

The Costs of Muslim Cousin-Marriage

by Hugh Fitzgerald



The [Daily Mail reported yesterday](#) that “scientists believe that more than 13,000 people in the UK have DNA which indicates they are the result of ‘extreme inbreeding.’”

This is linked to mass Muslim migration into the UK and Europe. All over Europe, Muslim migrants have taken full advantage of what the generous welfare states of the Unbelievers offer them: free or highly subsidized housing, free education, free medical care, family allowances that increase with each child, welfare payments for the unemployed. And while many European states offer such benefits, some are wealthier than others, and consequently, even more generous with the benefits they provide. Muslim migrants, unsurprisingly, are eager to be taken in by these countries – especially Germany and Sweden – where they can enjoy the largesse provided by Infidel taxpayers.

The financial cost to Western societies is huge. Muslim families tend to be much larger than those of non-Muslims.

This means the housing provided – free or subsidized – needs to be larger. Family allowances are larger. Education of immigrant children is more expensive than for the indigenous population, because in addition to the regular cost of education per pupil, these migrants require special classes and even private tutors in the local language. Teaching them that language is an enormous extra expense. Providing classes that attempt to teach them about Western values, in order to further their hoped-for integration, cost money too – and have been a singular failure.

Unemployment among Muslim immigrants is very high, and they seem to be in no hurry to find jobs, for the benefits they receive are so generous. An estimated 40% of Muslim youth in France and 50% in Germany are unemployed, but far from destitute. Rather, they receive a wide range of social benefits – as noted, housing, education, medical care, family and unemployment allowances. Why work when life can be so good without working? An estimated 40% of welfare outlays in Denmark go to the 5% of the population that is Muslim. According to Otto Schilly, former German interior minister, speaking of immigrants in general: “Seventy percent of the newcomers [since 2002] land on welfare the day of their arrival.” In Sweden, perhaps the most troubling case, immigrants are estimated to now be 1.5 million out of 10 million people; those immigrants are estimated to cost the government almost \$14 billion per year. High levels of welfare encourage high levels of unemployment. According to analyst Christopher Caldwell: “In the early 1970s, 2 million of the 3 million foreigners in Germany were in the labor force; by the turn of this century, 2 million of 7.5 million were.” The earlier foreigners were mainly Turks who came to work; the more recent Muslim economic migrants – most of them Arabs, including many who claim to be “Syrian refugees” but are not Syrians at all – have welfare, not work, on their minds. In Sweden, of the 163,000 asylum seekers who arrived in 2015, only 494 had a job by mid-2016. That suggests they were not

trying very hard to find employment. In the U.K., only 19% of Muslims (both immigrants and those born in the U.K.) between the ages of 16 and 74 have full-time employment. In every European country, the levels of Muslim unemployment are double or triple that of non-Muslims. These unemployment benefits add considerably to the state budgets.

Large numbers of Muslims may be receiving welfare payments, but that is not their only form of income. Money can be made, they quickly discover, from drug deals and fenced goods, as well as from those welfare payments. Just as some Muslims interpret the payment of social benefits as a form of jizya, the tax traditionally paid in Islamic societies by non-Muslims, in order to be allowed to remain alive and practice their own religion, some think that in helping themselves to the property of Infidels, through robbery and street muggings, they are merely exacting a form of jizya. The very high rates of sexual assault and rape by Muslims may reflect their view of non-Muslim women as fair game, because of the supposed immodesty of their dress and deportment. Think of the girls of Rotherham, passed around by grooming gangs of Muslim men. Think of the 1,200 German women and girls who were sexually assaulted by 2,000 Muslim men in Cologne on New Year's Day, 2016. They all "had it coming to them."

These high levels of Muslim criminality have costs beyond the crimes themselves, and the physical insecurity they engender. These costs include the entire human apparatus of the criminal justice system: the need for more police, more prosecutors, more lawyers, more judges, more prison cells, more prison guards. It all adds up.

Among the expenses resulting from the large-scale presence of Muslim immigrants, there is one particular cost that has not received sufficient attention. This is the cost of cousin-marriages. Such marriages are extremely common among Muslims, especially Pakistanis and Bangladeshis. A report last year in the Daily Mail – ["The tragic truth about cousin marriages"](#)

–set out the problem in the U.K. by considering the case of Hiba Maloof, a young Pakistani-British girl who was considering whether to marry a cousin or not.

