

Philosophy, Education and the corruption of youth- from Socrates to Islamic extremists

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Introduction

Since the days of the Ancient Greeks citizens, city fathers and philosophers have acknowledged the category 'youth' as a distinctive life stage and have vitally concerned themselves with the moral constitution of youth. They have argued over their wellbeing and their education and how best to mould as responsible citizens. Youth has been considered a 'dangerous age' and transition to adult and citizen; education has been identified with a range of different ways of enhancing or inflaming youth the passions of youth. Depending on ideology and philosophical viewpoint, education has been conceived as a means to incite or prevent revolution, violence and terrorism. Education may in fact be considered a form of indoctrination or political socialization especially when particular regimes set out to politicize notions of culture, religion and national identity. Moreover, teachers can be considered to have considerable impact on student attitudes and actions as the famous case of corruption against Socrates in Ancient Greece. Today both the US and Islamic countries hold teachers to account for providing appropriate moral training. And governments around the world routinely impose performance-related pay regimes based on the assumption of a relationship between teaching and learning. Regardless, teaching is a social activity and depending on many factors including the degree of relationship between teacher and student, the teacher's charisma, intelligence, knowledge and powers of persuasion, and other influences on a young person (e.g. family, politics, religion) teaching can have either a profound or a limited effect.

This paper explores the intersection of philosophy, education and the influence of teaching on youth as it developed in Ancient Greece. I consider Aristotle's compelling and forceful description of youth and the case against Socrates as historical evidence for reviewing the intersection between a teacher's influence and how his contemporary Athenians might have viewed him and his student's actions. I argue that we must see Socrates and his teachings in relation to the historical and political context of his time and that we must also consider his teachings as subversively anti-democratic and implicated in three uprisings led by his students against Athenian democracy for which he accepted little or no responsibility. We need a modern legal opinion and other relevant historical details in order to come to a fair and equitable re-evaluation of Socrates as a teacher. Against the dominant and standard philosophical account of Socrates as one of the great teachers, perhaps the greatest in the Western tradition, I suggest that there are grounds for reviewing this assessment. This view critiques the way philosophy so often presents a de-contextualized and ahistorical picture. I note the concern from ancient times to the present that exists about the influence of education (and indoctrination) and teachers on youth and wonder to what extent a teacher can reasonably be held responsible for a student's subsequent actions.

Aristotle on Youth

Aristotle clearly identifies three life stages (omitting childhood). He distinguishes youth, from men in the prime of life (we can call these adults), to those in old age (aged). In *Rhetoric*, Book II, Chapters 12-13, Aristotle describes the character of young men of Ancient Greece:

“Let us now consider the various types of human character, in relation to the emotions and moral qualities, showing how they correspond to our various ages and fortunes. By

emotions I mean anger, desire, and the like; these we have discussed already. By moral qualities I mean virtues and vices; these also have been discussed already, as well as the various things that various types of men tend to will and to do. By ages I mean youth, the prime of life, and old age. By fortune I mean birth, wealth, power, and their opposites—in fact, good fortune and ill fortune.

Aristotle describes youth passions, sexual desires, tempers, emotions, idealism, nobility, friendship thus:

