

Mirage of Moderate Islam

“Islam does not have a separation of Mosque and State, because there is really no state, only the mosque.”

Travellers across the vast stretches of the Arabian desert have been known to get lost and in their thirst and exhaustion hallucinate oases with palm trees and flowing water. Western policymakers lost in the vast stretches of madness that define the Muslim world are even more wont to hallucinate the oasis of a moderate Islam to take refuge in. Whether you're dying for a drink or a way to reaffirm your reality, a mirage is sometimes the only way you can find it.

Moderate Islam is a mirage, a projection by desperate Westerners of their own values and culture, on an entirely different religion and culture. It is a mirage that many Muslims are eager to uphold, in the same way that desert merchants might sell goblets and bowls of sand to passing travellers foolish enough to confuse water with dust. And like travelers who think they are drinking water, when they are actually swallowing sand, it is a deception that will eventually kill the deceived.

When the Western cultural elite look at Islam, they see what they have to see to avoid falling into crisis mode. Like the traveller who would rather choke on sand, than face up to the fact that he is lost in a desert, they would rather keep most things as they are, even at the cost of the extinction of the nations they preside over, than confront the full scope of the threat surrounding them. A threat that they had a hand in nurturing and feeding in the name of goals that seemed to make sense at the time.

It is easier to segregate a “Bad Islam” composed of a tiny minority of extremists from the generally “Good Islam” of the rulers of the Muslim world and the waves of Muslim immigrants

washing up on their shores. [That] this segregation has no objective reality, and is nothing but a psychological defence mechanism against experiencing the full reality of a disaster. From the Titanic to World War II, there are numerous similar situations in which the people in charge chose to ignore a growing crisis at a horrific cost.

The two primary paradigms through which Western political elites see Islam, is that of tyranny on the right, and the evils of Western foreign policy on the left. Bush employed the former when he defined the problem as being one of tyranny, rather than Islam. Having defined the problem in terms of a majority of "Good Muslims" oppressed by "Bad Tyrants", Bush tried to liberate the former from the latter, only to discover that there was a good deal of overlap between the two. Under Obama, we have seen the left implement its own construct of Islam, as popular resistance movements against colonial oppression, who are reacting to the evils of American foreign policy. This knee jerk Marxist formula goes one worse than the Bush Administration by defining terrorists as "Good Muslims" and moderates as "Yankee Puppets".

But the only item of true significance to emerge from the contrast of these world views, is the revelation that American political leaders from both sides of the spectrum still view Islam in terms of the old Cold War struggle between Communism and Capitalism. Like many generals who fight every war in terms of the last war, the political leaders of the West still see Islam in Cold War colors, which prevents from seeing it for what it is. While Islam shares some common denominators with Communism, as well as Nazism, it is also a quite different entity than either one. For one thing it is not Western in any sense of the word. It does not rely on a centralized leadership. It has had over a thousand years to seep into the culture of the regions it has conquered. That has made Islam into an identity in a much more profound way, than Adolf or Vladimir could have ever managed with their own

crack pottery.

Islam predates the political movements such as Communism and Nazism that arose to fill a vacuum of faith in a secularizing West with dreams of racial and economic utopias. It is the original sin of the East, a ruthless religion based on stolen beliefs and stolen property, its moment of religious transcendence was not that of the law or the spirit, but the sight of tribal rivalries uniting under a single green banner.

The Banner of Islam.

The powerful appeal of Islam has been rooted in that dream of unity, an idea that is hard for more civilized peoples to understand because they take unity for granted. Yet any European need only turn to the fierce struggle for an independent and united German nation in the 19th century, or for an independent and united Italy around the same time. An eventual outcome in which both nations ruled by nationalist regimes faced off together against England and France during WWII could be traced back to that false sense of destiny which papered over national insecurities with blood.

