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<http://journal-neo.org/2016/09/01/alienation-between-the-west-and-the-muslim-world-on-the-rise/>

## Alienation Between the West and the Muslim World on the Rise

By: Veniamin Popov  
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It would seem logical that those who have seen it on TV, as well as eye-witnesses couldn't be more unpleasantly surprised by the absurdity and obscenity of the situation. On a beach of the beautiful Mediterranean Sea – the cradle of civilization – a French policeman publicly tries to strip off a swimming suit from a female holiday-maker. All this happened because the municipal authorities of certain French towns do not approve of the design of the swimming suit – according to its designer, the fabric virtuously conceals the body (instead of exposing it) thus reducing unnecessary concern of other people on the beach.

However, this design – the burkini – does not suit the taste of the Mayor of Cannes. He sees a sign of Islamisation in it. Prime Minister M. Valls publicly called the burkini “a symptom of female enslavement that is incompatible with French values.” As a result, on August 12, the Mayor of Cannes introduced a ban on wearing burkinis. The Mayors of other coastal towns followed his example. Violation of this rule incurs a fine.

Common people in France and Europe find this phenomenon absurd, lacking common sense, and, of course, a clear violation of the right of any citizen to the free choice of clothing.

It is obvious for everyone that these senseless prohibitions are very unfair. Instead of combating the major current threat – terrorism – they are just disintegrating society. It certainly has nothing to do with the insult of traditional values that the French authorities, which prohibited the burkini, are referring to (incidentally, demand for this model has increased by 200% in recent weeks). All this looks like pure political manoeuvring and disgusting hypocrisy. As for the values, even the puritan Guardian newspaper has written that “it is entirely unclear what French values this ban protects.”

The issue of Muslim clothing has repeatedly been used by the French authorities for internal political purposes. The New York Times newspaper recently wrote that “the burkini is currently a convenient excuse to divert attention from the problems that French leaders cannot solve: high level of unemployment, declining economic growth and the real threat of terrorism.”

The matter is that a campaign against burkini launched in mid-August 2016 is just part of the greater story, which reflects the deep internal crisis in the West and its growing opposition with the Islamic World.

This is clearly reflected in the American presidential campaign that has become unprecedented in terms of strength of feelings, rudeness, inclemency and even in the use of obscene expressions. The withdrawal of England from the European Union, the increasingly clearly declared desire to conduct similar referendum in other countries, as well as deepening gap between the rich and the poor, and a rise of separatist sentiment in a number of states are testimony to the crisis. These are just the edges of a phenomenon that is becoming more acute and deep every day.

The growing gap between the West and the Islamic World looks especially alarming. This concerns not only the conflict situations that were a consequence of the invasion by Western countries of Iraq, the destruction of Libya as a result of NATO bombing, the actual support for Islamic terrorist organisations by the West (Donald Trump and many other politicians state directly that DAISH was created by Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama’s policy).

A major factor in the deteriorating relations between the Western countries and the Muslim communities is the issue of refugees. However, many Western leaders who do not know how to solve this thorny issue, do not possess sufficient expertise and are unable to look beyond the horizon try to use anti-immigrant and Islamophobic sentiments in order to avoid solving urgent problems.

A series of major terrorist attacks in the United States, France and a number of other countries this year shocked them so much that prudent Germans considered it necessary to stock up on food and water in case of unforeseen circumstances.

Islamic radicals, primarily ISIS, are trying to take advantage of the state of fear, uncertainty and confusion that has seized many West European cities. They openly present themselves as an alternative to the Western system.

In recent months, Islamists have made open calls against the governments of many countries, especially Western ones. For example, according to the Al-Arabiya web site, Abu Muhammad al-Adnani, a spokesperson of ISIS, has called on Muslims “to kill the disbelievers of America and Europe, and especially the evil and vile French.”

England was shocked by the actions of the Muslim preacher Anjem Choudary, who recently published a manual on what faithful Muslims should do in the first 24 hours after the victory of the Islamic Revolution in England. Moreover, in his numerous sermons, the imam says that after Britain starts living under Sharia law, it will immediately turn into “a perfect Islamic state without poverty, queues, and utility bills.”

Something similar is described in French writer Michel Houellebecq’s recent novel, *Submission* (French: *Soumission*).

The essence of this conflict and deepening of the ideological rift is that Western countries are using all means possible to preserve their supremacy while acting immorally and cynically. Well-known Pakistani journalist and writer Dr. Akbar Ahmed speaks about it directly in his speeches, underlying that “the enormous violence that occurs in the Middle East and other countries is an inevitable consequence of violence directed against the Muslim World.”

A great deal suggest that a seemingly petty issue of women’s swimming suits is becoming a new stage of confrontation between the West and the Muslim World like the Muhammed caricature scandal.