifted people always do well in school. But, unfortunately, the structure of the education system is not always appropriate for many geniuses, who either do poorly in school or drop out (e.g., Einstein).

Jacobsen: Any thoughts on the God concept or gods idea and philosophy, theology, and religion?

Desjardins: God was an invention of prehistoric man to explain what he could not understand. Eventually, science explained more and more and made God and religion irrelevant. As for philosophy, it is a field that helps sharpen critical thinking, analysis, and writing. Therefore, everyone should take courses in philosophy, unless one aims for a job not requiring much thinking, like a farmer or a US congressman.

Jacobsen: How much does science play into the worldview for you?

Desjardins: I earn a living as a physician and scientist, so much of my worldview is based on science.

Jacobsen: What have been some of the tests taken and scores earned (with standard deviations) for you?

Desjardins: I took the Mega test and Titan test in the mid-1990s for fun. My scores on those were good enough to qualify for membership to the Mega Society. Whether they are appropriate tests to measure very high IQs is still an open question, but all similar tests face the same problems. I probably have taken other tests as a kid, but I don't remember much. I also do puzzles and quizzes whenever they come up, such as Tim Roberts quizzes, and I usually finish first at most of them.

Jacobsen: What is the range of the scores for you? The scores earned on alternative intelligence tests tend to produce a wide smattering of data points rather than clusters, typically.

Desjardins: High enough to qualify for membership in the Mega Society. Narrow range, around five-sigma.

Jacobsen: What ethical philosophy makes some sense, even the most workable sense to you?

Desjardins: I take a little bit from each of the main ethical philosophies, depending on the context. Deontological ethics mainly guides physicians, but a utilitarian approach often makes more sense to me.

Jacobsen: What social philosophy makes some sense, even the most workable sense to you?

Desjardins: I value the “Live and let live” social philosophy with a set of practical constraints. As long as people’s behavior does not harm others, does not harm the environment, and does not harm the social fabric, let people do what they want to do. If they’re going to hurt themselves, it’s their choice. You can always provide them with the best possible advice to help them realize the consequences of their actions, but in the end, it’s their choice. Physicians use that approach a lot. For example, we inform patients who drink too much or do drugs about the consequences of their actions, and if they chose to continue, it’s not our role to forcibly stop them from harming themselves.

Jacobsen: What economic philosophy makes some sense, even the most workable sense to you?

Desjardins: Well, I cannot tolerate the cruelty and exploitative nature of predatory capitalism in the US. I instead value any economic system that provides people with the means to achieve their goals in life and reap the benefits of their hard work while at the same time providing a robust social net to prevent people from falling through the cracks. Canada, where I grew up, is a social democracy that provides all these features and makes sense to me from an economic perspective.

Jacobsen: What political philosophy makes some sense, even the most workable sense to you?

Desjardins: I oscillate between social liberalism and social democracy, depending on the context. Their basic policies are often the same. I value the power of the state but do not value as much the power of unions.

Jacobsen: What metaphysics makes some sense to you, even the most workable sense to you?

Desjardins: I have a purely atheistic scientific view of the world, and I do not need metaphysics.

Jacobsen: What worldview-encompassing philosophical system makes some sense, even the most workable sense to you?

Desjardins: As a scientist, post-positivism is the worldview philosophical system that makes the most sense to me. Reality is accessible through careful observation and scientific reasoning. Scientists make theories that can evolve, and they use observation to support or disprove a theory, knowing that all observations have a certain amount of error in them. Thus, science makes steady progress towards understanding reality.

Jacobsen: What provides meaning in life for you?

Desjardins: Three elements provide meaning to my life: my wife and kids, job and research work, and achievements. For the past few decades, I undertook a series of Grand Challenges outside work for personal growth and achievement. Each new Grand Challenge had to meet three conditions: (1) be something I had never done in my life, (2) enable me to grow as a person, and (3) have a well-defined end goal. I have pursued many such grand challenges, such as getting a Black Belt at Tae Kwon Do, earning a Wood Badge with Boy Scouts of America, becoming a pilot, becoming a competitive master marksman, etc.

Jacobsen: Is meaning externally derived, internally generated, both, or something else?

Desjardins: It’s both. In my case, my grand challenges are purely internally generated. However, other aspects such as wife and kids are externally generated.

Jacobsen: Do you believe in an afterlife? If so, why, and what form? If not, why not?

Desjardins: We either get cremated or eaten by worms and get recycled, currently into dirt, but eventually possibly into Soylent Green.

Jacobsen: What do you make of the mystery and transience of life?

Desjardins: Life is a beautiful thing. It appeared by itself out of nothing billions of years ago. It kept evolving until it produced Homo Sapiens, which could colonize and change the planet, and might eventually become interstellar. Science has taught us more and more about the mechanisms of life, so it’s becoming less mysterious with time. The transience of life is a good thing, as otherwise there would be 100 billion people living on Earth, 94 billion of them living in old people’s homes.

Jacobsen: What is love to you?

Desjardins: Love is an emotion that binds people to example, I've bought roses for my wife every month each other. I never thought of it more deeply or since we started dating, and I have not forgotten any philosophically. But I express it regularly. For monthly roses in the 37 years we have been together.

Appendix I: Footnotes

[1] Academic Physician; Member, OlympIQ Society; Member, Mega Society.

[2] Individual Publication Date: July 8, 2021: <http://www.in-sightjournal.com/desjardins-1>; Full Issue Publication Date: September 1, 2021: <https://in-sightjournal.com/insight-issues/>.

*High range testing (HRT) should be taken with honest skepticism grounded in the limited empirical development of the field at present, even in spite of honest and sincere efforts. If a higher general intelligence score, then the greater the variability in, and margin of error in, the general intelligence scores because of the greater rarity in the population.

Appendix II: Citation Style Listing

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Conversation with Prime Minister Salih Hudayar on International Human Rights, the UN Charter, and the Contextualization within the 21st Century: Prime Minister, East Turkistan – Government-in-Exile (3)

2021-07-15

Interviewer: Scott Douglas Jacobsen

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Abstract

PM Salih Hudayar is the Prime Minister of East Turkistan (Government-in-Exile) and the Founder of the East Turkistan National Awakening Movement. He discusses: similar cases; and international law and rights.

Keywords: China, Chinese, East Turkistan, government-in-exile, Prime Minister, Salih Hudayar, Turks, UN Charter, Uyghurs.

Conversation with Prime Minister Salih Hudayar on International Human Rights, the UN Charter, and the Contextualization within the 21st Century: Prime Minister, East Turkistan – Government-in-Exile (3)

Please see the footnotes, bibliography, and citation style listing after the interview.

Interview conducted October 20, 2020.

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: And other than Tibet and some of the concerns about Taiwan or Hong Kong, what are other similar cases or ongoing cases that the Chinese government is working towards enacting similarly to the case for East Turkistan and its peoples?

Salih Hudayar[1],[2]: So East Turkistan has been, since 1950, used as a base for literally everything from nuclear weapons to military software to surveillance systems to new political programs that China wants to test programs, ethnic programs, so, in Tibet, they started with us. They started locking us in concentration camps. They started taking away our language. The international community didn't respond. Nobody responded effectively. Now, you have half a million Tibetans sent to similar

concentration camps. But China is saying that it's 'labour camps.' So, now, China is admitting they're sending them to labour camps. Half a million Tibetans have been sent to labour camps for 'labour and training.' This is one of those in 2020. So, all the national security laws and all the stuff like that, what they did in Hong Kong they just recently passed a national security law. They passed similar laws in East Turkistan and they were kind of gauging the international community to see how the international community would respond.

Between 2014 and 2016, they rounded up 200,000 people, men between the ages of 15 and 45 in East Turkistan. They were the first ones to go into the concentration camps and prisons on the basis that they were prone to become radicalized. They did it

so publicly just to see the kind of gauge how the international community would respond and once the international community just completely ignored it. Then that's when they started locking up millions of people and targeting them regardless of their age, whether they're male or female, whether they're religious or not.

Jacobsen: Now, under international law or international fundamental human rights, can you give the audience when they do read this, some of the layouts of the series of human rights violations on the level of the individual right? I'm speaking of, for example, things like forcible sterilization or even coerced or forced marriage to Chinese civilian men. These forms of violations of freedom of choice in a variety of domains. These individual human rights.

Hudayar: Yes. So, from the individual human rights perspective, they are being eradicated. Essentially the *UN Charter*, it guarantees freedom of religion, freedom of expression, freedom of..., even to engage in their own political views, etc. all is guaranteed under it: a right to live, a right to worship, a right to learn their language, a right to engage in their cultural practices. These are all guaranteed. In fact, even China's constitution guarantees people the right to practice our religion, to practice our culture, to speak our language, all these things. It's all on paper. But effectively, what's happening is, they are being violated.

We can't even speak our own language in schools or in public places. Our language is no longer being taught. Women and men can't even wear scarves because if you wear a scarf then you must be an extremist. That's one reason why you get sent to a concentration camp. If you are male, and if you have a beard, and if you're under 65, "Oh, then you must be an extremist. Therefore, you have to go to a concentration camp." If you own matches, that's illegal. You must be a terrorist, sent to a concentration camp. If you work out, and this is one of another reason, if you physically like to work out, e.g., just doing push-ups, going to a gym, you're a security threat because you're training to be a terrorist. You have to go to the concentration camp. If you have travelled overseas, you have to be sent to a concentration camp.

