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Islamism-Communism

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Paper No. 35
March 2016

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In the wake of 9/11 the term Islamism-Fascism took hold.

President Bush had characterized the ideology behind the attacks as the heir of the totalitarian ideologies of the twentieth century – Fascism, Nazism, and Totalitarianism. However, Communism, the other criminal ideology that had spilled its share of blood in the last century, remained missing in the interpretations. This made some sense since the link of the islamists with fascism appeared closer to those writing then, while the relationship to Communism seemed more remote. Indeed the figure of speech used by President Bush himself was that terror was brewing in the swamps of the Middle East, where oppression bred resentment giving way to violence. The clearest inescapable tyranny then was Saddam Hussein's Irak. Not only had he invaded repeatedly neighboring countries, he had actually massacred his own people. Since the Baath Party was Saddam Hussein's, a political heir to the Nazis that ruled the Levant during World War II, the term Islamism-Fascism seemed only natural to name the enemy. The long standing tyrannies of Iraq, Iran, or Syria and the Islamism fanatics that seemed to be the result—the Taliban and their al-Qaeda *protegés*—were then, as night follows day, Islamism-Fascists. This was a two-headed monster, represented by the dictatorships—neither exactly nor exclusively fascist—where terrorism grew and more precisely Islamism terrorism. And that was that.

Yet the totalitarian ideology of the twentieth century had two faces and, in that area of the Levant fallen to Soviet influence during the Cold War and considered by some as World War III, Communism had played a relevant role. Thus the harmful ideologies that had made the Middle East hell on earth in the twenty-first century had an unmistakable Western whiff more specifically, European.

From 1920 to 1946, Syria was administered by France under a League of Nations mandate. The French mandate in Syria-Lebanon was established by the League of Nations on April 25, 1920, after World War I. It was officially created to provide a way for Arab States to reach independence and sovereignty once they had achieved enough political maturity and economic development. Four mandates were created: The governments of Palestine and the present Iraq went to the British; the mandate over Lebanon and Syria went to France.



Egypt reached an arms agreement with Czechoslovakia in 1955. It was the USSR's first attempt to gain influence in the Middle East since they were Soviet weapons.

That very same year the US and the UK offered economic help to Egypt to pull it away from the Soviet orbit. Nonetheless, Gamal Abdel Nasser continued his alliance with the Soviets and the Americans withdrew much of their help. During the Suez Canal crisis in 1956, the USSR supported Egypt's nationalization process. Nasser expanded his march against Western colonialism throughout the Arab region. Yet he resisted the Communist influence by trying to form a Pan-Arabic Alliance initiated with Syria under the so-called United Arab Republic.

In 1966 a leftist party gained power in Syria and started cooperating with the USSR. The Soviets intended to be the defenders of the Arab world and worked on it trying to increase its dependence on foreign-

ers. Syrian unrest and outright violence on Israel's border with Soviet support was one of the causes leading to the Six-Day War in 1967. After the Arab defeat, the USSR continued to sell weapons to these countries and Nasser allowed Soviet bases to remain on Middle Eastern soil. Nasser's successor, Anwar Sadat, signed a cooperation treaty with the USSR in 1971. Although in 1976 this alliance broke up, the USSR continued developing ties with Syria, Iraq, and the PLO. The PLO regularly bought weapons from the Soviet bloc.

The Iraq-Soviet Union relations were running high after 1958: Weapons sales, oil agreements, general cooperation. From 1966 forward, Syria got most of its military equipment from the USSR. In 1971 when Hafez al-Assad became Syria's president in a coup d'état, he decided to keep a policy of cooperation with the USSR and agreed to keep the Soviet base of Tartus. Some of this cooperation entailed Soviet support to Syria in case of conflict with Israel. The USSR also developed ties with Lybia, the Arab Republic of Yemen, and South Yemen.

For a long time during the Cold War, Syria and Iraq were governed by rival factions inside the Baath party. The relationship started to change after the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran in 1979. Then Assad, a Shi'ite, made Syria an ally of Iran in its war against Iraq in 1980. The Ayatollah Khomeini, however, continued to oppose the USA and the USSR, considering Communism an ideological threat. Nonetheless, he formed substantial alliances with Communists in the process leading to the overthrow of the Shah.

From 1966 the USSR developed an important military presence in Syria. Syria became the USSR's most favored client in the Middle East. By mid-1984 there were 13,000 Soviet and East European military advisers in Syria. The USSR considered the Arab states more important than Israel for the expansion of Communist influence.

