The Essentially Misunderstood Nature of Political Islam

https://www.e-ir.info/2012/05/30/the-essentially-misunderstood-nature-of-political-islam/

IOANA TARTACUTA, MAY 30 2012

Two decades ago, the unexpected end of the Cold War and the subsequent demise of the Soviet Union upset the entrenched post-Second World War world order. The familiar bipolar system in which the two giants and their respective spheres of influence faced each other in an ideological and nuclear standoff was replaced with uncertainty as one of its centres of gravity disappeared overnight. Academics and policy makers had to answer the vital question of what would fill the gap left by the Soviet Union in the 'New World Order' and, as a result, many of the theories born immediately after the end of the Cold War tried to envision the future of international relations and the balance of power. Amongst these, optimists such as Francis Fukuyama believed that the unassailable victory of liberalism marked an ideological 'End of History'[1]. On the other hand, in 1993, Samuel Huntington put forward the more pessimistic theory of the 'Clash of Civilisations' and predicted that "the fault lines between civilisations will be the battle lines of the future"[2].

Although his thesis was hotly contested at the time and contradicted by the openness and liberal internationalist trend of the 1990s, the events of 9/11 seemed to corroborate Huntington – if there was a part of the world which had been troubled by the effects of globalisation and the influx of modernity from the West, it had been the 'civilisation' of Islam. Indeed, many argued that Islam, as a system of values and ideas starkly opposed to Western liberalism which incentivises sectarian violence against 'infidels', represents a grave threat not only to international security, but also to US global dominance. However, what this essay will attempt to achieve is a cogent analysis of the actual potency of Islam to threaten US hegemony by firstly examining the historic and ideological roots of the antagonism between the two 'civilisations'. Secondly, the essay will examine the true impact of Islam upon the Muslim world and the international system at both a societal and political level. In conclusion, hopefully, the essay will have painted a more accurate picture of the nature, goals and limitations of Islam.

US and Islam: An Uneasy Relationship

Firstly, however, one must look at the background which shaped the present relationship between the United States and the Islamic world as it is a vital element in establishing why the US perceives Islam as a threat and whether it is entitled to do so. It becomes obvious early on that the US have a fundamentally distorted image of political Islam as being radical and dangerous. However, when examining the roots of revitalised Islamic culture one cannot ignore the indirect role that the US and the West played in its emergence as a driving force in the Muslim World in modern times. Indeed, the revivalism of Islamic values in the Middle East in the latter half of the twentieth century did not happen by accident; to the contrary, it was born out of disillusionment with the secular, authoritarian, and often pro-Western governments which had sought to modernise Muslim states subsequent to the collapse of the Ottoman Empire[3]. The lack of economic development, social inequality and oppressiveness of authoritarian regimes were understandable causes of public frustration and discontent as the need to return to the traditional values of Islam grew.

On the other hand, the influence of Western values and popular culture through the steadily increasing process of globalisation over the last half a century, particularly after the end of the Cold War, caused a loss of identity within Muslim societies and sparked a reactionary revival of the Islamic culture. According to Rothkopf, "American music, American movies, American television (…) are so dominant (…) and so visible that they are now available literally everywhere on the Earth. They influence the tastes, lives and aspirations of virtually every nation. In some, they are

viewed as corrupting."[4] On the other hand, America's foreign policy has also caused great aversion towards Western involvement in the Muslim world: "For most Muslims, antipathy towards America is not based on opposition to 'American values' of democracy and freedom. It is (…) grounded in (…) aspects of American foreign policy, especially the perception of Washington's operation of blatant double standards in relation to the Middle East"[5]. It should come as no surprise then, particularly to the USA, that there is a clear and widespread powerful anti-American sentiment in the Islamic world[6].