If you believe in any religion, whether it's Christianity, whether it's any other religion, you're probably becoming radicalized. You have to be sent to a concentration camp. All rights are being violated. Children are being separated from their families, half a million children. This is something that the Chinese government has acknowledged. It's

to promote education, to educate and train loyal Chinese citizens. So, what they're doing is, they're taking away our children from pre-K up until college, teach them to be loyal Chinese citizens, teaching them to not speak their language, teaching them to hate their own people to be like, "No, these are a bunch of barbarians." We are actually Chinese people. They were brainwashed into thinking that they were different.

To hate religion, to worship the Chinese state, these are things that are happening: Forcing our women to marry Chinese men, coercing them, in most cases by saying, "If you don't marry Chinese men, we're going to send you or your family to the concentration camps." Many of the people in diaspora countries, in neighbouring countries, even in the diaspora, many of them, even here in the US, a few of them went back, bullishly went back because what the Chinese government did was they arrested their parents and then have them call those children or those relatives outside of the country and told them to come back, "When you come back, they will let you go." When those people went back, neither those people nor their parents were ever heard from again.

The same thing happened to numerous members of my own family. In Central Asia, I told them, "Don't go back, don't be stupid," because I know they got my mom. I had a cousin. They got my mom and dad. They made my mom call us and said, "They have agreed to let us go if you come back." None of them are heard from again. There's so much individual violation like they force DNA collection. They force the collection of DNA and biometric information. Forcibly, a Chinese official lives in your home to ensure your loyalty to promote "ethnic unity" as the Chinese government called it. It is to ensure that you speak Chinese at your home and that you don't have any or are not engaging in religious practices or anything.

They offer you, "You're a Muslim." They'll offer you drinking. They'll bring some pork. They'll be like, "Eat it." If you don't eat it, then, you're an extremist and, therefore, you have to be sent to a concentration camp. In many cases, if you're a woman, they'll offer to sleep with you. They'll be like, "Oh, let's sleep together." If you refuse, if you refuse that sexual harassment and the rape that follows afterwards, you're an extremist and your whole family has to be sent to a concentration camp. There's no type of oppression like this that is comparable anywhere in the world in the 21st century. The humiliation from the individual basis all the way through the suffering as a national. It's

not visible in any other part of the world at this scale.

Appendix I: Footnotes

[1] Prime Minister, East Turkistan (Government-in-Exile); Founder, East Turkistan National Awakening Movement (ETNAM).

[2] Individual Publication Date: July 15, 2021: <http://www.in-sightjournal.com/hudayar-3>; Full Issue Publication Date: September 1, 2021: <https://in-sightjournal.com/insight-issues/>.

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[Summit](#), [National Institutes of Health](#), [OASIS Initiative](#)

Conversation with Alisha Graves on Girls' Education and Rights, and the Global Education Summit: Co-Founder, OASIS Initiative

2021-07-22

Interviewer: Scott Douglas Jacobsen

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Abstract

Alisha Graves, MPH is the Co-Founder of the OASIS Initiative. She discusses: the Sahel region; the Global Education Summit; the organizations that are getting involved; girls who lose out on the access to education earlier in life; the keynote speakers; high levels of population growth typically associated with lower rights for women and girls; fundamentalist religion; freedom of choice at all levels of life; and Oasis.

Keywords: Alisha Graves, education, girls, Global Education Summit, National Institutes of Health, OASIS Initiative.

Conversation with Alisha Graves on Girls' Education and Rights, and the Global Education Summit: Co-Founder, OASIS Initiative

Please see the footnotes, bibliography, and citation style listing after the interview.

Interview conducted July 21, 2021.

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: So, today, we are here with Alisha Graves. We are talking about the Global Education Summit. In particular, it is focusing on girls' education and family planning in the Sahel region. Its growth rate is among the highest in the world. This comes from a number of factors. However, with these societies that are in this region and this growth rate, what are the risk factors for girls not getting proper education? And what are the indicators of girls having that access to education? Noting, of course, that this is fundamentally a human right for all children, including girls.

Alisha Graves[1],[2]: Ok, so, related to risk factors for not staying in school, there are many. We started our work with a grant from the NIH, the National Institutes of Health here in the US to look at

maternal mortality and morbidity. So, women dying from pregnancy and childbirth in northern Nigeria, which has one of the highest rates of maternal death in the world. Actually, through the really careful, ethical, logical work of a colleague of mine, Daniel Perlman, he and his research team found that early marriage and childbearing is one of the great risks of maternal death. so then, they began asking the communities, "Well, what alternatives are there to marriage and childbearing?" And they heard, over and over again, that the alternative is – in fact, the only viable alternative is – school. then they looked around and noticed that most of the girls were leaving school around the same time puberty started and in early adolescence, 12 or 14. So, they asked the families; this education was so important: Why are the girls not in school? And they found that

consistently, the parents said, “The first daughters go to school, a great opportunity cost.” And they finished doing that for 6 years and barely read or write. So, it wasn’t worth sending their other daughters to school.

So that points to the importance of the quality of education. It also goes back to a question about risk factors. There are tremendous risks when girls leave school early and are more likely to be married and more likely to become pregnant. There is a tremendous risk to the girls’ health, which also precludes her from developing. The girl was taken out of school early, very early, is not really able to get a sense of self and a feeling of what she wants in life and ability to be able to express her own wishes and desires and form them in the first place and then express them to the people in their family and community.

So, it precludes girls from leading a full life and girls who marry and start bearing children early in addition to the health risks to them. Their own children are less likely to be educated. Their own children are less likely to have good nutrition. There’s just a lot of detriments at the household level when girls don’t complete school. then conversely, there are a lot of benefits when they do so, both in terms of girl’s self-expression, obviously literacy, numeracy and interest in that ability to work outside of the home. So, you can get a wage-paying job, should be more likely to be connected to social services, including health, health care and just generally more able to contribute to society and to the development of her community and her nation.

Jacobsen: What was the starting point of the Global Education Summit focus on girls’ education and family planning in the first place?

Graves: So, this summit itself is an international meeting to try to increase funding for education worldwide. It really is focused on education. Our event is a side event at the summit. We have been calling for increased funding, especially for girls’ education in the Sahel, for many years. So, we took advantage of this larger summit to offer a platform to make the case for really focusing on keeping girls in secondary school, because now, it’s happening in Africa. The country has changed a lot. The primary education rates have increased a lot over the last couple of decades. Secondary education, especially in the poorer countries of the region is still really low. So, we’re making the case that by keeping a focus or getting focused on girls’ secondary education.

There will be all of these other benefits, not just to the individual girls, but on a demographic level as well, because those girls are likely to get married and start bearing children later and they’re more able to negotiate with their partners about using family planning. They’re more likely to desire a smaller family and be able to achieve both with and through better communication with their partners, but also better access to health services, because that’s something that doesn’t come easily. so there are these regional and demographic benefits that will be reached by changing the demography of the region and in particular, changing the structure. So, we put the girls’ education and family planning together because, through family planning, the demographic benefits are achieved.

Jacobsen: So, the organizations that are getting involved here. What are some of the prominent ones that people can look forward to in terms of their becoming involved in this particular summit? And what are people hoping as some of the takeaways, what have been some of the takeaways in the past?

Graves: And so, we’re organizing this event. I am the co-founder and director of research and started as a project at the University of California, Berkeley. We’re also a nonprofit, also registered as a charitable organization in Canada. That’s the latest initiative in Canada and our partners are UC Berkeley. The partnership coordination unit, which is the Family Planning and Women’s Rights and Girls’ rights organization in West Africa. We have a partnership with the Center for Girls Education, which is a partner in northern Nigeria. It has had tremendous success keeping girls in school. They’ve shown a two-and-a-half-year increase in the age of marriage with girls who participated in the program. So, this is a partnership that we’re organizing this event. In terms of what we can hope for there, we’re really hoping to see a commitment from donors, especially donor agencies and the governments on how to increase aid and increase available programs for girls’ secondary education and for her reproductive health and rights in the West African Sahel.

Jacobsen: For girls who lose out on access to education earlier in life, what happens to them?

Graves: Everybody has a different story, but we know from surveys, demographic and health surveys and national-level surveys; we know that the less educated girls, again, are likely to marry earlier. They’re less likely to have access to health services. That includes reproductive health services, counselling. They’re less likely to have decision-

making power in the household. So, that could be regarding household resources like money and making decisions about their own ability to leave home. So, this goes on in terms of how empowerment decision-making/power is correlated with education. So, importantly, there's a virtuous circle that happens, which is that mothers always want to see their children as educated or better educated than they are. To the one, we can keep girls in school. We know that there'll be benefits to their own children in terms of what the mom expects and can be able to navigate for her children's education.

Jacobsen: Now, who are going to be the keynote speakers at this particular summit?