THE “JACKAL-BINS¹”

Yet again, the war against the West waged by the Islamofascists could count with the ideological help of leftist movements inside Western countries. Dressed in the garb of good intentions towards the downtrodden, the oppressed, and the poor, these people had more ill will for the victims than for the attackers. It was a position akin to that of former Nazi and Communist parties in particular, subservient to a larger goal directed and designed in another country.

The Islamists sought that same goal of collectivist control as the Communists by the way of placing the *Ummah* or community of believers under the direction of the more radical among them. The ideological relationship between Communism and Islamism had been suggested for long. It had been so among Marxists and by Muslims. French Marxist historian Maxime Rodinson was celebrating with other party members in the “*fête de l’Huma*” (*L’Humanité*, or humankind, propaganda tool of the French Communist Party that denominates a long standing and renowned festival). He was given this explanation by an Algerian participant: “*L’oumma, c’est l’Huma*” (The *Ummah* is *L’Humanité*); i.e. The *Ummah* is, by extension, Communism.

French progressive journalist, Jean Daniel, founding member of the French weekly *Le Nouvel Observateur*, clarified it in no uncertain terms: “Communism is an ideology disguised as politics. Islamism is politics disguised as a religion.”

He concluded that the two ghosts haunting the West today are the return to tribalistic nationalisms and Islamist violence create the illusion to respond to the needs of the downtrodden, just as not so long ago did Communism,.

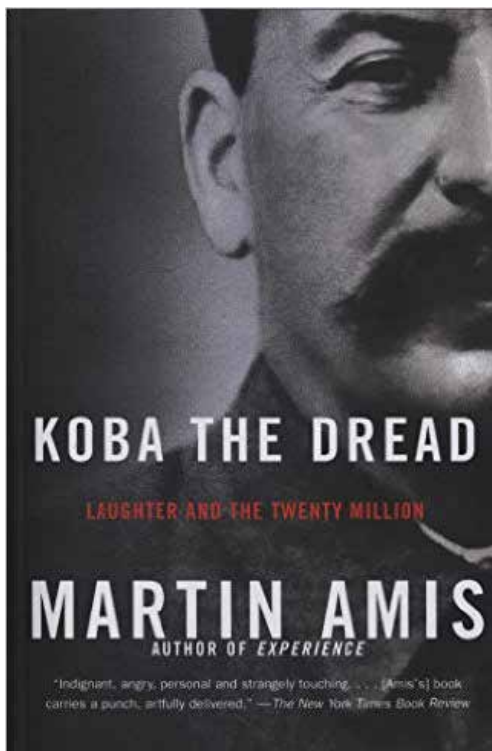
In due time, the opposition to the so-called Global War On Terror following the terrorist attacks was kept alive by sundry leftist commentators that served as useful idiots or fellow travelers, just as during the Cold War many

1 Norman Podhoretz tells the story many times, one of them is in “World War IV. The long struggle against Islamofascism”: “I remember John Roche, a political scientist then working in the Johnson White House, being quoted by columnist Jimmy Breslin as having derisively labeled the radicals a bunch of “Upper West Side Jackal Bins.” As further investigation disclosed, Roche had actually said “Jacobins”, a word so unfamiliar to his interviewer that in transcribing his notes, “jackal bins” was the best Breslin could do.” There’s no telling what harm can be done by a bunch of “jackal bins” to an uncultured and innocent Western public.

in the West did help Soviet Communism from inside with excessive remarks made by Communists at heart after the attacks.

Probably the first one to come out of the woods was Jean Baudrillard, a French Marxist philosopher of the post-structuralist school. Baudrillard beat everyone in the starting blocks of infamy by stating in reference to the attacks: “Ultimately, they (Al-Qaeda and bin Laden) did it, but we willed it.” It could not be clearer: The West again under threat and a Marxist doing his duty to become the Trojan Horse capable of building a critical mass first among progressives and then in the entire society. A critical mass sufficiently loud to drive public opinion against any proper reaction towards those who shared the Marxist’s hatred for liberal democracy. A critical mass sufficiently strong to defeat that regime—liberal democracy—that, in Fukuyama’s oft repeated expression, had reached the End of History.

Darío Fo, 1997 Nobel Prize of Literature, would not stay far behind: “Big speculators joyfully splash about in an economy that lets millions of people die every year in misery. What are 20,000 (sic) dead in New York by comparison? ... Regardless of who carried out the massacre, this violence is the legitimate daughter of the culture of violence, hunger and inhumane exploitation.”