Blessed with long wavy hair and dark brown eyes, Hiba Maroof is a beautiful teenage girl. She is softly spoken with a hint of the Yorkshire dialect so distinctive to Bradford, where she was born and raised.

Her life stretches ahead of her, yet at the age of just 18 she is already discussing with her family whether she should have an arranged marriage, and whether her future husband should be a cousin.

For Hiba comes from the city's British-Pakistani community, in which around 60 per cent of mothers are married to their cousins according, to a major academic study.

Her uncle, Younis, hopes that Hiba does so and follows his family tradition.

*Indeed, **four of his own five children have wed close relatives**. However, Hiba's father is unsure. And her mother is very much against her daughter marrying such a close relative because her own first marriage – to a cousin – ended in divorce.*

*Hiba, single and a student at the University of Leeds, faces a common dilemma. Her story came to public attention because she featured in a BBC documentary called *Should I Marry My Cousin?*, which looked at the custom of cousin marriage.*

Relationships described as 'consanguineous' are those between couples who are at least second cousins or more closely related. The practice has been legal in Britain for more than 400 years, but is considered one of society's last taboos.

*In British Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities, **marriage between cousins is designed to strengthen the family and keep***

wealth intact.

But there are massive health risks involved for the children of such couples. And when they are tragically born with disabilities, it is taxpayers who are left to pick up the huge costs of their NHS treatment, which can run into millions over a lifetime.

New official figures shown to the Mail reveal a worrying picture across England. Shockingly, cousin marriages are a key factor in an average of two child deaths every week.

This figure is derived from the fact that a total of 545 boys or girls born to closely related couples have died in childhood during the past five years, according to the Department for Education, which collates data from Child Death Overview Panels in every council area. (It is the job of these panels to examine the deaths of any child under the age of 18.)

Thousands more children of consanguineous marriages survive, but with appalling physical or mental problems. These include blindness, deafness, blood ailments, heart or kidney failure, lung or liver problems and a myriad of often incurable and complex neurological or brain disorders.

According to a report for the BBC's Newsnight, British Pakistanis are 13 times more likely to have children with genetic disorders than the general population.

They are responsible for three percent of all births, but produce just under a third of all British children with such health problems.

In Birmingham, around one in ten children from first cousin marriages either dies in infancy or develops a serious life-long disability caused by genetic ailments, according to health officials in the city, where half the mothers of Pakistani origin are married to a close relative.

Meanwhile, a research document by the NHS-funded Enhanced Genetic Services Project reveals that in Birmingham in 2009-2010, the combined infant stillbirth and death rate 'definitely or probably' due to genetic disorders inherited from Pakistani cousin parents was 38 times higher than that among white European babies in the city.

The report – one of the most thorough into this health and social problem – says: 'Almost a third of the affected children die before five years of age.

Most of the survivors suffer chronic disability, and they are cared for by their families, posing tremendous emotional and financial strain.'

Up in Bradford, where teenager Hiba Maroof lives, doctors and nurses have told me pediatric wards look after numerous children who are unable to speak, and are fed through tubes.

For Hiba comes from a **British-Pakistani community, in which around 60 per cent of mothers are "married to their cousins."**

Meanwhile, the city's special schools struggle to cope with the huge numbers of pupils with learning difficulties...

The problem is that babies born in cousin marriages can suffer what are called 'recessive' genetic disorders, associated with severe disability and early death...

Yet despite the dangers – and the huge cost to the NHS – according to the BBC, it is estimated that 55 per cent of couples of Pakistani heritage in the UK are in cousin marriages.

Seven years ago, leading geneticist Professor Steve Jones, of University College London, controversially warned that what he called 'inbreeding' in Britain's Muslim communities threatened the health of children...

Yet the Health and Wellbeing Board overseen by Oldham council

recently said cousin marriage is an 'integral part of cultural and social life' and attempts to try to stop the deep-rooted practice were 'unlikely to succeed' anyway.

The view that society should not interfere in a custom of some ethnic communities wins a degree of sympathy from even those at the top of the medical profession....

