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A Positive Voice for Atheism

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A Letter From The President


Gail Miller

Atheist Alliance International works everyday to make the world a more secular place. Last month we funded an atheist conference in Nigeria where such a gathering came together for the first time. We reach out to secular groups like the one in Honduras where they are losing hope of being able to organize and make changes in their country. We respond to individuals in Muslim countries wanting to know what's available to help them connect with other atheists. Our goal is to support all atheists around the world.

This past summer, Atheist Alliance International revised its Mission statement to strengthen our commitment to providing support to our affiliates:

New Mission Statement: AAI's Mission is to support atheist/freethought organizations around the world by assisting them with; local campaigns, outreach, secular education projects, coaching and promoting interactions among these groups.

We want to build strong groups that can make changes in their regions. We also want to bring together these groups to work toward the bigger goal of a secular world.

In 2018, we look forward to expanding our work. Plans are underway to do more billboard campaigns in Africa, critical thinking in India, and grow our affiliate base. We are excited about the future for atheism and hope you will join us. 



Oppression against nontheists? Atheist Alliance International

The Freedom of Thought Report

A Global Report on Discrimination Against Humanists, Atheists and the Nonreligious



www.FreeThoughtReport.com

A Letter From The Editor

Rustam Singh

Is atheism limited to the privileged upper class white men?

Privilege exists around us in every form. It is an undeniable fact that some sections of society are systematically more privileged than others, some marginalized sections may never have access to the same resources and opportunities as the rest and some would have to fight the odds to achieve same results as a few privileged. But does the atheism movement also entitle an inherent sense of privilege to it? I believe so.

It's an undeniable scientific fact that everyone is born an atheist, and one is slowly doctored to be religious and accept other distinguishing factors such as cultural pride, nationalism, gender roles, caste pride etc. If you aren't a member of the small percentage of the population that is second, or third generation atheist, chances are you had to struggle through to be out of your closet about your religious beliefs. You may still choose to be discreet about your beliefs – perhaps for fear of your personal safety, perhaps for social acceptance or maybe the concept of being irreligious does not bother you as much and you'd not want it to be a significant defining factor in your life. However, if you voluntarily go about doing your own research, understand science, begin to question religious dogma, realize the real harm religion causes in society, you are in some sense privileged to gain that insight, since most likely a source of knowledge had some role to play in this. Not everyone has access to that kind of knowledge,

information, critical thinking skills or know peers that have questioned institutions such as religions and encourage you in your journey. In closed conservative societies, and across several parts in the world, individuals may spend their entire lives having no access to an alternative to the mainstream thought of God and it's supposed morality, thus being deprived of choosing it's alternative simply because there exists no other solution. Of course here I am conveniently ignoring the small percentage of the population that switched from being religious to irreligious just on their own.

Talking about privilege can be an extremely touchy subject, because even though the most destitute of the most marginalized may still be privileged in some aspects, and it is not uncommon for us to be unaware or out rightly deny privilege. This is about the time we remind ourselves that privilege is a very relative concept. In the same turf, just because we have a privilege in some aspect of life, does not mean we have privilege in all aspects of life. Privilege is often a systematic concept, or one derived via birth, but it can also be institutionalized. Yet, such a system hurts us all, and not just the oppressed (even though the oppressed is clearly more significantly affected). For example, as a straight male I have possibly the largest amount of privilege when it comes to gender and sex. However, the same privilege also puts the pressure of confining to traditional notions of masculinity and heterosexuality, restricts me from living my life freely without obeying to such rigid stereotypes, or even being in touch



with my softer side. There is no winning for either side – the system hurts both parties, the oppressor as well as the privileged.

However, having privilege does not necessarily have to entitle a sense of guilt. Privilege by definition may most likely be blessed to you via birth, for example your race, your nationality, your gender, caste etc., factors which were not voluntarily earned by you but under normal circumstances would define you. Guilt does not inspire us to change, and does not add any constructive improvement to our situation. In fact, if privilege comes from a place of birth, the individual must not be told to feel guilty about it either. Instead of harassing individuals to a guilt trip to realize their

privilege, the goal should be to the private sector. I would be lying if I encourage one to undermine their said I do not know at least half a dozen privilege and breakdown their individuals from so called backward dependency on their privilege. Slowly castes on paper that have been taking diluting its effect and being aware of it advantage of the system, drive cars can make all the difference. For example, worth more than my house, yet gained as a straight male instead of feeling guilty admissions with much lesser for sexuality and gender, I can choose to requirements into colleges I not only encourage and showcase my support dreamt to but also struggled and failed and empathy for other orientations on to get past the rigorous admissions. As a the sexuality spectrum. I can encourage non-perfect individual, I did grow up like women in power to lead, I can ensure essentially everyone else I knew there is a level playing ground for women criticizing reservations as a failed system around me and I can try to not that propagates the caste system ahead. participate in sexist traditions and I believed merely not acknowledging my institutionalized practices other sexes. privilege is what it would take to finish the system. I also knew so many kids

Growing up in India where possibly the oldest forms of systematic oppression and discrimination still flourishes via the caste system, I understood my privilege very early. Certain segments of society were considered subordinate, or inferior. Forget mingling with their members, mere association or casual conversation and sharing tasks with them would mean judgmental looks from different strata of society. According to the law of the land, caste based discrimination is illegal, yet removing it from our functional social life every day is a task that requires much more time and struggle. As I got more aware, I consciously tried to bridge the gap in my own little ways, and made a conscious effort not to discriminate and start conversations. Instead of spinning the conversation to hey check your privilege you spoilt upper caste rich individual, I tried to spin the question to how can we demolish this system that hurts us all?

The year is 2017, my parents weren't even born when British left India in 1947, but my grandparents did. I know for a fact there are Indian billionaires, I know the richest of us lead lifestyles that can make any English jealous right now. However, I also still feel the itchy side effects of coming from a colonial nation if I happen to apply for a foreign job, or even visit as a tourist. I know that idea exists. I know as an Indian it will take an exceptional amount of struggle, hardship and privilege to get the basic lifestyle and resources that, say, average American would. This does not mean I assume all Americans eat apple pies and unseasoned turkey for lunch every day, or that their struggles are anywhere unreal. On the surface, and statistics might even support my belief that India does boast of an extensive infrastructure of healthcare, roads, public transport, educational institutes, food more diverse than imaginable but I still realize in my heart of hearts, I'll have to fight the odds to defeat the effects of something that existed over 70 years ago. This does not mean in the hypothetical that India would be a superpower as my fascist

A major problem with accepting privilege's existence is individuals that are from marginalized segment of society yet do not display any visible signs of oppression are more visible than those suppressed. Going back to my case, I do realize affirmative actions can go upwards of 40% positions in government colleges, jobs and even in

government in current power claims, or that Indians were inherently flawless before the British invasion, but it does suggest that the discrimination has been imbedded in our heads that will take generations to get past.