In the case of the United States, foreign policy is both a cause and a result of their intrinsic misconceptions about Islam. On the one hand, there is serious discontent in the Muslim world with regards to American foreign policy on the Arab-Israeli conflict and their double standards in friendship with secular oppressive regimes. On the other, after the events of 9/11, the fight against terrorism and Islam more generally soared to the very top of the American foreign policy agenda: "the campaign against global terrorism is now the central aim of US foreign and defence policy, and other international goals will be subordinated to this broad objective."[7] This quote is vital in understanding the perspective that the US have of the Muslim world. To subordinate one's foreign policy agenda under the single goal of countering fundamentalist terrorism implies perceiving Islam through the lens of terrorist threats and dealing with Muslim states accordingly – an example of which is the intransigence with which President Bush II asserted in 2001 that "either you are with us or you are with the terrorists"[8]. The absence of the option of neutrality puts states in the Middle East (and not only) in an uncomfortable position while the possibility of Muslim states being pitted against one another over allegiance with America reinforces the image of the US as an imperial, self-interested state, insensitive to the opinions of others. In turn, Arab and Islamic states' hesitancy to become involved in the American effort raised suspicions about their dedication to the cause; thus is built a cycle of mistrust between the US and Muslim states.

Another element which became clear after the proclamation of the 'war on terror' and sealed by the National Security Strategy of 2002 was that America had found in Islam the adversary it perhaps needed in order to justify its own role on the international stage – that of leader and protector of the free world. Arguably, this stands testimony to the post-Cold War internal crisis of the US which, after decades of identifying its international position as opposed to the Soviet Union, became an aimless superpower. Indeed, after a decade adrift, America seemed to have found a new enemy entity around which to articulate its foreign policy agenda: "if the demise of the Soviet Bloc can be said to have triggered a growing fixation on Islam as the object of post-Cold War ideological displacement (…) September 11th and the subsequent 'War on Terror' certainly sealed its fate as a main focus of intellectual and geo-strategic enquiry"[9]. This reinforces the argument that the threat of Islam is a largely artificial Western construction, rooted in America's inherent need of justifying their own power and based on a distorted and inaccurate image of political Islam, in which its potency and goals have been exaggerated. One must suggest that, while Islam is reactionary, it is not radical or dangerous – it represents an alternative, vastly different system to what the West offers, precisely because it is moulded to the needs of the Muslim world.

Islam: a Social Ideology

However, to dismiss Islam as the reactionary force which is destined to counterbalance US power and threaten their hegemony in the new millennium does not mean to discount the impact that the culture of Islam has had within Muslim societies. To the contrary, it is a central argument of this essay that the revivalism of Islamic values under the auspices mentioned earlier was vital to returning equilibrium and a sense of identity to the Muslim world. It stands proof to the reality that, while the West and particularly the US have been largely successful in exporting their values through the galvanised process of globalisation, it was a hasty generalisation to assume that there would global unanimity in accepting Western ideology. This would seem to invalidate Francis Fukuyama's 'End of History' thesis and concur with the predictions made by Samuel Huntington that cultural and civilisational disparities are incongruous – as he reiterated in 2007, "cultural identities, antagonisms and affiliations will not only play a role, but play a major role in relations between states"[10]. Huntington's theory on the probability of cultures playing a fundamental part in the shaping of international relations in the twenty first century has, of course, its merits. Perhaps the most significant aspect of his thesis is the sheer recognition of the existence of different, unique and independently established cultures.

The Essentially Misunderstood Nature of Political Islam

Written by Ioana Tartacuta

This notion is crucial because it implies that 'civilisations' other than the West, including Islam, are not backward for the single reason that they have not reached a model or system of values similar to the West and are not, consequently, "uncivilised stragglers of modernity"[11]; they have simply evolved on a different path. It follows that the values advocated by Islam are not archaic or dated but subscribe to a different societal order than what the West has developed. This, ultimately, brings one back to the reasoning behind the vehement reaction against the homogenising effect of cultural globalisation in Muslim societies; the alarm with which Muslims repudiated the alien Western values and turned instead to traditional Islam should not be regarded as a rejection of modernity but as an affirmation of Islamic cultural consciousness. Islam offers Muslim societies the opportunity to remain culturally independent in an increasingly uniform world and is undoubtedly a source of great pride. Indeed, one of the texts analysed as part of the research for this essay refers to a mediaeval scholar, Ibn Khaldun, who speaks of the notion of *asabiyya* which "binds groups together through a common language, culture and code of behaviour. (…) With *asabiyya*, society fulfils its primary purpose to transmit with integrity its values and ideas to the next generation."[12] The reason why this element is vital in answering the main research question of whether Islam poses a threat to US hegemony is the directionality and goal of Islam as a social ideology: Islam is not, as in many ways Western culture is, expansionist; instead, it is inner-directed. The goal of Islam at a societal level is mainly to save Muslim societies from corruption from the outside and a perversion of traditional values from within. That cannot be categorised as a belligerent or radical aim as it targets specifically the domestic environment within the Muslim world.