Even Martin Amis, author of a relevant 2003 book on Stalin was probably still under the influence of his father’s Communist militancy, or it was perhaps standing in for the traditional exculpatory good intentions of Communists, when he asserted in an article in *The Guardian* days after the events:

“Terrorism is political communication by other means. The message of September 11 ran as follows: America, it is time you learned how implacably you are hated.(...) Various national characteristics - self-reliance, a fiercer patriotism than any in western Europe, an assiduous geographical incuriosity - have created a deficit of empathy for the sufferings of people far away.”

“Koba, the Dread”: The book by Amis is a study of the violence exercised by Stalin in the USSR between 1920 and 1950. The title refers to the nickname Koba and the estimated 20 million dead during Stalin’s reign due to famine, torture, the Gulag and the purges. This estimation is from Robert Conquest’s works.

It was not a small paradox that these neo-Hegelians were now rejecting any determinism in the End Of History narrative and were about to do the impossible, and pull it off, to spread their criticism of the West to public opinion to an extent capable of providing Islamism with the victory in this conflict that some, pace Eliot Cohen, called World War IV.

Thus it happened that, American troops left Iraq, and practically Afghanistan, and the United States shied away from open war against the Caliphate in Syria, thereby tolerating with this cautious and peaceful concern, more deaths, refugees, and destabilization in the last four years than “Bush’s war” since the invasion of Iraq in 2003 to the present day. The ominous success of those who had been condemned to the ash heap of history was therefore appalling. History, far from over, was coming back with a vengeance – and it was the doing of radical Communist leftists.

Casualties estimate for Syria’s war

Syrian Net for Human Rights: 215,454 (March 2011- May 2015)

UN: 250,000 (March 2011- August 2015)

Syrian Observatory for Human Rights: 260,758–350,758 15 (March 2011- October 2015)

How the healthy part of the West allowed this to happen is another story, but the fact remains that this neo-Communism worked as intellectual baking powder and lifted the *soufflé* of retreat to a level seldom reached by Lenin himself in the founding act of this ideology.

A GEOSTRATEGIC ALLIANCE

Building on this, the Islamic State *par excellence*, so to speak, the Islamic Republic of Iran, at first sidelined by the almost exclusively Sunni push in the war against the West, started to use the regimes at its disposal to extend the destabilization of the West by other means.



There were those flights to Venezuela by Iran’s former president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad to visit his “brother” Hugo Chávez. Since 2007 until at least 2010, there was a plane leaving Caracas to Teheran, with a stop in Damascus, Syria. Only government officials of both countries could be among the passengers and often very few people traveled. The remaining space was filled with drugs, weapons and cash. The drugs and the money were instrumental in financing Iranian activities in Latin America. One of those has recently resurfaced, the ideological expansion of the Islamic revolution by the way of *Hispan TV*, related to a

similar operation in Spain financing a TV program directed by Communist political leader Pablo Iglesias. He has recently managed to lift his party, Podemos, to the third place in Spain’s elections and he has at hand to gain power with the help of Kerensky-style social-democrats. The stop at Damascus was destined basically to collect false passports and other documents to allow Iranian agents to move freely from Venezuela.

The former Assistant Secretary of State for the Western Hemisphere said to the Senate back in 2012:

“The Venezuelan state-owned airline, Conviasa, operates regular service from Caracas to Damascus and Tehran – providing Iran, Hezbollah, and associated narco-traffickers a surreptitious means to move personnel, weapons, contraband, and other materiel.”

This information, and much more, pointing to the links between Iran and Venezuela, was also made public by Argentinean prosecutor Alberto Nisman, in the process of investigating the Hezbollah bombing of the Jewish community center AMIA in 1994. Nisman died later under strange circumstances and his death is being investigated as a possible homicide by present Argentinean officials after former president Cristina Kirchner lost to now president Mauricio Macri.

Iran's president, Hassan Rouhani, was actually the only one of the three candidates – previously vetted by the Grand Ayatollah and Supreme Leader Khamenei – not to have participated in that terrorist attack. According to Nisman, two of the pre-selected candidates, Ali Akbar Valeyati and Moshen Rezai, had been involved in the killings of 84 people.

In a document of the prosecution, Nisman identified several other Iranian officials as suspects: Ahmad Vahidi, former minister of Defense until August 2013,; Ali Falahijan, ex-minister of Information,; Moshen Rabani, former counselor to the Iranian Embassy in Buenos Aires, , Ahmad Reza Ashgari, former diplomat. Rabani was the essential piece in the organization of the terrorist operation

What Nisman uncovered was an extended terrorist network organized by the Iranian regime to promote the Islamic revolution in Latin America. The source of this use of legal appearances by the Islamic republic in order to promote illegal activities was a 1982 seminar organized in Tehran that 380 clerics from 70 countries attended. The seminar concluded that there was a need to export the revolution whenever it was found convenient “in a violent way and using terrorist attacks.” According to Nisman, this message was transmitted to every Iranian embassy in the world to transform them into intelligence agencies at the service of the revolution.