I call affirmative action as necessary evil. It exists not because I personally hurt minority individuals, it exists to empower these individuals and this segment of society to get access to equal opportunity as well as equal representation in powerful positions so that policies and governance may be forwarded with their inclusion. I may still subconsciously discriminate in some ways even I'm not aware of, yet I consider the system of reservations as a way to make up for the system my great-grandparents took for granted. I do get tired standing in the metro rail when I travel especially when I see a visibly younger (and much less fat) woman sit at a chair just because of her gender, but then I think of the alternative. Can I really risk this woman thinking public transport isn't for her? Can I really risk the entire Dalit community thinking they do not belong to powerful governmental positions or gain entrance in my college of dreams? Can I risk a Muslim feeling India is a Hindu nation and they don't have the exact rights as I do? Of course not, that would prick my conscious beyond a point that I'm comfortable with.

Yes, a significant chunk of the population may take advantage of the system, and others may make me feel guilty of my own privilege, and I may occasionally also sub-consciously blame other's privilege for my own short-comings. But still, in my fight to break down these institutes that propagates, it is a small operational loss I'm willing to take. That's my same perspective in atheism – while I would strictly never participate in religious ceremonies that would encourage their normalization, I would also not scold or seriously mock those

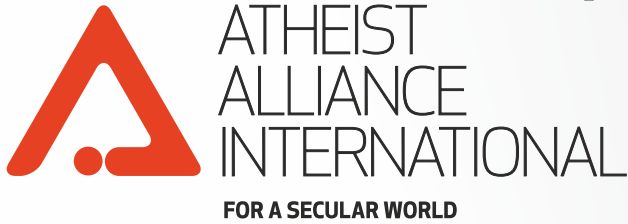
that still are agnostic. I try to understand their position, for they may not have the same level of privilege of acceptance that I did, or resources that helped me decide on my perspectives and beliefs on life's big problems. Let us fight our privileges by not guilt tripping, but by

working to acknowledging them, helping marginalized segments rise and co-share our responsibilities and try to voluntarily diminish their effects in whatever way we can. I hope you enjoy this edition of the

Secular World magazine. As always, please use the email provided for feedback and advertising options. We are always looking for new writers to discuss their systems of discrimination, religious criticism and discuss atheism. Thankyou. 

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The Fate of Non Believers: Understanding the Challenges to Atheism in Africa

Leo Igwe



My main task in this piece is to answer the question: Why is it difficult and sometimes dangerous to be an atheist in Africa? In answering this question, I outline the risks and difficulties that non theists face and how they play out in everyday life. I draw from the experiences of atheists in Nigeria, Ghana, and Zambia in answering this question and in supplying materials for further discussion and reflection.

Atheists across Africa face personal, social, economic, state and organizational challenges.

Personal Challenges: What kind of atheist to be.

As individuals, atheists grapple with the fact of their unbelief, their realization that there is no god. Atheists struggle to come to terms with their disbelief in a deity. This struggle entails deciding where and when to take a stand and how to come out as a disbeliever in god. Atheists grapple with whether to maintain a strictly non-theistic stand or entertaining a sit-on-the-fence, agnostic, may-be-there-could-be-some-god-out-there approach. Many atheists often have to confront the challenge of what kind of atheist to be-a closeted atheist or an atheist in the open; an atheist activist, who is assertive of his or

her rights or a passive one who does not want to rock the theistic boat or ruffle theistic feathers in any way. For those living in a very intense religious environment, this personal challenge is often designated as a crisis of faith. Atheists experience this crisis not really because faith in god makes a more compelling case for truth, meaning and morality but because atheism has social implications.

Social Challenges: What Will they say? What will they do?

Human beings are social beings and their



behaviours have social angles. In addition to their personal challenges, atheists contend with possible reactions of their family and community members, that is, what family members and friends would say and their other responses to their atheism. This is actually where atheists encounter much of the risks and dangers-that is how the society judges or treats them. To illustrate this point, a comment that was posted on the facebook page of a Ghanaian atheist, G.A (14 October 2019) is quite appropriate. He said: "I've been told before that my atheism is a show off. To be honest, being atheist in this country is painful. It means being at "war" all the time. It means standing against family, risking the support or being primed to lose that support at any moment for your worldview. Atheism means the social comfort that the church gives to others is out of reach for you. Add Feminism your position and things gets even tense (sic), you are threatening the very foundation of the patriarchal family structure. You now not only have to fight for yourself but with and for women whom the structure oppresses. If you are a

humanist on top of that, now you've taken it to another level, your solidarity with LGBTIQ people now makes you a clear enemy to everyone around you who would have been a friend, brother or sister.

Truth be told, Atheism/Humanism /Feminism is a costly thing in our current social environment. It is only fun when you're with like-minded folks, otherwise you have to be fighting at many fronts at all times".

As this quotation shows, atheists deal with the social costs of their atheism. And as GA noted, the response from the social is a form of war, a painful social fight at different fronts that may likely destroy the base of one's support or comfort. This social assault comes in different forms.

Atheism: A Form of Sickness?

In some cases, embracing atheism is equated to some psychological problem or crisis. A friend of a Nigerian atheist, the Northern Atheist (N.A) posted this message online:

"Recently I added the acclaimed Northern Atheist, on my friends list. In fact, I requested for the friendship. So far I found two things intriguing: First is the way people condemn him whenever he makes post that violates their system of belief, which I find really funny. But I understand why (or so I think). He was once their own. Now they cannot contain the reality of him being on the other side of the coin. The second thing I have learned from his posts, so far, is the conflict between conscious(sic) and ego. Instead of the dude to concentrate on preaching what he practices and calling upon people to the salvation that freedom offers, he resorts to ridiculing other people's system of belief, which is tantamount to denying/questioning their choice (read freedom) of worship. That's not even the point I am trying to make. What I have realized about N.A is that he is in a very difficult situation. His knowledge (read consciousness) of God (Allah in this case) on one and his egoistic self on the other put him in a situation of conflicting resurgence of a problematic. He cannot denounce his announcement of not believing in God just like he cannot

free himself from the nagging awareness of His existence. That's what I have learned so far. I may be wrong".

As you can see, even though this friend of the N.A added that he could be wrong, the sentiment captures a widespread reaction, that is a pathological framing of atheism. Friends and family members respond when a person comes out as an atheist thinking that one's declaration of atheism is a symptom of sickness. An atheist is seen as somebody who is out of his or her mind. People react by thinking that a person becomes an atheist due to some frustration, disappointment, 'difficult situation' or a 'conflicting resurgence' (whatever that means). They think that one must be mentally sick to say that there is no God. And as suggested in the quotation, one sign of this mental illness is 'ridiculing other people's system of belief'.

