

Islam and Terrorism

- SRA-211, Threat of Terrorism and Crime
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Problematic Truths

- “Islam is not a religion of pacifists” –Ayatollah Khomeini
- “those who would dare do such dastardly acts claim our faith [Islam] – Izak-El M. Pasha, NYPD Muslim chaplain on 9/11
- “Islam is being taken over by a small poisonous element, people who advocate cruel attitudes toward women, education, the economy and modern life in general. I have seen this happen in India...” –Fareed Zakaria



vids

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Oxwyvd-MJ5Y&list=PL6C8oBFE4637541Eo>

From Zenith to Nadir: A brief history

- **LONGEVITY** - Islam was humanity's showcase for one thousand years.
- **POWERFUL** - The treaty of Karlowitz in 1699 which signaled the beginning of the Ottoman Empire, an empire that lasted longer than the roman empire.
- **SMART** - They were responsible for some of the greatest scientific, philosophical and artistic achievements up to that point in history.
- **It is important not to confuse the history of Islam with the radical Muslims of today.**

Ancient History of Islam

- Baghdad had universities and carefully planned streets complete with street lights
- Islam was once a rich, tolerant and dominant cultural empire and there is hope for a rebirth if the radicals can be subverted
- This chapter is very much about the systemic problems
- Mongols conquering of Baghdad marked the end of the Arab empire. The end of the Arab empire had nothing to do with the West
- Ottoman Empire(Turkey) took over leadership of Islam from the Arabs, but it was dissolved after WW1

Ancient History of Islam

- 700-1700AD-Islamic empire stretched from France to China
- In 1258 Mongols conquered Baghdad marking the end of the Arab empire.
- The end of the Arab empire had nothing to do with the West
- Ottoman Empire(Turkey) took over leadership of Islam from the Arabs, but it was dissolved after WW1
- Some Arabs and followers of Islam maintain a deep resentment because of this

History of Islam

- Radical Islam is one element of Islam
- Not all Muslims are Arab; not all Arabs are Muslim
 - EXAMPLE - Pakistan and Indonesia are neither in the Middle East nor are they Arab, but they both have large Muslim populations
 - Iran is an Islamic Republic, but its Arab population is only about 2-3%. Most of the population is defined as Persian
- Arab lands are the center of the Islamic world
- Islam is the dominate Arab religion
- Arab issues tend to dominate Islam

Arabs and Muslims: Often the same but not always


- Easy to confuse
- Global Islam are Muslims.
- Global Islam comes from the Arabs.
- The Koran was Arabic.
- Understanding the Arab factor and Islam associated terrorism will be crucial for understanding the phenomenon.

Sunni versus Shi'i(Shiite)

- 90% of Muslims are Sunni
- Islam split in 680AD
- Sunnis believe that any Muslim can become caliph
- Shi'i Muslims believe that only descendants of Muhammad can lead the Muslim community
- Sunnis and Shi'i Muslims despise each other

Sunni versus Shi'i(Shiite)

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5KLvjs7Yrtw>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=veMFCFyOwFI>



Read what do you think? Pg 139

Decline of Islam

- The modern Middle East is violent, poor, oppressed, backward and angry
- Been in decline for hundreds of years
- Seems to be a source of anger for many of Islam's supporters
- Compare Islam to Israel, which has no oil and is one of the smallest countries in the Middle East and yet is a world economic and science leader

Islam and the Modern World

- An understanding of the issues in the Arab lands is critical to understand Islam
- **Little social, political, economic or scientific development**
- Arab writers cite three factors at the root of Arab backwardness
 - Lack of freedom
 - Lack of empowerment for women
 - Lack of knowledge
- Arab nations lag the rest of the world in virtually every measure
- Over 20% of the population is illiterate
- called it a “trust fund mentality.”

Islam and Education

- Half of all women in the Arab world are illiterate, which forfeits a massive amount of potential
- 25% of college graduates leave
- Arab research and science lags the rest of the world
- Research in advanced fields is non-existent

Islam and Science

- “Muslim contributions to pure and applied science-measured in terms of discoveries, publications, patents and processes—are marginal...”
- The harsh truth is that science and Islam parted ways many centuries ago.” –Perez Hoodbnoy, Pakistani professor

Islam and Science..to make matters worse

- Islam actively discourages science
- This failure of religion is not unique
- EXAMPLE - Galileo- held the opinions that the Sun lies motionless at the center of the universe, that the Earth is not at its center and moves, and that one may hold and defend an opinion as probable after it has been declared contrary to Holy Scripture." Spent the remaining 9 years of his life living under house arrest
- Even in Western culture there are those who reject obvious science to support creationism, but our culture broke free of Galileo's bonds

Arab Governments

- NOT HELPING
- The current tyranny of most Arabs live under is not conducive to free thinking, free markets, and economic prosperity

Why Terrorism?

- The question is how does all of this lead to terrorism
- Without question, most terrorists are Muslim
- How and why have all of these factors lead to Islamic terrorism?

