

# Islam: What Is To Be Done?

by G. Murphy Donovan (March 2016)



Mohammed's Kaaba stone in art

Yes, Islam! The politics and theology of Muslims is now the dominant source of global instability; although any separation of the two is [moot](#) in most nations with an Islamic majority. This is not to discount criminals, militants, extremists, terrorists, various Muslim small wars/insurgencies, or even “nefarious characters” and “lone wolves.” All of these euphemisms are symptoms; unfortunately, now also doing service as rhetorical burkas for metastasizing religious instability, a theopolitical movement of global dimensions. Call it Islamism, if a short hand is necessary.

Indeed, a latter day Muslim crusade is underway. Religious imperialism is now an existential threat across the autocratic *Ummah* and the republican West. If we can borrow the Huntington [prophecy](#), the future is one of cultural conflict – between “the West and the rest.” The secular world is at war with irredentist theocracy.

China is still a bit of a clinker as its brand of command mercantilism is the ingénue polity of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Neither the West nor the Chinese have much experience with capital communism, so the best that can be said of Beijing at the moment is that the jury is still out. Nonetheless, the Chinese, like Russians, have their theocratic insurgents too – and few illusions about tolerance in the name of religious [idolatry](#).



Romancing the stone in modern Mecca

A few Muslim nations are “secular” in the same sense that the Democratic Republic of Congo is democratic or republican. National adjectives might be harmless for true republics, but for most of the contemporary Muslim world, the adjective “Islamic” is deadly serious. Just ask any resident minority, Jew, woman, apostate, or visible [infidel](#). Tolerance is a national value for Islam only where Muslims are a voting minority.

Compassion in Islam is a one-way street too. While the West is awash in Muslim “refugees” and moral “obligations,” few migrants will find refuge in affluent Arabia or the affluent Muslim Far East. What the West calls humanitarian migration, *Ummah* imperialists probably see as missionary economy of force. Humanitarian values in the *Ummah* are a very selective and sometime thing.

If the non-Muslim world is to think of Islam as a morally equivalent ideology, then Muslims should reasonably be expected to behave at least as well as Anglicans. Islamic Immigration now serves three masters: religious proselyting, growing constituencies in social democracies, and terror cells when necessary. Votes and the dole are the most insidious 5<sup>th</sup> columns. The clear and present [dangers](#) of open borders cannot be obscured by humanitarian absurdities.

And with migration, the vector of empire is reversed. The irredentist now colonizes the advanced. Backwards is the new forward. The imperial Muslim refugee [serves](#) the ambitions of fascist and passive aggressive Islam alike. Demographic tsunamis augment the [mythical](#) “moderate Muslim majority” as well.

Contemporary Islamofascism has its roots in Arabia and Egypt; the same cultures that spawned the original crusading Mohammadans, (570 AD- 1683 AD) a campaign waged by various ethnicities for more than a thousand years. We should note here that the Christian Crusades (1095-1291) were relatively brief, defensive, and in the end, unsuccessful. With the exception of the Iberian Peninsula and Israel, most original Muslim (Arab, Mongol, or Ottoman) conquests/colonies remain intact – and Islamic. The eastern Mogul Khanate ([Yuan](#) Dynasty) proved to be the exception, Buddhist to this day.

The modern Muslim *Ummah* is not so much a global political condominium as it is an aspiring religious [monoculture](#). Feuding Shia and Sunni tribes might have varying claims to legitimacy, but goals, means, and ends are held in common. Cultural proselytizing, punctuated by blood and guts terror, now appears to be more effective than conventional variants of warfare. Sanguinary sedition is portable, cheap, and effective.

The grand leitmotif for future conflict is societal, a cage match between evolved democratic norms and a persistent strain of theocratic fascism. We say “persistent” because there is more than a little merit to the many arguments that suggest contemporary Islamism is merely the logical extension of Mohammed’s

original crusade, an ambition never limited by time, geography, or Arab tribes.