Some years ago atheists in Nigeria witnessed a situation where family members of the N.A took him to a mental hospital after he renounced Islam. Many people had wondered why relatives could take such a measure in reaction to one's renunciation of Islam. A way to explain this psychiatric interpretation of atheism, 'Islamic atheism', is that the family members in question had considered this step, that is taking him to a mental hospital, as a form of 'care' and 'rehabilitation', as a way of correcting the maladjustment. Their thinking is that atheism is of no benefit at all in this world and in the next. After all, the

penalty for apostasy under sharia is death in this world and hell fire in the hereafter. So they had wondered how anyone in his or her right state of mind could embrace atheism. And the Christian Bible puts it a bit differently in Psalm 14:1 that the fool has said in his heart that there is no God.

Interestingly a psychiatric interpretation of atheism is well known and get often alluded to, but there is a dearth of similar explanations of religious behaviours such as speaking in tongues, divine revelations, receiving prophecies and communication with the gods, throwing stones at the devil in Mecca etc. Unfortunately, attempts to provide such insights are often misunderstood or better resisted, violently resisted. Part of the social challenge to atheism is that atheistic expressions are deemed haram (forbidden); efforts to highlight absurd religious and theistic beliefs are often seen as insulting the religious gods and prophets, and a serious offence. Meanwhile theistic faith traditions are filled with narratives that ridicule atheism and unbelief, and equate atheists to fools, to psychiatric patients and also to criminals. In fact theistic traditions impose economic costs on unbelief.

Economic Challenges: How to survive as an atheist

Atheists often wrestle with how they will survive after going open with their unbelief. This is a serious concern

because one way that theism legitimizes itself is by undermining the economy of atheism, by defunding unbelief, and yes, by monopolizing the belief market and capital. Put differently, theistic religions try to put atheism out of business. As noted by G.A. embracing atheism has socio-economic implications. The decision could lead to the destruction of one's means of livelihood, loss of job, and business opportunities. Part of the personal crisis that atheists experience is weighing the costs, the economic costs, of their atheism; the impact that unbelief could have on their lives, future and survival. A campus organiser in Ibadan told me sometime ago that freethought was not marketable as he explained his inability to get other students to join his 'group'.

This concern is vital because given the harsh economic realities in the region, few atheists are ready to risk or jeopardize their means of livelihood-jobs and businesses. Many do not want to lose the support that they are receiving from their family members especially if they are still dependants - students or unemployed or the aged. In this case many atheists end up not believing but still belonging to faith organisations. They attend and participate in the church or mosque activities of that rich uncle or that in-law who lives abroad and sends money to support the family. They belong as a way of ensuring the continued flow of support, and their economic survival. Many atheists do not want to lose their



REPRESENTING ATHEISTS INTERNATIONALLY

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jobs or their customers. They teach in schools where they are forced to lead in morning devotions. Some atheists work with governments that observe national days of prayer and as civil servants they attend or coordinate these state functions. Some atheists work in banks and in others firms that start the daily businesses with worship and devotions. Refusal to take part in these theistic businesses could lead to their dismissal from their positions.

It is important to note that part of the economic challenge is that atheists have to confront the allegation that some real or imaginary financial benefit is the reason for their atheism.

Atheism for Monetary Purpose

Some atheists who have managed to survive and stay economically afloat have to contend with another challenge, that is the idea that it is all for some financial gain. In some cases, friends react by claiming that one's embrace of atheism is for some pecuniary purpose. This allegation is made especially where there is some known or imagined financial support from the atheist movement or from abroad. I must add here that monetary consideration is a factor in the decisions that human beings make whether it is theistic or non theistic, religious or secular. Financial consideration goes into deciding to attend or not to attend that church, or that mosque; even in deciding to participate in that atheist meetings physically or virtually. The pecuniary element may be in terms of the money received as tithes or as subsidies for pilgrimages but also the money spent, saved or the 'seeds' sown in furtherance of theistic or atheistic affairs. In the case of atheism, people impute financial motivation in order to belittle and trivialize the decision, ridicule it and make it seem as if the decision to become an atheist is a mischievous one.

Here is a comment from the friend of the

KASESE HUMANIST PRIMARY SCHOOL

- A Project of the AAI Foundation -



<http://kasesehumanistschool.webs.com/>

Located in rural East Uganda, the Kasese School has been supported by AAI since 2008 and has provided a secular education based in science and reason for over 3,000 students.

90% of the schooling in Uganda is provided by religious organizations. The Kasese Humanist Primary School is unique in providing a Humanist education.

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Thank you again for your ongoing support!



N.A. highlighting the money factor in his embrace of atheism.

“Innalillahi wa inna ilaihi raju'un (To Allah we belong To him we return). What a life we are living if a grown up man like THIS be born in Kano into a muslim family schooled at Hassan Gwarzo, and graduated from same department as I, at the same school ABU Zaria after he became 25 years of age decided to leave Islam and completely worship SATAN just because of MONEY. What is our love for money growing into? MAY ALLAH KEEP PROTECTING US AND GUIDE US TO THE RIGHT PART, AMEEN!”

And here is a reply from N.A:

“Becoming an atheist is not easy. Drinking the blood of bats and black cats almost made me quit. But what can one do, alas! The money is in dollars. It paid off in the end. I love you Satan, Lucifer, you are the God”.

So part of the challenge to atheists in this region is addressing such imputed economic – monetary- motivations for atheism. Many atheists may not have the wit and intelligence to respond the way that the N.A did.

And as noted in the quotations, the devil is designated as the invisible hand that guides atheism.

Satanization of Atheism

Atheists in this region have to contend with the fact that they are accused of being Satanists, that is, devil worshippers. As Satanists, atheists are seen as embodiment of evil. Many atheists find it difficult to comprehend this Satanist label. For them, since they find no evidence for the existence of god, how could anyone think that they could actually worship the devil, another imaginary entity. The fact is that many theists find it difficult to believe that atheists indeed do not have something that they worship at all. They assume that atheists must have their own 'god'

and their own 'church' or their own 'mosque'. Hence they often conclude that atheists worship Satan. A man who reacted to the registration of Atheists In Kenya said the decision was like licensing 'devil worshipping'. Their thinking is that denying the existence of god creates a belief or worship vacuum that devil's worship fills. In some places people go a bit further by equating atheist groups to secret cults.

The assumption is that disbelieving in god creates a community gap in the lives of atheists and secret societies and occult rituals fill this space. So people think that atheists belong to some cults where as N.A sarcastically noted they drink the blood of bats and black cats and revere Lucifer.