In relation to the idea that Muslim societies follow their own path to modernity, it has been suggested that Islam as a societal and cultural bedrock of Muslim societies is fluid and, for all its drawing on a mythical past, is in a continuous process of modernisation under its intellectuality. Indeed, the argument is that modernity permeates the strata of Muslim societies at a different pace and perhaps in a region-specific personalised form. However, in the opinion of many authors it is unquestionable that the phenomenon is taking place and it cannot be stopped or overturned. The notion that Islamic states are not stagnant but are continuously evolving internally, albeit on a different route than the West has gone down, is significant. To quote Ali Mazrui: "one must distinguish between democratic principles and humane principles. In some humane principles – including stabilising the family, security from social violence, and the relatively non-racial nature of religious institutions – the Muslim world may be ahead of the West."[13] The argument put forward is that while democracy advocates freedom, liberties and peace, results in practice do not always do the theory any justice. Street violence, racist and ethnic crimes are cogent examples of how the values the West exports are not protected domestically. As a counterpoint, in fundamentalist regimes such as Iran, the Islamic code of conduct translates in an increased safety of their citizens: "Iranians are more subject to their government than Americans, but they are less at risk from the depredations of their fellow citizens."[14] Mazrui's is an interesting interpretation of the inextricable link which US rhetoric has built between peace and the democracy-liberalism duo, since it suggests that the universal acceptance that the governing system of democracy is a prerequisite to achieving global peace is not a fundamental necessity.

Of course, the other side of the argument of Muslim societies' irrepressible course towards modernity are the events of the 'Arab Spring'. Especially in the case of Egypt – a country in which human rights had been stifled for decades under authoritarian military regimes, most notably that of Hosni Mubarak – and the eruption of public discontent following the toppling of the Tunisian administration one can identify an almost desperate effort to liberate their nation from oppressiveness through popular revolution and achieve sudden societal modernisation in a very Western sense of the word, by implementing a democratic governing system. The Islamic movement the Muslim Brotherhood was, as expected, part of the opposition but it remains to be seen whether they will gain control of Egypt following elections. Egypt is an interesting example, firstly because of America's change of stance on the issue: in the first few days of the insurrection, when it appeared as though Mubarak would regain control, both Obama and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton spoke of US' support for the Egyptian regime and the long lasting friendship between the two states. After it became clear, however, that the demonstrations would not quiet down the US performed a morally dubious 180° change of perspective, advocating for the spread of the wave of democracy in Africa and the Middle East and 'washing their hands' of Mubarak. This stands testimony, on the one hand, to America's double standards of promoting democratic enlargement while maintaining friendly relations with governments such as Egypt's and, on the other, of how volatile US loyalty is to their allies when public opinion and the mass media become discontent. Secondly, the Egyptian revolution is significant because it shows that the evolutionary path of Muslim societies is not set in stone: it was possible for the reactionary Muslim Brotherhood to be involved in a revolutionary movement which

might bring about democracy, very much a Western concept. Whether Egypt will achieve a successful switchover to democracy and Islamic movements will participate in such a government or the country will abandon democratisation in favour of establishing another Islamic state of course remains to be seen. More generally, if the future of Muslim societies is, as Mazrui argues, in following the path of a modernising Islam or, to the contrary, a slow-paced partial infusion of Western values is an issue only time can settle.

However, the essential element that must be highlighted with regards to social Islam is that, for all its strengths and weaknesses, it is strictly confined within the borders of the Muslim world. It has been, as has been mentioned, enormously attractive, especially in times of domestic hardship, but the "universe [of Islamic values] has a finite scope: It stops where Islam stops and therefore is not expansionist toward the Western world or the East Asian world outside of Malaysia and Indonesia"[15]. Undoubtedly, it creates a barrier in the expansion of Western civilisation by providing an alternative cultural framework which permits Muslim societies to remain in contact with their traditional values in an increasingly homogenised world, but even if one were to acknowledge social Islam as a 'threat' to Western cultural expansion, this argument would only apply *regionally*; beyond the borders of the Muslim world there is no appeal or need for Islamic values and indeed, Islamist movements have no global ambitions.

