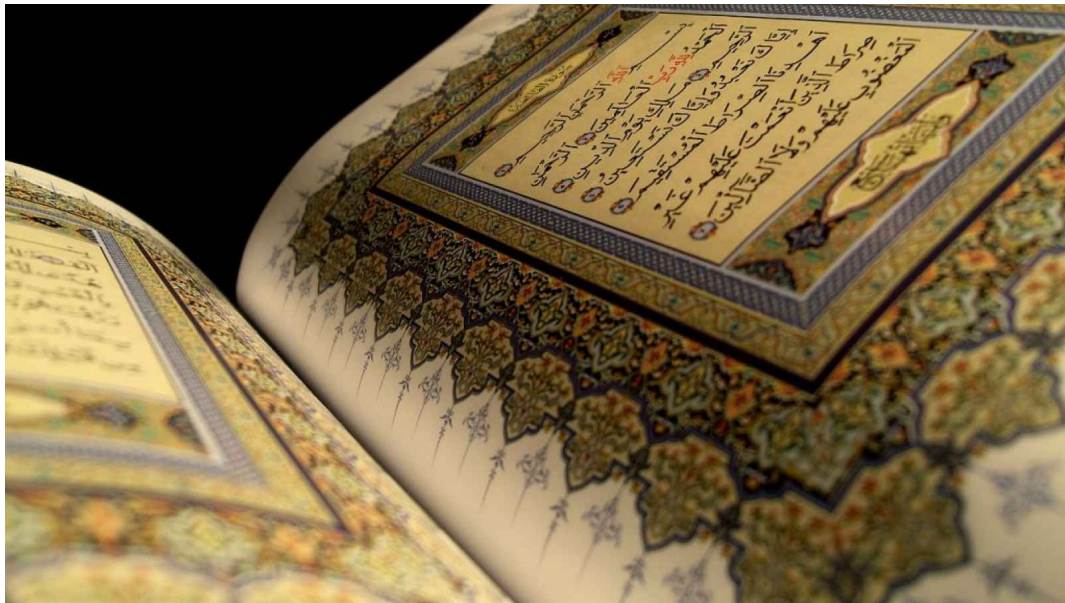


FANTASY ISLAM (KAFIR EDITION): LUTHERAN SOCIAL SERVICE OF MINNESOTA

Playing or being played?

March 4, 2016 Dr. Stephen M. Kirby



Fantasy Islam (Kafir Edition): A game in which an audience of non-Muslims wish with all their hearts that Islam was a “Religion of Peace,” and a Kafir (non-Muslim) strives to fulfill that wish by presenting a version of Islam that has little foundation in Islamic Doctrine.

In 2015 the Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota produced a 61 page booklet titled *My Neighbor is Muslim, Exploring the Muslim Faith* (<http://lirs.org/myneighborismuslim/>). The purpose of the booklet was to enable Lutherans to learn about Islam in order to better understand their “new neighbors” who were arriving as refugees.

On p. 3 of the booklet we find an endorsement by, and a picture of, Imam Hassan Ali Mohamud, the founder, Imam, and Director of the Minnesota Da’wah Institute. A brief biography of Mohamud can be found at the Institute’s site (<http://www.mndawah.net/about-imam.html>). But there are a few additional items in Mohamud’s background that are of particular interest and make him a curious choice as the endorser of a book welcoming Muslims into non-Muslim communities.

Hassan Ali Mohamud praised Hamas

The United States government declared Hamas a Foreign Terrorist Organization in 1997. On March 22, 2004, Sheikh Ahmed Yassin (Yaasin), the founder of Hamas, was killed in an Israeli airstrike. On March 26, 2004, Mohamud wrote an article in *Somalitalk – Minneapolis* (<http://www.somaliatalk.com/2004/march/26mar404.html>) expressing his condolences for Yassin's death. The article was titled *Hambalyo Shahiid Sh. Ahmed Yaasin*, (Congratulations to Sheikh Ahmed Yaasin, the *Shahiid*). *Shahiid* is the term used for those who achieve martyrdom by being killed in the cause of Allah.