Atheism: Lacks Conscience

Furthermore, atheists have to contend with the notion that they are people without morals. An atheist from Zambia, Mr H.

posted on his face book page how a friend reacted when he told him that he was an atheist.

"I'm an atheist, I told him and all he had to say was that he only wondered the kind of evil I was capable of doing despite my innocent look. He said someone who did not believe in the existence of God must lack conscience because he could do anything to anyone without fear of God's punishment".

The thinking is that the atheist's freedom from fear of divine punishment constitutes a moral liability. The assumption is that the fear of God's

punishment is a necessary condition for morality. This kind of reasoning has been used against atheists before now. In 1940, the British philosopher, Bertrand Russell secured an appointment to teach at a university in New York. But a woman opposed the appointment, describing him as "lecherous, libidinous, lustful, venerous, ... aphrodisiac, irreverent, narrowminded, untruthful, and bereft of moral fiber. As in the case of Mr H, and reechoed in Russell's, people consider atheism as an outlook without a moral compass. They consider atheists as mean and vicious, as persons who act or can behave without any restraint or qualms.

laying their religion readily aside to commit the most heinous acts of injustice and wearing it back on when they are through, then blame it on the devil if per chance they are apprehended. If as a human, you only do the right things because of the fear of a divine authority or the promise of payment by the same authority, then you're a beast disguised in human form...a disaster waiting to occur. A ticking time bomb!! Can't you be good without strings attached?"

Unfortunately such a response has done very little to raise the moral ground of atheism in the eyes of many in the

society. The social challenge to atheism takes a charged and threatening dimension in places where satanization and immoralization of atheism is codified in state policies and legislations.

State Challenge: Atheists as Criminals?

Atheists face an additional challenge in many countries because of the existence of state laws that could be used to prosecute them for various crimes including apostasy and blasphemy. Legal provisions exist in different countries that make it a crime to offend religious sensibilities, majority religious sensibilities. These provisions are employed to silence, suppress or eliminate atheists and freethinkers.

Under sharia law, both apostasy and blasphemy are crimes that are punishable by death. So atheism and atheistic expressions are justiciable. Although some may argue that these laws are just there in the statute books in



Interestingly, Mr H posted a response noting that the moral deficit in the theistic position and reasoning: "But I thought that is exactly the fact with most religious people. Void of their religion, they are incapable of mustering any good deeds and kindness and think it must be the same with everyone else. The only restraint they have from going completely berserk, disobedient of laws and hurting a fellow human is the belief of an awaiting punishment from a divine jurisdiction, and the only times they do good things and live morally upright is because of the expected reward from God. And more often, we see them

many countries and are seldom invoked, their very existence poses a grave threat to atheists and atheism in the region.

One way that non-theists have tried to tackle this challenge is to lobby and get the state to repeal these laws. However to effectively lobby, atheists need to be organized.

Organisational Challenges: How to confront the difficulties?


The atheist movement has organizational issues that are linked to their visibility or lack thereof in several places. Few non theist groups exist in the region. Fewer individual atheists are active and much fewer are financial members. This organizational challenge is often attributed to the notion that organizing atheists and freethinkers is like herding cats. But I think it is much more than that. To confront the above listed-personal, social, economic and political-challenges, atheists need to come together as organizations, coalitions, alliances, associations and unions. Atheists need to resist this notion that atheism cannot be effectively organized. Atheists in Africa

need to figure out a way of organizing that works for them and avoid blindly copying and adopting models that are used elsewhere. The organizational models that apply to atheism in Europe and America may not necessarily work for atheists in Africa. In fact organisational models may differ between countries and within countries in Africa. For instance, organizational formations that apply to Christian dominated communities may not be effective in mainly muslim areas. The urban circumstance is different from the rural situation. Thus the atheist movement needs appropriate campus, academic, parliamentary, media, educational, online, rural and urban initiatives to further the interests of atheists in all sectors and segments of the society.

Part of the challenge is also ensuring that atheist associations continue to fulfill its mission despite the political circumstances or ethnic differences. Africa is ethnically diverse and ethnicity plays prominent key role in political mobilization. Atheist organisations should guard against the ethnic fault lines and aim to take on all governments in power that violate secular values.

Atheist organisations should not allow sectional/partisan interests of members to undermine their objectives.

Furthermore, atheist groups face very unique challenges due to the socio economic realities in the region. Poverty is a huge problem and sometimes constitutes the reason why people join or start groups. Given their humanist, human rights, peace and humanitarian concerns, there is a tendency for atheist and freethought groups to attract non theist, non atheist, or quasi atheist persons, NGO opportunists with 'other' interests and agenda. Atheist groups in this region must position themselves to effectively address this challenge.

In conclusion, the various challenges facing atheists in different parts of the region have been examined. Insights into how atheists responded or could respond to such issues and difficulties have been offered. The path to atheism is a road to reason. It is a path marked by risky turns and dangerous twists. Ensuring that the atheist movement remains on track despite these dire challenges that may occasionally yield crisis is critical to the future and survival of atheists and atheism in this region. Overcoming these personal, social, economic and political hurdles on this road to reason will be the litmus test of the resilience, vibrancy and vitality of the atheist, humanist and freethought organisations in the region in the years ahead. 



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The topic of his ongoing doctoral research is: Negotiating Witchcraft Accusation: A Case Study of the Dagomba in Northern Ghana. His research interests include witchcraft and magic, non-religiosity, atheism and unbelief in Africa.

Islamophobia – What Is Really Wrong With It

Benjamin David



Accepting the notion of ‘Islamophobia’ means the end of legitimate criticism of Islam. We cannot allow *de facto* blasphemy to destroy our liberal values.

Much has been made of the controversy surrounding East London Mosque’s [complaints](#) against the Council of Ex-Muslims (CEMB) for being “Islamophobic” at this year’s London Pride march. Of course, a slew of articles have dispelled the claim that CEMB’s slogans, such as the one featuring the contumacious yet amusing statement ‘Allah Is Gay!’, is somehow an attack on Muslims. Accusations of Islamophobia are, unfortunately not isolated to CEMB.

