



Acid attacks in Muslim countries are rising, though generally unpunished. One Pakistan city, the size of Los Angeles, last year had five times more acid attacks than LA had murders. Is Islamic 'culture' to blame?

Those who have called in to my radio show to debate me on Islam or the dozens whom I've met at lectures and speeches who bother actually to confront me, always say the same thing; "Everything you talk about that is bad is not Islam, that's not Islam, it's a cultural thing, it goes on throughout the world in many cultures".

Well, they are somewhat correct, the things I speak about, Sharia mostly, does go on throughout various parts of the world. The problem is regardless of where it occurs, the 'culture' is 99.9% of the time Islamic.

That last sentence will undoubtedly get a ton of hate mail (as usual), but to be more specific in this case let me concentrate on 'Acid Attacks'.

First we have to examine Sharia law, the Quran and the hadith.

Sharia law, otherwise known as Islamic law, developed several hundred years after Mohammed's death in 632 BCE as the Islamic empire was expanding to the edge of North Africa in the West and to China in the East. Muslims believe that the 'Prophet' Mohammed was the most pious of all. Therefore his life and the way in which he lived became a model for all other Muslims and stories about his life were collected by scholars into what is known as the hadith.

Muslims try to live according to the Quran and the hadith and believe that Sharia is best for all societies. It is the will of Allah.

Once again, this is not my opinion, but rather fact. Let us look at a website by Muslims for both Muslims and non-Muslims alike. The [website](#) Al-Muhajabah's Islamic Page states on its home page,

This site provides information on Islam for both Muslims and non-Muslims. I hope, God willing, that you will find the information helpful. If you are not a Muslim, I encourage you to take some time to learn about Islam and the perspectives of Muslims.

According to Mohammed Salam Madkoar's [article](#) "Human Rights from an Islamic Worldview;

An outline of Hudud, Ta'zir & Qisas", on the Al-Muhajabah website,

Crimes under Islamic Law can be broken down into three major categories. The three major crime categories in Islamic Law are:

Had Crimes (most serious).

Tazir Crimes (least serious).

Qisas Crimes (revenge crimes restitution)

Madkoar explains the "Qisas" in further detail,

Qisas Crimes

Islamic Law has an additional category of crimes that common law nations do not have. A qisas crime is one of retaliation. If you commit a qisas crime, the victim has a right to seek retribution and retaliation. The exact punishment for each qisas crime is set forth in the Quran. If you are killed, then your family has a right to seek qisas punishment from the murderer.

Traditional qisas crimes include:

Murder (premeditated and non-premeditated).

Premeditated offenses against human life, short of murder.

Murder by error.

Offenses by error against humanity, short of murder.

Some reporters in the mass media have criticized the thought of “blood money” as barbaric. They labeled the practice as undemocratic and inhumane. Qisas crimes are based upon the criminological assumption of retribution. The concept of retribution was found in the first statutory “Code of Hammurabi” and in the Law of Moses in the form of “an eye for an eye.”

The last paragraph of his article reiterates my comment of “Muslims try to live according to the Quran and the hadith and believe that Sharia is best for all societies. It is the will of Allah.” He writes,

Islamic Law is very different from English Common Law or the European Civil Law traditions. Muslims are bound to the teachings of the Prophet Mohammed whose translation of Allah or God's will is found in the Quran. Muslims are held accountable to the Sharia Law, but non-Muslims are not bound by the same standard (apostasy from Allah).

Qisas comes from "an eye for an eye." It literally means ‘retaliation’; it can be found to this day in the judicial system of Islamic countries. An [article](#) in the American Thinker from July, 2005 gave several examples of this “Qisas” punishment. I have shortened each for time’s sake,

August 2000, Abdel Moti Abdel Rahman Mohammad, was subjected to forcible surgical removal of his left eye at King Fahd Hospital in Medina. The operation was carried out as a judicial punishment of Qisas after he was found guilty of disfiguring Shahata Ajami by throwing acid at his face and damaging his left eye.

2003, in Saudi Arabia a man had two teeth extracted under the law of retaliation. In May Awda al—Zahrani, had two of his teeth extracted as a judicial punishment for having caused similar injury to someone during a fight.

2003, Pakistan sentenced a man to be blinded by acid after he carried out a similar attack on his fiancé. Court in the town of Bahawalpur, Punjab province, sentenced Mohammad Sajid under the Islamic Qisas law. Sajid blinded and mutilated his fiancé after her parents called off the couple's engagement.