...the Youthful type of character. Young men have strong passions, and tend to gratify them indiscriminately. Of the bodily desires, it is the sexual by which they are most swayed and in which they show absence of self-control. They are changeable and fickle in their desires, which are violent while they last, but quickly over: their impulses are keen but not deep-rooted, and are like sick people's attacks of hunger and thirst. They are hot-tempered and quick-tempered, and apt to give way to their anger; bad temper often gets the better of them, for owing to their love of honor they cannot bear being slighted, and are indignant if they imagine themselves unfairly treated. While they love honor, they love victory still more; for youth is eager for superiority over others, and victory is one form of this. They love both more than they love money, which indeed they love very little, not having yet learnt what it means to be without it—this is the point of Pittacus' remark about Amphiaraus. They look at the good side rather than the bad, not having yet witnessed many instances of wickedness. They trust others readily, because they have not yet often been cheated. They are sanguine; nature warms their blood as though with excess of wine; and besides that, they have as yet met with few disappointments. Their lives are mainly spent not in memory but in expectation; for expectation refers to the future, memory to the past, and youth has a long future before it and a short past behind it: on the first day of one's life one has nothing at all to remember, and can only look forward. They are easily cheated, owing to the sanguine disposition just mentioned. Their hot tempers and hopeful dispositions make them more courageous than older men are; the hot temper prevents fear, and the hopeful disposition creates confidence; we cannot feel fear so long as we are feeling angry, and any expectation of good makes us confident. They are shy, accepting the rules of society in which they have been trained, and not yet believing in any other standard of honor. They have exalted notions, because they have not yet been humbled by life or learnt its necessary limitations; moreover, their hopeful disposition makes them think themselves equal to great things—and that means having exalted notions. They would always rather do noble deeds than useful ones; their lives are regulated more by moral feeling than by reasoning; and whereas reasoning leads us to choose what is useful, moral goodness leads us to choose what is noble. They are fonder of their friends, intimates, and companions than older men are, because they like spending their days in the company of others, and have not yet come to value either their friends or anything else by their usefulness to themselves. All their mistakes are in the direction of doing things excessively and vehemently. They disobey Chilon's precept by overdoing everything; they love too much and hate too much, and the same with everything else. They think they know everything, and are always quite sure about it; this, in fact, is why they overdo everything. If they do wrong to others, it is because they mean to insult them, not to do them actual harm. They are ready to pity others, because they think every one an honest man, or anyhow better than he is; they judge their neighbor by their own

harmless natures, and so cannot think he deserves to be treated in that way. They are fond of fun and therefore witty, wit being well-bred insolence.

(<http://libertyonline.hypermall.com/Aristotle/Rhetoric/Rhetoric-Bk2.html>)

Aristotle recognizes that youth are susceptible to ideology because of their heightened passions, idealism and willingness to take risks. His description of youth – a category which today includes females – holds much that seems to resonate with how youth are viewed today, especially the negative press they receive from the media and ensuing moral panics (see Besley, 2002; 2010). In identifying life stages he paves the way for a philosophy of youth as a category distinct from other stages of life, and for later work on stage theories of development by the likes of Freud, Piaget, Kohlberg and many others.

Philosophers of education have critically examined the notion of indoctrination by focussing on important conceptual differences between the terms 'education' and 'indoctrination' (e.g. see Snook, 1972; Siegel, 1991; Spiecker, 1991). To indoctrinate is to imbue one, via teaching, with a doctrine or set of beliefs that involves intentionality on the part of the teacher. It is inherently ideological and suggests 'that someone is taking advantage of a privileged role to influence those under his charge in a manner which is likely to distort their ability to assess the evidence on its own merit' (Snook, 1972, p. 66). In contrast, the liberal theory of education promoted by the likes of John Dewey and R.S. Peters, is concerned with broadening the mind and developing rationality and a critical world view which is epitomised in terms of problem-solving, decision-making or the employment of scientific method.

Moral or values education and civic education are contemporary areas of education where indoctrination is most likely to occur because 'informed' people differ in how they perceive these and how and what they believe young people should be taught. It can be difficult for educators to balance the conceptual issues between indoctrination and education as they seek to imbue mainstream societal values and morality in young people to know and appreciate what is 'good' while still respecting their potential or actual rationality. At one extreme, some would argue (following Rousseau, 1979) that all moral and social training should be avoided until the child has developed sufficient rationality to assess, evaluate and form reasonable conclusions about various moral ideas. This may ensure a negative freedom, that is a freedom from something but it does not ensure a positive freedom, a freedom to do something. It makes the erroneous assumption that rationality is something that a child acquires at a certain age, denying that rationality is the result of the child experiencing and working through their reactions to a range of social and moral situations and dilemmas. Denying a child such experiences is likely to stunt his or her rationality and moral development. Yet how can education transmit the cultural values and traditions in which rationality itself is defined, without indoctrination and without stunting the rationality of the child in the process? The question then becomes one of the *form* that education should take once the child is considered educable and what form it should take prior to this. If a programme of moral education is designed to encourage children to weigh evidence and consider the consequences of their actions it becomes the opposite of how indoctrination has been defined.