Graves: And so, I feel like I need to clarify this. Our event is a side event at the larger summit. We are an official side event, but ours is a half-day conference. Next Tuesday in the larger summit is full day, next Wednesday and Thursday, I believe, and possibly Thursday and Friday. So, I'm not sure who the keynote speakers at the Global Education Summit are. We have a few very high-profile speakers that were mentioned. One of them is Professor Nicolas Meda, who is a special advisor to the President of Burkina Faso and also a former minister of health. Another is the high commissioner to the Sahel coalition. He's the former minister of agriculture of Chad. It's interesting with the conference dedicated to education and training of West African women. But these are two of the most... I don't know if they describe themselves as feminists, but I know them personally and they're very active and in a position to influence education and rights in the region. So, we're hoping to get a special guest, but I know it's not confirmed and that person is a very high-profile education advocate. So, I'll let you know if that changes in the next day or two. Another person to mention is one of the key speakers, Habiba Mohammad, who is the director of the Center for Girls Education or a partner in northern Nigeria. She, for 15 years, has been dedicated to helping to keep girls at school and really changing social norms and expectations of girls and in the state, actually. But now, we have seen ripple effects throughout northern Nigeria.

Jacobsen: Are high levels of population growth typically associated with lower rights for women and girls?

Graves: Very good question. My guess is, "Yes." But I think the probably more careful answer would be to say that we know high rates of population growth generally correspond to an age structure that used to be very young. There is a lot of evidence that shows that a youthful age structure of the country is

more associated with greater civil unrest. So, I think in the context of the Sahel, which is a very young population, the regional population is very, very young. There been as long as I've been paying attention to it – for about 12 years now. There's just increasing unrest and violence. So, I think that compromises women's and girls' rights. It compromises the well-being of the people in the region at large. But women and girls tend to be more affected by violence in terms of their own safety, facility to move around places and so forth. So, I think that's part of the relationship there.

One of the things I would say about this relationship is we know when it easier it is for girls or women to access family planning services, which includes counselling and contraceptive methods, the more likely they are to uptake it. So, it's an obvious thing to say. But I think there are so many barriers to accessing reproductive health services in the Sahel that there's a relationship between the ability to access, usage rates, and contraceptive prevalence rates, and then that in turn contributes to high fertility and the population growth. One last thing I would say about that is it's true that there's generally a preference for large families in West Africa. However, there are more women who want to space or limit their pregnancies, but are not using any contraceptives. There are women who are current users. So, there's this latent demand for family planning. That's something that's there.

Jacobsen: In southern Nigeria, it's majority Christian. In northern Nigeria, it's majority Muslim. With northern Nigeria, how is fundamentalist religion associated with exacerbating violations of girls' rights or with assisting them come to fruition?

Graves: I don't feel qualified to answer that directly, but I would say our colleagues at the Center for Girls Education have done a really amazing job developing a community approach to get the community members engaged, including, oftentimes, conservative and religious leaders to get them on board with girls' education because is supported in the Islamic texts. So, for the girls' education, I think it hasn't been our experience in working with our partner there hasn't been negatively affected. In fact, I think they've been so successful in getting religious leaders on board that it has contributed to the overall success of keeping girls in school. I think we are now piloting safe space groups. So, that's like a group of girls who meet with a mentor and develop life skills. Often, they can also help literacy and numeracy equivalents to now piloting with the Center for Girls Education

for married adolescent girls, including good spacing of lessons. So far, we've been going very carefully because of the things that you just described. So, far, we haven't met with any resistance.

Jacobsen: For freedom of choice at all levels of life, how will having a higher level of educational access for a girl when she becomes a woman help her become financially independent, and so on?

Graves: That's a good question, and the truth is: Because it's such a youthful population, because of the sort of high levels of poverty, the job market looks very, very different. Lots of highly informal work there. So, that's very different from what most of your readers would be familiar with. That said, I mean, there are a few ways that there's a promotion of women in the workforce through our service that keeping the girls from school. First of all, through the safe spaces approach that we offer, we are actively promoting girls' literacy and numeracy improved much more than it was just through the traditional education system. So, they're more likely to be literate and more likely to be able to do the math and so forth. So, they have the skills. We're also testing vocational approaches for girls who are out of school and want to learn skills. So, in northern Nigeria, where this is still a relatively small pilot, but so far they've been very successful, teaching girls poultry farming, poultry rearing, tailoring, shoemaking, cell phone and small electronics repair. But those are giving girls concrete skills to go into the workforce. It's still, like I said, a pilot. I don't know. It's been a year or two. We'll have more concrete results. But they're moving towards opportunities for working outside the home.

Also, I think you're asking, 'How is education contributing to them being able to work outside the home?' One other thing I'd say is: The norms for girls in the communities where we've been working have changed radically over the years. When it was just a handful of teenage girls who were in school, families would gossip about those guys sending the girls and putting them at risk. Now that the majority of girls are going to school, the families are gossiping about those families who are keeping girls from going to school. So, expectations for girls have really changed. In northern Nigeria, the culture for a

long time now; it's hundreds of years that families have practiced seclusion until a woman, once she's married or a girl and she's married, generally is not allowed to leave the home without the permission of her husband. If we have a cascading mentorship program whereby the girls who go through this program can become mentors, after a few years, given the spaces, the spaces for other girls, those cascading mentors are usually married and they're usually the first in many, many generations to be allowed by their husbands to work outside the home. So, I find that pretty amazing.

Jacobsen: How can people find out more about Oasis?

Graves: So we just were established as a Canadian charity earlier this year, so we don't have a Canadian. The website is "www.oasisssahel.org." We as Oasis Canada charity will be fundraising for girls' safe spaces in Nigeria and Niger. So, Canadians could make tax-deductible gifts to Oasis initiative Canada, that we would pass through without any overhead charges to our partners in northern Nigeria and Niger.

Jacobsen: It's fabulous.

So different from the US, yes, I think so, too. I think it's awesome. I have through my Canadian husband; I have some connections in Canada, so I hope to later this year really to get fundraising for that. Because ultimately we want to see this approach. I want to see all girls staying in school for secondary school and being able to make important life choices. Part of our contribution to that will be to continue to offer these safe programs, especially in northern Nigeria and Niger. So, to do that, we need partners in the region and we're raising as much funding as we can raise.

Jacobsen: Thank you very much for your opportunity and the time today, Alisha.

Graves: Thank you, Scott. I enjoyed talking to you, taking your questions, and hopefully answered them sufficiently.

Jacobsen: Thanks so much.

Graves: Ok, have a nice day.

Appendix I: Footnotes

[1] Co-Founder, OASIS Initiative.

[2] Individual Publication Date: July 22, 2021: <http://www.in-sightjournal.com/graves>; Full Issue Publication Date: September 1, 2021: <https://in-sightjournal.com/insight-issues/>.

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Conversation with Prime Minister Salih Hudayar on Government-in-Exile and Instilling Democratic Norms and Processes: Prime Minister, East Turkistan – Government-in-Exile (4)

2021-07-22

Interviewer: Scott Douglas Jacobsen

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Abstract

PM Salih Hudayar is the Prime Minister of East Turkistan (Government-in-Exile) and the Founder of the East Turkistan National Awakening Movement. He discusses: governments in exile and democratic norms.

Keywords: China, Chinese, democracy, East Turkistan, government-in-exile, Prime Minister, Salih Hudayar, Turks, UN Charter, Uyghurs.

Conversation with Prime Minister Salih Hudayar on Government-in-Exile and Instilling Democratic Norms and Processes: Prime Minister, East Turkistan – Government-in-Exile (4)

Please see the footnotes, bibliography, and citation style listing after the interview.

Interview conducted October 20, 2020.

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: The United Nations recognizes 193 Member States in the world today. In regards to your election as the prime minister, the formal title includes a “Government-in-Exile.” For those who don’t know, what does it mean in regards to a government when it is in “exile”? And why this is important for the historical and ongoing contexts for East Turkistan?

Salih Hudayar[1],[2]: So, the government in exile is essentially a government which claims sovereignty over a territory and it has been forced into exile. It doesn’t see whatever is the current government there, as the legitimate government. It seeks to represent that specific country or a region as its own as the representatives. In our case in December 22nd, 1949, our former country, East

Turkistan, formerly known as the East Turkistan Republic, was overthrown. This is not something that we voluntarily gave away, our independence, or voluntarily agreed to be a part of China. Because if you look at Chinese government documents from 1949 to 1954, they killed, according to Chinese state media, 150,000 enemies of China. So, obviously, our people resisted this.

To this day, we have continued to resist Chinese occupation of our country. Some of our leaders were able to escape into the Soviet Union and just general political pressures from the Soviets. They weren’t able to create an actual exile government. They were able to create a national committee, but they weren’t able to create a government in exile. Others fled into Turkey. Even there, because of political pressure, we weren’t able to engage in political advocacy. We

were just there. You can't engage in any political advocacy. You should be happy that we were here very much like that. It's only after the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991 that we regained our hope for independence.

Not that we have never lost hope of it, it continues. We struggled for it. There are numerous historical uprisings over the past seventy years. The last armed uprising was in 1990, in April 1990 in which we had several hundred people take up arms to advocate and struggle for East Turkistan in the present. The only reason they took arms was because in that town, 200 women forcibly have their babies aborted. I saw our people tried to go to the local government buildings and shortlist grievances. So, seeing what happened in Afghanistan, a guy who was only 27 at that time, 26 years old.

