

Geraldine Doogue: And how -- what are the characteristics of that second generation, by comparison with the first? I mean and presumably why you say 'first generation', the diaspora first generation, the people who've come out of those traditional Muslim countries, is that what you mean?

Halim Rane: That's right. Well if you look back in the 1930s, we saw the emergence of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, and around the same time we saw the emergence of the Jamaat-e-Islami in Pakistan. And there were a number of very influential thinkers around at this time. In Egypt you had Hasan al-Banna and Sayyid Qutb, in Pakistan you had Maududi, and in Iran of course you had the Ayatollah Khomeini. And they basically advocated quite similar ideas that related to the formation of an Islamic state, and the implementation of *shariah* law, and this was a common feature of this particular idea, and of course quite oppositional ideas when it came to Islam-West relations.

But what has happened is that there's been a failure of the first generation of Islamic political parties, parties that have advocated the implementation of *shariah* law in the formation of an Islamic state have really let down many of their citizens. When you look at states such as Saudi Arabia or Pakistan when it implemented Islamic law, or Sudan, or even in Iran, the basic needs of people and the aspirations of people more broadly have not been sufficiently met. And that has led to a decline in support for those first-generation Islamic political parties. And that's gone some way to stimulate the emergence of a second generation of Islamic oriented parties, and you can point to some examples. One example, a good one, would be the AKP in Turkey. I should qualify that by saying that that the AKP doesn't regard itself as Islamist or Islamic in any way of course, that would be a violation of the Constitution in Turkey. It regards itself rather as a conservative democratic party. But you can see that the AKP even, respects and reflects Islamic values and traditions, and of course 99% of the population in Turkey are Muslim.

Geraldine Doogue: And what about obviously the PKS in Indonesia, which is a very interesting one on our doorstep.

Halim Rane: Absolutely, yes. I mean the PKS in Indonesia has 56 members of parliament, yes, has four ministers, and it has about 9% of the vote. With the PKS, one of the challenges they're facing at the moment is their capacity building. They've been surprised by the level of success they've had at elections, and so they're taking a 'steady as we go' approach, and trying to build a more solid foundation. They actually have a MOU with the Labor Party so that they can learn more about governing, because they don't have experience in this, they've come from Islamic roots, a dawa or preaching roots, you could say. And now they've moved into the -- they've become a political party. But you can see them to be quite distinct from the earlier Islamically-oriented political parties in Indonesia, in that this party doesn't advocate the formation of an Islamic state. But rather what they say is that an Islamic state is one where people should have their rights. There should be opposition to corruption, there should be a fairer distribution of wealth, we should seek to eradicate poverty.

Geraldine Doogue: Typical orthodox political aspiration.

Halim Rane: Right. We should respect human rights and those things that we would value in a Western context.

Geraldine Doogue: So in terms of -- do you think people in Australia for instance, Muslims in Australia that you've looked at, as well as of course, around the world, is there a new type of Muslim politician emerging in your view, in this second generation, that there are real patterns you can detect, or is it all just too diffuse yet?

Halim Rane: Yes, I think that the new pattern is that the new Muslim politician is more in touch with reality. If you take the case of Indonesia, the mood is quite secular. If you take the case of Malaysia, [in] Malaysia Muslims only make up about 60% of the population, so you've got 40% non-Muslims, and so if you're a hard-core first-generation Islamically-oriented political party that advocates implementation of *shariah* law and the formation of an Islamic state, there's a large proportion of the population that is never going to vote for you. And so what the second generation has done is come to a middle position. One that is appealing to the broadest cross-section of society. It's advocating policies that meet the needs and expectations of Muslims and non-Muslims alike, and the way this is being done, and the way they've been able to maintain Islamic legitimacy is to change the discourse and the way that the Qur'an, for example, is approached. And this is another major distinction between the first generation and the second generation.