Nisman also mentioned another agent as relevant: Abdul Kadir, a disciple of Rabani, charged with the expansion of Islamism in –of all places– Guyana, where he had gone from Venezuela. He ended up serving life imprisonment in the US after trying to put a bomb in New York's JFK Airport.

It is therefore understandable that Nisman's investigations were an irritant to the Iranians. This would explain the agreement they reached with former Argentinean president Cristina Kirchner. Nisman had actually gotten the Interpol involved and it issued a red notice regarding the five principal suspects: Vahidi, Fallahijan, Rezai, Rabani and Ashgari. Argentina's parliament ratified a memorandum of understanding in 2013, allowing Iran to take part in the interrogation of these people. The Islamic Republic also ratified the accord.

All these events led Nisman to make his findings public. In particular, those related to the Iranian plan to expand the Islamic revolution by the way of violent means in Hispanic territories. This plan included the presence of Iran, through Hezbollah, in the so-called Triple Frontier (Argentina, Brazil, and



Paraguay) and the Caribbean. It was a permanent endeavor, a significant commitment that went beyond the meaning of superficial contacts as the Chávez-Ahmadinejad relationship might have suggested. It was also something different to mere propaganda, more than the establishment of *Hispan TV* in Latin America using the Spanish satellite Hispasat until it took it off the air as Eutelsat had done in Europe with the equivalent propaganda tool in English, *Press TV*.

It is indeed wishful thinking to consider that the Iranian regime may change, no matter what emerging role over the mullahs one would wish to give the *Pashdaran* (the military Guardians of the Revolution). But what does seem to be in perpetual mutation is the strategy of presentation of the regime that, before Rouhani, was probably excessively blunt, vulgar, and primitive.

Indeed Ahmadinejad's image and the harm done by the international sanctions to the economy, recently raised as result of this summer's nuclear agreement with the Obama Administration, made it impossible for the Iranians to reach their underlying goals. Thus it is not particularly far-fetched to conclude that the clerics of Qom, with their cunning not limited to theology, devised a way to trick the West into giving them more room, in exchange for Rouhani's pretty face, to consolidate the regime and the immensely peace-threatening—actually more war-like—activities they pursue.

The two-headed Islamo-tyrannical monster the West is reluctant to face—the *de facto* alliance between terrorist organizations and totalitarian regimes—is perfectly represented by wolves in the garb of sheep such as Rouhani, that serve the fundamental purpose of consolidating the Iranian regime. Nisman's death and the continuity of the alliance with Communist movements in Western countries seem to confirm these considerations.

As of today, Spain's police unit for financial and economic crimes is investigating the funding of around ten million euros granted to the debate program *Fort Apache*, ("political resistance talk show" as the subtitle clarifies) of political Spanish leader Pablo Iglesias. The funds are traced back to Iran.

HOW IS THIS LIKE THAT, A COLD-WAR ANALOGY

Islamism-Communism is primarily an ideological alliance that has evolved into a political and geostrategic endeavor to threaten liberal democracy in the world, defying as it turned out the hasty interpretation of the End of History.

As for the ideology, we must bear in mind that the founding fathers of Islamic extremism were more intellectual than anything else. As Bernard Lewis has taught, Islam is a civilization in the extensive sense of the term, a culture that includes elements as essential as public law, identified with religious law, included in the Koran. It is thus almost indifferent whether Ibn Taymiya, Hassan Al-Banna, Abul A'la Maududi, or Sayid Qutb are to be assimilated by clerics or ideologues: They spoke of sovereignty, power, authority, law, and community; ultimately, they aimed for the establishment of an Islamic State.

In that collectivist and internationalist goal—for there are no nations in Islam but the division between Dar al-Arb and Dar al-Islam, the House of unbelievers or the House of War and the House of Islam—there is a profound similarity with Communism.

The similarities become uncanny when one considers the phases followed by the Iranian revolution and compares them with the most violent acts of the French and Soviet revolutions. Or when one sees the efforts currently made by the Islamic State to consolidate its borders, akin to the Red Army's to do just the same after the Brest-Litovsk pact that ended Russian intervention in World War I. Or when one compares the opposition between radicals in Islamism—the difference between the bin Laden fatwa of 1998 claiming to first hurt the West and then turn to the internal tyrannies, rather than the opposite strategy advocated by ISIS. Just as Stalin and Trotsky fought over the "socialism in one country" theory defended by Stalin against Trotsky's world revolution. This transition in Islam from ideology to politics rounds the circle of the ideological turned practical that threatens the West's way of life so much.

