

Racism



Ask most people

Ask most people about racism and they will probably talk vaguely about discrimination at work or in public attitudes to ethnic minorities. Only a few will mention the verbal abuse which some people experience on a daily basis, or the physical trauma suffered in racist attacks. But, racism is alive and kicking and the situation is not getting any better. The level of racist violence in the UK has risen dramatically in recent years, to an estimated 130,000 incidents a year. And a full 90% of these cases go unreported - often because the victims have no confidence in the police or the judiciary. The institutionalised prejudice that exists in some areas of the state system is a major reason for the low levels of housing, education and job opportunities which most minority groups face. People should not be denied a fair chance.

In addition, the introduction of exclusive laws to keep migrants out of 'Fortress Europe' has condemned thousands of refugees to months or even years of imprisonment while their cases are dealt with, even though they have committed no crime. Some politicians and media figures continue to portray minority or refugee communities as if they were a burden, rather than highlighting the enormous, positive contribution they make to the societies in which they live. These misrepresentations reinforce stereotypes carried over from the colonial era, and often go hand in hand with negative media images of the Third World. In turn they encourage racially motivated violence, and levels of abuse have been seen to increase when public figures openly attack minority groups.

The development of racism in Europe

From classical times, European thought has held onto a set of ideas and images about the 'others'. The farther one moved from the centres of 'civilisation' - Greece and Rome - the more it was believed that Europe was inhabited by strange and monstrous species: the 'wild' people of the forests of the north; the 'barbarians' who could not speak Greek or Latin; and the 'wild hordes' whose advance struck terror into the hearts of ordinary folk. Europe was believed to be inhabited by what classical writers like Herodotus and Pliny called the "monstrous races" - bizarre combinations of human and animal forms, at one and the same time wondrous and threatening. Anyone who did not belong within the known and familiar communities - fools, beggars, nomads, witches, the very poor, widows, the insane, even peasants from remote settlements - was vulnerable to negative stereotyping. It was against these negative images of its 'others' that European civilisation first defined itself.

In the Middle Ages, 'others' was extended to include Jews (portrayed as betrayers of Christ), Muslims (portrayed as infidel enemies of Christian Europe) and the Irish. As a result of voyages of exploration, bizarre ideas of monstrous races were also applied to the new communities that they came across. These ideas were consistently found in the accounts of the explorers, such as Marco Polo, Sir John Mandeville,

Columbus, Vespucci and Sir Walter Raleigh. Within a decade Europeans were debating before Charles V, King of Spain, whether the Native Americans were indeed human at all - did they have souls and, if so, could they justifiably be enslaved? The papal view that they did have souls and could not



"uncivilised foreigners!"

be enslaved contributed to the growth of the alternative slave trade from Africa. It was believed that there had been several different creations of humanity. The belief that other people belonged to a different species continued to be held by some later Enlightenment scholars, who tried to develop systematic ways of categorising the races of mankind.



"civilisation has arrived"

Racism and Empire

The success of the anti-slavery movements in the nineteenth century represented something of a high point in efforts to contest extreme racist beliefs. However, in the latter half of that century a new and more virulent form of racism began to emerge in Europe, spearheaded by figures such as Carlyle and Gobineau. It claimed scientific respectability for the idea that human beings belonged to distinct and separate species. Each race was seen as a self-reproducing biological group whose characteristics were fixed forever with its own distinctive 'blood' and 'stock'. A scientific basis was similarly claimed for the principle of arranging races into a hierarchy, and physical differences were measured in order that groups could be mapped on a

neo-Darwinian evolutionary tree, from 'primitive' to 'civilised'. Biological reproduction within each group should be regulated, it was maintained, so as to allow only the physically most superior to procreate, thereby improving the racial stock. These theories were closely aligned with increased European nationalism and with rising competition between the European nation-states for a monopoly of markets, raw materials, colonial possessions and world supremacy. Scientific racism spanned the period of high

imperialism and two world wars - racial sentiments were valuable supports for military mobilisation and nationalistic fervour. This race-based nationalism interacted with a race-based imperialism. In Britain, for example, the Empire was frequently celebrated as the achievement of an 'imperial race'. The revival of anti-Semitism, leading to the pogroms against Jews in central and Eastern Europe and Hitler's Final Solution, was the climax of this pan-European trend.