Today, Professor Small believes changing attitudes to cousin marriage among young Muslims, tighter immigration controls on bringing spouses into the UK, and efforts to inform families sensitively about the health consequences may, one day, reduce the disabilities and stillbirths. As yet, he told me, it is unclear if this will be successful....

Former Labour MP Ann Cryer, who represented Keighley near Bradford, has bravely highlighted this issue, but was attacked by the Left for calling for an end to such 'medieval' unions.

She said: 'It's not fair to the children or to the NHS which has to treat them. If you go into a pediatric ward in Bradford or Keighley, you will find more than half the kids are from the Asian community.'

Philip Davies, Tory MP for another Yorkshire constituency, Shipley, has gone further. Controversially, he has questioned the state costs of treating sick children of related parents, and said to the Mail this week: 'Isn't it time that first-cousin marriages were outlawed in Britain?'

Britain's first female Asian peer, Baroness Flather – who describes herself as a 'Hindu atheist' – also told us: 'Such marriages are partly [pursued] out of the conformist desire to keep all property within the family, partly out of a wish to bring over a relative to marry in this country. There is so much disability among the children. You go to any such family and there will be four or five children, at least one or two of whom will have some health problem.

'Effectively, we have imported a medieval convention that should have no place in modern society.'

She has pointed out: 'The term "inbreeding" is an unpleasant one, but it is an exact description of what is happening in 21st-century Britain, despite everything we know about genetics.'

'It is little wonder, then, that more than six per cent of all children born in Bradford have severe disabilities, including blindness, deafness, and neuro-degenerative conditions. Yet to set out these truths is to invoke the fury of the politically correct brigade, who refuse to consider anything that might intrude on their carefully constructed fantasy of Utopian multi-culturalism.'

Indeed, the whole issue is so highly contentious that few dare mention it. NHS doctors and nurses are reluctant to speak out for fear of being branded racist...

A community nurse working in Redbridge told me that he has helped to care for many of the disabled children.

He said: 'A terrible burden is put on the cousin parents who have, often unwittingly, given birth to a baby with a lifetime of tricky health problems. Their own relationship suffers...

A retired NHS nurse from the same area has added: 'The children are being kept alive by the skills of the NHS, which is already over-stretched. In the paediatric wards of east London hospitals, I have seen the result.

'Intensive care beds are being taken up by terribly disabled babies born to related parents.

'They will never be out of nappies. Some will never speak beyond a wail. They have such grave problems that they will cost the state thousands upon thousands over their

lifetimes.’ Another medic recently complained on an internet forum discussing the issue: ‘The problem is no one dares say: “No, stop marrying cousins” because it is politically incorrect to do so.’...

A young Muslim man called Ali wrote recently on one: ‘The reason couples inbreed is because their parents want their children’s earnings to remain in the family...’

Iftacan says it may just be the luck of the draw.

A lot of people who marry but aren’t related have ‘kids with autism’, he reasons. For her part, Minaz muses that ‘God may have chosen’ to put them in this situation. Hiba goes to see two potential suitors – her young male cousins – in Pakistan. She struggles to have a conversation with the two boys, university students who appear to like the idea of marrying her and coming to live in Britain....

Even more worryingly, the number of children damaged by consanguinity is predicted to increase as the birth rate in ethnic [that is, Muslim] communities goes up.

In Yorkshire and Humber (embracing Bradford, Kirklees, Leeds, Sheffield, and Rotherham) doctors are having to deal with 600 cases a year – a number they expect to rise to 2,400 a year by 2031, according to documents published by public health officials in the area....

This long review-article of a documentary about Hala Maloof, a British-Pakistani girl looking for a suitable mate, focuses on the consequences of inbreeding in Muslim families. While first-cousin marriage is not illegal in the U.K., almost all such marriages take place in British Pakistani or Bengali or, to a lesser but still significant extent, in British Arab homes.

Two statistics are especially startling.

