

From prisoners to jihad soldiers: scary Islam in jail

by **Ida Magli**

il Giornale
May 24th, 2010

Among the many problems due to the excessive number of immigrants in Italy, one of the most difficult ones is the large number of muslims in our jails. Several thousand people are living one of the most painful experiences - the loss of freedom - in a place where their language is not spoken, where they cannot share with their fellow prisoners the memories of their past nor the projects for their future. A place where being far away from their country, from homeland, religion, customs, feelings and from everyday's life, which are already deeply felt when living 'outside', becomes in a way an 'essential' dimension. Only if we make an effort to understand this aspect of the life that muslims are living in our prisons, we can realize how the discovery or the re-discovery of religious devotion becomes a bond and a force of redemption, thanks to the cures of their diligent fellow prisoners.

A system has been created for bringing back the prisoners to the Koran, even those who are far away from the observance of religious precepts. Undoubtedly, this is a psychological help for people, especially when they have been forced to recur to theft or drug dealing because they were unable to have a regular life and job.

Most of all this is driving them towards a new center of interest and a real guidance, since the Koran not only is a sacred Text, but it is also a Code, both a religious and a civil one. It is a voice telling the believer that God is showing him the safe path along which he will never be left alone, if only he will follow the rules for the prayers and for everyday's life.

This is just a foreword about what is becoming a form of very attentive and disciplined organization of many of the muslim immigrants. They are among the less integrated in Italy and also, being in prison, they are

already keen to deviance; so they can easily become testimonials of a great will of islamic redemption, which eventually will become a subversive one. In other words, we are facing a form of indoctrination of the muslim prisoners: with a deeper adhesion to the Koran, this is leading to a revival of the most radical forms of muslim identity, which do not admit the existence of the 'infidels': who must be fought and defeated, in the name of Allah.

This is a new aspect of the difficulties that immigration is bringing to Italians. Today, the Italians are very far away from a faith that would lead them into battle, and they do not feel the strength of a religious faith felt in such an absolute way. Of course, in our jails there also are many italians, but the jail chaplain is an obvious figure, who is comforting people on his own and is not giving them strong passions in the name of God. We do not know if in the same prison cell the muslim will not arouse a greater interest in the christian man talking to him about Allah more than the chaplain talking about God.

This is the present situation and the Church does not seem to worry about it. The Church is worrying about the immigrants, instead, about their right to practice their own religion; there is not even the smallest attempt to point out to the abyss existing between the koranic obligation to hate the infidels and the words "*Father forgive them because they do not know what they are doing*". Today the priests seem to be content with a weary routine, made of obvious words which are always the same ones; they know very well that these words are useless, and will not change anything.

Therefore the prisons too are not preparing the immigrants to the integrations that mr. Gianfranco Fini is so sure about. They are breeding strong muslims who, once out of the jail, will be available for hostile actions, whether they remain in Italy or they go back to their own country. There should be some kind of corrective action, for example religious meetings held under the guidance of an

who is known from the prison's director. The most important thing is not to set this problem aside hoping that it will solve by itself.

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May 22nd, 2010

traduzione di Marina Mascetti