Just as people in the 21st century are so often concerned about the link between youth, their moral development and the type of education required for them to become responsible citizens, such concerns were predominant in Ancient Greece. With no formal schooling in pre-Socratic Athens, the travelling bands of Sophists who taught rhetoric, oratory and the art of persuasion to the sons of citizens, provided vital skills for debating in the Assembly and the Council of Five Hundred – i.e. for partaking in the democratic process. The Sophist emphasis was on argumentation, on proving a position regardless of truth and on relativity as summed up by Protagoras' famous "Man is the measure of all things" (c.485-c.411 B.C.) emphasizing that importance of the individual man.

Subsequently Plato's dialogue, *Sophist* is highly critical of them, regarding them as not seekers of truth whose only concern was making money and teaching their students success in argument by whatever means. Aristotle said that a Sophist was "one who made money by sham wisdom." The notion of *parrhesia* goes a large way to address this 'sham wisdom.' (Foucault, 2001).

The case of Socrates - a teacher accused of corrupting youth

Doug Linder (2002) poses a key question that seems to be ignored when philosophers consider Socrates trial and Plato's *Apology*:

Why, in a society enjoying more freedom and democracy than any the world had ever seen, would a seventy-year-old philosopher be put to death for what he was teaching? The puzzle is all the greater because Socrates had taught--without molestation--all of his adult life. What could Socrates have said or done than prompted a jury of 500 Athenians to send him to his death just a few years before he would have died naturally? (<http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/socrates/socrates.htm>)

Or was the trial a political trial or 'martyrdom by democracy'? Was it the 'the tyranny of the majority, of the trampling of the voice of reason and individual conscience by mass rule, of the common man's hatred of the man of genius...' as suggested by Gooch (Rowe, 1999, <http://www.dur.ac.uk/Classics/histos/1998/rowe.html>). Strangely our present day notion of trial by jury is exactly this (but not by so many, so maybe we are less democratic in this respect) – trial by a group of peers – a democratic decision, so why should the trial of Socrates be held up as some sort of aberration and unreasonable event? How did his Athenian peers view him?

Socrates leaves no written record, but Plato, his student and supporter, writes about Socrates in the *Apology* after his death. Subsequent Platonists have tended to deify Socrates as a *parrhesiastic* hero – as one who showed all the characteristics of *parrhesia* when facing the full force of the Athenian law as he was tried before a jury - the Assembly of 500 Athenians for 'corrupting the young, and by not believing in the gods in whom the city believes, but in other *daimonia* that are novel' (*Apology*, 24b). He was found guilty by 280 to 220 votes and famously condemned to death by drinking hemlock. Requiring a majority decision from the 501 *dikasts* (Athenian citizens chosen by lot to serve as jurors), 30 more in his favour, would have found him innocent.

Plato and many philosophers subsequently focus on Socrates words, style, arguments, ignoring the difficult political times facing Athens. However, separating speeches from the context gives only a limited picture of the Athenian Assembly decision. It is important to historicize the famous trial of Socrates, for here we have the intersection of philosophy, democracy, youth and education. Debra Nails (2009) provides a useful timeline in 'A Chronology of the historical Socrates in the context of Athenian history and the dramatic dates of Plato's dialogues' but barely touches on the wars, battles, defeats, threats and criticisms to the Athenian democracy (<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/socrates/>)

