Citizenship of marginal/subjugated voices

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The prescribed topic evokes a number of probing questions. There is an uncritical assumption within the formulation of the topic that marginal is synonymous with subjugated. This is a commonly held assumption and can probably be vindicated with reference to a number of historical contexts, not least Apartheid South Africa. The critical question that needs to be probed more deeply, is whether this is always the case? Is marginality always a consequence of subjugation?

A related question is the following:

Does subjugation inevitably result in "precarious marginality"?

In order to address these questions, it would be necessary and expedient to define more sharply what is meant by the seminal concept "marginality".

Advantageous marginality’s: The role of the call of Islam in the anti-apartheid struggle

Simone, using the theoretical formulation of Derrida, has developed the idea of "advantageous marginality’s". He has described the role of the Call of Islam during the anti- Apartheid struggle as a concrete example of an "advantageous marginality". The voice and consequently, the impact that the Call of Islam had during the anti-Apartheid struggle far exceeded their numbers. Apartheid subjugation in this instance did not automatically lead to marginalization. On the contrary, Apartheid subjugation was creatively used to amplify the Call of Islam’s marginal voice. The key to this micro-strategically maneuvering lies in psychological posture. The Call of Islam is a minority movement for a minority constituency within the South African context, but does not act like one.

By integrating the anti-Apartheid struggle into it’s agenda as a Muslim organization, the entirety of the democratic movement is considered a Muslim movement because it is doing Muslim things and for the most part, implementing Muslim practice (even though it does not officially bear such a designation).

"Precarious marginality’s": The tension between religious identity and citizenship

Ironically, for the vast majority of South African Muslims however, their citizenship of the non-racial and democratic South Africa is an enigma. This occurs, despite the post-Apartheid State’s avowed commitment to a policy of non-alignment to any one particular religion and the unprecedented public space created for the full expression of religious observances and practices.

Many Muslims experience a negative tension between their Islamic identity and their South African citizenship. Discovering the precise nature and cause for this negative tension between religious identity and citizenship will illuminate our discussion. The consequences of such a negative tension are what we have called "precarious marginality". This kind of "marginality" is not a consequence of subjugation, but rather of dual allegiance i.e. religious affiliation and national citizenship.

This "identity crises" has led many South African Muslims to become withdrawn and turn further inward. Such Muslims have become extremely self-protective. The more they have turned in on themselves, the
more they see the outside world as hostile and threatening to their existence. These Muslims have chosen
to marginalise themselves from the dominant public discourse in South Africa. It appears however, that
they derive their efficacy and power from the margins. The margins function as an institutionalized shelter
and a place of voluntary exile. It also becomes a launching pad for sustained pernicious assaults on the
public discourse. A discourse which is denounced as anti-Islamic.

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