"civilisation has arrived"

Islam and racism

Racism involves stereotypes about difference and inferiority, and the use of power to exclude, discriminate or subjugate. It embraces the view that the human species can be scientifically divided into different races and that differences between groups ultimately have a biological or genetic basis. These views, though biologically discredited, remain in much popular thinking about race and some scientists, usually funded by right wing organisations, continue to make claims regarding the links between genes and race.

On the contrary, it is now widely acknowledged that race is a social and political construct, not a biological or genetic fact. Race cannot be used to account for the wide range of differences between people. For instance, we know there is more genetic variation within any one so-called race than there is between 'races'. Moreover, it is now known that the human species shares a common gene pool. All the while this issue of race was being debated in Europe, the view in the Muslim world had already been made



clear through the verses of the Holy Qur'an, God's final revelation to humanity, revealed to prophet Muhammad some six centuries after prophet Jesus (may God's peace be upon be them).

"O human beings!"

"And humanity is naught but a single nation" Qur'an 2:213

"O human beings! Be conscious of your Sustainer, who created you out of one living entity and out of it created its mate, and out of the two spread abroad a multitude of men and women."

Qur'an 4:1


Islam teaches that all human beings have a common origin, and that because of their common origin, the whole of humanity is one family, one nation. Human brotherhood is thus a real one. We all trace our ancestry back to one and the same mother and father. The Qur'an, however, does not shy away from or deny that there are differences in human beings regarding their colour, language and other features. In fact, it affirms and recognises these differences. But in the Qur'an these differences say something of the greatness of God rather than of the greatness or superiority of one colour, or language, or group of people over the other:

"And among God's signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the variations and diversity of your tongues and of your colour; truly in that are signs for those who know" Qur'an 30:22


Here, inquisitive minds are made curious about the world at large. Far from being described as a source of danger, diversity in nature is given as something to be admired and marvelled at. Modern science may confirm the unity of all human beings, but the Qur'an goes further to explain why - what is the object and purpose of this division. It also provides us with the one and only criterion or standard by which a person is judged by God:

"O human beings! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know one another not that you may despise each other, truly the most honoured of you in the sight of God is the most righteous of you, and God has full knowledge and is well acquainted with all things" Qur'an 49:13

This standard is neither colour, language, social standing, wealth nor degree of intelligence. It is something which lies within the reach of every human being, regardless, if only they made an effort to cultivate it within themselves: righteousness! Righteousness is moral greatness and the careful observance of duty towards God and one's fellow human beings. The concept and idea of the oneness of humanity is Islam's unique contribution to human civilisation, and it came as a natural sequel to its cardinal doctrine: the unity of God. God is the God of all the worlds, dealing with all of us alike, no matter what language we speak, what colour we are or to what parentage we may belong.



Not a new idea? You might want to point out that the idea of racial equality and human brotherhood is not the exclusive property of Islam - that such ideas have been proclaimed by differ-



ent individuals and ideologies in different places of our globe and at different times. We know that since the 18th century, when the Age of Enlightenment had dawned, this idea has been accepted and adopted as a principle or policy of organised society. It is true that this idea was not invented in the Qur'an. Muslims believe that this was the teaching of all the prophets that God had sent to humanity, peace be upon them all. But only through Islam has this idea ever been realised in action over the centuries and among the most different and dissimilar nations and races. An historian like Arnold Toynbee, who was not known to be sympathetic to Muslims, wrote: *"The extinction of race consciousness between Muslims is one of the outstanding moral achievements of Islam, and in the contemporary world there is, as it happens, a crying need for the propagation of this Islamic virtue."*