The Modern Muslim theopolitical *jihad*, like its antecedents, is opportunist in origin and viral in effect.

#### The Pakistan Precedent

The modern Islamist era probably began with British colonial naiveté, dividing South Asia (1948) along ill-defined religious lines. Pakistan has been a neo-religious, if not crypto-terrorist, basket case ever since. The “Islamic” Republic of Pakistan is a continuing source of conflict with India, Bangladesh, and Afghanistan. Pakistan now works both sides of the *jihad* street; at once receiving generous technical and military support from the West whilst [exporting terror](#) cells and providing sanctuary for groups like *al Qaeda* and the *Taliban*. Pakistan is host also to the first Islam bomb, a strategic land mine commonly ignored in global threat calculus. Nonetheless, the political janissary that passes for government in Islamabad often seems ripe for the picking, and like many Islamic states, a bullet away from theocracy. The religious terrorist is a snake that inevitably eats the host.

#### The Israel Miracle

The Israeli miracle was an ironic Islamist milestone. The triumph, of a few Jews in serial warfare with multiple Arab states and the restoration of the Jewish homeland, was and is nothing short of miraculous; seven major conflicts and countless smaller [operations](#) since 1947 where Israel has, for the most part, prevailed. Indeed, Israel has done what the European crusades could not; rescued and defended the geographic cultural wellspring of Western civilization from Muslim iconoclasts, humiliating 360 million Arab *Ishmaelites* in the process.

Whither Israel, so goes the West.

The liberation of Jerusalem and subsequent existential struggles has spawned a host of Palestinian [terror NGOs](#). More ominous is the sea change of global public opinion which has metastasized into a new and toxic [variant](#) of anti-Semitism, now especially fashionable at the schoolhouse in particular and liberal social democracies in general. The most pernicious global *non sequitur* abroad today argues that a Palestinian state on Israeli borders would somehow pacify militant Islam. Alas, Israeli victories have become Islam’s excuses; excuses for Arabs

and Muslims to behave badly – in the Levant and anywhere else.

### Coup and Counter-coup in Persia

Mark 1953 and 1979 on the Shia *jihad* calendar. The revolt against the House of Pahlavi in Iran was both payback for British and American mid-century meddling and an Islamist masterstroke on several counts: a corrupt, if not illegitimate, autocratic monarchy was deposed; an ancient culture was hijacked by religious zealots; and a potent Muslim theocracy was enfranchised. Withal, the Persian Shia minority upstaged a largely clueless Sunni majority in the larger *Ummah*.

Now on the verge of nuclear hegemony, the Persian variant of atomic Islam is now *the* dominant Muslim player in the Mideast. Indeed, excepting the Kurds, Shia proxy *Hezb'allah* is the most effective fighting ground force in Lebanon, Syria, and Iraq. America and Europe were so mesmerized by the hostage crisis of the Carter/Reagan years that the Ayatollah's theocratic counter-coup barely caused a ripple in any strategic calculus then – or now.

### Ataturk Undone in Turkey

Mustafa Kemal Ataturk (1881-1938) might be spinning in his grave today. Turkey, once a model of Ottoman and Islamic reformation, is undergoing a religious renaissance, a retreat to Muslim irredentism. The race backwards is attributable to two institutions and two personalities, one visible and the other a shadow government of sorts.

The visible institution is the ruling Justice and Development Party (*AK Parti*), an autocratic Islamist political front led by Recep Tayyip Erdogan. The incumbent neo-Ottoman in Ankara is now notorious for double dealing, simultaneously a NATO “ally” and [ISIS financier](#). Less well known is the associated [Cemaat](#) (community) or *Hizmet* (service) movement led by [Fethullah Gulen](#), a very wealthy Turkish Sunni imam who resides in Pennsylvania (sic) and presides over a global network of businesses, secondary schools, and ideological synods.