Islam and Terrorism

- Keep this question in mind.
- Has Islam been hijacked by a small group, or is there something that goes deeper that enables the small group?
- Too often the problem is oversimplified.
- Truth is Islam is a peaceful religion and a small group of people subverts its basic good
- Can this be the case?
- It is almost inescapable that systemic problems within Islam enable the small group?

Islam and Terrorism

- Three factors are responsible for the rise of Islamic terrorism
 - Spread of Wahhabism
 - Iranian Revolution in 1979
 - Advent of technology

Wahhabism

- Began 250 years ago in Saudi Arabia
- Sub group of Sunni Islam
- State religion of Saudi Arabia
- Irrelevant until oil
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=staMI7DoO-E>

Wahhabism

- Al-Wahhab preached a very strict version of Islam in the area of Saudi Arabia; subgroup of Sunni Islam
- Probably nothing would have come of it except that he obtained the support of Muhammad ibn Sa'ud who was an ancestor of Abdul Aziz Saud who established Saudi Arabia after WW1
- Saudi Arabia is dedicated to exporting Islam all over the world, and what form of Islam do they export??? Wahhabism.
- Wahhabi's are building mosques all over the world, including 80% of the mosques in the US
- Supported with lots of Saudi money

Wahhabi Philosophy

- Religious obligation to hate Christians and Jews
- 911 - 14 of 19 hijackers were Saudi's
- Treat democratic societies with contempt
- Believers in the US are in hostile territory
- Non Wahhabi Muslims are infidels
- Kill adulterous Muslims and take their money
- Kill anyone leaving Islam
- Veil and separate Muslim women from men

Wahhabi Philosophy

- SO.....
- Very clear link between Wahhabism and increase in anti-Western conduct
- Confrontational by nature
- Associated with a wealthy country that has money to spend, Saudi Arabia
- There are more human and tolerant forms of Islam, and if this is the one that gains traction, problems will continue

Iranian Revolution

- February 1979
- Shah was deposed and replaced by Ayatollah Khomeini
- Iran traded a secular dictatorship for theocratic one
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LVrtd7Ltk-4>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P82j9op7hYc>

Iranian Practices – not good

- Iran makes the Sunni countries nervous, very nervous
- Iran expressly uses terrorism to support foreign policy objectives
- Dedicated to advancing Islam throughout the world
- Consistent sponsorship of political violence outside of its borders to advance foreign policy goals

Iranian Practices – not good

- Relentless generation of anti-Western sentiments among Muslims
- The government still stages demonstrations where the crowd chants "Death to America." and the government controlled media consistently repeats these messages
- They created, manage and financially support Hezbollah and Palestinian Islamic Jihad

Iran as a Nuclear Threat

- This game of cat and mouse is working very well and buying time quite effectively for Iran
- **Problem on multiple levels**
- The most obvious is the possibility that they will use the weapons or supply them to someone else to use
- Iran will become completely unmanageable if they have nuclear weapons.
- How will we stop them from doing what they want to do if they have nukes pointed at other nations?
- Iranian missiles could hit other Middle Eastern nations, Israel and even Europe
- Will create a nuclear arms race between Sunni's and Shiites???

Iran as a Nuclear Threat

- Given their history, what is likely to happen?
- Can we realistically expect all of those countries to behave responsibly with these weapons?
- What is Iran likely to do?
- China and Russia are supporting Iran and making it difficult to do anything

What Iran Says

- **These statements create religious justification for using nuclear weapons**
 - "Application of an atomic bomb would not leave anything in Israel, but the same thing would just produce minor damages in the Muslim world." -Former Iranian President Rafsanjani
 - "It is permissible to make use of these weapons." -Iranian cleric Mohsen Gharavian
 - Israel will be wiped off the face of the earth –President Ahmadinejad
 - A world without the United States-President Ahmadinejad

Arabs and the Media

- Freedom in the Arab world is limited
- Most of the information in the Middle East is biased
- This biased news is often accepted as fact
- This is not terribly surprising given the educational level in the Arab world.
- Less educated people are not very effective at sorting truth from bias

News Sources

- Newspapers, magazines and television have historically been government controlled
- Privately owned news sources are emerging
- Cell phones and the Internet have opened up communications even more **GOOD THING?**
- Seems to have promoted radicalization rather than diffusing it

News Sources

- As the situation in Libya has deteriorated, the government has cut off access to cell systems and the Internet
- While freedom of the press has generally proved beneficial in most of the world, it also brought problems in the Arab world
- It has promoted even more radical behavior
- Why might that be?

al Jazeera

- al Jazeera's content and presentation caters to the beliefs of Arabs and Arab nationalism
- The content is alleged to be rabble rousing incitement full of radical propaganda.
- al Jazeera has consistently rejected these accusations
- They have created considerably less journalistic integrity and crowd pleasing anti-Western bias is pervasive

Sample al Jazeera Stories

- <http://youtube.com/watch?v=-HQOo774lx4>
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PQEZ2ad8z2o&NR=1>

Communication and Governments

- **More problems...**
- Unlikely to be a force for moderation in the Middle East
- Effectively controlled by governments, and as a result, may feed Muslim rage rather than moderate it
- “Those looking for the Internet and innovative information technology to be the medium for a progressive new moderate trend in the Middle East misread the current radical reality in the region.”