Socrates' trial was in 399 BC, shortly after Athens' defeat by Sparta in the Peloponnesian War (431-404 BC), a time when many Athenians were understandably concerned about the safety, well-being, 'right-thinking', education and democracy of its youth. While there was a considerable legacy of criticism of the democracy, not least by Socrates who was not an egalitarian nor in favour of democracy, 'instead believing that people needed the guidance of a wise shepherd. He denied that citizens had basic virtue necessary to nurture a good society, instead equating virtue with a knowledge unattainable by ordinary people. Striking at the heart of Athenian democracy, he contemptuously criticized the right of every citizen to speak in the Athenian assembly.' (<http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/socrates/socratesaccount.html>). That free speech (*parrhesia*) and space for criticism of the state's systems should be possible are hallmarks of a

democracy - notions that western democracies cherish today, and which date from the days Ancient Athens (see Besley & Peters, 2007). Foucault identifies other critics as the aristocratic Pseudo-Xenophon and Isocrates who worried that 'Athenians listen to the most depraved orators; they are not even willing to hear truly good speaker, for they deny them the possibility of being heard' by driving them off the platform if they don't support what they wish (Foucault, 2001, p. 81). But attitudes to democracy then and today differ considerably. Many Athenian critics like Xenophon were the elite class to whom

giving poor and uneducated people power over their betters seemed a reversal of the proper, rational order of society. For them the *demos* in democracy meant not the whole people, but the people as opposed to the elite. Instead of seeing it as a fair system under which 'everyone' has equal rights, they saw it as the numerically preponderant poor tyrannizing over the rich. They viewed society like a modern stock company: democracy is like a company where all shareholders have an equal say regardless of the scale of their holding; one share or ten thousand, it makes no difference. They regarded this as manifestly unjust.' (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Athenian_democracy).

It seems clear that Socrates held such a position.

The Peloponnesian Wars between Sparta and Athens involved city states with opposing political systems. While Athens was by no means non-military, but it espoused democracy for male citizens. Sparta was a kingdom totally focused on militarism - closed society, but one where women had a totally different and role more equal to men. 'Aristotle describes the kingship at Sparta as "a kind of unlimited and perpetual generalship" (Pol. iii. I285a), while Isocrates refers to the Spartans as "subject to an oligarchy at home, to a kingship on campaign"(iii. 24) (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sparta>). Linder points out a revealing reference to Socrates in Aristophanes' *Birds*, written six years after *Clouds*, when he 'labels a gang of pro-Sparta aristocratic youths as "Socratified", suggesting that considering the enmity between Sparta & Athens, 'Socrates' teaching may have started to be seen as subversive by 417 B.C.E.' (<http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/socrates/socratesaccount.html>). Yet many Athenians, especially Platonists admired its rival Sparta 'as an ideal state, strong, brave, and free from the corruptions of commerce and money.' Some like the aristocratic general Xenophon sent their sons as foreign students *trophimoi* (foster sons) to be educated in the *agoge*, the rigorous education and training regimen mandated for all male Spartan citizens. (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sparta>).

Concerns about Socrates' ideas and teaching, would have followed a series of incidents beginning in 415 when the Athenian fleet led by Alcibiades, Nicias & Lamachus was due to sail to invade Sicily, the *herms*, statues of the face and phallus Hermes, the god of travel, that marked the city boundary, were mutilated in a single night. Such a sacrilegious act was seen as a bad omen and fearing a conspiracy against it, the city formed a commission

to investigate not only the herm-smashing, but all crimes of irreverence (*asebeia*) that could be discovered, offering rewards for information. In a climate of near-hysteria over three months, accusations led to executions (including summary executions), exile, torture, and imprisonment affecting hundreds of people, some of whom were close to Socrates (Alcibiades, Phaedrus, Charmides, Critias, Eryximachus, and others). The actual herm-mutilators turned out to be a young men's drinking club, and some of the accusers ultimately admitted to lying; although death penalties imposed *in absentia* were rescinded, nothing could bring back the innocent dead. (Nails, 2009, <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/socrates/>)

Athenians had a legal obligation to publicly participate in religious festivals and *asebeia* or irreverence was a capital crime, so not surprisingly Alcibiades fled. He went to Sparta and while there, proposed ways to help the Spartans defeat Athens - an act that was viewed as treachery by many Athenians. Yet, criticism in belief in gods occurred in the democracy. For example, Xenophanes 'chastised the human vices of the gods as well as their anthropomorphic depiction.' Rather than polytheism, Plato, speaking through Socrates in the *Republic*, believed in one supreme god -- the Form of the Good -- 'as the emanation of perfection in the universe. Aristotle also disagreed that polytheistic deities existed, because he could not find enough empirical evidence for it. He was a pandeist believing in a deity called the Prime Mover, which had set creation going, but was not connected or interested in the universe' (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religion_in_ancient_Greece).