In 2005, Iranian court orders a man's eye to be removed for throwing acid on another man and blinding him in both eyes. Etemaad says the accused, identified only as Vahid, was 16 when he threw a bottle of acid at another man during a fight in a vegetable market in 1993 and blinded his victim in both eyes. A court said the crime should be judged as qisas, the sentence was to pour acid on Vahid's eyes, but an appeals court ruled it should be done surgically so as not to harm other parts of his face.

The word "Qisas" appears 5 times in the [Quran](#) . It appears 16 times in the [Hadith](#) . As explained above, anyone can understand that 'acid attacks' used as a punishment come from Islamic Law. Often it falls under the "Qisas", but recently it is a form of attack rather than revenge.

Even three of the four examples above were initially cases of an acid attack that brought about the "Qisas" punishment. The use of acid within the Islamic so-called religion is quite common.

More recently acid attacks are starting to get noticed by the mainstream media. This year's Oscars for short subject documentary went to Pakistani filmmaker Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy and her film "Saving Face" which chronicles the struggles of acid-attack survivors. According to an [article](#) in the LA Times,

Every year, scores of Pakistani women are disfigured in acid attacks, usually at the hands of husbands or relatives. The attacks, often brought on by fits of jealousy or rage, go largely ignored and rarely prosecuted.

Valerie Khan, chairwoman of the Islamabad-based Acid Survivors Foundation estimates that as many as 200 acid attacks occur in Pakistan each year. In more than 70% of the attacks, the victims are women or girls.

The Asian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) [website](#) has posted 11 pictures of women who suffered acid attacks with their story. The picture accompanying this article is from the AHRC and in my opinion the least bothersome. This story explains the reasons behind the attacks,

Most acid-attacks are punishing measures towards women who have refused to accede to commands from men or have stood against abuses from them. The effects of these acid attacks upon their lives have been destructive: apart from the physical trauma undergone (some are scarred and maimed for life, despite numerous surgical interventions), they also have to face psychological trauma as well as social isolation and ostracism from their community.

Insight News TV also recently had a [story](#) on their website about the rise of acid attacks in Bangladesh,

There have been about 200 acid attacks in the last year in Bangladesh. And they are on the increase. A year ago doctors were treating one to two a month. Today they're treating one to two a week. It's a uniquely cruel crime in a country where for most young girls; their prospects of a reasonable life depend entirely on a good marriage and motherhood.

Uganda's New Vision news website posted a [story](#) on December 25, 2011 about the blinding of a Pastor,

As many Ugandans celebrate Christmas, Pastor Umar Mulinde of Gospel Life Church, Namasuba was lying in pain following an acid attack by unknown person last night.

He is an evangelist and church planter with an outstanding ability to debate and challenge the religion from which he came in any public forum. His controversies preaching about his past religion (Muslim) had always caused him to be at logger heads (strife) with some Muslims.

I know I'm not the only one who sees a pattern here. A former Muslim now a Christian preacher blinded by an acid attack.

A one minute video from Reuters in November 2008 shows girls who were attacked with acid in Afghanistan for nothing less than going to school.

The rising numbers of acid attacks are actually unbelievable. In one district of Pakistan alone, one district, there was an average of almost 3 attacks daily. The Express Tribune [reported](#) on January 31, 2011,

In 2010, more than 800 acid burning cases took place in Rahim Yar Khan and so far in January 2011 13 cases have already been reported from the district. "It has become an exceedingly common practice and it usually involves the women's spouses," said an NGO worker Kashmala, adding that she had personally helped arrange for free plastic surgery for several victims. "Even though the surgery may help with the appearances and the scars the trauma never really goes away. These women are disfigured simply because they disagree with their husbands," she said.

Acid in the face for "disagreeing" with your husband, yeah, that's not barbaric.

Let me try and put this in simple numbers. The city of Los Angeles had a population of just over 3.7 million according to the 2010 [census](#) ; the population of the Rahim Yar Khan (RYK) District of Pakistan was just over 3.1 million according to the 1998 Pakistan

[census](#)

. Both have similar populations to put in perspective how overwhelming the numbers are.

According to the FBI [website](#) there were a total of 148 murders in the city of Los Angeles in 2011. That is over five times the number of acid attacks than murders for nearly the same population.

But I know that people will say I am comparing "assault" on the one hand to murder and that isn't a fair comparison. Let us then compare violent crimes rather than murder. Using the same FBI report there were 433 rapes in LA in 2011, half that of the acid attacks in the RYK district.

