

Clear and Present Danger

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The West with our libertarian values faces a clear and present danger from Sharia that is infiltrating our western societies, particularly the UK. The Cairo Declaration and the European Convention on Human Rights was adopted on 22 January 2019 in Strasbourg by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. It testifies of an awareness that Islamic law constitutes a legal-religious order competing with the law stemming from Western modernity, both in Europe and in the world.

First of all, the Assembly of the Council of Europe *“is also greatly concerned about the fact that Sharia law – including provisions which are in clear contradiction with the Convention – is applied, either officially or unofficially, in several Council of Europe member States or parts thereof”*; namely Greece, Chechnya and the United Kingdom.

They are particularly concerned with the United Kingdom where there is a large muslim population, unlike Greece which has about 100k muslims under Sharia in Thrace which was annexed to Greece after the First World War. The UK has about 85 known Sharia Councils that act as de-facto “Courts” where they deliver consensual (?) arbitration on family and commercial matters. These include divorce, child custody, mistreatment and inheritance. Whilst there is always recourse to UK Law there is considerable pressure for social conformance and if one were to disregard the arbitration ruling one would at the very least be ostracised.

Sharia also does not fit in with our western values of equality and human rights with women's rights particularly affected. If married under Sharia the woman would lose significant rights afforded under UK civil law. Of political importance is the use of Sharia Councils to ensure their communities conform to Sharia and is therefore an obstacle to societal integration with our Anglo-Saxon Common Law and customs.

Surprisingly, the Assembly does not ask the United Kingdom to put an end to the application of Sharia on its territory (as it did to Greece), but calls on it to *“ensure that Sharia councils operate within the law, especially as it relates to the prohibition of discrimination against women, and respect all procedural rights”*. It also calls on the United Kingdom to *“make it a legal requirement for Muslim couples to civilly register their marriage before or at the same time as their Islamic ceremony”*. This difference in approach between the United Kingdom and Greece could be explained by the demographic importance of the Muslim communities with millions of population.

Sharia is a trojan horse that is growing and exacerbated by unfettered immigration. If we do not confront this problem sooner rather than later we will have far more social breakdown than the recent riots; Elon Musk's recent tweet “civil war is inevitable” may be no exaggeration.

Banning Sharia councils may lead to riots from those communities but regulating them by not allowing Nikah marriages without a civil marriage under UK law could be a first step. Then restricting its arbitration to divorce rather than inheritance or commercial matters could be another step. The aim should be to bring these Sharia councils more in line with the majority who support Anglo-Saxon Common Law and customs. No one wants people to forsake their family or religious traditions but we cannot allow societal breakdown through competing and contradictory legal systems.