Gulen's Pennsylvania fortress is more than a bit of a cipher. Why is a Sunni imam, a Turkish kingmaker, indeed a venerated leader of a global Islamist movement, holding court in the Poconos? Clearly there is some understanding or working agreement between the Obama and Erdogan regimes and their respective

intelligence agencies. This much is certain; an Islamist cleric with global reach, pulling strings from Pennsylvania, is not good news for secular democracy in Turkey, NATO security to the east, or separation of church and state anywhere.

#### Cradle of Civilization Chaos

Iraq and Syria are now the disaster twins of the Levant. Like Afghanistan and Libya, regime change campaigns gone awry. Indeed, Iraq and Syrian oil is now on a par with Afghan opium, commodities that finance Islamism and terror. The sectarian poles in Iraq were reversed by two American wars and now a good part of Saddam Hussein's Army and the Sunni tribes have gone over to the dark side of Islam, to groups like ISIS, a new caliphate. Syria was to suffer a similar fate until Vladimir Putin stepped in and rescued Bashar Assad from an end similar to Hosni Mubarak, Muammar Gadhafi, and Saddam Hussein. For the moment, regime change follies are on hold but the resultant chaos rages on. The best thing that might be said about Washington and Brussels foreign policy in the past fifty years is that it has facilitated the various local *jihads* and guaranteed the rise of ever more toxic terror phenomena like the Islamic State.

Countless lives and treasure were squandered in the sands of Iraq and Kuwait only to have America gift that same oil back to incontinent Arab tribes who now use oil revenues to finance  *jihad*  in the Levant and elsewhere. Blowback indeed!

#### The Arab Spring Charade

If the theocratic coup in Persia was lost in the emotional miasma of the Iran hostage crisis, the smog of the so-called [Arab Spring](#) is still a function of American/NATO propaganda, media hyperbole, and wishful strategic thinking. Still, the consequences of the Arab Spring charade are now manifest: theocracy, not democracy, is the default setting for failed Muslim states; regime change is more poison pill than policy; and Arabia, the Levant, North Africa, and the near East are now invested with sectarian chaos wrought by generational strategic poltroons. More ominous still is the prospect that one of those dynastic authors of American foreign policy folly may manipulate the vicissitudes of domestic gender politics to again "lead" the free world "from behind" in 2016.



Generational cluelessness

If living American presidents were characterized as a confederacy of foreign policy dunces, such an assessment would be charitable. At the moment, the explanation for what appears to be chronic; if not masochistic, serial failure in the Muslim wars would probably be reduced to bromides like: "It's complicated!"

### The ISIS Tar Baby

The Islamic State, or ISIS, is the latest idol raised by modern *jihad*. Besides pretensions to statehood and televised beheadings, ISIS is not much different than its Islamic predecessors or contemporary *Assassins*. And like *al Qaeda*, the Muslim Brotherhood, *Boko Haram*, and the *Taliban*, the Islamic State is just another symptom, not the ailment. Indeed, today there are literally dozens of Islamist terror crews with the same *modus operandi*. The US State Department keeps a modest, but by no means complete, [list](#) of contemporary terror groups other than ISIS. Administration and media obsession with ISIS, another terror flavor *du jour*, is a symptom of threat atomized to obscure a larger problem; a feckless policy of endless reactive tactics at the expense of operational competence and clear strategic vision.

What is to be done?

Surely, whatever passed for American foreign or military policy in the past three decades is not working. Just as clearly, in case anyone keeps score these days, the dark side of Islam is ascendant at home and abroad. What follows here is a catalogue of policy initiatives that might halt the spread of Islamic fascism and encourage [religious reform](#) in the *Ummah*.

Some observers believe that the Muslim problem is a matter of life and death. Be assured that the need for Islamic reform is much more important than either. The choices for Islam are the same as they are for Palestine Arabs; behave or be humbled. Europe may still have a Quisling North and a Vichy South; but Russia, China, and even America, at heart, are still grounded by national survival instincts – and Samuel Colt.