Mohamud noted that Yassin had founded Hamas and referred to the Hamas mujahidin (*mujaahidiinta*), who were fighting for the liberation of the Al-Aqsa Mosque and of Palestine (mujahidin are those fighting in the Cause of Allah). Mohamud hoped that Allah would consider Yassin a martyr, and he referred to Yassin as the Sheikh of the Mujahidin (*Sheikhul*

Mujaahidiin). Mohamud referred to the Israelis as terrorists.

This article had the following byline: "Sh. Xasan Jaamici, xasanjaamici@yahoo.com, Minneapolis, MN, USA." How do we know this is our Hassan Ali Mohamud? An internet search of this name and e-mail address will show the connection to Mohamud (e.g., here (<http://nwaneri.com/>), here (<http://www.somaliatalk.com/2003/aug/jaamici2.html>), here (<http://somalitalk.com/kiish/shir.html>) and here (<http://www.somalitalk.com/hajj/hajj.html>) (both of which also include a telephone number), here (<http://www.somalicurrent.com/author/imam/>), and here (<http://www.somaliatalk.com/2003/aug/2aug3003.html>). The aforementioned telephone number is also connected to Mohamud (e.g., here (<http://www.naseeb.com/villages/journals/roseville-librarian-47627>), here (<http://somalitalk.com/kiish/civil.html>), here (http://web.archive.org/web/20070109055820/http://www.masmn.org/documents/pressreleases/MASMN_Media_Kit.pdf) (on the page titled *Expert Resources Available To Media*), and here (<http://documents.mx/documents/history-of-somalia.html>) (on p. 15 of the slide presentation).

Muslim cab drivers at the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport

For a number of years some Muslim cab drivers had refused to pick up passengers at the airport if those passengers were carrying sealed bottles of wine and/or liquor, even if those bottles were in the passenger's luggage. Controversy grew, and on June 6, 2006 the Muslim American Society of Minnesota (MAS) stepped in and issued a religious

ruling (*fatwa*) stating that it violated Islamic law for the cab drivers to be involved in the transportation of alcohol. Hassan Ali Mohamud was one of the four members of the committee that issued this *fatwa*.

A few weeks later, when interviewed by NPR (<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=5544610>), Mohamud stated:

Islamic identity is important because it is like keeping the faith. For that reason, Muslims here believe - Somalis are the majority of the Muslims in Minnesota- they believe it's important to have, like, our own village, what you can call like Muslim village.

And what would this Muslim-majority “village” in the United States be like? Here is an excerpt from an article (http://www.studentnewsdaily.com/world-current-events/get_out_of_the_cab/) published later that year; this excerpt starts off with comments from Omar Jamal, a Muslim cab driver, and ends with comments from Mohamud:

Jamal..says MAS is an organization of Middle Eastern Muslims attempting to fold Minnesota's large population of Somali Muslims into its divisive political campaign...“They've been driving the taxis for the last 20 years. How come it became an issue now all of a sudden? Were all the Muslims born again?”

MAS leader Mohamud, who is Somali, contends that just such a revival occurred, that nominal Muslims began practicing their faith. He says that as more Muslims do the same, similar issues will continue to spring up throughout the country. Asked if he believes local governments should enforce Shariah law in communities dominated by Muslim immigrants, Mohamud replied, “I believe in American democracy, which is majority rules.”

So according to Mohamud, as more Muslims return to their faith there will be more conflicts springing up between Shariah Law and American law. And if localities have a Muslim majority, then he believes that Shariah Law should be enforced, even in the United States.

This approach by Mohamud should not be surprising, because of what he wrote for his law school student newspaper in 2000; the article was titled *Law in the Islamic Perspective* (<http://mitchellhamline.edu/students/wp-content/uploads/sites/9/2011/08/winter2000.pdf>):

Law, both as jurisprudence and as a normative system is an articulation and an expression of God's will. As a consequence, within the Islamic outlook, it is difficult to conceive of a secular state or a secular legal system.