Two much more serious assaults on democracy occurred when Athens was betrayed to Sparta and the democracy briefly overthrown by two of Socrates' students. A third attempt to overthrow in 401 also involving Socrates' students was unsuccessful.

The first coup, by Alcibiades, lasted four months in 411-410 BC (<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/13306/Alcibiades>). This coup was known as 'The 400' -- the reduced number of people who now ruled Athens -- usually a Council of 500. Concern about Socrates ideas no doubt arose from the close relationship he had with Alcibiades, an aristocratic general whose political allegiance shifted several times. He defected to Sparta where he advised in campaigns against Athens, was forgiven and returned, but ended up leaving Athens again (see <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alcibiades> & Alcibiades, *Encyclopedia Britannica*. <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/13306/Alcibiades>).

The second overthrow of democracy in 404-403 for slightly longer was led by Critias and included Charmides (both were relatives of Plato and Socrates' students) and established a Spartan led oligarchy known as the 'Thirty' and also as the 'Thirty Tyrants'. The 'Thirty' confiscated the estates of Athenian aristocrats, banished 5,000 women, children, and slaves, and summarily executed about 1,500 of Athen's most prominent democrats. Many of Athen's leading democratic citizens went into exile (including Anytus, who became one of Socrates' accusers along with Meletus and Lycon) where they organized a resistance movement. In the *Apology* Socrates relates an incident and criticizes the oligarchy that:

...sent for me and four others into the rotunda, and bade us bring Leon the Salaminian from Salamis, as they wanted to execute him. This was a specimen of the sort of commands which they were always giving with the view of implicating as many as possible in their crimes; and then I showed, not in words only, but in deed, that, if I may be allowed to use such an expression, I cared not a straw for death, and that my only fear was the fear of doing an unrighteous or unholy thing. For the strong arm of that oppressive power did not frighten me into doing wrong; and when we came out of the rotunda the other four went to Salamis and fetched Leon, but I went quietly home. For which I might have lost my life, had not the power of the Thirty shortly afterwards come to an end. And to this many will witness.

He may have not followed the order in what was arguably an act of civil disobedience, but neither did he stand up to the Thirty on behalf of Leon. Moreover he did not join the Athenian exiles who plotted to overthrow the Thirty, seeming to perhaps wash his hands of the tyranny and not joining others in exile. To many Athenians it may have shown his tacit support for the Thirty, despite a fall out with Critias and Charicles who sought to intimidate Socrates by forbidding him, unsuccessfully, to speak to men under thirty [ie. youths & unmarried men] (using evidence from Xenophon,

Memorabilia 1.2.35) (<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/socrates/>). That Socrates chose to remain in Athens provides an interesting argument about his tacit support for the regime, even if he refused to partake in their violence. Waterfield (2009) suggest that he could have gone to Thebes which had taken many exiles and to be among Pythagoreans who included close associates.

Once democracy was restored in 404 after the violence of the Thirty, Athenians must have wondered why this had happened again and must have looked at influences on the ring-leaders – Alcibiades, Critias, and Charmides - all students of Socrates. Were his teachings responsible for the overthrow of the democracy? Was he was responsible for their actions? Many must have blamed Socrates' teaching and ideas --especially his expressions of disdain for the established constitution—as being at least partially responsible for the death and suffering during the tyranny. His criticisms may well have been tolerated and even admired by many in the past, but times had changed and based on such visceral evidence of these coups, his teaching and influence could scarcely be seen as harmless or eccentric. Instead with his criticisms, alternative ideas, powerful oratory skills and interlocations, 'Socrates--and his icy logic--came to be seen as a dangerous and corrupting influence, a breeder of tyrants and enemy of the common man' (Linder, 2002, <http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/socrates/socratesaccount.html>).