The first generation advocated a more literal approach to the Qur'an and Islamic sacred scripture, whereas with the second generation, they have more of what I call a *maqasid*-oriented approach. The *maqasid* is an Arabic word that means 'higher objectives, intent, or purpose', and so rather than approaching a text like the Qur'an for a very literal perspective, the Qur'an is approached in terms of context, the context in which verses were written, the social-political and historical context, and also looking at these verses in terms of what was their purpose, what was their objective.

And so when all of these factors are taken into consideration, it's recognised that what Islam really was meant to be about was establishing a just and ethically based social order, and when parties like the AKP in Turkey, and the PKS in Indonesia, and the PKR in Malaysia assessed the history of Islamically-oriented political parties, they noticed that those parties and governments that came to implement *shariah* law, really didn't meet the basic needs and aspirations of people. There was still widespread poverty, there was still widespread corruption, there was a lack of human rights, and the demand of the people was that they would have more freedom, they would have more of a say in the running of their country, that there would be more equitable distribution of wealth, there would be less corruption and so on. And so it's through a *maqasid*, this higher objective and its contextual approach to Qur'anic interpretation that these parties have been able to reconcile the two.

Geraldine Doogue: Well it's terribly interesting because of course it implies that they are free to think this very interesting new interpretative, or throw a new interpretative light on the Qur'an. That means the role of the mullahs and the religious establishment is -- and it's a question for you, does that mean that slightly less or disproportionately less in places where this has occurred?

Halim Rane: It's actually interesting, that it's not really the ulama or the mullahs or this religious class that are most heavily involved in this -- well I have to qualify that term 'new approach' as well, but I'll come to that. It's really a new generation of educated Muslims that are most embracing of this particular approach, rather than the traditionally educated, scholarly class.

If I just had to comment about that point about 'new'. It's not actually a new approach, the *maqasid*-oriented approach was actually developed in the 14th century, and you had a number of scholars at that time come up with this particular perspective, it's more of a philosophy of Islamic law. You had people like Ibn Taymiyyah in Damascus and you had people like Abu Ishaq al-Shatibi in Muslim Spain, who developed this approach based on these higher objectives, to move away from this literal approach and the reasons were very interesting. There was major social, political and economic turmoil in the Muslim world in the 13th century. One example is that you had the sacking of Baghdad by the Mongols, you know, completely destroying that very advanced city at that time. And so by the 14th century you have some political stability again, but it's a time where scholars were then reflecting on what had happened and how the world had changed. And it's quite interesting to note that it's now in the 21st century that you have Muslim intellectuals engaging in the same activity. There was major turmoil for Muslims in the 20th century, you had in the 19th and 20th century, you had colonial rule, Muslims became newly independent from colonial rule and you had by the middle of the 20th century, you had the formation of the modern Muslim nation-states, that struggled a lot with various social, political and economic problems, and it's only with the turn of the century that many of these countries are starting to get on a steady footing, and so it's at this time you see a gravitation more towards this *maqasid* oriented approach.

Geraldine Doogue: Just quickly, when you said earlier that the PKS in Indonesia had completed an MOU, a Memo of Understanding with the Labor Party, that's the Labor Party in Australia is it? What sort of advice do they want from the Labor Party?

Halim Rane: I have this information from the PKS not from the Labor Party. I've never discussed it with any people within the Labor Party, but my understanding is that what they want is assistance with capacity building, on how to govern.

Geraldine Doogue: In this very sort of modern, well really, modern Western way.

Halim Rane: Absolutely, yes. That's the idea. Part of this emerging trend in the Muslim world is really to not continue to see the West in adversarial terms, but to start to recognise that the Western world has developed superior systems and institutions that the wider world can learn from and benefit from, and that's the realisation of the second generation Islamist political parties, that the Western world has developed these systems and institutions that are beneficial to their own people.

Geraldine Doogue: Well Dr Rane, this is very interesting research. Thank you very much indeed for joining us.

Halim Rane: Thank you.

Geraldine Doogue: And Dr Rane is deputy director of the Griffith Islamic Research Unit, and his most recent book *Islam and Contemporary Civilisation: Evolving Ideas; Transforming Relations* is a Melbourne University Press publication, published this week and look out for further research that he's undertaking as well, and we'll keep you up to date with him.