Muslim Spain has no parallel


Islam's answer to racism did not remain as some pious exhortation, but went on to sound the death knell of racial discrimination in much of the world. This was signalled in the earliest days of Islam through the example set by the final messenger of God, Muhammad (pbuh), and was to be borne out by the subsequent events in the history of Muslim nations. Muslim Spain represents a shining example of a progressive, cohesive and advanced multicultural society, the like of which was never to be witnessed in the world again. History bears testimony to the fact that Islam has, uniquely and with no parallel from world religions and world civilisations, overcome the problems of colour and racial prejudice.

Prophet Muhammad (# peace be upon him) - God's Messenger

There are instances galore in the life of the Prophet Muhammad#, which show that he was the perfect exemplar, the beautiful pattern of conduct that realised the principle of the oneness of humanity in both his personal relations with his followers and with adherents of other faiths. We can further appreciate how formidable a task it was to establish this principle among his followers when we take into view the social conditions which prevailed at the time. Arabian society was suffering from the same conspicuous disease of racism and colour was not any less of a problem. The Arabs regarded themselves as a superior race and they did not recognise black skinned people except as slaves.

When, during the lifetime of Muhammad#, the Muslim community was forced due to persecution to emigrate from Makkah to the city of Medina, the Prophet# succeeded in establishing the first state in human history based on basic human rights and respect for all races. From that point on, the state was to appoint the best and brightest of the community without regard to social background, wealth or race. Throughout his life, the Prophet# constantly observed and strictly opposed racist tendencies among his people. On one occasion, a companion of the Prophet# once derogatorily called another companion *Bilal*, the "son of a black woman!" The Prophet# on hearing this severely reprimanded the caller, saying: **"Do you condemn him because of the blackness of his mother? You are certainly a man of ignorance, blindly following inherited practices!"**

And the Prophet# also declared: **"People descend from Adam, and Adam was made out of dust. There is no superiority for an Arab over a**



equality before God

non-Arab, neither for a white man over a black man, except the superiority gained through righteousness and God-consciousness."

The reverence which Muslims hold for Prophet Muhammad# meant that this declaration was to shape the general attitude of Muslims, right to the present day.

Unity through prayer

Among the measures introduced to level the differences of rank or colour among the steadily growing community, perhaps prayer ought to be mentioned in particular. Five times a day Muslims meet together for prayer. Among the first Muslims were members of the noblest Arab families as well as a good number of black slaves. At prayers they all stood in rows, shoulder to shoulder before God. And when during the course of prayer, they prostrated before their Lord, it might well have been that the head of an Arab noble praying in a row behind a slave rested at the latter's feet! And so it was impressed on their minds that they were all equal before God. The human heart once moulded in this way led to the natural consequence that all citizens genuinely enjoyed equal status in society.

The Hajj

The annual pilgrimage, or *Hajj*, is a fundamental religious practice performed by Muslims. This huge assembly of believers in God, the gathering together of a multitude of worshippers from all five continents on a single desert plain, is perhaps the most spectacular expression, symbol, and proof of the unity and equality of human beings before God. There, for all to see, is a multitude of men, women and children, close to 2 million in number, and from every race in the world. Every person is dressed alike, eliminating completely all marks and signs of distinction: the mighty and the wealthy cannot be distinguished from the poor and the lowly. Here they come, brother unto brother, sister unto sister, bearing witness to the brotherhood and sisterhood of humankind, to the equality of all human beings before their Creator.