Indeed, most recently Richard Dawkins [Muhammad](#). The newspaper received hit the headlines after the radio station even more controversy after a 2011 issue on which he was scheduled to appear (in re-titled [Charia Hebdo](#) (French for Sharia order to talk about his recent [book](#) and Weekly), featured a cartoon of the usual vistas of anti-theism) cancelled Muhammad, whose depiction is his appearance, citing his supposed forbidden in some interpretations of Islamophobia as unendurable for its Islam. The newspaper’s office was fire-bombed and its website hacked as a result. In 2012, the newspaper received

Arguably, the most well-known case of unprecedented ire from various Muslim communities after it published a series of satirical cartoons of Muhammad, Hebdo. Indeed, in 2006 Islamic including nude caricatures. Slathers of organisations under French hate speech claims were levelled towards the laws unsuccessfully sued Charlie Hebdo newspaper, warning that by publishing over the newspaper’s re-publication of Muhammad in racially clichéd form, the [Jyllands-Posten cartoons of](#) adopting all sorts of scandalous



The image from the Charlie Hebdo office shows blood-stained wooden floors

positions, they would only be feeding the widespread discrimination towards Muslims. Moreover, the claim was made that such satire is *another* attack on Muslims – a group of people already victimised due to the West’s longstanding incursions in “Muslim lands”. As we know, Charlie Hebdo would eventually pay with their lives for having the nerve to depict their prophet and satirise their religion.

Origins of the term Islamophobia

In order to understand what Islamophobia is, it will be prudent to first offer a history of the term. The word ‘Islamophobia’ can be traced back to a series of articles published in the 1990s by the Left-leaning think-tank the Runnymede Trust. Robin Richardson, who edited the 1997 report ‘Islamophobia: A Challenge for Us All’ said that the term goes back even

further. Indeed, in a recent paper Richardson traces the phrase back to Alain Quellien’s use of the French word ‘Islamophobie’ in 1910 to berate French colonial administrators for poorly treating Muslim subjects. Richardson’s paper notes that the first time the term is used in English occurs in “the connection between Islamophobia and antisemitism” by Edward Said – a pro-Palestinian and former professor of literature at Columbia University. In his work, Said chides writers who either fail or refuse to recognise that “hostility to Islam in the modern West had historically gone hand-in-hand with antisemitism”. In its earliest historical usage, the term ‘Islamophobia’ denoted animus towards Muslims, not an “irrational fear of Islam – which is what the term should mean etymologically.

In the UK, the first known use of the word in print occurred in a book review in the

Independent on 16 December 1991. [Modood](#) noted there is a view that *The Satanic Verses* was “a deliberate, mercenary act of Islamophobia” but indicated that his own view was that “while Islamophobia is certainly at work, the real sickness is militant irreverence”.

What is meant by Islamophobia?

According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the word means “Intense dislike or fear of Islam, esp. as a political force; hostility or prejudice towards Muslims”. The Berkeley University *Islamophobia Research & Documentation Project* [suggested](#) the working definition: “Islamophobia is a contrived fear or prejudice fomented by the existing Eurocentric and Orientalist global power structure. It is directed at a perceived or real Muslim threat through the maintenance and extension of existing disparities in economic,



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political, social and cultural relations, while rationalising the necessity to deploy violence as a tool to achieve ‘civilisational rehab’ of the target communities (Muslim or otherwise). Islamophobia reintroduces and reaffirms a global racial structure through which resource distribution disparities are maintained and extended”.

Let’s probe deeper...

In a world of identity politics, political positions based on the interests and perspectives of social groups with which people identify have hijacked the hegemonic political discourse. ‘Cultures’ have become fatefully synonymous with the category of the ethnic or minority. As Davina Bhandar observed, cultures are being seen as an entity highly abstracted from practices of daily-life, thereby becoming represented as a ‘geist’ of the people. Cultures become a homogenisation of cultural identity and the ascription of particular values onto minority cultural groups. Put another

way, cultures have become strange and saturated entities hybridising identity and ideology. In effect, what this means is that Islamophobia – or rather acts of Islamophobia – has become the new racism. Yesterday’s anti-racism activist has refashioned him or herself into the salesman of a highly specialised commodity: a niche form of discrimination.

‘Islamophobia’ today principally means an animus towards a people, i.e., Muslims. As former editor-in-chief of Charlie Hebdo Stéphane “Charb” Charbonnier states in his posthumous *Open Letter: On Blasphemy, Islamophobia, and the True Enemies of Free Expression*, the phenomenon gained traction by the “mostly idiotic complicity of the media”, because of “laziness, then for novelty, and lastly out of commercial interest.”

Problems with the term

The problems associated with using the term Islamophobia are profound. Some

of the problems principally concern the focal ring implicit in the concept of phobia. Others concern the overtures to the term Islam. Some of these are as follows:

1) As many would likely discern, to label someone as ‘Islamophobic’- that is, as somehow having a phobia about Islam and for Muslims, is clearly preposterous. Of course, medically, ‘phobia’ implies an acute mental illness of a kind that affects only a small number of people. Whatever else anxiety about Muslims and/or Islam may be, it is erroneous to claim that it is merely a mental illness and it surely does not merely involve a small number of people.

2) Etymological points of contention aside, to label someone ‘Islamophobic’ essentially absolves oneself of the responsibility, both intellectually and with empathy, why someone thinks and acts as they do towards Islam and Muslims, and attempt to modify their perceptions and understandings



through engagement and argument. It has the rather scowling repercussion of shutting down debate and failing to address – let alone redress – an interlocutor’s views towards Muslims and/or Islam.

3) ‘Islamophobia’ suggests that hostility towards Muslims is no different than other forms of hostility such as racism and xenophobia. Moreover, the way in which Islamophobia is understood suggests that it is a social disease bearing no connection with issues of class, power, status and territory; or with issues of military, political or economic competition and conflict. Islam, however, is not a race, ethnicity, or nationality; it is a set of ideas. Critiquing those ideas – such as some of the regnant positions held by the majority of scholars concerning women, LGBT people, apostates, etc., – should never be confused nor conflated with an animus towards a people.

4) The term implies little difference between an animus for Muslim people within one country and an animus for groups (e.g. ISIS) and regimes elsewhere in the world, where those who identify as Muslim happen to be the majority, and with which ‘the West’ is in military conflict. This point requires fleshing out.

The Post-Modernist Left:

The Left, committed to defending and empowering the most persecuted in society, has provided fresh soil for this conflation to sprout. To be more precise, it is a section of the Left who, employing post-modernist world views (seeing social phenomena in terms of power structures needing zero-sum game responses) and harbouring Western guilt, see redressing social inequities as so important that it can validly – and even necessarily – justify pulling the plug on so-called Western hegemony. Examples include denouncing liberal

principles such as free speech.

Art historian John Molyneux, member of the Socialist Workers Party, rightly accuses this section of the Left for “singing an old song long intoned by bourgeois historians of various persuasions”. Of course, those bourgeois post-Modernists do so with a post-enlightenment plume as they continue gaining considerable leverage within a section of politics eerily confused concerning what common value it should stand for. The intoned relativism renders so-called Western liberal principles – those things that people across the world rely on in championing rights for minorities – stripped of their merit and placed on equal footing with other schools of ideology, such as Islamism. Add Western guilt alongside a post-modernist *weltanschauung* and you have a group of people willing to embolden and further institutionalise some of the most perilous ideologies.