First, **about 60 percent of British Pakistanis marry their cousins.**

Second, **British Pakistanis are 13 times more likely than the general population to have babies with severe congenital defects.**

The article in the *Daily Mail* made clear that even those couples who had had a severely defective child were still intent on having more children, not convinced of the genetic explanation, willing to take their chances. Some families had two or even three children with such defects. They exhibit a kind of inshallah-fatalism, and do not think clearly about, or choose to ignore, the genetic evidence. As Iftacan, a father of two children with severe congenital conditions says in the article, "it may just be the luck of the draw."

Furthermore, **many doctors and nurses have been afraid to openly discuss the consequences of cousin marriage and the need to discourage or even prohibit it under the law, for fear of being labelled "racist."**

Why do these Muslim families favor cousin marriages? One reason is the desire of the family to keep wealth within the family. Muslims repeatedly mention this as an important consideration. A man identified only as Al wrote that **"the reason couples inbreed is because their parents want their children's earnings to remain in the family."** They worry that money or property that had been earned or inherited by a family member might, through divorce or death, end up with a non-related spouse.

Muslims also mentioned the need to "strengthen the family" through cousin-marriage. This goes to the matter of trust. In Muslim societies, you cannot rely for justice to be done through the courts or other institutions; trust is more likely to be assured, it is believed, if you are dealing with fellow family members rather than with outsiders. It's self-defensive

tribalism, taken to the family level.

Still another consideration, mentioned glancingly in the *Daily Mail* article, is the desire to bring over to the U.K. from Pakistan (or Bangladesh or India) a family member, who can more easily gain entry as the spouse of a U.K. resident or citizen. Another consideration is that British Pakistani males have shown a preference for marrying girls who are more submissive, less “Western” in their ways, and such girls are more readily to be found back in Pakistan.

Marriage to first cousins has had disastrous consequences for the National Health Service. Care for each of the children with congenital effects who are born from such marriages annually costs, as noted above, 50,000 pounds on average. For those who survive (many die before the age of five) it has been estimated that each child will cost the NHS several millions of pounds, “over a full life-span of medical and other care.”

It is a tragedy for the children and the parents. It is a catastrophe for the National Health Service. And it is avoidable, if only the British government would present, and widely publicize, the evidence for the connection between cousin marriages and babies born with severe birth defects, and then work to prohibit such marriages. The number born annually in the U.K. with such defects is now between 750 and 900; it is expected to rise as the number of Muslims, and thus the number of cousin marriages, increases. How many of those congenital defects are due to cousin marriages has not been revealed. Let’s make some modest assumptions. Suppose that for 500 of those 750-900 born each year with congenital defects, the cause is cousin marriages of parents who are Muslims in Britain. Let us also suppose that 100 of those babies die at birth or within a year, that 400 survive to live, with their severe disabilities, to an average age of 40 years. If the cost to care for each child, who then grows into adulthood and lives for 40 years, is 50,000 pounds a year – an estimate made

in the article – then two million pounds would have to be spent on lifetime care for each of those 400 children born with defects as a result of cousin marriage. We are not even including the cost for intensive care for the 100 babies born with such severe defects that they live a year or less. Given that it will cost two million pounds for lifetime care for each child born with defects who lives into adulthood, and that 400 of them are born each year in the United Kingdom, this means that the NHS is committed, each year, to spending *another* 800 million pounds over the lifetimes of those born that year. Through the decades, this becomes billions. One can only guess how much has already been spent by NHS over the last 30 years on babies with severe defects, born of cousins who either came from Pakistan or Bangladesh, or were the children of immigrants from those countries.

One more thing should be noted. A prohibition on cousin-marriage is a health measure and a budgetary matter. It is an attempt to spare people – many of them Muslims – anguish. It cannot be described as anti-Islamic. There is nothing in Islam, nothing in the Qur'an or Hadith, about cousin-marriages. If cousin-marriages are widespread among British-Pakistanis, that is because of certain cultural and economic considerations, having to do with property, trust, immigration, and the family as the irreplaceable unit of loyalty. There will be those who will claim that such a prohibition demonstrates "Islamophobia." But it works for the good of all, especially Muslims, for Muslim wives and husbands, and their children. It is also a measure that will keep the National Health Service, or NHS, from having to spend billions of pounds on lifetime support for thousands with congenital defects, whose numbers will dramatically decrease if such a prohibition is in place – money that can then be spent on treating cancer or heart disease.

First published in