That being said and the merits of Huntington's thesis having been acknowledged, one must now turn to highlighting the issues with said theory. Although much ink has already been dedicated to challenging Huntington this essay will focus on a particular and crucial element of the 'Clash of Civilisations' which has facilitated the propagation of the image of Islam as endangering the interests of the US. This, of course, is the hypothesis that civilisational cleavages are irrepressible and likely to result in conflict and violence. Cultural affiliations are expected to dictate the alliances of the future and therefore the US should be suspicious of friendship with any state that does not belong to the Western civilisation. Not only does this theory paint the future of the international system as one of global distrust and disunity, much more so than it has been during the Cold War due to the sheer number of 'enemy' civilisations, but, more significantly, it plays into the afore-mentioned propensity of US administrations to identify and construct enemies – in this case Islam – threatening American world dominance.

As Rubenstein and Crocker sum up this 'danger': "fortunately the West is now on top, but other civilisations are finally developing the economic, military and cultural capacities to challenge Western hegemony and reshape the world though the lens of non-Western values and beliefs"[16]. However, where the Harvard professor and the US vision no longer concur is on the means in which to react to the civilisational threat. In his article "The West Vs. The Rest", Samuel Huntington asserts that in the new millennium, "the time has come for the West to abandon the illusion of universality and to promote the strength, coherence and vitality of its civilisation. (…) Promoting the coherence of the West means both preserving Western culture within the West and defining the limits of the West."[17] While Huntington advocates a modern form of isolationism behind the clearly established borders of Western civilisation, the US have chosen the path of profound involvement in the Arab and Islamic world, both multilateral – as was the case in Afghanistan or Libya – or without the support of the vast majority of the international community – as was the case with Iraq. Either way, the severe misunderstanding of the civilisation of Islam and of civilisational interaction more generally are elements which Huntington and the US foreign policy makers seem to have in common.

Islam: a Political Ideology

Of course, the most important ramification of Islam, at least in what the US are concerned, is its influence upon Muslim politics, particularly through the emergence of Islamic regimes and opposition movements. That is because, intuitively, it is mainly through this political facet that Islam comes into contact with the West on the international stage. Furthermore there is, as has been argued so far, a fear that by means of this political interaction the civilisational incongruities would manifest with ill effects on American hegemony. However, the point that the essay will consistently make throughout this section, by use of both theory and examples, is that despite their religious background, Islamic regimes behave extremely pragmatically once transposed in a political environment, and particularly so in foreign policy. Therefore, one might argue that the anxiety with which the United States perceives Islamist regimes is unfounded, as they function, in all intent and purposes, very similarly to secular ones.

The Essentially Misunderstood Nature of Political Islam

Written by Ioana Tartacuta

Indeed, it has been suggested that once removed from the realm of the spiritual and moved into that of politics, Islamic regimes are faced with the practicalities of policy making: "to play the game of politics is to grapple with the practicalities of power (…); Muslims who seek to reshape the world according to Islamic ideas and traditions (…) are confronted by the mundane need to bend an often obdurate reality to their will"[18]. One must admit this is a fascinating paradox of political Islam: although the very bedrock of their programme is based on consistent, unambiguous religious goals, Islamist regimes must be fundamentally politically driven and their policies must be contextual. Fundamentalist Hamas is perhaps one of the most cogent examples faced with this conundrum. Although Hamas is classified as a terrorist organisation by many nation states including the US, one cannot ignore the notion that it acquired domestic political legitimacy after the legislative elections of January 2006. In practical terms, the surprising ascent to power has translated in a sudden need to adapt and differentiate between Hamas' rigid and fundamentalist ideology and focus instead on the immediate necessities of the Palestinian people – the obvious conclusion to be drawn from this being that, once in the political realm, accountability is not longer to God but to the people. The fact that short term practical political goals can and do take precedence in front of the long term religious goals of *jihad* stands testimony to the vital compromise that Hamas has had to make in order to survive as a viable political entity:

Hamas has developed its own arbitration mechanism to negotiate the middle ground between its religious ideology and its need to play the political game (…). While retaining its authoritative statement of its fundamentalist creed (…), it has innovated ways of allowing its leaders to declare or acquiesce in political positions that contradict its creed.[19]

Therefore, the changing of tactics by Hamas is, in every respect, unequivocal proof that, even in the case of radical Islamic regimes, conciliation between ideology and pragmatism is not only possible, but fundamental in order to maintain public support and survive in government.

