

Jawboning the Jihad



Kaaba Stone veneration in Mecca

“To say nothing, especially when speaking, is half the art of diplomacy.”

– Will Durant

by [G. Murphy Donovan](#) (January 2022)

No one abuses or misuses language better than a politician, except maybe a political “scientist.” Calling the study of politics, science, is in itself more than a bit of a reach. Serious study is to political science as Plato is to graffiti, free-forms of daily invention. Nevertheless, in the age of social mediums, banal clichés often become memes or even movements overnight. The “Arab Spring” comes to mind. Climatological or seasonal metaphors are a thing in our age of environmental angst these days, and just as ephemeral.

Not too long ago, the media and the academy were euphoric about Arabia, or the Muslim world generally, emerging from a long dark night of religious tyranny into the warmth of secular, if not enlightened democracy; the so-called “Arab

Spring.” All the while, it was much too dangerous to actually say or write that one third of the world’s population had been living in the dark since the 7th Century. Today, any serious debate about persistent Muslim recidivism, Islamist threats, or perennial jihad is dismissed as “racism.” Never mind that Islam is an absolutist ideology, a politicized religion, indeed a kind of [theofascism](#), not a race or a class of people.

In the debate about Islamism, facts and logic are often irrelevant. Never mind the obscenities of 9/11, the slaughter in Benghazi, beheadings in the Levant, the Laura Logan rape in Cairo, the recent triumph of the Taliban in Kabul, or the Islam bomb now on both sides of the Sunni/Shia schism; all signal events for a modern, “moderate” (sic) Islam.

The Arab Spring euphoria peaked in the Obama era. Barack Hussein’s first foreign policy stumble as US president was to launch an apology tour in Arabia, taking a knee in Cairo, a kind of strategic [genuflection](#) after 9/11.

Professor Marc Lynch, of George Washington University, minted the “Arab Spring” metaphor. GW is one of those “second tier” schoolhouses that cluster inside or near the capital Beltway. Lynch, an [Obama](#) Democrat, anchors the “two-state” or pander lobby in Washington. At best, Lynch is anti-Israel, if not anti-Semitic. He pedals the [apartheid](#) slur about Israel, loudly and often, in left-leaning establishment journals like *Foreign Policy*.

And now with Biden, a Winter of discontents descends on Washington in the wake of the Abraham Accords. No talk now of “Spring,” or sunshine for that matter. Trump era policy can’t possibly be an achievement if you are reading DC demagogues like Lynch. And so goes analysis in political science, a lot like weather, climate, and meteorological arguments; ounces of fact larded with pounds of bile, bias, or wishful thinking.

If you lose the Middle East foreign policy thread in

Washington, just remember that a Democrat White House equals Spring, a Republican Oval Office equals Winter. Yes, it's that simple for the academy and media allies these days. We are now led to believe that historic treaties and Arab/Israeli reproachments like the Abraham Accords are ignorable, irrelevant, or counterproductive.

Honest analysis, and truth, about Islam and Israel these days is hostage to a host of such shibboleths, the most prominent of which are fear, demographics, moral equivalence, and the two-state fantasy.

Appeasers are literally terrified about jihad and Islamism. Alas, the real global terror threat is the fear that energizes appeasement, immigration policy, and imprudent atrocity tolerance in the West. Note that Islam's migrants travel on a one-way street, always from East to West.

For the ayatollahs and imams, to be sure, victory by a thousand cuts will still be a win.

Recall that Saudi jihadists trained in America before 9/11 whilst team Clinton's FBI was asleep at the wheel. After 9/11, team Bush repatriated resident Saudis even before the smoke cleared at the Twin Towers. When it comes to the Muslim wars, American national security impotence is bi-partisan.

The late Director of CIA, John Brennan, actually [argues](#) that religious jihad is not war, but rather a personal "spiritual" struggle for Muslims, not warfare. Brennan confuses Muslim [mayhem](#) with Catholic soul searching. Any attempt to link terror, religious war, or theocratic coups to global Islam or theology is dismissed as racism, again conflating biology and ideology. Global jihadists have no need to apologize for atrocities. American Intelligence oligarchs, like Brennan, do that for Islam.

Apologists go to any length to create a space between alleged "moderates" and unspecified jihadists (aka radicals) in the

Ummah. Muslims (1.5 billion) represent a third of the world's population. That number, that demographic threat alone, is simply too big, or terrifying, for the West to accept, no less confront.