Call a spade a spade

The threat is Islam, both kinetic and passive aggressive factions. If "moderate" Islam is real, then that community needs to step up and assume responsibility

for barbaric terror lunatics and immigrants/refugees alike. Neither America nor Europe has solutions to the Islamic dystopia; civic incompetence, strategic illiteracy, migrants, poverty, religious schisms, or galloping irredentism. The UN and NATO have no remedies either. Islamism is an *Ummah*, Arab League, [OIC](#) problem to solve. Absent moral or civic conscience, unreformed Islam deserves no better consideration than any other criminal cult.

Western Intelligence agencies must stop cooking the books too. The West is at war and the enemy is clearly the adherents of a pernicious ideology. A global war against imperial Islam might be declared; just as angry Islam has [declared](#) war on civilization. A *modus vivendi* might be negotiated only after the *Ummah* erects a universal barrier between church and state globally. Islam, as we know it, is incompatible with democracy, civility, peace, stability, and adult beverages.

Oxymoronic “Islamic” states need to be relegated to the dust bin of history. If the Muslim world cannot or will not mend itself; Islamism, like the secular fascism of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, must be defeated, humbled in detail. Sooner is better.

Answer the Ayatollahs

Recent allied concessions to Tehran may prove to be a bridge too far. If the Persian priests do not abide by their nuclear commitments, two red lines might be drawn around Israel. Firstly, the Ayatollahs should be put on notice, publicly, that any attack against Israel would be considered an attack against America – and met with massive Yankee retaliation. Secondly, any future cooperation with NATO or America should be predicated on an immediate cessation of clerical hate speech and so-called *fatwas*, those arbitrary death sentences.



Persian political theater

Clerical threats to “wipe Israel off the face of the earth” and “death to America” injunctions are designed to stimulate *jihad* and terror globally. The only difference between a Shia ayatollah and a Sunni imam these days seems to be the torque in their head threads.

Ostracize the Puppeteers

Strategic peril does not emanate from Sunni tacticians like *Osama bin Laden*, *Mullah Omar*, or *Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi*. Nor does the real threat begin with or end with *al Qaeda*, the *Taliban*, *Hezb'allah*, *Hamas*, or the Islamic State. Lethal threat comes, instead, on four winds: toxic culture, religious politics, fanatic fighters, and furtive finance; all of which originate with Muslim state sponsors. The most prominent of these are Saudi Arabia, the Emirates, Turkey, Iran, and Pakistan.

Put aside for a moment the Saudi team that brought down the Twin Towers in New York. Consider instead, the House of Saud as the most egregious [exporter](#) of *Salifism* (aka *Wahabbism*) doctrine, clerics, imams, and mosques from which ultra-irredentist ideologies are spread. The Saudis are at once the custodians of Islam's sacred [shrines](#) and at the same time the world's most decadent, corrupt, and duplicitous hypocrites. Imam Baghdadi is correct about two things; the venality of elites in Washington and [Riyadh](#). The House of Saud, an absolutist tribal monarchy, does not have the moral standing to administer "holy" sites of any description – Mecca, Medina, or Disneyland.

The cozy relationship between Europe, the European Union, and Arabia can be summarized with a few words; oil, money, arms sales, and base rights. This near-sighted blend of Mideast obscenities has reached its sell-by date. The "white man's burden" should have [expired](#) when Edward Said vacated New York for paradise.

Jettison Turkey and Pakistan

What Saudi Arabia is to toxic ideology in North Africa; Turkey and Pakistan is to perfidy in the Levant and South Asia. Turkey and Pakistan are Islam's most obvious and persistent grifters. Turkey supports the Islamic State and other Sunni terror groups with a [black market oil](#) racket. Pakistan supports the *Taliban*, *al Qaeda*, and ISIS with sanctuary and tolerance of the world's largest [opium](#) garden. Oil and drug monies from Arabia, Turkey, and South Asia are financing the global *jihad*. Turkey also facilitates the migration of Muslims west to Europe while sending Islamist fighters and weapons south to Syria and Iraq.