One the other hand, it is not only domestically that Islamist regimes must adapt to the realities and demands of the political arena. Of course, one can easily identify the reasoning behind Western fear over the international behaviour of Islamic states in the militant message of Islam and the potential of political Islam to mix spirituality with political power. In a Western world dominated by apathy concerning the political process, regimes which use an often virulent anti-Western rhetoric as part of their political discourse have the capacity to galvanise the masses far beyond what any secular government could achieve. Despite this, practice has disproven this theory: "in dealing with the non-Islamic world (…) fundamentalist states and opposition groups adopt a more variegated and pragmatic foreign policy that closely approximates the realist paradigm"[20]. Ultimately, Islamic regimes represent the interests of the nations which have appointed them on a global scale and it is a fact that the survival in the international system in any modern sense of the word requires cooperation, tolerance and compromise. Therefore, it is imperative of Islamic states to adopt a realist approach to their foreign policy agenda – in that sense political Islam behaves similarly, if not identically, to secular governments. Subscribing to the established framework of the international system means, in essence, that Islamic states seek to become integrated in rather than isolated from the rest of the world. One must then argue that the goals of Islamic states are not to 'thwart' US hegemony, but to further their national interests and compete, much like any nation, for power and wealth.

Although there are many examples to illustrate this propensity of Islamic states to act in accordance with international norms and the *realpolitik* paradigm, the lack of space limits oneself to but a couple. Firstly, it has been argued that even in the case of some of the most radical Islamist organisations, and here one returns to Hamas, there is a sense of acquiescence of international law as they try to justify their more dubious actions through the principles of just-war and self-defence: "Hamas (…) make convoluted attempts to describe the employment of terrorist tactics against Israeli civilians as self-defence. These may sound implausible but are a tacit admission that non-combatants should not be targeted"[21]. Although Hamas' violence is not be ignored or excused, it is by no means the only actor engaging in aggression of another state – the assassination of Osama bin Laden on Pakistani soil without the knowledge of the administration by the US could be considered an unlawful breach of sovereignty. Secondly, there is, of course, the complex case of Iran, which is perhaps one of the most visible and feared Islamic regimes at the present moment. That the Ahmadinejad administration employs a virulent and sometimes belligerent rhetoric against the US and their involvement in the Middle East is beyond contention; however, one must argue that, when it comes to the actions of the Iranian government, they are largely rational and fall within the realist paradigm.

The Essentially Misunderstood Nature of Political Islam

Written by Ioana Tartacuta

Of course, the main reason why the US are wary of Iran is the illegal development of a nuclear programme beyond the limits set by the Non-Proliferation Treaty. Furthermore, Iran, on their part, have done everything in their power to antagonise and increase suspicion about their enterprises through Ahamdinejad's own addresses as well as the refusal to allow international inspections of potential nuclear sites. Despite this apparent aggressiveness and ignorance towards international norms in general and American hegemony in particular, Iran's actions have so far been as realist and national interest oriented as one would expect of any self-respecting regime. One could easily understand Iran's endeavour to acquire nuclear weapons in terms of a measure of self-defence – without excusing Iran's undiplomatic manner of tackling the issue, as Kenneth Waltz suggests, one need only examine Iran's geo-strategic position. Firstly, Iran borders fragile and volatile states such as Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iraq; secondly, American involvement within these nations coupled with the more or less subtle threats made by US administration against the Iranian regime means that Iran has every reason to worry about its territorial integrity and safety[22]. Developing a nuclear programme would seem entirely rational in these circumstances as a measure of self-defence through deterrence; so far this tactic has been successful but it remains to be seen what the future holds for US-Iranian relations.

Conclusion

All in all, one hopes that the essay has fulfilled its goal of, firstly, painting a more accurate painting of Islam and, secondly, proving that it does not, by any standards, represent a real threat to American global hegemony. The point has consistently made throughout that the US has, in effect, constructed an enemy, drawing a distorted over-simplified image of Islam as a dangerous culture and incubator for fundamentalist terrorism. From the very beginning the essay rejected the notion that Islam is radical and suggested that the portraying it as such is a direct consequence of America's inherent misconceptions about the scope and reach of Islamic values. Historically there has been animosity between the US and the Islamic cultures particularly surrounding American meddling with that part of the world, which has been political as well as cultural. The revivalism of Islamic values can be partly traced back to this interference and can be interpreted as an alternative designed to protect Muslim societies from the effects of globalisation. Islam has been argued to be most attractive as a social ideology, with only regional reach, in effect not having the capacity or even the purpose of upsetting the international balance of power. Migrating into the political realm through Islamic regimes does not mean that Islam represents any more of a threat to the US. Quite to the contrary practice has proven that even the most 'radical' of Islamist regimes act in a manner subscribing to the *realpolitik* paradigm seeking to be integrated in the international system rather than isolating their states from it. One must conclude that if the US were to reassess and correct their views of Islam they may discover not only that a different culture does not pose a threat to their hegemony but also that this would result in a more peaceful international system.