He was inspired by what happened in Afghanistan. He said if he was trying to buy time. He said like if we were able to resist; maybe, we'll get support from the international community. Maybe, they will help us. Unfortunately, the world didn't even hear about this massive uprising until months later after the Chinese government arrested over 7,000 people in connection to this. But with the independence of the Central Asian countries, we had to advocate for our independence more openly because from 1960s up until really late, until 1990, everything had been underground. Because the Chinese, they executed a lot of leaders. In prison a lot of people, and so everything was just underground, everyone's like, "Hey, we should do something."

But we weren't able to do anything because there was no real external support. But starting in the 1990s, our people started to go out of Central Asia and into Europe and out of Turkey, into Europe and into the United States. In 2004, September 14, 2004, that is when the pre-existing East Turkistan organizations like East Turkistan National Congress, East Turkistan Freedom Center and the East Turkistan revolutionary branch, the East Turkistan Committee, all these different leaders of the different East Turkistan organizations came together here in Washington, D.C. to declare the East Turkistan government in exile. Since then, we have been based in D.C. I got involved in early 2019, in April, not seeing my success raising awareness and getting the US Congress and others to move on the East Turkistan issue.

The government in exile, they reached out to me and said, "Hey, we'd like you in November 2018," when they initially reached out to me. At that time, I politely declined because I didn't want to be; I just wanted to be responsible for other things. Because I

was able to get a lot of popular support within our own community, our diaspora getting a petition of 100,000 signatures. On a petition, it might not be a big deal for people in the way. For the rest of the world, it might not be a big deal. But for us, that's something very difficult to do. To get a 108,000 of our people to agree on one thing and say, "Hey, I want to. I agree with this." It is very different and it's very difficult. Because in our diaspora, we number at maximum about a million.

And in the Central Asian countries, advocacy on East Turkistan is prohibited even in Turkey advocacy. Turkistan is limited. So, not only giving us the limited external Western diaspora community to really focus on our issue. Our petition to the White House got over a hundred and eight thousand signatures in more than one month. The only reason I made this petition was that there was a previous petition made by a different organization, human rights organization. They used the Chinese terminology for our country. They just call us human rights abusers. They referred to our people as an ethnic minority, which we are not. We don't see ourselves as minority because we are still the majority in East Turkistan. They just asked the U.S. government to just condemn the human rights abusers.

And it came to my attention and I was being asked by our people, "Should we sign this?" And I said, "No. Because if we sign this, China's going to use this." Let's say it gets 100,000 signatures and it gets into the White House. China is going to use that to go down our face and we'd be like, "It's just a few a bunch of people that they don't want, East Turkistan." The leaders are happy and China. Yes, there's a little bit human rights problems, but we can work with that. We have accepted that we were the moral minority. We would have accepted the Chinese colonial term for our country, which means we would have accepted Chinese rule. And we have absolutely have not accepted historically. But I said, "No, we need to – let me put out a different petition."

So, I filed a petition, condemning China's 21st century Holocaust in occupied East Turkistan. I have the same thing we've been pushing for sanctions on Chinese officials on the *Magnitsky Act* and passed the *Uyghur Act*, to recognize the genocide in East Turkistan. Despite the other pre-existing organization, the human rights organization is a large human rights organization. In spite of them pushing against this petition, accusing me of being a suffragist, accusing me of dividing our community, etc., at the end, our people, I told them, "You are

human rights activists. How are you going to get it? How are you going to get human rights? If you don't have a country, if you don't have a government, if you don't have a chance to elect your own people, how are you going to get that human right?"

Yes, there are some human rights, written on a piece of paper. Just like under Chinese law, we have human rights. Under Chinese law, we have autonomy on a piece of paper. But you need your own independence to achieve that. I made a video message with tens of thousands of views and people all across the world are in our community. They're like, "What?" Let's sign on their petition. So, 108,000 versus 12,700 on the WC petition. So, you get a lot more respect and support. You wonder. If I ask people to do something in our community... which I did, I said, "We need to organize demonstrations in your own country."

Your governments, parliaments, etc., you need to engage in grassroots activism. We can't just rely on a few organizations here and there to do it. We need to use the correct terminology. We need to emphasize that this is what our people want. By now, a majority of our population in the diaspora – I would say – prior to me coming out and creating some of this. There was about 60% or 70% who advocated, who wanted independence. But now, it's over 95%. In fact, right now, it has gotten to the point where if you're in the community, people ask, "Do you want independence?" You can't even answer, "No." Because in our community's perception, if you answer, "No," then there's a problem. There's a problem with you. Unfortunately, this is the way it has to be.

So, seeing that the government in exile wanted me to represent them because I was appearing at important events, I think the university is talking about our issue meeting with members of Congress and raising our issue, meeting with the State Department and raising our issue. So, they asked me to represent them as their ambassador to the U.S., which I didn't accept until April of 2019. Then the government in exile, though it was created in the US and based in Washington, the leadership was still in Turkey and they were heavily under Turkey's influence. They would make a lot of anti-Semitic and anti-Western statements. That's because Turkey's pressure has influenced and has been on a leash.

So I began to push back against that within our own government and then, ultimately, a parliament had to choose sides. Then I also said, "We need to get these people in the grassroots. We need to get grassroots elections done." I tried to push for grassroots elections and tried to get them to allow to change the constitution, which would allow the people to directly vote for the president, the prime minister, and so forth. But I wasn't able to do that. Before it was only three representatives. They can only vote three representatives in each nation. But I said, "No." We need to do it to where they can elect ten and then have those ten decide amongst themselves and narrow it down to three.

Because we need to be democratic. We need to run it in a more democratic fashion. We have to teach our people democratic process, because I genuinely believe that we will regain our independence much closer than many people think. We have to be prepared for that. In order to be prepared for that, we have to focus on democratizing the various institutions that we have here in exile.

Appendix I: Footnotes

[1] Prime Minister, East Turkistan (Government-in-Exile); Founder, East Turkistan National Awakening Movement (ETNAM).

[2] Individual Publication Date: July 22, 2021: <http://www.in-sightjournal.com/hudayar-4>; Full Issue Publication Date: September 1, 2021: <https://in-sightjournal.com/insight-issues/>.

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Conversation with Prime Minister Salih Hudayar on Colonialism, Terminology, and the Media: Prime Minister, East Turkistan – Government-in-Exile (5)

2021-08-01

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Abstract

PM Salih Hudayar is the Prime Minister of East Turkistan (Government-in-Exile) and the Founder of the East Turkistan National Awakening Movement. He discusses: colonialism.

Keywords: China, Chinese, colonialism, East Turkistan, government-in-exile, Prime Minister, Salih Hudayar, Uyghurs.

Conversation with Prime Minister Salih Hudayar on Colonialism, Terminology, and the Media: Prime Minister, East Turkistan – Government-in-Exile (5)

Please see the footnotes, bibliography, and citation style listing after the interview.

Interview conducted October 20, 2020.

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: When we look at some of the international community is strong against the historical records of settler colonial societies, in particular some of the European based or enacted settler colonial societies, these include Australia, New Zealand, the United States, Canada and South Africa. These countries have come to work towards some marginal reconciliation, to some extent of reconciliation with the indigenous population. The most prominent people that come to kind of public consciousness would be people like Nelson Mandela. However, there are numerous other individuals who have worked on non-indigenous and indigenous alike towards that form of reconciliation and independence for those peoples, those ethnic and cultural groups who were colonized and then settled in East Turkistan.

This action of the Chinese government is explicitly a colonial effort. So, if the reaction of

historical and current settler colonialism in other societies, in terms of working towards the need towards to work towards reconciliation, why is there not necessarily silence, but a dampened response, towards this form of colonialism ongoing in East Turkistan, occupied East Turkistan?

Salih Hudayar[1],[2]: Many people are one misinformed. Because many people aren't even aware that we were an independent country or that we were occupied. You still have the media portraying us, as I stated, as Muslims, therefore, making a change in internal affairs issues. You still have what they hear about, the Chinese, they automatically think, "Oh, it's just a part of China." They must have this Muslim problem, especially post 9/11. Being Muslim, they had negative complications, including the war on terror. A lot of different governments, including the Muslim

governments, used the excuse of counter-terrorism to take out its opponents, some more legitimate. There are legitimate counter terrorism concerns. But others like those being done by China.

It was the much needed excuse that China needed to effectively carry out its final solution, which we are seeing at this point. By portraying us as just a bunch of Islamist terrorists, even though our movement is a national movement, even though it's largely a secular movement, that doesn't matter. Because when you have a majority of the population being Muslim, and you have negative perceptions on Muslims across the world, it's the narrative. In fact, this is another issue. The Chinese prior to 2001 would never refer to Uyghurs as terrorists. Because prior to that, that term wasn't really known or prominent, let's say.

However, two weeks before 9/11 happened, China's puppet the secretary, the Communist Party secretary in East Turkistan. He had a large press conference with international media. He was trying to seek international foreign investment. So, he said, 'Everything is peaceful here. People get along very happy. There have been no acts of violence.' Some journalists act upon the actions like other people advocating for East Turkistan. We heard that there was a republic here before. He's like, 'Oh, no, no, no, that's just a few things made up by Western imperialists. There is no East Turkistan. The people here, they're happy. Everybody's happy, there's no resistance of any sort.'