However, one must never forget that, be it Shia or Sunni, Muslims assign a dominant and central place to religion in their own affairs that is much different to what contemporary Western men do. Therefore, the similarities with Communism do actually exist first and foremost with the present interpretation by radicals in the Islamic world on their religion and the tenets of Communism itself. It should be clear that any impression about this paper disregarding the religious element in Islamism in order to put it into an exclusive or even prevailing political perspective is wrong. Rather, the contention of this paper is that, by recognizing the importance of the religious factor, in this case Islam, and better yet, the radicalism of some sects in Islam, one must also acknowledge the connections with totalitarian ideologies that enslaved the world in the twentieth century, with Communism in particular — and the role it played to weaken the West internally.

Once more, it is of major importance to bear in mind what has been frequently mentioned by Bernard Lewis:

“Render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar’s; and unto God the things which are God’s.’ That is, of course, Christian doctrine and practice. It is totally alien to Islam.”

This lack of separation between mosque and State to speak in Westernized terms, is clearly repeated in Communism, where there can be no separation in what belongs to the individual, namely a certain sense of autonomy or liberty and what belongs to the State.

Similarly, again quoting Lewis:

“In Islam, the process was quite different (to Christianity, or Christendom as Lewis likes to say). Muhammad did not die on the cross. As well as a Prophet, he was a soldier and a statesman, the head of a state and the founder of an empire, and his followers were sustained by a belief in the manifestation of divine approval through success and victory.”

Just as Communism promised the advent of a blessed State as the end result of the dictatorship of the proletariat; just as there is a total jurisdiction of Islam on every aspect of life on religious grounds, this same totality is the aim of Communism, who tries to attain total jurisdiction on the lives of its subjects.

It is also the essential basis of identity and loyalty, therefore replicating the universality or internationalism claimed by Communism. Lewis says:

“The point was made with remarkable force and clarity by a Grand Vizier of the Ottoman Empire who, in reply to the exponents of the new-style patriotism, replied: “The Fatherland of a Muslim is the place where the Holy Law of Islam prevails.” And that was in 1917.”

Islamism is therefore strikingly similar to Communism in its appeal to internationalism and its rejection to nationalist or ethnic bonds. The aspiration to pan-Islamism, a much more natural view to Muslim lands than the Western idea of nation, has its parallel in Communist Imperialism.

The trend is now sufficiently long as to be consistent that Muslim states have become more self-consciously Islamic and that this has also, and perhaps in particular, been the case “in the so-called radical and revolutionary States, which are intellectually and socially far more conservative than the politically conservative States, and find themselves obliged to show greater deference to popular sentiment.”

So, what began as pan-Islamism, the attempt to exploit the sentiment of Islamic brotherhood, somewhere in the XIX century, has been a movement of two kinds, including one official and promoted by governments in pursuit of their interests; the other radical, including revolutionary social doctrines. Examples abound in the redistributing role adopted at least on propaganda grounds by groups such as the Islamic Brotherhood, Hamas, Hezbollah, and now the Islamic State itself. Its origins may be traced back to radical pan-Islamism of various types that appeared during the interwar period—at first from left-wing and, indeed, frequently Communist, sources.

But the unity of Islam is an uchronic utopia, such as the new leftists appealing to Trotsky’s claim Communism remains, for the truth is that although in the first century and a half of the Caliphate, Islam was indeed one single world State, at that early date, it ceased to be so, and was never unified again.

Yet one should not doubt another parallelism with the Cold War and the time when Communism was considerably influential in Western European democracies. Just as there were communist parties then who gave their allegiance to toe Moscow’s line and worked, via deception, to overthrow the regimes that gave them better shelter than the ones Communist countries

gave to their own peoples, there are now radical parties attempting the same revolutionary goals and are funded by tyrannical Islamic regimes.

The failure to acknowledge it will only weaken the West more. It will also provide more credence to those among us who think that those who tried to win this war declared on September 11, 2001 are murderers; those who find excuses for the guilty and laud the appeasers. Just as the criminals of today are the heirs to the tragic totalitarian ideologies of the twentieth century—Nazism and Communism— those who help them here the way they do are the heirs to the late collaborationists and fellow travelers. They are, at best, the useful idiots; at worse, they are as stupid as they are evil.

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