Such well-meaning sorts offer monolithic diagnoses of systemic problems ([sexism](#), [homophobia](#), [extremism](#)) in considerable numbers of Muslim communities. They see Muslims as largely reactionaries of Western agency (colonialists) as opposed to seeing them as autonomous hermeneutists. This is, they argue, owing to the West's foreign policy in the Middle East, which has inflicted a maelstrom of death, collateral damage, and instability to those unfortunate enough to live there.

Given our general inability to neatly hold

journalist [Yassin Musharbash](#).

The Islam/Middle Eastern Conflation

Middle Eastern people have, of course, been victimised by people who come from the West, and of course Middle Easterners have been victimised by other Middle Easterners. The Middle-East and the Wahhabi form of Islam (we often see all across our newspapers) have become identical with Middle Easterners. This almost appears to be a facsimile of the homogenisation of Judaism and the Jewish People – whereby Judaism, the Jewish People and

systematises it under the guise of political egalitarianism.

By conflating an ideology with a group of people, these people are not only essentialised but are judged by a lower set of moral standards. When white westerners commit moral transgressions, the highest moral standards are referenced. This is largely owing to the fact that we think that *they could have done otherwise*. When a white westerner has a putative complicity in the far-right violence in Charlottesville, for example, they will be met with the highest degree of moral



two different abstract entities (in this case, a people and an ideology) when they exist in conjunctive form, monolithism quickly follows. One can be pardoned for thinking that Orientalism precipitates this monolithism in rather straightforward fashion. A victimised group of people, predominately Muslim, are reduced to a single entity with a common set of ideas: Islam. Consequently, mocking Mohammed or lambasting the intellectual merit of its theism, is denounced. Ben Affleck typified this when rebuffing Sam Harris and Bill Maher as being, more or less so, 'racist', as did the ever-insensate

Jewish culture and history are seen as a monolith. People expect Muslims to have some fundamental connection to the people of the Middle East, and Middle-Easterners and meant to be Muslim.

Equally worrying is that Muslims and Middle Eastern people are seldom seen by the aforementioned as capable of holding other religious ideologies or fundamental worldviews, such as the so-called humanist world view borne post-enlightenment. This is a form of Orientalism that not only plays on longstanding stereotypes, but

judgement and consequent opprobrium. When a British thawb donning, caliphate-craving Islamist is parading the streets of London screaming "Allahu akbar! Death to apostates!", there will inevitably be people on the Left who refuse to condemn such a person because he or she unwittingly deems the Islamist unable to have *really done* otherwise. "He's a Muslim, and we know that Middle Easterners have been vilified by us Westerners. We'll be Islamophobes if we dare throw down the gauntlet."

When a group of people and an ideology are conflated, those in that very group

who dare modify the ideology, are met with scepticism. Indeed, progressive Muslims who argue that, for example, feminism and democracy are perfect compatible with Islam, are often accused of not being “real Muslims” and not speaking on behalf of the Muslim community. Many such progressives are often deemed ‘uncle toms’, and colonial gambits.


Going ahead:

Many people who identify as Muslim are attacked, harassed and persecuted simply because of their religion. Not only that, given that the majority of Muslims happen to be Middle Eastern looking, many have been subjected to unpalatable degrees of racism. We must call these two things for what they are – anti-Muslim bigotry and racism. The continued acceptance of ‘Islamophobia’ as an inclusive, vogueish neologism to capture both

manifestations is having grave implications concerning a particular speech and open enquiry are being

ideology – Islam. The notion of ‘Islamophobia’ is constructed out of a desire to perpetuate a siege mentality and sense of victimhood amongst Muslims, or to put an end to legitimate criticism, or to engage in lazy abuse. The threatened by a wily – and ingenious – new form of censorship. I say ‘censorship’ but many would be inclined to call it by another name: ‘blasphemy’. There are people in Muslim majority countries who face threats from Islamists for daring to leave the religion or thumping for reform. This doesn’t just happen there, of course, because we know only too well what happened to [Theo van Gogh](#) and [Charlie Hebdo](#) here in Europe. There are many apologists of Islam who, such as the post-Modernist Left, will excuse such atrocities for the most perverse of reasons – social equality. “Muslims and Islam are under attack” they will lament. The time is now for the Left to

restitute its defining, quondam principles, lest blasphemy make a bloodcurdling return. 

implications concerning a particular speech and open enquiry are being restitute its defining, quondam principles, lest blasphemy make a bloodcurdling return. 



Benjamin David is a writer, Senior Editor for The Parliamentary Review, and founder of Conatus News www.conatusnews.com

Atheist Society of Nigeria Inaugural National Convention

Oge Igboegbunam and Freeborn Amadi



The first national convention of Atheist Society of Nigeria was held on November 11, 2017. The society is registered with the country's corporate affairs commission under the Incorporated Trustees Act, Companies and Allied Matters Act 1, 1990, Part C. The convention, tagged, The Road to Reason was held at Julius Berger Theatre, University of Lagos, Lagos State, Nigeria.

Target audience

The event was targeting attendance by all atheists, agnostics, freethinkers and secularists in the country. The international atheist community was

also present and ably represented. Nigeria. Due to unavailability of data, the Atheist Alliance International (AAI) – the society budgeted to receive 100 major sponsor of the event - was participants but this went over by about 50% recording 143 registered participants.

communications director and a member of the Atheist Society of Nigeria who **Objective**

acted as a co-host. The International Humanist and Ethical Union (IHEU) was represented by Dr. Leo Igwe. The formally announced to the entire atheist community in Nigeria and Africa that there is now an organized body properly represented by its chairperson Roslyn incorporated within the enabling laws of the country to protect the interests of atheists and humanists. Another key objective was to encourage closet atheists and individuals who are in a



state of doubt regarding the existence of deities or agnostics that they are not associate with likeminded individuals to gain more insight into their scepticism so that jointly, we can adopt critical reasoning as a means to address a myriad of socio-economic challenges bedevilling Africa which was hitherto associated with a supernatural being.

Information regarding the event was circulated through Facebook and the official twitter channel of the society.

Due to high cost of advertisement in other media channels such as television and newspapers, unfortunately we were unable to reach out to as many people as we would have loved to. We expect that in subsequent events, and as our resources grow, we will be able to circularize information to a wider audience. It is estimated that Nigeria, a County with population of 180 million people has about 3% atheists' population, the majority being still in the closet.

Media Coverage

Few media personalities from key media houses in Nigeria, Radio Nigeria, Sun Newspaper and CKJ Media were at the event to provide coverage. In the subsequent event, we shall work towards gaining access to the mainstream media by engaging more media houses with an objective to reach out to as many people as possible. Creating awareness is one key way to achieve our desired objectives.