The intense feeling of universal brotherhood and peace of the Hajj even liberated a black activist like Malcolm X from his previously aggressive racism. His youth was characterised by crime and drugs, but he turned his back on that life and became one of the most outspoken and charismatic speakers against the injustice and racism suffered by black people in the USA. However, he had come to believe that all 'whites' were evil and only 'blacks' were good. Although he considered himself a 'Muslim', he did not really know the teachings of Islam. Then he took the opportunity to perform the Hajj, and this was to change his thinking forever:

"Never have I witnessed such sincere hospitality and the overwhelming spirit of true brotherhood as is practised by people of all colours and races here in this ancient holy land, the home of Abraham, Muhammad, and all the other prophets of the Holy Scriptures. For the past week, I have been utterly speechless and spellbound by the graciousness I see displayed all around me by people of all colours... There were tens of thousands of pilgrims, from all over the world. They were of all colours, from the blue-eyed blondes to black-skinned Africans. But we were all participating in the same ritual, displaying a spirit of unity and brotherhood that my experiences in America had led me to believe never could exist between white and non-white.



America needs to understand Islam, because this is the one religion that erases from its society the race problem. Throughout my travels in the Muslim world, I have met, talked to, and even eaten with people who in America would have been considered 'white' - but the 'white' attitude was removed from their minds by the religion of Islam. I have never before seen sincere and true brotherhood practised by all colours together, irrespective of their colour."



A human weakness

To say that Muslims had managed to completely eradicate the scourge of racism from themselves would be as presumptuous as to assert that Muslims had managed to defeat evil itself. Considering the weakness of human nature, some racist stains on the Muslim world were inevitable as communities weakened in faith, and became less mindful of God and less thankful for His countless favours and blessings.

Racism, then, is a human weakness. It still exists in all parts of the world and manifests itself in many forms. Sometimes it appears as abuse or physical attacks, which could be as serious as murder, assault or torture. Racism is also manifest in discrimination, which could be in terms of state welfare, education, employment, housing, court justice or in politics. In many countries around the world this sort of racism is rife - discrimination on the basis of colour or caste or family background. Racism is also hidden within the ideologies of nationalism, tribalism, fascism, nazism and anti-Semitism.

Race and culture

Over the centuries all forms of racism have had - and continue to have another two separate but intertwining strands. One, biological racism, uses physical or biologically derived signs as a way of recognising difference - skin colour, hair, features, body type, and so on. The other, cultural racism, uses cultural features, such as customs, language and dress. The two strands usually appear together, but they combine in distinct ways, with one or other prominent at different times and in different contexts. The result is a focus on outer signs and features of a particular grouping of people.

Islam teaches that it is not the outward forms that are important but the inner values and principles. There are more than one billion Muslims all over the world and they have many different cultures, customs, languages and types of dress. There is no particular culture that is inherently more Islamic than another. A European Muslim brought up in a European culture is no less of a Muslim than an Asian or African Muslim brought up in an Asian or African culture. In fact as the faith of Islam spread throughout the world, the people who became Muslims did not discard their own distinctive cultures but adapted them to adhere to the values and principles that take them closer to God. These principles include the notions of equality, justice, the rule of law and the sanctity of life, for Islam regards these as universal values. Islam is as much a western religion as it is an eastern religion.



Immigration

Much of the debate on racism in Europe is closely linked with the phenomena of mass migration in the late twentieth century. People confused Islam with the different cultures that many Muslims in Europe had brought with them. Ironically some of these people flee to the West to escape the cruel dictatorial regimes that are partly being supported through the 'ethical' foreign policies of some Western governments. The issue is also surrounded by 'immigration myths' propagated by racist groups. Myths built around emotive subjects such as the number or 'flood' of immigrants, Britain being overcrowded, or immigrants taking people's jobs and running down the inner city areas. The facts are that since 1964 more people have left Britain each year than have entered and of those that enter, there are more white than non-white by a ratio of 2:1. The non-white population is actually just 5% of the total population, less than in other major western European countries, some of which are more densely populated. Far from taking people's jobs, immigration has proven to be a boost for a country's economy by creating wealth and more jobs, and by preventing vital public services (transport, NHS etc.) from grinding to a halt. Unemployment is caused by changes in the economy (recessions), not because people are coming into Britain. Some of the lowest unemployment Britain has had this century was in the 1950s when immigration into Britain was at its highest level since WWII. Bad housing conditions existed long before 'black' immigrants, and urban decay has existed in Britain since the Industrial Revolution. Nobody expects that the UK or any other country will relax border controls completely and let everybody in who wants to. But the case against controlled immigration continues to grow even weaker as Britain's birth rate declines.