But nationalism requires meaningful national identities, while the Muslim world only has artificial borders drawn by colonial administrations, differences in Arabic slang and bitter familial rivalries. Despite the best efforts of Arab Socialist autocrats like Gamal Abdel Nasser or Saddam Hussein, the vaunted unity of the Arab nation failed to materialise. While Nasser admired Hitler and Hussein admired Stalin, neither was able to turn their respective countries into anything even as barely functional as Nazi Germany or Soviet Russia. Instead Nasser got by on Soviet aid and Saddam Hussein on oil money.

Glance at a map, and you will see the Muslim world defined in terms of borders and politicians, but as Allied troops along the Afghan-Pak border are discovering, the actual Muslims on the ground define themselves in terms of tribe and family, not

nation. The Muslim world is a hodgepodge of dispossessed ethnic groups crammed into artificial nation states created by the UK and the UN. Nation states that have a vote at the UN, an embassy off Turtle Bay, and little tangible reality.

If that sounds far fetched, consider that there is an actual debate among foreign policy experts over who really runs Pakistan. Many European observers of Turkey have a similar debate going there as well. Most of the Muslim world is run by families, like the rulers of Saudi Arabia and the UAE. Some are run by dictators who took part in military coups and hold power using the military and the secret police. These are the only forms of stable government in the Muslim world that matter.

Without a dictator or a powerful ruling family, or clique of them, civil war follows. Yemen has been torn apart by such tribal civil wars for a long time, the latest phase of the war is being conducted with the participation of Al Qaeda. Anwar Al-Awlaki, the infamous Imam, did not join Al Qaeda merely out of anger or ideology, he did it because his Awlaki family is allied with the local Yemeni Al Qaeda. Think about that for a moment, and you begin to see the byzantine maze of loyalties and alliances in the vast desert of the Muslim world.

Empires and kingdoms combined church and state in order to insure that there would be no contradiction between religion and the authorities, that the will of the king would also be the will of god. Mohammed tried to make the same leap in the multicultural environs of Mecca, eliminating all religions, but the one he had newly created in order to glue together the warring families and tribes. That act was and is the essential basis of Islam. Everything else is borrowed glamor from the other religions that he had subjugated and destroyed to make way for Islam.

For Muslims that initial bloody butchery is the only true act of religious significance that matters. Because for a brief shining moment, the internecine quarrels were brutally

suppressed, and thousands of backstabbing desert tribesmen came to see themselves as something larger and greater. Of course that false unity collapsed back into warring families and tribes. Which has made it all the more of an unattainable dream. It is why Jihad is the ultimate religious act for a Muslim, and why the Caliphate is the great religious goal.

To Muslims, Islam is a Perfect Form of Global Unity that Must Be Achieved at Any Cost

In the face of this understanding, any talk of a moderate Islam is nothing but a farce. To Muslims, Islam is what the Thousand Year Reich was to Nazis and a United World is to Socialists. A perfect form of global unity that must be achieved at any cost.

A moderate Muslim might pursue such a goal "peacefully" through Dawa or missionary work, but successful Muslim mass conversions have taken place either directly or indirectly through the sword. Even Muslim missionary successes in the West take place in the context of Muslim terrorism. There is no Islam without the sword, because it has no meaning or identity without violence. A non-violent Islam is nothing but a collection of tribal mores and borrowed religious ideas. It quickly recedes to the secular and the cultural, driving the Islamists to revive its core ethos through acts of violence and terror.

This is what Western political and cultural leaders do not understand. The Right is correct that Islam like Communism can be weakened by capitalism, but it cannot be destroyed that way. Because Islam is not incompatible with business, it originated among merchants after all. The fruits of capitalism can help secularize Islam, but not without empowering the very same type of merchants who helped create it. That is why American capitalism has helped create the terrorist threat by enriching the new rulers of Mecca, the House of Saud, which has expanded its own power by funding a new Islamic invasion

against its best customers in the West. And so history repeats itself again.