Welcome address by the president

The event commenced with an inaugural address by the incumbent president of Atheist Society of Nigeria, Calistus Igwilo. Igwilo was an executive committee member of the Nottingham Secular Society. In his welcome address he expressed his excitement at having atheists gathered as an organized body in Nigeria for the very first time. He took participants through the synopsis and events that eventually culminated into forming an atheist society. Next, he provided an update on the activities of the society since it was approved on March 10, 2017. The president thanked all participants especially international

bodies who co-hosted the event. The International Humanist and Ethical Union (IHEU) donated funds (900 pounds) which was budgeted to sponsor 20 participants from 10 tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Atheist Alliance International also supported the event with a sum of \$2,500. The president highlighted the road map to achieving the society's set objectives and appealed to the atheist community to join hands towards this cause.

Other speakers

Theory of evolution: Akorita Aisiah (head of media, Atheist Society of Nigeria) Akorita took the audience through the basics of the theory of evolution. He also highlighted on some facts to dispel some misconceptions about the same. It was a high level overview on the subject and was very engaging.

Road to reason – Bill Flavell (vice president, Atheist Alliance International)

The theme of the convention was road to reason. Reason has exponentially



contributed to man's understanding of its environment and the universe. Bill made a very good presentation laced with well researched demographic information on Africa vis a vis other developed economies and their respective appetite for religion. He empirically illustrated how poverty is the key driver of religion in Africa. He thereafter highlighted some insightful ways out of the situation.

Challenges of atheism in Africa – Leo Igwe (chairman, Humanist Movement of Nigeria and representative of International Humanist and Ethical Union - IHEU)

Leo Igwe is well versed in issues around Africa's penchant for religion and the challenges of atheism in Africa following his extensive research in the subject. He dwelled on various challenges which included personal, social, economic, state and organizational challenges and offered solutions around each. He summarized the god concept as “imaginary”. He next urged all within the atheist community to stop being passive over issues and policies around us that are appraised based on religion.

He also asserted that nobody has been known to die of shock from hearing that a loved one has turned atheist, so no one need to live in the closet or pander to the whims of the religious out of misplaced consideration for their feelings.

During his presentation, a media rep from Radio Nigeria, Ifeoma Okpara requested to know from Leo if Atheist Society of Nigeria advocate pro-abortion. Leo responded saying that the decision regarding abortion is a personal and sensitive issue and should be the prerogative of the pregnant woman to decide whether she wished to keep the pregnancy or medically terminate it. His audacious answer prompted the cheers of the audience as he continued with his speech.

Experience of an ex-Muslim - Mubarak Bala

Mubarak, a well-known face of atheism in Nigeria who went through harrowing experience of confinement to a psychiatric hospital following his rejection of Islam, talked about some delusional dogmas of Islam and how

ridiculous it all appeared. He also talked about the current trend in Nigerian politics and the subtle subjugation of a secular society. He then provided an update regarding the registration of the Humanist Association of Nigeria.

Roslyn Mould – Past president - Humanist Association of Ghana

Roslyn presented some activities of the Humanist Association of Ghana as a learning point for new organizations formed in Nigeria. She also represented the International Humanist and Ethical Youth Organization. She narrated how the organization is providing support and cooperation to over 20 other member organizations. They encouraged local programs and promoted humanism which supported the idea that the solution to the world's problem is in human thought and action rather than divine intervention.

Transhumanism – Chogwu Abdul (Transhumanist Forum of Nigeria)

Abdul delivered a presentation on Transhumanism. Technology has advanced so well that scientists are

proposing merging the human brain with as computer. What is the implication for humanity? Abdul gave a high level synopsis of the potential benefit and dangers of such emerging technologies that could overcome fundamental human limitations.

The program was wrapped up by a speaker who made a presentation on mental health.

The event ended on a joyful note at around 17:00 hrs. We are happy to say that the audience was engaged right up to the end and the question and answer sessions were quite vibrant. There were

refreshments and lunch served to the participants and entry was kept free to encourage participation.

The audience were encouraged to like and follow the organization's social media channels at [Atheist Society of Nigeria](#) and send emails for further enquiries to info@atheist.org.ng

The recommendations for future events currently being looked into by the body are:


- Membership growth,
- Access to the mainstream media,
- Set up student chapters of the organization,

- Set up a support unit and help care phone lines where members of the public going through psychological (and other) challenges regarding atheism can call in for help.

The event was hosted by:

Freeborn Amadi – Head of logistics, Atheist Society of Nigeria and Pearl Osibu – director of communications, Atheist Alliance International.

Feedback can be sent to info@atheist.org.ng

Report compiled by Oge Igboegbunam and Freeborn Amadi. 



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VOLUNTEERS: We need volunteers for marketing, merchandising, fundraising, helping organize campaigns, translation, etc. If you want to be a volunteer, contact: volunteer@atheistalliance.org.

The Clear Thinking of Julie Payette vs. the Atheophobia of Solange Lefebvre

David Rand

In a [recent address to a scientific convention in Ottawa](#), the Governor General of Canada, Ms. Julie Payette, expressed her opposition to pseudosciences such as astrology and her rejection of false beliefs. She mocked not only those who continue to deny a human role in climate change, but also those who persist in attributing the origins of life to divine intervention, thus refusing to accept a natural explanation.

By making such comments, Ms. Payette places herself in a sort of conflict of interest, because she is the official representative of Queen Elizabeth II, head of state of Canada (and of the UK of course) “by the grace of God” no less! Her role is intimately tied to the theism on which the monarchy is based. But for me, atheist, anti-theist and anti-monarchist that I am, this contradiction only makes her unexpected behaviour all the more delightful!

It is indeed refreshing when an important public figure dares to break a taboo set by conformist decorum and says finally and openly that which many of us have known for a very long time: that religions contribute nothing whatsoever to our knowledge of the world in which we live and that, when they conflict with science, only science can provide valid explanations. But not everyone would agree with us on this score, and criticism of the GG was not



long in coming.

The premier of Saskatchewan, Brad Wall, is disgruntled because, in his opinion, Ms. Payette denigrated those who believe in a creator ([Premier Brad Wall criticizes Governor General’s ‘divine intervention’ speech](#)).

Federal Conservative Party leader and head of the official opposition [Andrew Scheer criticized Prime Minister Trudeau for supporting the Governor General](#). Using the apparently sacred concept of “diversity,” Scheer said that Payette’s comments showed a lack of respect for

millions of Canadians, including “Indigenous peoples, Muslims, Jews, Sikhs, Christians and other faith groups who believe there is truth in their religion.” Thus Scheer exposed, to no-one’s surprise, the essentially pro-religious stance of his party. Obviously, the Conservatives’ opposition to the niqab at citizenship ceremonies was not based on any concern for secularism, but rather on a Christian prejudice motivating them to oppose other religions. (This observation does not in any way change the fact that the Liberal Party and NDP took an even worse position, to the **right** of the Conservatives, by lending their support to the Islamist fanatic Zunera Ishaq.)