With the advent of Erdogan and his Islamist AKP, Turkey has morphed into NATO's Achilles Heel, potentially a fatal flaw. Turkey needs to be drummed out of NATO



until secular comity returns to Ankara. Pakistan needs to be restrained too with sanctions until it ceases to provide refuge for terrorists. Pakistani troops harassing India could be more prudently redeployed to exterminate jihadists.

Sanctions against Russia and [Israel](#) are a study in moral and political fatuity whilst Arabs and Muslims are appeased midst a cultural sewer of geo-political crime and human rights abuses. If NATO's eastern flank needs to be anchored in trust and dependability; Russia, Kurdistan, or both, would make better allies than Turkey. Ignoring Turkish perfidy to protect ephemeral base rights confuses tactical necessity with strategic sufficiency.

### Recognize Kurdistan

Beyond Israel, Kurdistan might be the most enlightened culture in the Mideast. The Kurds are also the largest ethnic group in the world not recognized as a state. While largely Muslim, the Kurds, unlike most of the *Ummah*, appreciate the virtues of religious diversity and [women's rights](#). Indeed, Kurdish women fight alongside their men against Turkish chauvinism and Sunni misogyny with equal aplomb. For too long, the Kurds have been patronized by Brussels and Washington.

While Kurdish fighters engage ISIS and attempt to control the Turkish oil black market, Ankara uses American manufactured NATO F-16s to bomb Kurds in Turkey and Syria. Turkish ground forces now occupy parts of Iraq too. In eastern Turkey, Erdogan's NATO legions use ISIS as an excuse for bookend genocide, a cleansing of Kurds that might rival the Armenian Christian genocide (1915-1917).



### Kurdish [angel of death](#)

All the while, American strategic amateurs argue for a "no-fly" zone in contested areas south of Turkey. Creating a no-fly zone is the kind of operational vacuity we have come to expect from American politicians and generals. Such a stratagem would foil Kurdish efforts to flank ISIS and allow the Erdogan *jihad*, arms, and oil rackets to flourish. A no-fly zone is a dangerous ploy designed to provoke Russia, not protect Muslim "moderates."

Putin, Lavrov, and the Russians have it right this time, Turkish and Erdogan family subterfuges are lethal liabilities, not assets.

Washington and European allies have been redrawing the map in Eastern Europe, North Africa, South Asia, and the Mideast since the end of WWII. The time has come to put Kurdistan [on the map](#) too. Kurdistan is a unique and exemplary case of reformed or enlightened Islam; indeed, a nation that could serve as a model for the Muslim world. If base rights are a consideration, Kurdistan would be an infinitely more dependable ally than Turkey or any corrupt tribal autocracy in Arabia. America has a little in common with desert dictators – and fewer genuine friends there either. Indeed, at the moment America is allied with the worst of Islam.

### Create New Alliances

NATO, like the European Union, has become a parody of itself. Absent a threat like the Soviet Union or the Warsaw Pact, Brussels has taken to justifying itself by meddling in East Europe and resuscitating a Cold War with the Kremlin. Indeed, having divided Yugoslavia, NATO now expands to the new Russian border with reckless abandon; in fact, fanning anti-Russian flames now with [neo-Nazi cohorts](#) in former Yugoslavia, Georgia, and Ukraine.

NATO support for the Muslims of one-time Yugoslavia is of a piece with support for Islamic trouble makers in Chechnya and China too. Throughout, we are led to believe that *jihād* Uighurs and caliphate Chechens are [freedom fighters](#). Beslan, Boston, Paris, and now San Bernardino puts the lie to any notion that Islamists are “victims” – or heroes. Indeed, the Boston Marathon bombing might have been prevented had Washington a better relationship with Moscow.

Truth is, America has more in common with Russia and China these days than we do with any number of traditional European Quislings. Indeed, it seems that Europe and America can't take yes for an answer.

The Cold War ideological or philosophical argument has been won. Moscow and Beijing have [here](#).

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