Afghanistan

- In 1979 the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan and set up a puppet government
- This invasion energized political Islam and resulted in a wave of support for the Afghan resistance
- The Soviet Union withdrew in 1989, but this was the beginning, not the end
- The purpose of the invasion was to create a buffer against radical Islam between countries inside the Soviet Union and the Arab world
- Interesting note - The United States provided substantial financial and military support to the Islamic insurgents

Results of Afghanistan

- Islamists were inspired by this victory
- Islam then directed their attention to the United States
- Now they were armed with an abundance of American supplied weapons
- Whatever goodwill the US had with them was gone
- Afghanistan may have become the catalyst for world wide jihad

Islamist Goals

- Worldwide jihad
- Replace all Middle East governments with an Islamic caliphate
- Destruction of Israel
- Recapture areas that were once Muslim

Evidence of Goals

- Hamas has demanded that portions of Spain be returned to Muslim control
- Yousef Al-Qaradhwai, president of the International Association of Islamic Scholars stated, "Islam must return to Europe as the conqueror."
- Nasir bin Hamad Al Fahd, a senior cleric from Saudi Arabia advocated the use of nuclear weapons
- Al Fahd was promptly arrested by the Saudis and recanted his fatwa several months later. He remains in jail, but many Muslims view him as a martyr.

The Difficulty

- It should be clear that radical Islamist thinking does not represent the thinking of most Muslims
- However, Islamists do represent a threat to mainstream Islamic culture and philosophy
- The threat and systemic problems cannot be dismissed.
- Islam has to decide what it wants to be

Islamofascism

- Disturbing parallels between Islamists and fascists
 - Both are radical and push for mobilization of the masses
 - Find enemies within and without to direct their energies, pushing the population into a nationalistic frenzy
 - Inevitably, this results in a violent eruption of violence in the form of repression, terrorism, and outright war

Islamofascism is Not New

- In 1963, Manfred Halpern identified parallels between radical Islam and fascism
- "The neo-Islamic totalitarian movements are essentially fascist movements.
- They concentrate on mobilizing passion and violence to enlarge the power of their charismatic leader and the solidarity of their movement.
- They entirely deny individual and social freedom...[they] repress all free critical analysis of either past roots or present problems."
- This is classic WW2 fascism

Immigrants Views

- Decades of liberal immigration policies that allows Muslims into essentially Christian Europe are being reciprocated with hatred- **today's problems**
- Many immigrants and their descendants hate the countries that gave them the opportunity for a better life **WHY?**

Immigrants Views

- Represents a nearly incomprehensible paradox
- These people left their home countries to escape persecution, tyranny and poverty, and when given new opportunities, seek instead to turn their new societies into precisely what they left in the Middle East

The Danish Cartoons

- In December of 2005, a Danish newspaper published 12 cartoons with images of Muhammad
- Problem is images of Muhammad are prohibited by Islamic law; however, there are thousands of images of Muhammad in books by and for Muslims
- The images were political humor
- While some Muslim Danes were offended, for the most part this was ignored
- Until several Danish Muslims travelled to an Organization of the Islamic Conference meeting in Mecca

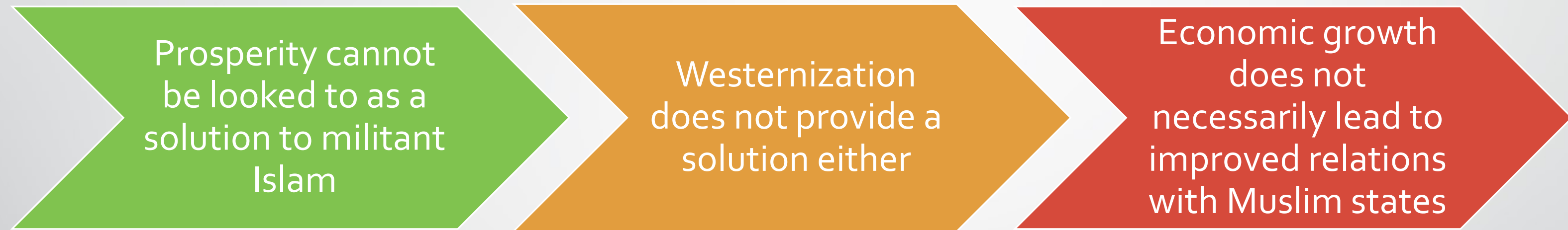


The Danish Cartoons

- Violent and bloody riots erupted across the Middle East directed at Denmark and the West in general. Mobs attacked embassies and burned buildings. Roughly a hundred protesters were killed
- What really happened?
- Arab regimes which generally brutalize their own populations likely orchestrated the events
- Many of the demonstrations took place in areas where the regimes allow no demonstrations
- The Arab regimes fired the people up and then killed them in an effort to undermine the West
- Iran's supreme leader, incidentally, blamed the Jews.

Poverty and Islam

- Daniel Pipes examined the possibility that poverty breeds terrorism
- Muslim terrorists are typically well educated middle class individuals, and most scholars agree that Islamist terrorism is not the result of poverty



Pipes Conclusions

So if none of that will work, which is arguable, what will work???