No one need even guess what the outrage would be not just in LA, but nationally if the murder rate went up five times or rapes doubled. Let's not forget, acid attacks, unlike murder and rape in the U.S. often go unpunished not to mention if ever even investigated.

The number of acid attacks is so rampant that there is even a website dedicated to this deplorable act. Acid Survivors Trust International (ASTI) lists on their [website](#) the locations they are currently working with survivors as Bangladesh, Cambodia, Nepal, Pakistan and Uganda.

ASTI explains who tend to be the victims of an acid attack as well as its aftermath,

The victims of acid violence are overwhelmingly women and children, and attackers often target the head and face in order to maim, disfigure and blind. Acid has a devastating effect on the human body, often permanently blinding the victim and denying them the use of their hands. As a consequence, many everyday tasks such as working and even mothering are rendered extremely difficult if not impossible.

Acid Violence rarely kills but causes severe physical, psychological and social scarring, and victims are often left with no legal recourse, limited access to medical or psychological assistance, and without the means to support themselves.

Some experts and those who have written on acid attacks have stated that this crime is worse than murder because the victim has to continue to "try" and live not only with constant pain, but the disfigurement and being an "outcast" for the rest of their lives. For many this is far worse than death itself.

If this abhorrent, heinous crime that is overwhelmingly committed against women, is shocking to you consider from whence it stems. Wikipedia has a [page](#) on acid attacks known as "acid throwing",

In South Asia, acid throwing attacks have been used as a form of revenge for refusal of sexual advances, proposals of marriage and demands for dowry.



Scholars Taru Bahl and M.H. Syed say that land disputes are another leading cause. In Bangladesh, where such attacks are relatively common, they are mostly a form of domestic violence.

Tom O'Neill of National Geographic reported that acid throwing is also used to enforce the caste system in modern India, where uppercaste individuals often attack Dalits for supposedly violating the order.

In Cambodia, it was reported that these attacks were mostly carried out by wives against their husbands' lovers.

According to New York Times reporter Nicholas D. Kristof, acid attacks are at an all-time high in Pakistan and increasing every year. The Pakistani attacks he describes are typically the work of husbands against their wives who have "dishonored them".

According to a Rand Corporation commentary, hundreds of women in Pakistan and Afghanistan have been blinded or maimed "when acid was thrown on their unveiled faces by male fanatics who considered them improperly dressed". Attacks or threats of attacks on women who failed to wear hijab or were otherwise "immodestly dressed" have been reported in other countries as well.

In Afghanistan in November 2008, extremists subjected schoolgirls to acid attacks for attending school.

Similarly, in the run-up to the Islamic Revolution from 1978–1979, Ayatollah Khomeini's supporters threw acid at hijab-free women and clean-shaven men in order to coerce the population into obeying strict Islamic mores.

The common denominator here is Islam. "Revenge for refusal of sexual advances, proposals of marriage and demands for dowry." "Domestic violence", "dishonor", "improperly dressed",

“immodestly dressed”, girls “attending school” and “hijab-free women”.

Yes, it's a 'cultural thing' alright; interestingly, the 'culture' is Islamic. We really can't blame them though, after all the Quran teaches in 9 different [verses](#) how women are less than a man. The hadith has 14 similar verses. Here are just some of those,

Qur'an (4:11) “The male shall have the equal of the portion of two females”

Qur'an (2:282) “And call to witness, from among your men, two witnesses. And if two men be not found then a man and two women.”

Qur'an (2:228) “and the men are a degree above them [women]”

Qur'an (5:6) “And if ye are unclean, purify yourselves. And if ye are sick or on a journey, or one of you cometh from the closet, or ye have had contact with women, and ye find not water, then go to clean, high ground and rub your faces and your hands with some of it”

Qur'an (4:24) and Qur'an (33:50) “A man is permitted to take women as sex slaves outside of marriage”

Hadith- Bukhari (2:28) - Women comprise the majority of Hell's occupants. This is important because the only women in heaven ever mentioned by Muhammad are the virgins who serve the sexual desires of men. (A weak Hadith, Kanz al-`ummal, 22:10, even suggests that 99% of women go to Hell).

Hadith- Muslim (4:1039) - A'isha said [to Muhammad]: “You have made us equal to the dogs and the asses” These are the words of Muhammad's favorite wife, complaining of the role assigned to women under Islam.

As I pointed out in my article “Call PETA No One Else Is Doing Anything” in March 2010,

I treat my dogs better than women in Islam are treated.