



Veiling and Unveiling - Turkey & Iraq
Turkey's parliament voted 403-103 to lift the ban on women in higher education wearing the veil. While secularists demonstrated against the vote in many parts of Turkey, the measure is expected to be signed into law by President *Abdullah Gul*. On the same day, writer *Khalid Al-Qahtani* wrote an article in the newspaper *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat* on the unveiling of Arab women more than



fifty years ago. Confronting conservatives all over the Arab world who were rejoicing over the Turkish initiative, he opened his article with this simple statement: “no days are more cherished by humanity than those when humans engage in battles of liberation and succeed. In our contemporary history, some of these most glorious days occurred when the Iraqi women in pursuing their rights, discarded the veil to underscore their chosen way in life.” The writer reminisces over the competition between Iraqi women to unveil during the nineteen forties and fifties, while he bemoans the fact that most of Muslim society today is racing in the opposite direction.

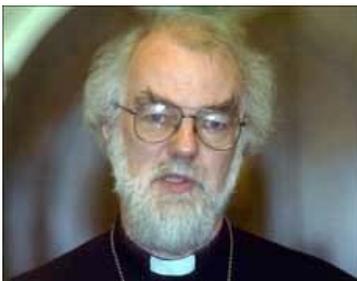
Source: <http://www.asharqalawsat.com/leader.asp?section=3&issue=10663&article=457356> Date : 2/7/2008
http://www.islamonline.net/servlet/Satellite?c=ArticleA_C&cid=1201957726779&pagename=Zone-Arabic-News/NWALayout 2/9/2008



Apostates and the Copts - Egypt

The Egyptian Supreme Administrative Court issued a decision today in favor of Christians who had converted to Islam and wanted to revert back to Christianity. The decision reversed a lower court ruling which had denied the parties claim to change their national identification cards. In Egypt, identity cards specify the person's religion and the application of certain civil laws are dependent upon that identification. Islamists and *Al-Azhar* disagreed with the ruling on the grounds that, under the *Shari'a*, a person who has espoused Islam cannot leave the religion without being considered an apostate. Christians were similarly unhappy with part of the ruling which dictated that although they can regain their religion as “Copts”, a notation on their identification card is to mention that they had previously converted to Islam. Christians called such a notation on their card discriminatory. Such a notation, they asserted, could lead to possible physical harm inflicted on them by radical Islamic elements who would take it in their own hands to implement the “*Shari'a*” punishing apostates with death.

Source: <http://www.aljazeera.net/NR/exeres/3C5D1305-909D-44E4-90C0-578D869F339A.htm> 2/9/2008



Cardinal of Canterbury Calls for Implementation of *Shari'a*

The Muslim world was taken by surprise by the Cardinal of Canterbury's statement that applying certain aspects of the Islamic *Shari'a* law in Britain is unavoidable in personal and family affairs. *Muhammad Hamid*, writing on Islam Online, reported on the unusual pronouncement, emphasizing British condemnation of the cardinal from various quarters. The cardinal did not retract his statement but insisted on Monday, that he never

advocated a “parallel jurisdiction” of the *Shari’a* in Britain. Many in Britain have accused him of intellectual arrogance.

[See PI -541 for Islamic reactions to the Archbishop’s remarks]

Source: http://www.islamonline.net/servlet/Satellite?c=ArticleA_C&cid=1201957719943&pagename=Zone-Arabic-News/NWALayout Date : 2/9/2008



British Deny Qaradawi Visa - England

Eighty-one year old Sheikh *Al-Qaradawi* has been considered a controversial figure by most political analysts. He often articulates peaceful solutions to disagreements between Islam and other religions. The Sheikh also does not espouse a belligerent attitude against the West with the exception of Palestinian attacks against Israel, which he considers legitimate. That distinction seems to have cost him the ability to visit England for health reasons. British authorities denied his visa application, citing his “views that could foster inter-community violence”. The Muslim Council of Britain considered the decision deplorable. Its secretary general, *Muhammad ‘Abd-Ul-Bari*, stated: “the decision will send the wrong message to Muslims everywhere about the state of British society and culture.” Although *Qaradawi’s* site, Islamonline reported the incident and the condemnation by various Muslims, the Sheikh himself did not speak directly on the issue.

Source: http://www.islamonline.net/servlet/Satellite?c=ArticleA_C&cid=1201957716348&pagename=Zone-Arabic-News/NWALayout Date : 2/9/2008

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