Islamists Have Shown They Can Quite Effectively Exploit Capitalism and Democracy to Further Their Aims

Capitalism brought down the Soviet Union, but it could not give Russians a meaningful identity. Instead it financed the rise of a new Russian totalitarian regime of KGB bosses and oligarchs who had grown wealthy on the profits from Western business. Even Communist China has shown that it can incorporate Capitalism and only become more of a threat by doing so. The fundamental error conservative American political leaders made was to assume that Capitalism and Democracy were absolute forms of good, in reality they're simply tools and prisms which different cultures use to express their potential in different ways. The Bush Administration showed the limits of applying Cold War rhetoric to Islamic realities. Or, treating 1.5 billion Muslims as the demographic equivalent of 1500 nuclear bombs, without ever admitting the attitude behind the diplomacy.

The Left however is even more wrong, falling back on its old habit of treating all enemies as resistance movements against capitalism, globalism and all the isms that they associate with First World nation states. If the Right is still echoing Ronald Reagan, the Left is still stuck on the Philippine–American War of the 19th century. And while the Right has shown that it can learn, the Left has only shown that it can shout the same self-destructive thing even louder. The Obama Administration is an exercise in national self-hatred. A ritual purging for the sins of Western success similar to an anorexic vomiting after every meal.

If the Right has some ideas for dealing with Islam, the Left has decided that Islam is right. There is no logic behind this, but that of "The enemy of my enemy is my friend", along

with healthy doses of orientalism and the fetishisation of the Noble Savage.

The Chief Cause of Islamic Outrage, is that these Displays of Anger Allow Muslims to Feel a Sense of Power

American foreign policy triggers Muslim rage, as do cartoons in Europe, Jewish housing in Israel, Buddhist statues in Afghanistan, British female tourists in Dubai, a teddy named Mohammed in Sudan, and countless other "irritations". But none of these excuses are the real cause. The chief cause of Islamic outrage, is that these displays of anger allow Muslims to feel a sense of power. Anger empowers small men, whether they are beating their wives or blowing themselves up in cafes. The excuses, "She made do it", "She shouldn't have walked in front of the TV" or "She should have had dinner ready", are just that. Excuses. The real cause is the sense of power that comes with the anger. The sense of suddenly being larger than life. That anger is its own cause and its own reward. And that is what Islam gives to the Muslim. The Jihad. The Caliphate. Anger in the name of Allah.

In America, Democratic and Republican leaders primarily differ on how tiny that "tiny minority of extremists" really is, and who's to blame for their extremism. The ugly reality that their entire view of Islam is based on a mirage, is not something they are willing to accept. But to talk of the Taliban or Al Qaeda without speaking of Islam, is as absurd as discussing the [Russian] Gulags without mentioning Communism. It means that not only can the problem never be solved, but it can never even be addressed. Because we have never stated the cause.

Instead we try to fight Islamic terrorism by cultivating alliances among the constantly churning factions of governments, militias, warlords and tribal elders, hoping to use them—only to be used as pawns in their own games instead. That is what happened in Afghanistan and Iraq. It has happened

among the Palestinian Arabs and the Yemeni government, in Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, and anywhere else we try to apply Western policy making.

Islam Does Not Have a Separation of Mosque and State, Because There is Really No State, Only the Mosque

The Muslim world has technology, but no civilization. Western nations have given to the Islamic East, the appearance of nationhood and the fruits of industry, without ever acknowledging that they were tossing pearls before swine. A pig wearing a pearl necklace is still a member of the porcine family. Only now it is a well-dressed pig. We have dressed up the Muslim world, but underneath it is not so different from the warring tribes that Mohammed tried to glue together with Islam. And that is why Islam retains the power that it does. Islam does not have a separation of Mosque and State, because there is really no state, only the mosque. The great dream of over a millennium of a transcendent global Muslim unity. A Great Leap Forward across the chasm of tribal savagery and into a Caliphate, which will undo all the achievements of all other peoples, and demonstrate once and for all that the Muslim is supreme over all the rest of the world.

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