Socrates seems to have always spent time with the city youth. After democracy was restored in 403, and students again started flocking to Socrates, many Athenians must have feared that his influence and teaching might again inspire willful and violent youth to attempt to overthrow Democracy. However, even if citizens had wanted to bring charges against him they could not because Eucleides' amnesty of 403 meant that no one who committed a crime before or during the rule of the Thirty could be prosecuted. Any charges had to relate to the years after the amnesty – the four years prior to his trial. 'The final straw may well have been another antidemocratic uprising--this one unsuccessful--in 401. Athens finally had enough of "Socratified" youth.' (Linder, 2002, <http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/socrates/socratesaccount.html>). Furthermore, Linder considers it significant that 'the earliest surviving reference to the trial of Socrates that *does not come from one of his disciples*. In 345 B.C.E., the famous orator Aechines told a jury: "Men of Athens, you executed Socrates, the sophist, because he was clearly responsible for the education of Critias, one of the thirty anti-democratic leaders." (Linder, 2002, <http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/socrates/socratesaccount.html>)

Platos' *Apology* presents Socrates' reasons for his bad reputation but omits the political context. Socrates' defence is well known, so will only briefly be addressed here. Socrates argued that his reputation followed his actions from when he was a youth after a visit to the oracle at Delphi with Chaerephon who was told that no one is wiser than Socrates. Subsequently from his youth, Socrates' goal was to test the wisdom of politicians, poets, and theologians against his own wisdom, finding that 'In my investigation in the service of the god I found that those who had the highest reputation were nearly the most deficient, while those who were thought to be inferior were more knowledgeable' (*Apology*, 26). He then addresses the issue of corrupting youth which seems to be the heart of the charges that he corrupted youth arguing 'that no one would intentionally corrupt another person (because they stand to be harmed by him at a later date)' ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apology_\(Plato\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apology_(Plato))). Meletus (*Euthyphro* 3c-d) claimed there were two forms of irreverence: 'Socrates did not believe in the gods of the Athenians (indeed, he had said on many occasions that the gods do not lie or do other wicked things, whereas the Olympian gods of the poets and the city were quarrelsome and vindictive); Socrates introduced new divinities (indeed, he insisted that his *daimonion* had spoken to him since childhood)' (Nail, 2009, <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/socrates/>). In the *Apology*, Socrates turned the tables, arguing that if he is convicted, it will be because Aristophanes' play *The Clouds* – [produced approximately 24 years earlier mocked Socrates] corrupted the minds of his accusers when they were young.

The case of Socrates is still contentious many years later, but rather than simply focus on his philosophy and defence, historicizing and contextualizing gives us a more nuanced picture of the social and political fabric of Athens at the time when it finally had enough of this 70 year old ‘gad-fly’ whose still poses a dilemma for us today. With such superb oratory skills couldn’t he have easily swayed the jury and defeated his accusers? Why did he taunt his accusers? Why did he not take advantage of opportunities to escape – as many expected and encouraged him to do? At age 70, probably near the end of his lifetime, had he had enough of living, was he becoming infirm? Was this an early form of ‘suicide by cop’? Did he know that Plato would promote his ideas? ...

Education and corrupting youth

The notion of free speech is enshrined in many democracies, but may have limitations when it comes to lying – to slander, libel, defamation and hate speech.

These practices linking truth-telling and education are still operative in shaping our contemporary subjectivities, thus they are relevant in understanding the exercise of power and control and of contemporary citizenship especially in situations where there is some risk for a person in telling the truth to a superior – a case of *parrhesia* - that clearly can occur in schools, in the student-teacher relationship and which certainly occurred for some UK youth in their anti- Iraq war activities in 2003 and for whistle-blowers (see Besley, 2006).

Concern about the type of education and the ability of teachers to influence, indoctrinate or corrupt youth have by no means dissipated over time. In the West, the 1950s up until the collapse of the Soviet Union, fears of indoctrination were related to the Cold War era especially about communism and Marxism. Since 9/11, the fear has primarily related to Islamic fundamentalism and terrorism, to the way some youth and young adults have been radicalised by Islamic extremism to undertake suicide bombing missions. Consequently several countries have made efforts to control this as the following four exemplars from Austria, Kenya, Saudi Arabia and UK indicate.