Then 9/11 happened. Then within 48 hours of 9/11 happening, China claimed, president at that time, that China was a victim of East Turkistani terrorism. That China supports the global war on terror. Then in November of 2001, on November 11, the day before Independence Day of November 12, China submitted a document to the UN Security Council stating that since 1990; several thousand East Turkistan terrorist attacks have occurred. They listed various different groups. All of them East Turkistani groups. The majority of them, we don't even know existed. We've never heard of those names. But one of them was the East Turkistan Islamic Movement. This is the first time that it was mentioned. Before that, you can't find any record of anything.

Whether from China, whether from others referring to the East Turkistan Islamic Movement, China claimed that it was the East Turkistan Islamic

Movement. They were pushing for East Turkistan independence and that they were a terrorist organization affiliated with al-Qaida. They began to lobby the U.S., the U.N. to recognize this group as a terrorist organization. Unfortunately, the U.S., the U.N. recognized this group as a terrorist organization in 2002 and 2003, in order to get many people to think that there was a *quid pro quo*, in order to secure China's support for the Iraq invasion or the war in Iraq. The way that China portrayed it in our media in East Turkistan at that time. It's not our media, but in the Chinese media in East Turkistan, at that time, was that the US and the UN declared East Turkistan independence as a terrorist movement.

Because the acronym ETIM, East Turkistan Islamic Movement, also happens to have the same acronym as the broad East Turkistan Independence Movement; there is no organization calling itself the East Turkistan Independence Movement, but it's a very broad term. Using that, China has been able to put out this narrative. So, there's two reasons for this. People are informed in the worst about East Turkistan. The media, they continue to spread and to write reports on what's happening with the human rights abuses that are in a more favorable terms in the Chinese narrative, using the Chinese narrative to write it down. Because at the end of the day, China's biggest fear is to expand independence.

And in order to prevent that from happening, human rights abuses happen all across the world. Every country in the world, whether it's the United States or Canada the E.U. or Japan; there will always be human rights issues. This is something that is a reality. In many cases, under international law, it's like a so-called internal affairs issue. So, China, its biggest fear is East Turkistan as independent. So, in order to prevent that, it's okay to have some human rights issue backlash, so long as it maintains the control. By using this influence, they have misinformed the world. To this day, that media, most of the media, not all of them, most of the media continues to label us, as, Chinese Muslims or Muslims in China or ethnic minorities almost always exclusively using the Chinese term in the new territory without even giving interpretation or translation of what that term means. So, that's why many people are uninformed about this. I think that's why, to get into your question; and I think that's why we're seeing this effort.

Appendix I: Footnotes

[1] Prime Minister, East Turkistan (Government-in-Exile); Founder, East Turkistan National Awakening Movement (ETNAM).

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Appendix II: Citation Style Listing

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Conversation with Prime Minister Salih Hudayar on Economic Concerns and Human Rights: Prime Minister, East Turkistan – Government-in-Exile (6)

2021-08-08

Interviewer: Scott Douglas Jacobsen

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Abstract

PM Salih Hudayar is the Prime Minister of East Turkistan (Government-in-Exile) and the Founder of the East Turkistan National Awakening Movement. He discusses: concentration camps and labor camps; the U.N. Human Rights Council; and economic concerns trumping human rights concerns.

Keywords: China, Chinese, concentration camps, East Turkistan, East Turkistan National Awakening Movement, human rights, government-in-exile, labor camps, Prime Minister, Salih Hudayar, Uyghurs.

Conversation with Prime Minister Salih Hudayar on Economic Concerns and Human Rights: Prime Minister, East Turkistan – Government-in-Exile (6)

Please see the footnotes, bibliography, and citation style listing after the interview.

Interview conducted October 20, 2020.

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: There's also violations in terms of labor right, alongside these concentration camps and prisons or labor camps. So, two questions follow from that observation. One, how are these prisons, concentration camps and labor camps being documented? And two, what is the extent of the forced labor in the labor camps?

Salih Hudayar[1],[2]: So as far as the first question, in terms of documentation, as far as like the concentration camps and the prisons and the labor camps, the East Turkistan National Awakening Movement, we were the first organization to really put out actual coordinates of these facilities. Back in 2018, and then again once more in 2019, it's only recently this past, about last month actually, that *BuzzFeed* and *ASPI* reproduced the maps that we created with the coordinates. They said that they

discovered four hundred something facilities, such facilities. It's like the same thing. We put it out in open source. We put it out on our Web site to wherever people can push.

And we tried to get the media to cover it. But most of the media, because we insist that they use the term East Turkistan, at least; we weren't opposed to them saying some other terms, but we insisted that they, at least, get this right with the Uyghurs calling it East Turkistan. So, there are organizations like the ASPI, other organizations; that are doing the research to look at it as well. As far as like the labor camps and the slave labor, the Chinese government's own propaganda. Their own ads that they put up online.

We located 600 people work in this industrial facility. So, they're going to get "job training." That's what they call it, "Job training." But it's like, "Okay, nice way of saying, 'We're going to send

them to the forced labor camp.” Many of these people are not getting any salaries. Many of these people don’t even want to leave their hometowns to work in other places. While, at the same time, they’re being replaced by Chinese settlers. Chinese settlers are being given homes, cash, and even a Uyghur or Turkic wife for the man and 6 to 12 acres of land, while we are being dispossessed and being used as slave labor.

ASPI, there is a lot of research and documented real companies. For example, these facilities, they discovered which company was actually running it and how those companies sold their good to Western companies. For example, they documented over 80 different popular global brands complicit in the use of forced to slave labor. In addition to that, we have videos of thousands of young men and women, hundreds of videos of being boarded up, trains being boarded up. People being bussed out to work. Then you have videos of elderly people and women that are left working in labor, building roads, building ditches, irrigation canals, stuff like that.

You have like a very elderly woman, a grandmother, trying to push a wheelbarrow. The worst, the best is you see the Chinese security forces right next to you, right back in that video.

Jacobsen: Recently, there was a press release put out in response to the appointment or election of China to the U.N. Human Rights Council. What has been the reaction of some of the international community to this? What has been a particular response from you?

Hudayar: So other than the U.S. State Secretary, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, you haven’t really had the international community or governments issuing statements or anything of that sort. You have human rights organizations all expressing their disapproval or condemnation or fear. But that’s just been about it. Few media outlets have reported on it. But other than that, there hasn’t been much opposition.

Jacobsen: Why?

Hudayar: Well, China seems to have used this economic and political influence to get those countries in the U.N. to vote for it. It is corruption

Appendix I: Footnotes

[1] Prime Minister, East Turkistan (Government-in-Exile); Founder, East Turkistan National Awakening Movement (ETNAM).

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and a lot of countries, most of these newspapers, the media, they’re owned by wealthy people at the top level. People who have business interests in China. They don’t want to disrupt those business interests in China by writing, by having published an article about some disapproval of government checks of disapproval of China’s membership to the U.N. But a government, they don’t want to upset China. They still want to continue working with China.

Even though, most of the world knows that China is engaging in a genocide. They feel that, “Oh, what can we do. If we express comments on it, we will lose disrupt our relations with them. We won’t be able to get loans. We won’t be able to get support from China, which is the way that most countries behave because they’re economically intertwined with China.”

Jacobsen: So in this case, is an economic concern trumping human rights concerns for most countries?

Hudayar: Yes. For most countries, it’s about economics. At the end of the day, everything, unfortunately, is about economics. The whole reason why China is engaging in the genocide is about economics. Because if they circle down with just that nothing valuable there, China is not going to waste the time and effort to occupy East Turkistan. hey colonize East Turkistan. We don’t have anything there. They would have left us alone. But we have gold; we have natural gas; we have uranium, even the wind power. We have the wind power from East Turkistan, which is what brings energy to Chinese cities inside China. Also, we’re very strategically located roughly about one fifth of China’s total territory, or what is now known as China.

And they bring nine other different countries where, the cornerstone of China’s Belt and Road Initiative, which is again, has to do with economics. It is achieve China’s global dream of becoming the most powerful economic, military, and political power in the world. We are a hindrance to their dream. That’s why China from its security perspective; it’s carrying out this final solution to prevent us from getting our independence.

Appendix II: Citation Style Listing

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Free of Charge 9 – All Things Ethical

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Abstract

Dr. Herb Silverman is the Founder of the Secular Coalition for America, the Founder of the Secular Humanists of the Lowcountry, and the Founder of the Atheist/Humanist Alliance student group at the College of Charleston. He authored [Complex variables](#) (1975), [Candidate Without a Prayer: An Autobiography of a Jewish Atheist in the Bible Belt](#) (2012) and [An Atheist Stranger in a Strange Religious Land: Selected Writings from the Bible Belt](#) (2017). He co-authored [The Fundamentals of Extremism: The Christian Right in America](#) (2003) with Kimberley Blaker and Edward S. Buckner, [Complex Variables with Applications](#) (2007) with Saminathan Ponnusamy, and [Short Reflections on Secularism](#) (2019), [Short Reflections on American Secularism's History and Philosophy](#) (2020), and [Short Reflections on Age and Youth](#) (2020). He discusses: current existential risks; the humanist orientation on life; pragmatic side of the humanist ethos; a complete rejection of the existence of gods; no regard for the tenets of Christianity; understanding human behaviour; the existential risks to the American republic; the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*; the American educational curricula; make American education more humanistic; Republicans working to restrict African Americans from full voting rights and privileges; and a refined universalist morality.