Integration: "Them and us"

In reality racists hide behind immigration myths because they really don't mind immigration as long as it is 'white' immigration. Some still continue to believe in the existence of 'pure' racial groups. In truth they are detached from reality for the human race cannot in fact be divided in this way. No such groups exist. The history of the human race and of every region in the world is one of invasion, conquest, migration and so on - and Britain was no exception.

A much more common reason against non-white immigration given nowadays is that "they" don't fit in with "our" way of life. On the face of it, this sounds reasonable: If you're going to live here, then you must learn the language, obey the law and contribute to society. Certainly for Muslims, none of this is objectionable, indeed it is a requirement according to Islamic teachings, for Muslims to do so. But some people would prefer immigrants not to try and amend an unfair law, or to pass on knowledge of their heritage to their children so that, for example, grandparents can speak to their grandchildren. They would prefer them to change so utterly that, bar the colour of their skin, they would be indistinguishable from anyone else in society. The uneasy assumption behind all this is that a

mono-cultural society is better than a multicultural society, whereas history shows us that the opposite is true.

Successful nations have always been pluralistic, tolerant of others, allowing diversity, ensuring the continuing adaptability and survivability of the society. The other problem with this assimilationist view is that Britain is not and never has been a homogenous and unified whole - it contains many conflicting traditions and is dif-



ferentiated by class, region and religion as well as by culture, ethnicity and race. Assimilation is a fantasy, for there is no single culture into which all people can be incorporated. In any case, it seldom leads to complete acceptance, for the demand for assimilation springs from intolerance of difference, and for the intolerant even one difference is one too many.

One of the major reasons why total assimilation has become unacceptable is that it cannot be justified morally. It attempts to suppress difference and condemns to second-class citizenship, in fact if not in law, everyone who does not accept majority norms. It actually encourages the opposite: isolation. There are many reasons why some immigrants have become more isolated than others. Certainly it has to be acknowledged that it is a complex two-way process. Racism forces some people into isolation, and this fosters nothing but ignorance, reinforcing prejudices, encouraging mistrust, mutual suspicion and hate (and so the cycle continues). Perhaps also because Muslims do not wear their religion lightly, some Muslims are concerned that assimilation necessarily means abandoning the principles and values of their religion. Whilst fear of losing something precious is understandable, cutting oneself away from society to become isolated from others is not a characteristic of Islam. It can give a false impression to observers of take, take, take, giving nothing in return - and this is not in the teachings of Islam.

Instead, Islam requires Muslims to take a full part in their society, to contribute to society, culturally, economically and politically. Historically speaking, over the centuries, whenever Muslims have travelled to other lands, they have learned the languages and customs of their societies and inter-married with the people without abandoning their values and principles. This is the reason why Islam continues to exist in many different societies around the world in a variety of cultures. The whole debate, however, is rapidly being superseded by the growing number of children born and brought up in Britain, and the growing number of converts to Islam who are all in the process of forging a new British Muslim culture - feeling both totally Muslim and totally British.

Nationalism

This forging of a new British Muslim culture would make some people very uncomfortable and one of the most common questions is that of loyalty. Where does the loyalty of Muslims lie? Is it to their religion or is it to their country? For Muslims the answer is quite simple and it is to be found in the teachings of the Qur'an. Loyalty is to God. What this means is that loyalty is to what is right and just and fair. There is no concept in Islam of "my country right or wrong" nor of "my religion, right or wrong". It is a matter of conscience, and what is important is what is in the interests of all of us, of the human race and of the planet earth, not the self-centred interests of one group of people over another. Muslims are duty bound to be loyal, to serve their family, their neighbours, their society and the country where they live - but it is not a blind loyalty; that would be morally indefensible.