Here in Quebec, the theologian Solange Lefebvre was even harsher. In an article published in *La Presse* of November 9th 2017—[Neutralité religieuse et incroyance](#) (Religious Neutrality and Nonbelief)—she even evokes religious neutrality in order to reprimand Ms. Payette, accusing her of exceeding not only the bounds of her “impartial” role as Governor General but even the limits of her scientific expertise. The theologian goes on to say:

Several commentators have interpreted her remarks as criticism of creationism,



but that is not the case. Creationism in the strict sense of the word is a belief in the literal truth of biblical scripture, according to which our universe was created in six days. But Ms. Payette's comments were more general, attacking theistic philosophy and most of the world's conceptions based on a belief in a divine creation or origin of life (faith in creation does not in any way imply the negation of the theory of evolution or of the complexity of the development of life). She attacked the beliefs of a majority of Canadians,...
 [Translation: D.R.]

Now, it is true that the term "creationism" is normally used in the strict sense, indicating only believers who deny evolution and imagine the earth to be very young, say a few thousand years, and created very recently by their god. But this usage of the word is a bad habit imposed—let's be honest—by those with a vested interest, like Ms. Lefebvre, in exonerating all other religious beliefs from criticism. It is a deliberate error which we must correct: indeed, if you believe that "God" created the world, then you are evidently a creationist,

because you believe in the existence of a creator-god. No matter how old you believe the universe to be—thousands, millions or billions of years—you believe nonetheless in divine creation.

Furthermore, Ms. Lefebvre is completely wrong in asserting that "faith in creation does not in any way imply the negation of the theory of evolution" because that faith implies some kind of divine intervention, at one time or another, whereas evolution is a purely natural process. Even a deist who posits a universe which developed with zero divine intervention since its creation nevertheless believes that it was created at the very beginning. The credo of the Catholic Church is even more problematic because it posits the divine insertion of a "soul" into each human being since the beginning of our species. Even if we set aside the insurmountable problem of determining when the "first" human being was born, what we have here, according to Catholic dogma, is a major divine intervention in the life of each and every individual human. Ms. Lefebvre goes on to add that:

[...] *neutrality must also be expected of*

atheists and nonbelievers. All too often, nonbelief is interpreted as a supposedly objective, rational approach to things, an approach which empties life of any and all symbolic or spiritual content.

Clearly, in Ms. Lefebvre's worldview, religious neutrality applies only to atheists, while the religious can continue to impose their beliefs and practices wherever they want.

Our dear theologian would have atheists remain completely silent, never openly criticizing outlandish religious beliefs. In fact, that is exactly how most atheists behave: reduced to silence by bullying from religious spokespersons such as Ms. Lefebvre. This situation must change, and indeed change is beginning to occur; atheists do sometimes dare, more and more often, to express themselves openly, and that is a very good thing. For far too long religions have benefited from the privilege of being treated with a level of deference which they certainly do not deserve. We atheists must increase the level of our criticism of the ridiculous and harmful religious beliefs which poison our societies.



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AAI Associate/Affiliate Members

Afghanistan

Afghanistan Atheists

Organization

www.facebook.com/pages/Afg

[hansAtheists-](http://hansAtheists-Organization/290988360929383)

Organization/290988360929383

Australia

Atheist Foundation of

Australia

www.atheistfoundation.org.au

Progressive Atheists

www.progressiveatheists.org

Sydney Atheists Incorporated

www.SydneyAtheists.org

Canada

Libres penseurs athées

www.lpa.atheisme.ca

www.AFT.atheisme.ca

Denmark

Ateistisk Selskab (Danish

Atheist Society)

www.ateist.dk

Germany

Internationaler Bund der

Konfessionslosen und

Atheisten

www.ibka.org

Greece

Atheist Union of Greece

www.atheia.gr

Guatemala

Asociación Guatemalteca de

Humanistas Seculares

www.humanistasguatemala.org

g

Indonesia

Indonesian Atheists

www.indonesianatheists.wordpress.com

press.com

Ireland

Atheist Ireland

www.atheist.ie

Iran

Iranian Atheists & Agnostics

www.facebook.com/Iran.Atheist.agnostic

st.agnostic

Iraq

Atheist Alliance of Iraq

www.facebook.com/groups/AI.IRAQ

AI.IRAQ

Israel

Hofesh – Freedom from

Religion NPO

www.Hofesh.org.il/English/Index.html

dex.html

Lebanon

Freethought Lebanon

www.freethoughtlebanon.net

Netherlands

Atheistisch Verbond (Atheist

Union)

www.atheistischverbond.nl

Norway

The Heathen Society

www.hedning.no

Pakistan

Atheists and Agnostics

Alliance of Pakistan

www.aaapakistan.org

Palestine

Palestinian Atheist-Agnostic

Movement

www.facebook.com/pages/palestinian-atheistagnostic-movement/68463

www.facebook.com/pages/palestinian-atheistagnostic-movement/68463

www.facebook.com/pages/palestinian-atheistagnostic-movement/68463

Philippines

Philippine Atheists &

Agnostics

Society Inc (PATAS)

www.patas.co

Philippines

HAPI - The Humanist Alliance

Philippines, International

[www.hapihumanist.org/the-](http://www.hapihumanist.org/the-hapi-founder-corner)

[hapi-founder-corner](http://www.hapihumanist.org/the-hapi-founder-corner)

Poland

Front Ateistyczny

[www.facebook.com/Front-](http://www.facebook.com/Front-Ateistyczny-497449670424725)

[Ateistyczny-497449670424725](http://www.facebook.com/Front-Ateistyczny-497449670424725)

Puerto Rico

Secular Humanists of Puerto

Rico

www.humanistaspr.org

South Africa

Free Society Institute

www.fsi.org.za

Suomi

Atheist Association of Finland

www.dlc.fi/~etkirja/Atheist.htm

Turkey

Ateizm Dernegi

www.ateizmdernegi.org.tr

Ateist Dergi

www.ateistdergi.com

Uganda

Humanist Association for

Leadership, Equity &

Accountability (HALEA)

www.haleauganda.org

United Kingdom

Atheism UK

www.atheismuk.com

United States of America

Atheist Alliance of America

www.atheistallianceamerica.org

Freedom From Religion

Foundation

www.ffrf.org

Secular Humanist Society of

New York

www.shsny.org