In February 2009, the Austrian education ministry began ‘implementing measures against extremist Muslim educators’ when it withdrew ‘the teaching licence of an anti-Semitic Islam religion teacher’. Austria had become alarmed at the state of religious education now that it has approximately 400,000 Muslims – almost 5% of the population (mostly from Turkey or the former Yugoslavia) and a study in January 2009 found that 21.9 per cent of them opposed democracy on religious grounds. ‘The Minister of Education [Claudia Schmied] made it clear that Muslim community must revoke teaching licences to those "who have proved to disassociate themselves from democratic values or human rights. Religious education has its limits where the constitution, democracy and the rule of law are affected," (12 Feb 2009, Earth Times, <http://www.earthtimes.org/articles/news/255471,austria-starts-to-crack-down-on-extremist-islam-teachers.html>)

Sudarsan Raghavan in *The Washington Post* on August 22, 2010, reports that ‘In Kenya's capital, Somali immigrant neighborhood is incubator for jihad.’ The report elaborates how moderate Islamic Imams are fearful at the inroads being made by extremist groups in schools and mosques in Nairobi’s Eastleigh neighborhood, with a large Somali immigrant community that has lived peacefully in the predominantly Christian country.

Moderate imams now compete with hard-line preachers pushing a strict interpretation of Islam. Bookstores sell anti-Western literature. Residents speak fearfully of militant spies, and children like Ahmed are taught to praise al-Shabab, an al-Qaida-linked militia, for waging jihad in Somalia against the U.S.-backed government. It has also emerged as a micro-battlefield in the war on terrorism, attracting American funds.

This year, the United States has allocated \$96,000 for job creation, education and tolerance programs, mostly directed at youth, to bolster moderate views of Islam in Eastleigh. (Raghavan, 2010. <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/08/21/AR2010082102682.html>)

The UK has a large Muslim population who are peaceful and law abiding. However following terrorist attacks in London in July 2005 & Glasgow in 2007, serious concerns were expressed about threats from the teachings of several extremist Islamic organizations including al-Muhajiroun and Hizb-ut-Tahrir an Islamic organization promoting an Islamic Caliphate system that is dictatorial, non democratic, excludes non-muslims, and actions Sharia law (for details see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hizb_ut-Tahrir; <http://www.hizb.org.uk/>).

It is not only western democracies that are concerned about the influence of teachers inciting youth to violence, Saudi Arabia has also moved on teachers it deems 'extremists' associated with Al-Qaeda who would overthrow the monarchy. In 2010, both *Gulf News* and the *Saudi Gazette* reported that 'Saudi Arabia moved more than 2,000 teachers who tried to teach students about al-Qaeda into administrative positions over the past two years' (July 15 2010, *Gulf News*, http://www.al-shorfa.com/cocoon/meii/xhtml/en_GB/newsbriefs/meii/newsbriefs/2010/07/15/newsbrief-01). On Sept 17, 2010, The *Saudi Gazette* elaborated further with Al-Hadlaq saying they had been promoting 'extremist ideology' (Al-Awwad, September 07, 2010, <http://www.saudigazette.com.sa/index.cfm?method=home.regcon&contentID=2010071377917>).

These contemporary exemplars indicate how governments still struggle to deal with issues of radicalisation and violence. They highlight the ongoing concerns with indoctrination of youth by teachers, be they religious and/ or politically motivated. They highlight that in a democracy free-speech is acceptable, but not the advocacy of violence. From Ancient Athens to today, the power of teaching, of ideas and how these can influence and corrupt youth remain critical issues for societies to understand and address. While it may be that some societies themselves are corrupt and oppressive and stand to be changed or overthrown, the democratic way is not by violent revolution, but by an electoral ballot. Clearly there is evidence that education and persuasive teachers can influence youth in ways that society does not deem to be for the better, but in ways that go against its values and cherished ideals.

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