The last two thirds of the 20th century have made more people refugees than any other century before due to that kind of blind, raging nationalism, usually accompanied by religious or ethnic reasons. Just remember the exodus of uncounted Jews from Europe; the expulsion of 11 million Germans from Eastern Europe; the bloody population exchange between India and Pakistan; the many Palestinians who have been scattered all over the world; the flight of the Bosnians and Kosovars; and of the Hutus and Tutsis. The 20th century was indeed the century of displaced persons,

and against this bloody background of recent date, we hardly need to recall other monstrosities like the systematic extermination of Native Americans in the 18th and 19th century and black slavery in the USA until the civil war.

Patriotism has been described as a non-aggressive form of nationalism that expresses one's loyalty to the country in which they live, and so is nothing more than family feelings extended toward 'kin and tribe'. What is important is that human beings commit themselves to a higher moral ideal that curbs excessive feelings and leads them towards justice. God says in the Qur'an:

"O you who believe! Stand out firmly for justice, as witnesses to God, even as against yourselves, or your parents, or your kin, and whether it be against rich or poor; for God can best protect both. Follow not the lusts of your hearts, lest you swerve, and if you distort justice or decline to do justice, truly God is well acquainted with all that you do." Qur'an 4:135

Anti-Semitism and Zionism

Anti-Semitism is the adherence to views or practices directed against the interests, legal rights, religious practices, or lives of Jews. This is clearly a racist notion and has no place in Islam, for the Qur'an commands upholding the rights of the Jewish people. Zionism was a secularist and nationalistic transformation of an aspiration basic to orthodox Judaism to establish the Jewish nation in Palestine in reaction to the Czarist persecution of Russian and Polish Jewry and to other outbursts of Anti-Semitism. The only alternative to persecution, it was argued, was to found a Jewish state. The fundamental flaw in the idea was that it required the political or physical expulsion of the Palestinians, who had nothing to do with the pogroms of Europe, to make way for the emigrating European Jews. It is quite possible to be against anti-Semitism and to be against Zionism at the same time. The Palestinians should not be made to suffer for someone else's crimes. Two wrongs cannot make a right.

Zionism today describes the organised sympathies and support in the West, especially in the USA, for Israel and also the efforts of Soviet Jewry to emigrate to Israel. It has resulted in the occupation of Palestinian land, the plundering of their resources, in continued expansion by bulldozing and illegal settlements, and Israeli state terrorism on the Palestinian people for more than 50 years. The Zionist movement is a pure colonial movement that has misused Judaism to serve its unlawful purposes, and still does. Zionism is neither a representation of Judaism nor a fulfilment of a Judicial prophecy. Decades of Zionist propaganda have misrepresented Zionism as a progressive, modern force bringing civilization to an arid, uninhabited wasteland. Such an image is an illusion; Zionism is an apartheid philosophy. It was not only land that was needed to reach Zionism's goal, but land without another people in the majority. Since Palestinian Arabs were by far the majority throughout the period up to Israel's establishment as a Jewish state in 1948, the Zionist state could emerge only by denying the majority its rights or by becoming the majority, either through immigration, or through reducing the number of Palestinians by ethnic cleansing. This is what has been going on in the region and is continuing to happen right now.



Islamophobia

The term Islamophobia refers to unfounded hostility towards Islam. It refers also to the practical consequences of such hostility in unfair discrimination against Muslim individuals and communities, and to the exclusion of Muslims from mainstream political and social affairs. There are those who would say that the use of this term panders to what they call 'political correctness' and that it stifles debate and criticism of Islam. But there is a difference between debate on the one hand, and prejudice or hostility on the other. The difference can be seen, for example, when Islam or Muslims are discussed as a monolithic entity, or as inherently inferior, or as the 'other', or as the 'enemy', rather than recognised as being diverse, dynamic and different but equal.