Keywords: America, Christianity, ethics, Golden Rule, Herb Silverman, Humanism, morality.

Free of Charge 9 – All Things Ethical

Please see the footnotes, bibliography, and citation style listing after the interview.

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: You made some great points about all religions, as an argument posed for the Golden Rule, having the same fundamental moral theoretic structure. They have the Golden Rule; therefore, they have the same moral philosophical base. Similarly, you stated, “And a version of this can also be found in almost every ethical tradition, with no gods necessary.” In other words, the Golden Rule exists pervasively and human beings use it, and build systems of moral philosophy on it. It can become tricky, as when the definition of the in-group leads to the Golden Rule only applying to one’s narrow ethnic and/or religious group. What

can be the application of a humanist ethical orientation on the Golden Rule on current existential risks, globally? In short, how is humanist ethics, here, universal and universally applicable compared to parochial religious ethics?

Dr. Herb Silverman[1],[2]: The Golden Rule can mean different things to different people. Typically we think of it as treating others as we would like to be treated. Alternatively, it says do not treat others in ways that you would not like to be treated. One problem comes with the definition of “others.” Sometimes it means only how we treat others within a certain religion. A religion might require treating

“infidels” with disdain, or worse. Treating others as we want to be treated might also involve trying to convert others to the religion of the believer. Many people don’t want to be treated as some people treat themselves. Universal human ethics has nothing to do with parochial religious beliefs. It requires empathy and reciprocity. We should try to find out how different people would like to be treated and try to treat them that way as long as such treatment doesn’t cause harm to them or to others.

Jacobsen: You described a shorthand of the humanist orientation on life. Also, as a side comment, you mentioned a progressive philosophy of life without a laundry list. Is a “laundry list” a bad idea? Simply for the fact, for any example or limited rule, you can find a counterexample to the example or the rule, because life is complex and, often, superficially contradictory.

Silverman: A laundry list is not necessarily a bad idea, depending on what we mean by such a list. Regarding humanism, we say that knowledge of the world is derived by observation, experimentation, and rational analysis; that humans are an integral part of nature, the result of unguided evolutionary change; that humans are social by nature and find meaning in relationships; that working to benefit society maximizes individual happiness; that we are guided by reason and inspired by compassion, and so on. If this is a laundry list, so be it. On the other hand, we assert that ethical values are derived from human need and interest as tested by experience. This means we continually learn new ways to improve humanism.

Jacobsen: What about individuals who say, “I don’t care,” as in they do not care about others or indeed, appear unable to feel compassion? Where do these individuals fit into the pragmatic side of the humanist ethos?

Silverman: We can try to describe how showing compassion toward others can make you feel better about yourself. Failing to succeed, pragmatically we should try to keep such people (perhaps some of them psychopaths) from hurting others.

Jacobsen: Why can’t some individuals stomach a complete rejection of the existence of gods? What reasons have come forward for you?

Silverman: I’m sometimes asked how I can go on living without a belief in God. Such people often believe that the purpose of this life is to prepare for an afterlife. They see no other purpose for human life. Such god belief might be how they overcome their fear of death. There may be no purpose OF life, the individual.

but humans can and should find many purposes IN life. We have only one life to live, and we should make the best of it.

Jacobsen: Individuals in the United States, White Christian Nationalists, want, in their dying demographic gasp, a complete control of the American republic without regard, or much, for freethinkers and other non-Christian religious Americans. Why?

Silverman: It’s even stranger. Many White Christian Nationalists in the United States seem to have no regard for the tenets of Christianity. They appear to be worshipping Donald Trump, rather than Jesus. They applauded attacks by Trump on non-white immigrants, African-Americans, women, gun control, science, climate change, and other social justice issues. They seem mostly engaged with anti-abortion, about which Jesus said nothing. They harken to the days of white privilege when they could discriminate against those of a different race and those who had non-Christian religious beliefs or no religious beliefs. They would like to turn America into their version of a Christian nation, not the secular nation we are. The good news is that many Americans are turning away from their fundamentalist religion, especially younger people, because of political stances that White Christian Nationalists have taken on. They include issues like women’s rights, abortion, immigration, LGBTQ, and other social justice issues, not to mention pedophilia. Some former or present Christians now believe that our humanist positions are more consistent with the message of Jesus than with the message of White Christian Nationalists.

Jacobsen: Furthermore, in that light, why do, indeed, ideas matter, fundamentally, to understanding human behaviour? As the brain is not a black box, but consciousness or an individual mind can appear as if a black box – so probably is, we can only peer at the outward behaviours and the descriptions of inner experience described by an individual.

Silverman: Human behavior is often irrational, so understanding it is not easy. It might be based on false rumors (think QAnon) or on wishful thinking (think religion). To understand an individual’s behavior, we should communicate with that individual and learn what motivated the behavior. Even then, the individual might lie or make something up. For instance, parents can say how much they love their children, yet beat them and not mind that the child is suffering. To understand present behavior, it helps to know the past history of the individual.

Jacobsen: What are the existential risks to the American republic now? How are these existential risks for global society, given declining American semi-hegemony?

Silverman: The greatest existential risk to the American republic is also the greatest existential risk to the global society—climate change caused by humans and the need to address this danger. Fortunately nations are listening to the dire scientific predictions and coming together to cooperate with the United Nations on landmarks like the Paris Agreement and the Climate Action Summit. A national risk to Americans was the attack on our democracy on January 6, with the storming of the Capitol building by Trump supporters. Those riots for the first time made me worry about what we need to do to keep our democracy. Another serious concern is that America sometimes supports authoritarian leaders for economic gain instead of pushing for human rights.

Jacobsen: In the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, you mentioned an important and oft-overlooked part – skimmed: “nationality, place of residence, gender, national or ethnic origin, colour, or religion.” If looking to a possibly more humanist future, would you add anything into it, in spite of its strengths?

Silverman: We should take all these into account for human rights. When I spoke of “gender,” I didn’t know all the implications. I would include transgender, but hadn’t before heard of gender fluid, bi-gender, and other terminology. Of course, regardless of a person’s pronoun, we should treat everyone with respect.

Jacobsen: What has been excluded from the American educational curricula? Those courses necessary for a more educated populace and necessary for a functioning democracy.

Silverman: I think too much time is spent trying to instill symbolic patriotism, and not enough time spent talking about some of our faults. This is incorporated in what is called “critical race theory,” which does not denigrate whites but talks about what privileges we have had over the years, and what we might do now to help those who weren’t born with such privileges. People should better understand our real history, including the meaning of our godless Constitution. We should teach people how to think, not what to think. I would like to see critical thinking become part of our national curriculum, including a mandatory course on logic.

Jacobsen: What would make American education more humanistic? I read complaints about

vouchers, private religious school financial and other privileges, and discrimination in hiring against atheists and others in America, as examples of issues on some fault lines. It’s unfortunate.

Silverman: Unfortunately, some private religious schools don’t have to teach topics that every educated person should know, like the theory of evolution. Some of these schools rely on indoctrination rather than education. Conservative Christians are influencing many school districts by introducing legislation to bring back school-sponsored prayers and demand that sex education classes in public schools teach “abstinence only,” instead of preparing teens to avoid pregnancy and disease. Some religious schools often incorrectly get to use some of our public tax dollars to support them through vouchers and other ways.

I like what one of our founders, Ben Franklin, said: “When a religion is good, I conceive that it will support itself; and, when it cannot support itself, and God does not take care to support it, so that its professors are obliged to call for help of the Civil Power, it is a sign, I apprehend, of its being a bad one.

Jacobsen: The natural question: Why are Republicans working to restrict African Americans from full voting rights and privileges (e.g., easier, reasonable access)?

Silverman: This is an easy question to answer. Most African-Americans vote for candidates from the Democratic party. Of course, the right thing to do would be to make it easy for them to vote their conscience. Unfortunately, Republican politicians these days rarely seem to do the right thing. Their only interest seems to be to get elected and re-elected.

Jacobsen: If we can learn to become more accurate in ethical decisions through an approximation of objective morality through a refined universalist morality, is ethical truth, or are morally correct choices, a natural feature of the natural world if evolved critters are roaming around in it, whether or not they have the mental capacity to know and decide at a sufficiently advanced level? In short, are universalist (approximating objective) ethical truths a derivative feature of universes with evolved or engineered minds? That is, if no beings in a universe, then no ethics in a universe; if beings, then inevitably ethics.

Silverman: Many people used to equate the Bible with objective morality, but not so much anymore.

Throughout history, the Bible has been quoted to justify slavery, second-class status for women, anti-Semitism, executing blasphemers and homosexuals, and burning witches and heretics. Some actions deemed moral 2000 years ago are considered immoral today. Morality evolves over time as our understanding of human needs within a culture changes. Even those who believe in biblical inerrancy interpret some passages in a different way today than in centuries past, in a manner more

consistent with many humanist principles. We make judgments about which portions of a sacred text to take literally, which to take metaphorically, and which to ignore completely. We may never reach what we consider objective morality, but we are a lot closer to it than in past centuries.

Jacobsen: Thank you for the opportunity and your time, Dr. Silverman.

Silverman: Thank you.

Appendix I: Footnotes

[1] Founder, Secular Coalition for America; Founder, Secular Humanists of the Low Country; Founder, Atheist/Humanist Alliance, College of Charleston.