If one cannot conceive of a “secular legal system” then it is only natural to come to the defense of Muslim cab drivers who are trying to impose Allah’s law on non-Muslims.

Omar Jamal would later state (http://www.studentnewsdaily.com/world-current-events/get_out_of_the_cab/):

“They have a political agenda, and they want to hijack the faith of Islam,” he said of MAS leaders. “They’re looking for an issue to get Muslims to rally behind to drive a wedge in the community between Muslims and non-Muslims.”

Somali youth leaving Minneapolis to fight with al-Shabab

For many years there has been concern within the Somali community in Minneapolis, and among federal government officials, about Somali youth going overseas to fight for the *jihadi*st terror group al-Shabab. In late 2008 and early 2009 there were two articles that mentioned Muhamud and his mosque.

On December 19, 2008 *USA Today* had an article (http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/nation/2008-12-18-somalis_N.htm) that included an interview with a former *jihadi*st living in Minneapolis. Below he describes how *jihadi*sts recruit new members at one particular mosque, and he stated that similar activities were occurring at Mohamud’s mosque, the Minnesota Da’wah Institute:

Yusuf Shaba...says he decided to speak out about what he considers Islamic indoctrination at Minneapolis mosques because he doesn't want his sons to follow the same path he did.

Shaba, 34, joined Al Ittihad Al-Islami (Islamic Union) at age 16 and was wounded at age 19 in Somalia. Al Ittihad was Somalia's largest Islamic terrorist group in the 1990s...

Shaba says he and his three teenage sons attended a program two months ago at Abubaker As-Saddique Islamic Center, where a former Somali warrior sat in a circle with other young people and delivered a passionate recitation of his experiences during the Somali civil war.

Some mosques also screen videos about the war in Afghanistan and about Muslim victims of perceived injustices... "They give them all the grievances that Osama Bin Laden has," Shaba says. "They talk about nothing but jihad and it's the best thing that can happen to a Muslim."...

Shaba says similar activities occur at Minnesota Da’wah Institute in St. Paul,

another mosque. Sheik Mahamud Hassan [sic], the institute's imam, says nothing like that is happening as his mosque. "It's liars," he says. "I'm not missing any members."

In February 2009 NPR did a similar report (<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=100287439>). The report noted this about the missing youth:

All of them were reared by single mothers, and all of them were particularly devout Muslims. They all prayed and signed up for youth programs at two local mosques...

Mohamud was the imam of one of those two mosques. And it was in Mohamud's mosque where the parents said their missing boys spent a lot of time, and even spent the night. In reply to the NPR interviewer, Mohamud stated, "We are not missing any single student who is connected to the mosque and the Dawah Islamic center." The interviewer pointed out that when Mohamud and his mosque's youth director were being interviewed, they were both "defensive."

Mohamud was refused clearance for an airport tour

In January 2016 Mohamud and other community leaders were invited to tour (<http://www.mprnews.org/story/2016/02/24/st-paul-imam-barred-from-twin-cities-airport-tour>) the Minneapolis - St. Paul International Airport and review its operations and screening procedures. Each had to be cleared in advance to access the secure areas of the airport. But a few hours before the tour started on February 18th, Mohamud was notified that he had not been cleared to access the secure areas. Government officials would not discuss the matter.

Conclusion

Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota created a booklet seeking to educate non-Muslims about Islam and encouraging them to have a welcoming attitude toward Muslim refugees coming into their neighborhoods. Ironically, the Muslim imam selected to endorse this booklet appears to be a Hamas supporter, believes that Shariah Law should be enforced in American communities where Muslims are the majority, heads one of two mosques that have been the focus of articles about Somali youth leaving Minneapolis to fight for a terrorist organization, and was recently refused a government security clearance. Welcome to the neighborhood!

Part 2 will look at how Islam is presented in this booklet.

Dr. Stephen M. Kirby is the author of three books about Islam. His latest book is [Islam According to Muhammad, Not Your Neighbor](#).

📌 **Tags:** infidel, Islam, koran, West

ABOUT DR. STEPHEN M. KIRBY

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