Anti-Muslim racism has been a feature of European culture at least since the Crusades, but has taken different forms at different times. In modern Britain its manifestations include discrimination in recruitment and employment practices; high levels of attacks on mosques and on people wearing Muslim religious dress; widespread negative stereotypes in all sections of the press, including broadsheets and tabloids; bureaucratic obstruction or inertia in response to Muslim requests for greater cultural sensitivity in education and healthcare; and non-recognition of Muslims by the law of the land, since discrimination on grounds of religion or belief is not unlawful.

Islam - the very anti-thesis to racism.

Muslims cannot possibly afford to rest on the laurels of the exemplary anti-racist teachings of their faith. Not only did God's final revelation, Islam, succeed in bringing racial harmony among the people with whom it came into contact, it is also true that much of the success of Islam in various parts of the world goes to the credit of this Islamic virtue. It is the duty of the Muslims, now more than ever, to understand that their survival and the survival of the world rests to a large degree on the propagation and promotion of this Islamic virtue. A virtue that provides humanity with the spiritual and moral foundation on which lasting peace and mutual trust and respect among the nations of the world can be built. The curse of racism and narrow-minded nationalism have been and still are responsible for many of the troubles of the ancient and modern world. Islam is, first and foremost, a universal religion founded on belief in the oneness of God, that stands for the equality and unity of humankind. To return to God is to sweep away the curse of racism.



Islamic Society of Britain

The Islamic Society of Britain is an established national organisation with local branches throughout the UK. It brings together Muslims of every background who see Britain as their society and home, a home that has been

destined by God. **The Young Muslims UK** is its youth section and has long earned a reputation as a trusted, dynamic and pioneering organisation in its own right.

The Islamic Society of Britain wants to connect British society with God, building on all good that already exists. The Society wants to change the perception of Islam as something eastern or alien to British society, and seeks to challenge head-on misconceptions in European thought that have grown like weeds. A long road lies ahead and there are no shortcuts - Muslims must share the message of God and His Messenger in a structured manner that today's Britain can relate to and understand. But many hands make light work and we urge concerned Muslims to join in our work. For a membership form or information about our work contact your local branch or our Central Office.

Your local branch:

inspiring people to **live** islam

MEMBERSHIP FORM



WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT ISLAM?



OR HELP YOUR COMMUNITY?



DO YOU WANT TO RAISE AWARENESS OF ISSUES OF CONCERN TO SOCIETY?



AND HELP CAMPAIGN AGAINST INJUSTICE AND OPPRESSION?



DO YOU WANT TO HELP REMOVE FALSE IDEAS ABOUT ISLAM AND MUSLIMS?

If you answered "yes" to any of these questions you should join the Islamic Society of Britain (or its youth wing The Young Muslims UK if you are under 26). We are a network of local branches up and down the country, backed up by a national organisation - a meeting point for positive Muslims of every background, like you. People join us everyday, inspired by a vision to work collectively towards a just society, committed to God. Why do it all alone?

Members pay £5 each month, and more if they are able, for which you will receive continuous blessings for every one of our activities, insha'Allah (but do let us know if you will have genuine difficulty in paying £5). Those over 25 (Islamic Society of Britain) will need to complete the Standing Order on the reverse of this form. Youth joining The Young Muslims UK will also be asked to contribute something regularly, and we shall contact you regarding this later.

Please tick Are you over 25? Islamic Society of Britain
or under 26? The Young Muslims UK

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Name: Mr / Mrs / Ms

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I apply for membership of the Islamic Society of Britain (including The Young Muslims UK) and agree to abide by the Rules of the Society as set out in its Constitution (which can be obtained from our website. A copy will also be sent to you on receipt of this form).

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Your occupation (or course) and qualifications:

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How can you contribute to our work?

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You may make copies for extra forms. Please return completed (in an envelope) to the Islamic Society of Britain, PO Box 7539, Birmingham B10 9AU.

Join us today, do whatever you are able to, and you will receive blessings for all that is going on, insha-Allah.



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