



Centro Studi
"Gino Germani"



EUROPE'S SECURITY DILEMMA: VIOLENT AND NON-VIOLENT POLITICAL ISLAMISM IN EUROPE AND COUNTERTERRORISM POLICIES

This advanced one-day seminar will explore the new security challenges posed to Western governments by the rise of politicized fundamentalist Islam (Islamism) across Europe. It will provide an overview of Islamist movements in Europe today and of the key ideological disputes that are raging within European Islam today. The course will also analyze the counter-terrorist and counter-radicalization strategies of various European governments, and will examine critical issues of policy towards Muslim minorities.

The seminar is for law-enforcement, security and intelligence professionals (especially in the fields of counterterrorism and counterintelligence); government officials dealing with policy towards Muslim minorities and/or foreign policy; decision-makers involved in national security policy; non-government experts and analysts (academics, think-tanks, NGOs).

The seminar will be held on December 19 2009 at the Link Campus University library.

Morning session (December 19, 9:30-13) - Dr Lorenzo Vidino

Policy-makers and security institutions in most Western countries are faced with a new security dilemma: can non-violent Islamists be engaged and used as partners against violent radicalization? And if so, what are the long-term implications of this partnership?

Some experts argue that only fellow Islamists have the legitimacy to sway violent radicals and that Western governments should therefore harness this potential by partnering with non-violent Islamists. On the other hand, critics of this approach argue that, even assuming non-violent Islamists can indeed sway some young Muslims from committing acts of terrorism, these short-term gains in the security field would be offset by the negative long-term effects of such a partnership on social cohesion and integration.

The morning session will be divided into two parts:

- History, characteristics, methods, views, and aims of European and American-based organizations that trace their origins to the Muslims Brotherhood, *Jamaat-e-Islami* and other participationist, non-violent Islamist groups.
- Counterterrorist policies and counter-radicalization efforts in various European countries and the role non-violent Islamists should play in them.

Afternoon session (December 19, 14:30-18) – Dr Patrick Sookhdeo

Islamism represents a challenge because it fosters separatism and radicalization. Though Islamism is not necessary violent, it gives legitimacy and motivation to those who endorse violent tactics, as both peaceful and violent Islamists often share the same long term goals.

The debates between these diverse elements are critical in shaping the future of European Islam. Progressive/liberal Muslims are often marginalized due to a variety of factors including the influence of Islamist organizations, the influence of Muslim governments (particularly Saudi Arabia), lack of integration of European Muslims, cultural factors relating to where particular immigrant communities originate from and resentment over many issues (including anger about wars “against Muslims”, perceived alienation, resentment about the weakness of Islam etc).

The afternoon session is divided into the following three parts:

- The variety of the European Islamic communities . How European Islam is characterized and shaped by the diverse national and religious background of its adherents.
- The key ideological disputes raging within European Islam: progressive/liberal Muslims, traditionalists, Islamists and groups emphasizing violence.
- Critical issues of policy towards Muslim minorities in several EU countries: the promotion of Islamic organizations by Western governments, the approach of Western governments to Islamic law, the promotion of Islamic finance and counter terrorism policies.

About the professors

Lorenzo Vidino is a fellow with the International Security Program's Initiative on Religion in International Affairs, Belfer Center, Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University. His research focuses on terrorism, radicalization, and political Islam worldwide, with a particular emphasis on Europe. He has testified before the U.S. Congress on the issue and regularly works with U.S. and European law enforcement and intelligence agencies.

He is the author of the book *Al Qaeda in Europe: The New Battleground of Global Jihad* (Prometheus, 2005) and a forthcoming book on the Muslim Brotherhood in the West (Columbia University Press, 2010). He has also published extensively in publications such as *The International Herald Tribune*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Boston Globe*, *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, *The Washington Quarterly*, and many others. A native of Milan, Italy, he holds a law degree from the University of Milan Law School and a doctorate from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University. He is the recipient of various fellowships and grants, including most recently a grant from the U.S. Institute of Peace for the study of counter-radicalization programs in Europe.

Patrick Sookhdeo gained his PhD from London University's School of Oriental and African Studies and also holds a D.D. from Western Seminary, Oregon, USA, for work on pluralism, as

well as a D.D. from Nashotah House, Wisconsin, USA, for work on human rights and religious freedom.

He is Adjunct Professor at the George C. Marshall Center, Visiting Professor at Cranfield University, the Royal Military College of Science, and Senior Visiting Fellow at the Defence Academy of the UK. He is also Guest Lecturer at the NATO School, Oberammergau and a Fellow of the Security Institute of the UK. He has taught at conferences and courses for the FBI and Homeland Security, and has also lectured US Special Operations and at the National Defense University, Washington.

He has advised several US military and NATO commands. He is involved in pre-deployment training for UK armed forces, serves as advisor to the Permanent Joint Headquarters UK, and was Cultural Advisor to ISAF in Afghanistan and also Cultural Advisor in Iraq. Dr Sookhdeo also advises government, business and security on financial terrorism, religiously motivated violence, terrorism, counter-terrorism and cultural warfare.

Dr Sookhdeo is the author of numerous articles and books including *Understanding Islamist Terrorism* (2004), *Global Jihad* (2007), *Faith, Power and Territory: A Handbook of British Islam* (2008), *Understanding Shari'a Finance* (2008), and *Freedom to Believe: Challenging Islam's Apostasy Law* (2009). In 1990 he was awarded the Templeton Prize, and in 2001, Coventry Cathedral International Prize for Peace and Reconciliation.