[2] Individual Publication Date: August 15, 2021: <http://www.in-sightjournal.com/free-of-charge-9>;
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Article 19(1) of the Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania, 1977 is a Legal Opportunity to Freethinkers in the Nation

2021-08-16



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Article 19(1) of the Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania, 1977 is a Legal Opportunity to Freethinkers in the Nation

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Dar es salaam, Tanzania – East Africa.

Freethinkers in Tanzania are small in percentage, yet their rights as human beings are provided, guaranteed and protected by the supreme law of the land which is the **Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania, 1977** specifically in article 19(1), whereby the article provides that...*“Every person has the right to the freedom of conscience, faith and choice in matters of religion, including the freedom to change his religion or faith.”*

This implies that every person in the United Republic of Tanzania is free to make a choice in what to believe and what not to believe essentially in matters of religion, and faith. A quotation below has a clear explanation of what the mentioned article does intend to portray. *“Freedom of religion and conscience this right means that no person should be required to profess any religion or other belief against his or her desire. Additionally, no one should be punished or penalized in any way because he or she chooses one religion over another or indeed opts for no religion at all”*[3]

Therefore article 19(1) is the foundation that makes Tanzanian freethinkers, atheists, non-believers and secular humanists have an opportunity of enjoying their right of non-believing. In fact, it is a legal chance for Tanzanian Freethinkers (non-believers) to make use of such constitutional avenues in order to push forward their activism and the movement in general national wide. The viewpoint of article 19(1) is also reflected in article 3(1) of the Constitution which among other things the article expresses that the United Republic of Tanzania is democratic, and a secular state. Hence forth secular humanists and freethinkers in Tanzania are free to use this opportunity which is enshrined under article 19(1). On the other hand in case any constitutional right is violated, then such right can be claimed and enforced by instituting proceedings for redress in the High Court of Tanzania, this is provided under article 30(3) of the Constitution. Therefore Secular humanists as well as freethinkers of Tanzania are urged to use this right of freedom of conscience and a right of choice on what to believe particularly in terms of faith or even a right of not believing in anything, because it is a Constitutional right. For that reason freethinkers may well undergo their activism peacefully and respectfully while observing article 19(1).

The essence of article 19(1) is entrenched in safeguarding the so called Individual Rights. Individual rights are natural rights that all human beings are born with and they cannot be taken away by the government but the government's duty is only to protect them. These individual rights do include

the right to life, right to equality, freedom of speech, and expression, freedom of association, freedom of religion and conscience, together with freedom of assembly.

However such right of freedom of religion and conscience as individual right may be violated either by some parents who denies their families a right to decide on what to believe or not to believe in matters of what to trust either religion or not to trust in any religion, much of the parents do emphasis that their religions is the one to be adopted by their families.

While in some places the public will not tolerate existence of people who do not believe their religions hence may disturb those non-believers. On the other hand in Tanzania the individual rights like freedom of religion and conscience can be protected as follows: First it is through the **Constitution** of the United Republic of Tanzania, as well as the Courts of law. Individual rights are enshrined in the constitution and Courts of law are empowered by the constitution under article 30(3) to protect human rights. Second it is through the **Commission for Human Rights and Good Governance**, which is established by article 129(1) of the Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania, 1977. While the law governing the operationalization of that commission, it is the **Commission for Human Rights and Good Governance Act, Cap 391**, Revised Edition of 2009. Where among other functions it empowers the Commission for Human Rights in Tanzania to promote, protect and preserve human rights in the nation. That mentioned function of the Commission is expressly noticeable in section 6(1) (a) of the Act, and the section provides that ...*“the commission shall carry out the following functions (a) to promote within the country the protection and the preservation of human rights and of duties to the society in accordance with the constitution and the laws of the land”*

Third it is through the **press**. Free media is in a good position to play a big role on informing the public concerning violations of individual rights such as freedom of religion and conscience, hence the presence of much informed people in the community about violations of individual rights then the cry becomes a general outcry, this may force the authorities to take some measures so as to stop the violations. Fourth it is through **adhering to the principles of rule of law**, this viewpoint insists on equality before the law, that every member of the community is to be left free to enjoy rights that are guaranteed by the law and the Constitution such as a right of freedom of being left free to choose one religion over another or indeed being left free to opt for no religion at all. Therefore obedience of rule of

law is the best methodology of protecting human rights including the rights of minority groups. Fifth it is through **providing Civic education to the public**, civic education does teach and educate citizens about their basic rights as a human being and their obligations to the nation as responsible citizens.[3]

Conclusively, freethinkers in Tanzania are urged to exploit this right under Article 19(1) as a constitutional and legal right in order to push their activism countrywide since it is a legal opportunity that may not be enjoyed in some other parts of the world. However such right is not absolute, it has to be enjoyed subject to obedience of other laws which regulate the modus operandi of enjoying such right. For instance article 30(1) of the Constitution among

other things it maintains that human rights and freedom which is enshrined in the constitution should not be enjoyed by a person to the extent of causing interference to freedom of other persons or interfere public interest, while article 30(2)a, of the Constitution provides that while enjoying the rights from article 19(1) then there must be an ensuring measures that... *“the rights and freedoms of other people or of the interests of the public are not prejudiced by the wrongful exercise of the freedoms and rights of individuals.”*

Thus article 30(1), and (2) a, of the Constitution provides some limitations of enjoying those rights enshrined in article 19(1) of the Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania, 1977.

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Appendix I: Footnotes

[1] Lucas Is Assistant Editor **African Freethinker/ in-sightjournal.com** (Tanzania), a Lawyer, an Advocate of the High Court of Tanzania, a Notary Public and Commissioner for Oaths, Member of the Bar Association of Tanzania main land, also a Freethinker activist in Tanzania. (E-mail: isamwaka01@gmail.com.)

[2] Individual Publication Date: August 16, 2021: <https://in-sightjournal.com/2021/08/16/article-191-of-the-constitution-of-the-united-republic-of-tanzania-1977-is-a-legal-opportunity-to-freethinkers-in-the-nation/>.

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[3] *Civics Manual For Secondary Teachers and College Tutors* (Dar es salaam: Tanzania Institute of Education, 2002),9.

The Powerlessness of a Secular State to Protect Secularism

2021-08-20



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The Powerlessness of a Secular State to Protect Secularism

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Currently it came into view as if the United Republic neglecting the constitutional fact that Tanzania is a of Tanzania is facing a constitutional dilemma, since secular state. That being the case then it is expected some of the state organs specifically the executive that all three branches of the state (the executive, and the parliament are developing a habit of parliament and the judiciary) are also required to

operate in a secular way when performing their everyday duties.

However, this is not the reality, the opposite is true, because some branches of the state carry out their day after day responsibilities while diverting from the constitutional philosophy of separation of religion from the state. In various occasions the **executive** and the **parliament** fails to separate themselves from religious influences. For example when a new president is sworn in Christian priests and Muslim sheikhs are invited to the occasion so as to conducts religious prayers to the ceremony, why this? this habit must stop at once, because the state is secular, hence religious affairs are not to be encouraged here, even though the person who is being sworn in or affirm may be affiliated to a certain religion, that is fine but this is to be left as an individual matter rather than making it obligatory for the Islam and Christian leaders only be invited to conduct religious prayers to their sky god in official government ceremonies, and if it is indispensable to avoid them then members of other beliefs and faith including the Traditional African Religions, Secular humanists, Freethinkers, Jews, Hindus are also to be invited to give their words, instead of discriminating them...because Tanzania is neither Christian state nor an Islamic republic, it is a secular state which allows a liberty of choice in matters of belief to be a private affair to each citizen while all state affairs are supposed to be left operating in a secular way, but so surprising Muslims and Christians are left to dominate in all state affairs...this habit is very unbecoming, and if the reason is that they are large in number, then why African traditional religions are not given the chance? Because in terms of percentages Christians, Muslims and African traditional religions in Tanzania their percentages ranges thirty percent per each of them. Article 13(5) of the Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania, 1977 provide the right of equality before the law and it prohibit discrimination of all kinds including discrimination basing on religious affiliations, therefore it is very astonishing why only Muslims and Christians are the ones be given priorities at the expenses of violating Constitutional philosophy of separation of religion from state affairs?

A further Constitutional controversy by the executive branch do arises on the national anthem. The national anthem contains some verses which says **God bless Tanzania, God bless Africa**... These words are somehow contradicting the Constitution, because the constitution declares that Tanzania is a secular state, though some individuals may be members of various religious affiliations of their

choice, while some are non-believers, secular humanists as well as freethinkers, one may be asking himself or herself that do secular state...the state as an institution believe in existence of god? Does secular state have faith in the existence of god residing somewhere the way religious people believes? If the answer is affirmative, then which god? Is it a Christian god? **Jehovah** or a Muslim god **Allah** or an African tradition religion god(s) who differ from one society to another or Shinto god, or Taoists god or Buddha's god or Hindu's god or Jewish god? In fact, this national anthem raises much confusion about which god is asked in the national anthem to bless Africa and Tanzania? This is a Constitutional crisis, and such dilemma was at once addressed by the former president of Tanzania Julius K. Nyerere in one of his official speech. To paraphrase his words Nyerere said that... *"I am so baffled ...how comes a secular state has the national anthem which says **God bless Tanzania. God bless Africa**? I don't know how this happened."* These are baffling words out of the mouth of a former head of state questioning himself how comes a secular state has a national anthem which glorifies god? Indeed, it is a constitutional dilemma.

