

The Immigrants Challenging Europe's Code of Silence on Islam

Over the holidays, two developments in Europe's immigration and multiculturalism battle stood out particularly.

First to France, where there occurred what might be dubbed the Zineb El Rhazoui affair. El Rhazoui, 36, is a French-Moroccan journalist and a former reporter for *Charlie Hebdo*. Born in Casablanca, she came to Paris for college. She's engaged in both France and Morocco in various forms of culturally left and secularist activism against the harassment of women in the street and the power of the patriarchy. Ni Putes ni Soumises and Mouvement alternative pour les libertés individuelles (which organized a public picnic during Ramadan) are part of her biography. In the wake of the *Charlie Hebdo* attack four years ago, she gained attention as a critic of Islamofascism and the larger part of the French elite that she called its collaborators.

The affair erupted after she was a guest on the well-established internet TV station CNews. She appeared there in the aftermath of the attack on the Christmas market in Strasbourg, where five people were killed by a "lone wolf" Islamic militant. Islam, she exclaimed, must subject itself to criticism. Islam must subject itself to humor. Islam must subject itself to the rights of the Republic and to French law. She added that no one would ever get to the bottom of the ideology that drives terrorism by telling people that Islam is a religion of peace and love.

Within hours, El Rhazoui was subjected to a barrage of rape and death threats on French social media. Undeterred, a few days later, she unapologetically reaffirmed her views. Several

commentators took note of an absolute silence from the establishment Left, supposedly committed to freedom of expression, who would never hesitate to defend a critic of Christian fundamentalism. [Her words](#), direct, to the point, coming from a French-Moroccan woman in a bright pink dress, struck a certain nerve in France where there is a center-left establishment consensus that terrorism has nothing to do with Islam. As the new year arrived, she was under police protection, while her lawyer was seeking to bring charges against some of those who threatened her.

Across the channel in Great Britain, another personality of non-European ethnic origin was in the headlines. This was Sajid Javid, the 49-year-old rising star in Britain's Conservative Party, currently home secretary in Theresa May's government. Javid, one of five children of a Pakistani immigrant bus driver, won a seat in Parliament in 2010. He combines extreme intelligence with a drive that would be exceptional anywhere—the youngest ever vice president of Chase Manhattan at the age of 24, a managing director at Deutsche Bank, and head of their emerging markets desk 10 years after that. A politically active young Thatcherite (and a volunteer in Rudy Giuliani's highly contentious and nationally important 1993 mayoral campaign), Javid was selected to be culture minister several years after his election to Parliament. Long before last month, he had achieved semi-legendary status in Tory circles.

Then reports that dozens of migrants were setting off in small boats from the coast of France to reach Britain and claim asylum brought him back early from his Christmas vacation (a safari in South Africa). He was soon photographed aboard one the coast guard cutters he had summoned for migrant monitoring duty.

Perhaps more important than anything the home secretary does or doesn't do about migrant channel crossings is what he says. And Javid asked simply, "If you are a genuine asylum seeker,

why have you not sought asylum in the first country you arrived in? Because France is not a country where anyone would argue it is not safe in any way whatsoever.” This straightforward and indisputable statement earned Javid harsh criticism from Labour’s shadow home secretary, who called it “a disgrace.”

Javid has a history of remarks that trigger the multicultural left. After the *Charlie Hebdo* attacks in Paris in 2015, he observed:

There is no getting away from the fact that the people carrying out these acts call themselves Muslims. The lazy answer would be to say that this has got nothing whatsoever to do with Islam and Muslims and that should be the end of that. That would be lazy and wrong. You can't get away from the fact that these people are using Islam, taking a peaceful religion and using it as a tool to carry out their activities.

In its full context, the statement is obviously not “Islamophobic” and conforms to standard establishment multicultural discourse. But for a senior European politician from a mainstream party, it passes very close to actual truth telling. Earlier this summer, Javid ordered research into the ethnic origins of the child rape gangs uncovered in Rotherham and other British cities—gangs that are disproportionately of Pakistani origin—a fact that was shrouded by the British press, which invariably refers to them as “Asian.”

Javid wrote that understanding their particular characteristics was essential to understanding the problem. Again, the actual statement was fairly banal—who could object to research?—except that in multicultural Britain there is more or less a taboo against probing too deeply into why Pakistani men form gangs to rape white British girls. And now a high-ranking Tory, not coincidentally of Pakistani origin,

was asking precisely that.

There is much from a quick perusal of Javid's career that gives one a good deal of pause. He is exceedingly, and probably excessively, pro-Israel, and seems to reflexively take neoconservative positions on foreign intervention. But that is not the issue here. What does matter is that his Muslim immigrant background seems to have inoculated him from fear of transgressing the boundaries of multicultural political correctness, and allowed him to raise questions—about asylum seekers, Islam, Pakistani grooming gangs—that conservatives and all responsible politicians ought to be raising. Yet outside the “populist” Right, few have raised them.

In this sense, Sajid Javid and Zineb El Rhazoui, though of different political statures, have a good deal in common. Both are figures who have been somewhat liberated by their ethnic backgrounds to speak more candidly than the vast majority of their countrymen.

An important new book is coming out, [*Whiteshift*](#) by Canadian-British scholar Eric Kaufmann, that analyzes the politics of white demographic decline in the Western countries. Kauffman is somewhat more optimistic than I am that things will work out. But one of his major points is that a considerable portion of the new immigrant population identifies with the history, institutions, and values (which are, of course, white dominated) of their new countries. The roughly 30 percent of Asian Americans and Latinos who voted for Donald Trump presumably fall into that category, but the percentage is probably a good deal higher than that.

Kaufmann is not claiming that these folks admire some anodyne civic nationalist version of Western pluralism, but that they at least to some extent identify with and embrace as their own the larger achievements of Western history, the good with the bad. They came to the West not in spite of our history, but to

some degree because of it. Part of this immigrant cohort have intermarried with whites, or have children who will. Kauffman's argument is that they comprise part of a sort of "whitish" dominant majority culture that will successively see the Western countries through a difficult transition. It's obviously a far more appealing scenario than the one favored by white multiculturalists, whom Kaufmann calls left modernists, in which people of color, in alliance with progressive whites, demographically overwhelm the racist, colonialist, old world, rooting out and destroying the evil uniquely associated with it.

I've certainly oversimplified a more complicated argument, but I think Kaufmann is largely correct about this. From my perspective, in different ways, El Rhazoui and Javid are playing a critical part in the defense and rejuvenation of the West. Their ethnicity gives them more license to speak freely than is permitted a typical beneficiary of "white privilege"—and perhaps, in subtle ways, more motivation. As such they are more than valuable; they are necessary. And we can hope that they and others like them play a big part in the battles ahead.

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