

Some further comments concerning Mr. Alec Rawls's  
"Islamic and jihadist design features of the Crescent/Bowl of Embrace."

by

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## **Introduction**

Original arguments put forth by Mr. Rawls fail to prove his contentions. In part, his logic is flawed, being replete with logical fallacies that are based mostly on emotional statements. He even admits in *Crescent of Betrayal* (2007) that he "bullies the girls, and a lot of the boys too" (p. 160) to get some of his outcomes. He offers a single arithmetic calculation, which mathematically does not constitute a proof, rendering his original mathematical argument unconvincing. Because Mr. Rawls posits some questionable claims, the burden of proof clearly lies with him.

Nevertheless, at the time my original review of documents produced by Mr. Rawls was completed (January 23, 2007), qibla locators available on the world wide web had gone unnoticed by me as well as others (although some version of it seems to have existed as early as April 27, 2006, if not earlier). I discovered them during the first part of September 2007, about the same time that one of Mr. Rawls peers also discovered one of them (see <http://caosblog.com/6042>); of note is that now the results obtained with a qibla locator are being misrepresented as though they are the original calculations put forth by Mr. Rawls.

One point of confusion seems to be the latitude and longitude coordinates to use in the calculation of the Mecca direction put forth by Mr. Rawls: Somerset (40.02, -79.09; suggested by <http://caosblog.com/6042>; obtained from <http://forecast.weather.gov/MapClick.php?CityName=Somerset&state=PA&site=CTP&textField1=40.005&textField2=-79.0783>), yielding 55.12°; the crash site (40.052, -78.8963; reported in <http://caosblog.com/6042>), yielding 55.25°; and, the monument site (38.88 -77.03; from [http://errortheory.blogspot.com/2007\\_08\\_01\\_archive.html](http://errortheory.blogspot.com/2007_08_01_archive.html)), yielding 56.62°. (NOTE: these calculations were made with the qibla locator available at <http://www.islamicfinder.org/sunQiblah.php?city=&state=&zipcode=&country=&latitude=40.052&longitude=-78.8963&timezone=-5&qiblahMonth=10&qiblahYear=2007>). The website <http://www.qiblalocator.com/> (mentioned in <http://caosblog.com/6042>) requires the use of a zip code (Somerset has two), which constitutes perhaps too coarse a geographic resolution: 15501 yields 55.04°, whereas 15510 yields 55.11°. Thus there is at least a 1.58° range resulting from the various coordinates being used. I also note that some liberty has been taken in figures appearing in the <http://caosblog.com/6042> piece concerning the connection of the two points to which the Mecca direction is to be perpendicular.

This new evidence gives much more credence to Mr. Rawls's Mecca direction contention. It not only confirms his arithmetic (as I did), but it also furnishes a result closer to being unique; one remaining question concerns whether or not Muslim clerics accept the web-based qibla locator results. How this Mecca-direction calculation interfaces with the memorial seems somewhat arbitrary, as indicated by a figure appearing in <http://caosblog.com/6042>.

### **Meaningfulness of Mr. Rawls's original mathematical analysis**

A numerical calculation does not constitute a mathematical proof. A proof is characterized by uniqueness coupled with compelling logic. A good illustration of this situation is the Riemann Hypothesis, for which to date calculations confirm that the first ten trillion of the zeta function roots lie on the 0.5 critical strip. But, as mathematicians point out, these ten trillion calculations do not prove the hypothesis.

Mr. Rawls initially only offered a necessary condition—his calculation needed to be correct—failing also to furnish the accompanying sufficient conditions. The qibla locators move him a substantial step closer to this end.

### **Concluding Comments**

In my opinion, Mr. Rawls now may well have more credible evidence supporting his Mecca-direction claim; how the line is superimposed on the monument becomes the critical issue. But his remaining arguments continue to be weak. And, his tactics continue to exploit emotions. For example, in *Crescent of Betrayal*, I am unclear why Mr. Rawls suggests that I am a religious expert consulted about the controversy (p. 161). Furthermore, his arguments are not bolstered by him calling me an idiot (p. 160), and stating that I am lying (p. 160), I am a moral imbecile (p. 160), and that I am a stinker (p. 160). Again, these forms of argument are not based on logic, and neither is bullying: “But Paula could not be so easily bullied into doing ...” (p. 126) and “I hate to admit that I would later bully both of them” (p. 159).

As an aside, I am unclear why I have been portrayed in a number of reports as being commissioned by the *Greensburg Tribune Review* or the families of the victims. I have not presented myself as such in any conversations. In addition, please note that Drancy was misspelled as Darcey in some of my original discussions (see Addendum).

Finally, I still believe that the mathematics employed by Mr. Rawls does not bolster a case for a conspiracy, oversight or insensitivity.

### **Addendum to original commentaries**

Some of my earlier narratives mention the Nazi concentration camp in Drancy, France, mistakenly presenting its spelling as Darcey. Unfortunately, my MSWord program automatically changed Drancy to Darcey, a typographical change that went undetected by me. The listing of Drancy can be verified at

<http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Holocaust/cclist.html>

The locational information for Drancy can be obtained from

<http://www.gaisma.com/en/location/drancy.html>