

the next paper. The introduction of computer software applications to this process, hyped by large textbook publishers, solidifies this mechanical approach. There are many other methods of composition and revision, and not only do writers vary in their methods, but often vary in their own practices. Why pretend that every undertaking follows the same path?

Lucas has come far closer to producing a masterpiece about writing than anyone else. If a writer's erudition, judgment, and good nature account for style, this is an enjoyable book by a real writer who wishes to help others along the way.

## The Silence of the Metropolitan Lambs

Paul Stott

**Islamophilia: A Very Metropolitan Malady**, Douglas Murray, Independently Published, 2020, £7.

This is the missing part of Douglas Murray's back catalogue – an eBook from 2013 now in print for the first time. It is short and snappy at 64 pages and save for a two-page preface written by the author for this edition, has not been updated. Is that a weakness? As Murray writes in his preface *'The years that followed saw the rise of ISIS, massacres in many European cities, a suicide bombing at a pop-concert in Manchester and the declaration of a Caliphate across a swathe of Iraq and Syria'* (p.2). We would be naïve not to expect much the same, or worse, in the next seven years. The beauty of Islamophilia though is that it is in many ways timeless, as its focus is on the theoretical blind spots of the great and the good, and the tendency of those in positions of power and influence to come over all doe-eyed and gooey when it comes to the second biggest religion in the world.

Murray defines Islamophilia as a *'disproportionate adoration of Islam'* that is not extended to other faiths. When was the last time you heard a British politician, or a high court judge tell you Buddhism or Methodism are religions of peace? Why do they say such things about Islam? As Murray simply observes *'They do it because they either think they ought to or they feel they have to'*). Others of course, act because they think Islam or Muslims are in some way oppressed and need support, whilst some act out of fear. Grayson Perry was asked in 2007 why he does not mock Islam *'I don't want my throat cut'*, Islamophilia is a malady that

particularly affects those of the highest rank. Murray diagnoses unpleasant cases not just among politicians and media, but senior soldiers and intelligence officers, and across followers of rival faiths and none *'It is especially prevalent in Western Europe and North America'*. Who might we name as suffering from Islamophilia? Step forward Tony Blair and his claim to read the Qur'an daily *'because it is immensely instructive'*). Or David Cameron, who responded to the murder of Lee Rigby in 2013 by stating *'There is nothing in Islam that justifies this truly dreadful act'*. Unfortunately, the Woolwich attackers felt differently, in a monologue recorded at the murder scene, a bloody Michael Adebolajo cited Surah 9 of the Qur'an, whilst Drummer Rigby's body lay in the street behind him.

Nor is this a problem restricted to British politicians. The late President Chirac referred to a *'Europe whose roots are as much Muslim as Christian'* showing us that Islamophilia is unconcerned with concepts of historical accuracy. In the US, even George W Bush was moved to declare *'Islam is peace'* within a few days of...9/11. Much the same followed under President Obama. Having tried desperately to claim the film *'Innocence of Muslims'* had in some way incited the 2012 attack on the American consulate in Benghazi, within a couple of weeks Obama was declaring at the United Nations *'The future must not belong to those who slander the prophet of Islam'*. What better way to encourage those willing to use violence to enforce blasphemy codes? Reading Murray's book shortly after the Democrats victory in the 2020 Presidential elections is a reminder of how unlikely the United States is to be found upholding freedom of speech in the international arena, or domestically, over the next four years.

What are the consequences of an outbreak of Islamophilia? One is a war on language which sets distinct parameters upon the words we may use. Under John Brennan's leadership of the CIA *'the Obama administration was doing everything it could to stop the term 'jihadist' being used to describe terrorists who act in the name of Islam'*. In time such strictures come to be reinforced by peer pressure and public shaming and then by corporate rules and regulations. In time, such language may even be classed as illegal. A second outcome is the need to rewrite history. The glories of western civilisation must be played down, and an Islamic civilisation trumpeted which has no warts whatsoever. Or as Murray describes the approach of the Science Museum in London and National Geographic Museum in Washington *'Muslims and Islam invented.... yes pretty much everything'*. This includes elements as diverse as manned flight (down with the Wright Brothers!) to the Rubiks cube. Here Murray reminds us that the protests of 2020, and