All over again the incapability of a secular state to protect Secularism is manifesting itself through the parliament in parliamentary sessions (The National Assembly). It is a habit nowadays, each day before the parliamentary session commences in the national assembly (in the house) ...the assembly begins with a prayer to God, normally the prayer session is led by the speaker of the National Assembly. During the prayer ... Words like **Ooh God the all might bless our parliament, bless our nation, and protect our nation from enemies...** are being uttered, and then the prayer ends by members of the parliament **screaming amen**. Actually this is a typical religious influence. Why the National Assembly as a state organ vested with a duty of making laws of the nation, including the laws which turned Tanzania to be a secular state, yet the same organ is in front line to conduct a prayer to god session in the parliament, while constitutionally the parliament is supposed to be operating in a secular manner, because it is a branch of a secular state. This is very astonishing. it is wise if issues of prayers to god are to be left to each individual member of parliament alone, and it is to be done at each person privately instead of forcing them to **shout amen** every day while in the house as if they are in a certain religious temple in a religious republic somewhere in the middle east or India.

The Judiciary: The Judiciary is one of the state organs that is vested with judicial powers in the

United Republic of Tanzania, this is according to Article 4(2) of the Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania, 1977. While article 107A (1) of the same Constitution provides that “*The Judiciary shall be the authority with final decision in dispensation of justice in the United Republic of Tanzania*”. As one of the three branches of the state in Tanzania the Judiciary is vested with duties of providing justice, **ensure compliance with the laws**, settling disputes between people and companies, protect the right of the citizens and solving constitutional disputes, article 107A (2) a, b, c, d, e, of the Constitution do illustrate so. While Article 107B of the Constitution provides that “*In exercising the powers of dispensing justice, all courts shall have freedom and shall be required only to observe the provisions of the Constitution and those of the laws of the land.*” In The united Republic of Tanzania, the judiciary composes the Court of Appeal, the High Court of the United Republic of Tanzania, the special constitutional Court of the United Republic of Tanzania, and the Lower courts subordinate to the High Court. The officials in the judiciary system include the court assessors, court clerks, judges, state attorneys who conduct state prosecutions, advocates and magistrates. The Judiciary is headed by the Chief Justice. Practice indicates that judiciary is the only remaining state organ which still maintains the philosophy of separation of state affairs from religious influence. The **judiciary perform its**

duties absolutely in a secular manner, except only when a person is invited to appear before the Court as a witness, hence when such person is in a witness box, then he or she is supposed to take oath by either swearing in if is a Christian or affirm if a person concerned is a muslim, whilst **a non-religious mode of swearing is also there for non-believers.**

Judiciary as an institution in the state do consider matters of belief in god and religion as a private affair to each individual, be it the employees of the judiciary or those who comes before courts of law as witnesses... they are not forced by the judges to conduct a prayer to god before court sessions commences or forcing those in courts to **shout amen**. Judges do not conduct, command or lead prayers to god in either open Courts or courts conducted in chambers, Court sessions are conducted perfectly in a secular approach, the mode in which the Constitution entail.

To bring the point home, the United Republic of Tanzania is gradually becoming powerless in protecting, preserving and observing the Constitutional philosophy of separation of religion and state. The constitutional philosophy requires that all state affairs to be conducted in a secular way, while religious stimuli are to be left to individuals as their private affairs, but so surprising religious influence is nowadays dominating some state organs daily businesses, this is a Constitutional dilemma which need to be resolved immediately.

Appendix I: Footnotes

[1] Lucas Is Assistant Editor *African Freethinker/ [in-sightjournal.com](https://insightjournal.com)* (Tanzania), a Lawyer, an Advocate of the High Court of Tanzania, a Notary Public and Commissioner for Oaths, Member of the Bar Association of Tanzania main land, also a Freethinker activist in Tanzania. (E-mail: isamwaka01@gmail.com.)

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Conversation with Prime Minister Salih Hudayar on Human Rights and In-Depth Interviews: Prime Minister, East Turkistan – Government-in-Exile (7)

2021-08-22

Interviewer: Scott Douglas Jacobsen

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Abstract

PM Salih Hudayar is the Prime Minister of East Turkistan (Government-in-Exile) and the Founder of the East Turkistan National Awakening Movement. He discusses: human rights abuse; and in-depth interviews.

Keywords: China, Chinese, colonialism, government-in-exile, Prime Minister, Salih Hudayar, Turks, Uyghurs.

Conversation with Prime Minister Salih Hudayar on Human Rights and In-Depth Interviews: Prime Minister, East Turkistan – Government-in-Exile (7)

Please see the footnotes, bibliography, and citation style listing after the interview.

Interview conducted October 20, 2020.

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: Do you think these human rights abuses and extreme levels of corruption and colonization can continue indefinitely or will there simply be a temporary phase in those efforts of the Chinese government?

Salih Hudayar: So, it won't continue indefinitely because either they're going to wipe us out. At that point, after they wiped us out they would have achieved their objective. It's going to continue until they reach that objective or until we get our independence which is the only two ways to see this. This is not just specific to that; most people don't know about East Turkistan and our struggle. They think that "Oh, it's just the Communist Party." No, it's just the issue of the Communist Party. Before the Communist Party came in, we were actually fighting what is most connecting China to the Central Asia against the National Republic of China. We had defeated them. The Chinese, the communists, they're like, "Hey, let's align together to fight against the nationalists." And we're like, no, thank you. our leaders, the initial leaders who died in the plane crash were like, no, thank you. The other one due to Soviet pressure, were forced to signed up by their treaty, which ultimately brought us to this day to being wiped out. Even before that, like before the Republic of China even the Chinese imperial dynasties, they always wanted to occupy East Turkistan. In fact, our issue why China said it's a part of China since the ancient time is because during the Han dynasty nearly two thousand years ago, over two thousand years ago, to control the Silk Road, the ancient Silk Road, and because much like today, the ancient Silk Road is and to the Middle East and ultimately to Europe.

And so the Han dynasty, they sent ten military expeditions to try to take over East Turkistan and failed, except only they were able to briefly occupy the area. China like the U-9 area which actually has been incorporated into China out of the East Turkistan for about seven decades. So using that because they were able to briefly occupy this for seven decades, 2,000 years ago, China's claim that East Turkistan is part of China since ancient times. If you don't be like seeing it, if Greek, for example, Alexander the Great, he's Greek Macedonian. It's like saying the Greeks are claiming Afghanistan, parts of northern India and Iran as part of Greece since ancient times. If we're going to go that way, or even the Romans, they ruled Egypt for over 600 years. But you don't see Italy coming out and saying that Egypt used to be a part of Rome, of Italy since ancient times.

So for us, there's only two solutions. There's only one solution for us. But getting back to your question, to when will the colonization end, what about the genocide and the concentration camps. It'll end when they have either achieved their ultimate goal of wiping us out and colonizing, fully colonizing East Turkistan to where we are actually a minority like Native Americans or others to where we won't have posed a threat. There won't be a threat even if we push for independence. But if you have one percent of the population and you try to push for independence, no one one's going to take that seriously. It'll be like, whatever – have your little reservation and go dancing to your music type of thing.

And the other solution, which is a solution that we desire, we will never give up on this independence. That's when we can truly end this. After that, we can reconcile with them. We can recompile the meeting they remain in China, we remain in East Turkistan. We improve diplomatic relations just the way Israel through diplomatic relations with Germany on the basis that Germany accepted that like under the Nazis committed a genocide and paid reparations.

Jacobsen: Prime Minister, I'm just being mindful of time. So, I like to ask you one last question.

Appendix I: Footnotes

[1] Prime Minister, East Turkistan (Government-in-Exile); Founder, East Turkistan National Awakening Movement (ETNAM).

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Any thoughts or feelings in conclusion based on the conversation today?

Hudayar: Yes. Firstly, I want to thank you for taking the time to do this in-depth interview. I think if we had more in-depth interviews like this, I think the world would be able to understand what was really going on. The issue of East Turkistan, it's not just a human rights issue. We have to look at the roots of the problem. Why is this genocide happening? Why are these people being sent to a concentration camp? Why are they being used as forced labor? Why are they being sterilized? Why are they trying to colonize? We have to look at the root of the problem. The root is that we were an independent nation that was invaded militarily and occupied. That's an illegal invasion. We didn't provoke China to do anything. We were minding our own business. They just came in and took over our country. It's colonialism in the 21st century.

China is trying to colonize our country to achieve its geopolitical agenda, achieving its Chinese dream. This is something that the world needs to understand if they really want to help address our issue. The U.N., for example, has a declaration on granting independence to colonized people's, countries and peoples. We still uphold that. Because we through that, we can get our independence through international law. Under international law, under that declaration, we have the right to independence. This is something no one can deny. Ultimately to seek a solution to this problem, people need to know why this problem is happening. Because if we don't know why it's happening. If we just think that, "Oh, there's just locking up." We go into concentration camps, starting in 2016 or 2017. We don't look at the historical aspects. We're not going to achieve any meaningful resolution to this problem.

Jacobsen: Thank you very much for your time today. I appreciate it.

Hudayar: Thank you so much. You have a wonderful day.

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