



## Backdoor Sharia Law? Lawmakers Aim to Define “Islam” as a Race

You’ve heard the claim that boys can transition into girls. Now some British lawmakers and activists want to transition Islam into a race. “It’s a backdoor approach toward enforcing Islamic blasphemy laws,” [writes](#) one commentator — using the “Islamophobia” label as cover.

As the Gatestone Institute’s Soeren Kern [reports](#):



Days after the British government rejected its preferred official definition of Islamophobia, the Muslim Council of Britain, the biggest Islamic organization in Britain, called for the ruling Conservative Party to be officially investigated for Islamophobia.

The dispute revolves around an effort by the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on British Muslims, a cross-party [formation](#) of around two-dozen MPs in the British Parliament, to institutionalize the definition of Islamophobia in racial rather than religious terms.

The APPG, in a November 2018 report titled, “[Islamophobia Defined](#),” proposed the following one-sentence definition of Islamophobia:

“Islamophobia is rooted in racism and is a type of racism that targets expressions of Muslimness or perceived Muslimness.”

The definition, the result of six months of consultations, was endorsed by hundreds of Muslim organizations, London Mayor Sadiq Khan, as well as several political parties, including Labour, the Liberal Democrats and the Scottish Conservatives.

This is just, I suppose, the official, pseudo-intellectual version of the puerile accusation of “racism,” hurled regularly in Internet comments sections, at those daring to render unfashionable opinions on Islam. Yet if Islam were a race, which would it be?

Islam has 1.8 billion adherents worldwide, and though most Americans associate the faith with Arabs (not a race), most are not Arab. Indonesia has the [largest Muslim population](#), and it’s Asian (in the racial sense). India and Pakistan have the second and third-largest Muslim populations, but most Indians and Pakistanis are classified as Caucasian (yes, really). For that matter, Arabs and Persians (Iranians) also are Caucasian. Then there’s the fact that there are more Muslims in China than in Syria.

But never you mind. The Islam Transition Team has this covered. “Proponents of the [new] definition say that while it is true that Islam is not a race but a religion — a set of beliefs and ideas — and that Muslims are a set of believers from different races, ethnicities and nationalities, many Muslims experience prejudice, discrimination and a *form* of racism, which, they say, is structural,” Kern also tells us.

(“Structural.” It’s just priceless how activists pick up the latest academia-disgorged philosophabble and run with it.)



Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on June 24, 2019

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Of course, this is quite convenient. Consider: Hate-speech laws prohibiting “racism” are based on the fact that one’s race is inborn, unchosen, and unchangeable, and that no human being is inherently bad (this doesn’t mean such laws should exist; they’re still used to stifle some legitimate criticism). Thus do hate-speech laws prohibit characterizing any race as inherently bad.

But *ideas* can be inherently bad, and this brings us to why activists want “Islam” granted racial status. While many nations (including the U.K.) have laws prohibiting “religious harassment,” more latitude is allowed with respect to criticism of religion. Classifying Islam as a race would grant it that greater “racial” protection, legally placing it further above scrutiny.

After all, rightly or wrongly, people don’t try to reason with racists — whom they generally consider irrational — but often just shut them down. Once Islam is a “race,” criticism of it may be viewed under the law as axiomatically immoral, with no defense of the religion necessary and the critics considered guilty by definition.

This is why some observers call this effort a “backdoor blasphemy law.” Criticism of Islam has long been treated as axiomatically wrong in many Muslim countries, which have explicit blasphemy laws on the books. For example, a man in Malaysia was [just charged](#) with insulting Islam; then there’s the famous [case of Asia Bibi](#), a mother who’d spent eight years on death row in Pakistan after a blasphemy conviction.

Yet demanding blasphemy laws in Western nations wouldn’t fly (yet). So Muslim supremacists must achieve the end of giving Islam exalted, sacred legal status via Westerners’ hate-speech laws, relativism, and political correctness.

What few realize, however, is that this attempted marriage between Islamic blasphemy laws and Western hate-speech prohibitions is actually a perfect fit because the latter have always been akin to blasphemy laws. The commonality? Both types of proscriptions state that there are certain criticisms that must never, ever be voiced — and that doing so will bring punishment by authorities.

What makes it worse still is the ambiguity. As David Green, the founder and chief executive of non-partisan public policy think tank Civitas, [warned](#) at the *Spectator*:

If this [Islam as race] definition becomes law, no one would be sure which forms of words could land them in court. It is precisely such uncertainty that makes the difference between a police state and a free society. Historically the term “rule of law” was used to describe the political system in which everyone knew when the law could be used against them and when they were free to act as each believed best. As John Locke put it, in England there was a “standing rule to live by, common to every one of that society” which meant “a liberty to follow my own will in all things, where the rule prescribes not; and not to be subject to the inconstant, uncertain, unknown, arbitrary will of another” [who in this case, mind you, will be a judge].

Of course, when people never can know what type of criticism will bring punishment, virtually all will just shut up and not render any criticism at all. And, really, isn’t this perhaps the whole idea?

(Hat tip: *American Thinker’s* [Thomas Lifson](#).)

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