

CENTRE FOR THE STUDY OF 'RADICALISATION' &  
CONTEMPORARY POLITICAL VIOLENCE

**THE POLITICS OF RADICALISATION:  
REFRAMING THE DEBATE AND RECLAIMING THE LANGUAGE**  
London Muslim Centre, Whitechapel  
Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> October, 2007

Since we established the Centre for the Study of Radicalisation and Contemporary Political Violence (CSRV) in 2005, the increased usage and shifting meaning of the term 'radicalisation', and the way it is deployed politically, has greatly concerned us. In particular, we have been concerned by the way in which 'radicalisation' has become synonymous with particular political-religious orientations, how it has functioned to construct Muslims as a 'suspect community' and how it has informed specific government programmes and perspectives on 'de-radicalisation'. We are also concerned that current perspectives on 'radicalisation' have a distorting effect on scholarly research and research funding.

Nor are we as scholars alone in our concerns. In February 2007, the Islamic Human Rights Commission organised a seminar on the topic of radicalisation, which was generally welcomed by participants and provided a forum for useful discussion.

In order to take the discussion further, and to help clarify how current approaches may be contributing to the problem and what should be done differently, we are organising this follow-up event. We have a number of specific aims:

- (a) to critique the way in which the term 'radicalisation' is used in contemporary Britain;
- (b) to identify the political, academic, social and other effects of that usage;
- (c) to explore alternative frameworks for speaking about and understanding contemporary forms and processes of radical activism, both violent and non-violent;
- (d) to strive towards a language within which real and perceived threats to security might be discussed, considered, researched and understood more fully and respectfully.

We hope that the attached sheet of questions will give the discussions a helpful framework.



CENTRE FOR THE STUDY OF 'RADICALISATION' &  
CONTEMPORARY POLITICAL VIOLENCE

**PROGRAMME**

- 9.30 am** REGISTRATION & COFFEE
- 10.00 am** **Introduction: Marie Breen Smyth**  
**Session 1: Reframing the debate about radicalisation**
- SPEAKERS  
Dr Salman Sayyid, Director Centre of Ethnicity and Racism Studies,  
University of Leeds  
Louise Christian, solicitor, co-founder Christian-Kahn civil liberties firm
- 10.45 am** **SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS OVER COFFEE**
- 11.45 am** **PLENARY DISCUSSION**
- 12.30 pm** LUNCH
- 1.30 pm** **Session 2: Reclaiming the language - the way forward**
- SPEAKERS  
Dr Mohammad Khan, Birmingham University  
Dr Daud Abdullah, Deputy Secretary, Muslim Council of Britain  
Moazzam Begg, former Guantanamo detainee
- 2.15 pm** **SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS OVER COFFEE**
- 3.15 pm** **PLENARY DISCUSSION**
- 4.30 pm** SEMINAR ENDS



We are grateful to the ESRC New Security Challenges Programme and the British International Studies Association for providing funding for this event, and we thank the MCB, IHRC and CSRV for much-needed assistance with its organisation.

CENTRE FOR THE STUDY OF 'RADICALISATION' &  
CONTEMPORARY POLITICAL VIOLENCE

**THE POLITICS OF RADICALISATION:  
REFRAMING THE DEBATE AND RECLAIMING THE LANGUAGE**

**Small Group Questions**

**Session 1: Reframing the debate about radicalisation**

- To what extent is the 'radicalisation discourse' contributing towards 'radicalisation'? What about the 'de-radicalisation discourse'?
- What are the main political, social, economical effects of this discourse? How has it affected you or people you know?
- What are the different aspects of what is typically referred to as 'radicalisation'? How can we deconstruct the term, deconflate its different meanings?
- To what extent is the problem of 'radicalisation' inherent in the terminology, and how has it been used to serve specific political ends? Who are the main actors driving the discourse and the way it is used?

