

Headlines:

- **The Myth of the Caliphate: The Political History of an Idea**
- **Turkey Won't Apologize for Downing Russian Warplane, Erdogan Says**
- **US: Anti-Islam Group Posts Muslims' Personal Info on Facebook**

Details:

The Myth of the Caliphate: The Political History of an Idea

In 1924, Turkish leader Kemal Ataturk officially abolished the Ottoman caliphate. Today, most Western discussions of the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS), the extremist group that has declared a caliphate across much of Iraq and Syria, begin by referencing this event as if it were a profound turning point in Islamic history. Some contemporary Islamists think of it this way, too: there's a reason, for example, that Lion Cub, the Muslim Brotherhood's children's publication, once awarded the "Jewish" "traitor" Ataturk multiple first prizes in its "Know the Enemies of Your Religion" contest. Even if today's Islamists reference the Ottomans, though, most of them are much more focused on trying to re-create earlier caliphates: the era of the four Rightly Guided Caliphs, who ruled immediately after Muhammad's death in the seventh century, for example, or the Abbasid caliphate, which existed in one form or another from the ninth to the thirteenth centuries (before being officially abolished by the Mongols). By conflating the nineteenth-century Ottoman royal family with these caliphs from a millennium ago or more, Western pundits and nostalgic Muslim thinkers alike have built up a narrative of the caliphate as an enduring institution, central to Islam and Islamic thought between the seventh and twentieth centuries. In fact, the caliphate is a political or religious idea whose relevance has waxed and waned according to circumstance. [Source: *Foreign Affairs*].

Modern day Western intellectuals continue to denigrate the institution of the Caliphate by distorting historical facts and relying on selective examples to bolster their arguments. They pay little attention to the fact that the Caliphate lasted for 1300 years and dominated Europe for well over 1000 years. The same thinkers ignore the deep flaws in liberal democracies and present it as the only political system for human beings to run their affairs. The bias and contradictions in their arguments are plain to see for anyone who chooses to study history objectively.

US: Anti-Islam Group Posts Muslims' Personal Info on Facebook

An anti-Islam group in the Dallas, Texas, suburb of Irving publicized the names and addresses of over 60 Muslims and Muslim "sympathizers" on its Facebook page. The Bureau of American Islamic Relations' post targets those who spoke out against a controversial Irving City Council vote on Islamic tribunals. In March, the council backed a state bill that would limit Muslim influence. Mayor Beth Van Duyne accused Irving's Muslim community of using Sharia law to bypass state and federal legislation to mediate disputes through an Islamic tribunal. The Islamic Center of Irving issued a statement that denies the existence of a Sharia court but confirms the existence of a tribunal. BAIR describes itself on its Facebook page as an "organization that stands in opposition (on all levels)" to Islamic groups like the Council on American-Islamic Relations. Alia Salem, executive director of the Dallas/Fort Worth branch of CAIR, said the publication marked the first time she had felt slightly alarmed over anti-Islamic sentiment. "As bad as things have gotten in the past, and especially recently, this is the first time where I see people taking this public," she told the Dallas

Morning News. Others on the list fear the consequences of their personal information getting into the wrong hands. The post has yet to be taken down from Facebook, which goes against the website's Community Standards. Facebook policy is to remove content when it presents a "genuine risk of physical harm or direct threats to public safety." Neither Facebook nor the Irving Police Department immediately returned requests for comment. [Source: *Huffington Post*]

In America Islamophobia has become so wide spread that the average American can easily post allegations and personal information about Muslims, and get away with it. There is now a two-tier security system in place: one that safeguards non-Muslims and the other openly victimizes Muslim citizens.

Turkey Won't Apologize for Downing Russian Warplane, Erdogan Says

Turkey will not apologize for downing a Russian fighter jet it says violated Turkish airspace near the Syrian border, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said in an exclusive CNN interview Thursday in Ankara. "I think if there is a party that needs to apologize, it is not us," he said from the Turkish capital. "Those who violated our airspace are the ones who need to apologize. Our pilots and our armed forces, they simply fulfilled their duties, which consisted of responding to ... violations of the rules of engagement. I think this is the essence." In a meeting with community leaders in Ankara, Erdogan said, "If the same violation occurs today, Turkey has to react the same way." Turkey has repeatedly said it shot down the Russian warplane on Tuesday only after the plane ignored several warnings and entered Turkish airspace. Russia has contested the claim, and its rescued co-pilot Capt. Konstantin Murakhtin told state media that "there were no warnings -- not via the radio, not visually." Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov has said the downing of the Russian jet did not appear spontaneous, but more "like a planned provocation." Russian President Vladimir Putin told reporters in Moscow on Thursday that the strike was unexpected. "It did not even come into our mind that we could be struck by a party that we considered to be our ally," he said. "We considered Turkey to be a friendly country." Putin also noted that Russia had informed the United States, Turkey's ally, of its flight path, and said it was "not possible" the Turkish air force didn't recognize the Russian aircraft. "Turkey is a member of this (U.S.-led) coalition and must know that Russians are working there," he said. Turkey's military has released audio it says proves its claim; Russia's Defense Ministry tweeted Thursday that the audio purporting to capture warnings issued by Turkish pilots to the crew of the downed jet was "a habitual fake." Putin has said the plane was attacked a kilometer inside Syrian territory, while Erdogan says it crashed in Turkey, injuring two people, after being in Turkish airspace for 17 seconds. "We knew there were two aircraft. One aircraft went back into Syria, and the second one was still in Turkish airspace and it was shot down by our aircraft," Erdogan told CNN. [Source: CNN].

There you have it—leaders of the Muslim world can take a stand against the enemies of Islam if they wanted to. But how far is this assertion true under scrutiny. Erdogan is pro-American and it is difficult to comprehend that the shooting down of the Russian plane happened without America's consent. America has been working hard to marginalize Russia's militarily role in Syria, and Turkey's action appears to support America more than Turkey.