Moral equivalence is the pink elephant in the approach/avoidance clinic. Scholars and pundits take great pains to claim that Islam is just one of the world's three "great" Abrahamic religions. Hindus and others, apparently, are just chopped liver. Allegedly, Jews, Christians and Muslims are united by common roots. The Abrahamic trope gives Islamic imperials, terrorists, and jihadists cover under a contrived burka of moral equivalence.

The object of the Abraham shibboleth is tolerance; tolerance for Islam, not Judaism or Christianity. Muslim states are happy to oblige. Conflating an Islamic "republic" with true republics is like confusing astrology and astronomy; worse still, misrepresenting theocracy as democracy. Israel is the lone tolerant democracy in a Levantine swamp. Unfortunately, Israel is also the canary in the geopolitical coal mine. If we can mix some more metaphors; without Israel, the cradle of civilization is just another third world "sierra hotel."

Unfortunately, whence Israel, so goes the democratic West.

Bogus moral equivalence enables cultural decay and here, if anybody is keeping score, recent rot now includes; Iran, Syria, Iraq, Libya, Yemen, and now Afghanistan, just to name the most visible. Pakistan too, with the first Islam bomb, is always one bullet away from recidivist theocracy. The success of the Taliban and ISIS next door in Afghanistan, suggests the days of Islamic janissary in Islamabad are numbered.

The CIA gravy train in south Asia ran/runs through Pakistan. It's not likely that the Taliban or ISIS will forget Pakistan's perfidy and double dealing. The Indian sub-continent now has an official state sponsor for Islamism too.

Kabul is host to the Muslim Brotherhood, Taliban, al Qaeda, and ISIS just to name some of the nastier tribal thugs with global reach.

Worse still, Sunni and Shia Islamist factions, now have nuclear leverage with state sponsors like Pakistan (Sunni) and Iran (Shia). None of this bodes well for enlightened globalism or progressive democracy worldwide.

The most pernicious trope propagated by American Intelligence and academic fakirs is the notion that dividing Israel into two states will assuage Arab or Muslim angst. The division of India in 1947 into religious cantons should be a cautionary tale about the imprudence of sectarian surgery. Beyond ignoring ugly precedent, the notion that Palestinians are the key to peace in the Levant or anywhere is another common fiction. Neither Americans nor Israelis have answers to historic and persistent Muslim civic or religious [pathologies](#) in spite of what the Muslim Brotherhood or Edward Said tell us.

The root of conflict within and without the Muslim world is the Shia/Sunni schism. (Sam Huntington takes a [legacy bow](#) here.) Medieval militants on both sides of the grand religious rift seek to overthrow hereditary, tribal, mostly autocratic, sometimes secular regimes who have strayed from Islamic religious orthodoxy. With the Shia, the vector of futures in Persia was resolved by theocratic coup in 1979, freeing Iran's ayatollahs to focus their hate on Arab and Sunni apostates and neighbors.

Apostates are priority one targets for jihadists. Kafir kills just keep a keen edge on the swords of the Prophet. The less visible strategic war is not with, but within Islam. America and Israel are caught in the crossfire, perennial if not potential road kills.

Taking sides in a family feud is always a dicey proposition.

Arabian despots, for their part, are now caught in a pinch too, between home-grown and Persian jihadists. The recent rapprochement between Israel and Arabia may be a child of necessity. Nuclear capability gives Tehran strategic parity with the Israelis and an equalizer for Sunni numbers. Iran's nuclear card might be taken but not given. Any assurances, to the contrary, from the ayatollahs will be like getting a get-well card from your bookie.

Seems that Arabia now sees Israel as a buffer, proxy, or surrogate against an existential threat from Persians. Why not a marriage of convenience that shifts the burden of confronting Shia militants and the Islam bomb to the Israelis? Hopefully, Israel appreciates the calculus. American national security plodders prefer not to think about it.

In any case, with Afghanistan, we have another breach birth theocracy, quickly relegated to yesterday's news. Journalists and national security pundits are back to whistling in the dark and romancing the Kaaba Stone. Jawboning the jihad is a symptom of weakness, a flaccid American tactic that just whets the appetite of Mohammed's strategic cutthroats.

Muslin religious imperialism, [Islamofacism](#) if you will, is on a roll. The West is losing the ongoing "clash of civilizations," albeit in slow motion. The difference in the 21st Century edition of East/West clash will be an Islam that has a strategy and a goal; and knows how to get there. The best that America and the West will do is hope for the best and endure the rest.

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