**Session 2: Reclaiming the language – the way forward**

- Can the term 'radicalisation' be reclaimed? If so, how? If not, what alternative term/framework could be adopted?
- What role can the media, civil society actors, government and academia play in changing the discourse and its political effects? What levers do we have to change the discourse? How will this affect the dynamic of what is now called 'radicalisation'?
- How can researchers best study the phenomenon of political violence in Britain without contributing to 'radicalisation'?
- How do we reclaim the right to be (non-violently) radical, or simply dissenting (e.g. by believing that religion is political)?
- How do we prevent the 'radicalisation discourse' from restricting what can be taught, thought, researched?

**CENTRE FOR THE STUDY OF 'RADICALISATION' &  
CONTEMPORARY POLITICAL VIOLENCE**

**THE POLITICS OF RADICALISATION:  
REFRAMING THE DEBATE AND RECLAIMING THE LANGUAGE**  
London Muslim Centre, Whitechapel  
Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> October, 2007

**Participant List**

- GROUP 1  
Maggie Beirne – Committee on the Administration of Justice, Belfast  
Marie Breen Smyth – Aberystwyth University  
Azad Ali – Muslim Safety Forum  
Abdul Haqq Baker – Brixton Mosque  
Chief Superintendent Ali Dizaei – Metropolitan Police  
Dominic Grieve – House of Commons  
Arzu Merali – Islamic Human Rights Commission (IHRC)  
Mohammed Shafiq – Ramadhan Foundation  
Makbool Javaid – Cage Prisoners
- GROUP 2  
Stuart Croft – Warwick University  
Mohammad Khan – Birmingham University  
Moazzam Begg – Cage Prisoners  
Julia Eastman – Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre  
Shehla Khan – Manchester University  
Aki Nawaz – [akination@bopenworld.com](mailto:akination@bopenworld.com)  
Jamil Sherif – Muslim Council of Britain  
Massoud Shadjareh – IHRC  
Tim Jacoby – Manchester University
- GROUP 3  
Zahid Parvez – University of Wolverhampton  
Richard Jackson – Aberystwyth University  
Daud Abdullah – Muslim Council of Britain  
Imam Shakeel Begg – Lewisham Islamic Centre  
Jason Tierney – Home Office  
Taji Mustafa – Hizb ut-Tahrir  
Asim Qureshi – [Asim.gu@gmail.com](mailto:Asim.gu@gmail.com)  
Abdul Wahid – Hizb ut-Tahrir  
Adnan Siddiqui – Cage Prisoners  
Karin Lindahl – IHRC
- GROUP 4  
Salman Sayyid – Leeds University  
Jeroen Gunning – Aberystwyth University  
Jim Auld – Community Restorative Justice Ireland (CRJI)  
Imran Khan – Imran Khan Solicitors  
Bob Lambert – Metropolitan Police  
Sabina Frediani – Liberty  
Saghir Hussain – Cage Prisoners  
Reza Kazim – IHRC

## CENTRE FOR THE STUDY OF 'RADICALISATION' & CONTEMPORARY POLITICAL VIOLENCE

### TRAVELLING TO LONDON MUSLIM CENTRE

The address of the Centre is:

46 Whitechapel Road  
London E1 1JX  
Telephone 020 7650 3050  
Fax 020 7650 3051

The nearest tube station is Whitechapel, turn right coming out of the station, and the Centre is a short walk on the other side of Whitechapel Road. Alternatively, you can travel to Aldgate East and on exiting the station, go onto Whitechapel High Street and turn left, and the Centre is a short walk away.

### DRESS CODE

The London Muslim Centre has asked us to remind you of their dress code which is as follows:

- Both men and women are asked to dress modestly
- Women are asked to wear loose clothing with long sleeves below knee length
- Please avoid see-through or low cut clothing
- You are asked not to wear shorts
- Those of you who wish to visit the Mosque will be asked to remove your shoes at the entrance. A headscarf can be obtained from reception for women visitors.
- The organizers are asked to ensure that attendees are aware of this code.