Bibliography

Ali, W., "Is Political Islam a Threat to The West", *The Guardian*, 23 January 2009, (electronic version – paging unknown), http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/belief/2009/jan/23/religion-islam-doha-debates [accessed 10 November 2011].

Ayoob, M., "The Future of Political Islam – The Importance of External Variables", *International Affairs*, 81:5 (October 2005), pp. 951-961.

Azzam, M., "Battle of Ideas", *The World Today*, 63:5 (May 2007), pp. 17-19.

Azzam, M., "Islam and the West – Cartoons, Confrontation and a Cry for Respect", *The World Today* 62:4 (April 2006), pp. 7-8.

Burke, J., "9/11 Anniversary – Smoke and Dust", *The World Today* 67:8 (August/September 2011), pp. 7-9.

The Essentially Misunderstood Nature of Political Islam

Written by Ioana Tartacuta

Bush, G.W., "Address to Joint Session of Congress – Transcript", CCN Website, 21 September 2001, http://articles.cnn.com/2001-09-20/us/gen.bush.transcript_1_joint-session-national-anthem-citizens?_s=PM:US [accessed 15 December 2011].

Buzan, B., "Civilizational *Realpolitik* as the New World Order? Review Essay", *Survival*, 39:1 (Spring 1997), pp. 180-183.

Calvert, J., "The Islamist Syndrome of Cultural Confrontation", *Orbis*, 46:2 (Spring 2002), pp.333-349.

Dalacoura, K., "Violence, September 11 and the Interpretations of Islam", *International Relations,* 16:2 (August 2002), pp. 269-273.

Fair, C.C. and B. Shepherd, "Who Supports Terrorism? Evidence from Fourteen Muslim Countries", *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, 29:1 (2006), pp. 51-74.

Fukuyama, F., *The End of History and the Last Man* (London: Penguin Books, 1993).

Haqqani, H., "Islam's Weakened Moderates", *Foreign Policy*, 137 (July-August 2003), pp. 61-63.

Huntington, S.P., "The Clash of Civilization?", *Foreign Affairs*, 72:3 (Summer 1993), pp. 22-49

Huntington, S.P., "The Clash of Civilization Revisited", *New Perspectives Quarterly*, 24:1 (Winter 2007), pp. 53-59.

Huntington, S.P., "The West v the Rest", *The Guardian*, 23 November 1996, (electronic version – pagination unknown).

Jordan, J. And L. Boix, "Al-Qaeda and Western Islam", *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 16:1 (2007), pp. 1-17.

Karabell, Z., "Fundamental Misconceptions – Islamic Foreign Policy", *Foreign Policy*, 105 (Winter 1996/1997), pp. 77-92

Kazmi, Z.A., "Discipline and Power: Interpreting Global Islam – A Review Essay", *Review of International Studies*, 30 (2004), pp.245-254

Klein, M., "Hamas in Power", Middle East Journal, 61:3 (Summer 2007), pp. 442-459

Krebs, R.R., "Rethinking the Battle of Ideas: How the United States Can Help Muslim Moderates", *Orbis*, 52:2 (Spring 2008), pp. 332-346

Mamdami, M., "Whither Political Islam?", *Foreign Affairs*, 84:1 (January-February 2005), pp. 148-155

Mazrui, A.A., "Islamic and Western Values", *Foreign Affairs*, 76:5 (October 1997), pp. 118-132

Murden, S., "Culture in World Affairs" in J Baylis, S. Smith and P. Owens (eds), *The Globalization of World Politics – An Introduction to International Relation* 4th Edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), pp. 418-431.

Rothkopf, D., "In Praise of Cultural Imperialism?", *Foreign Policy*, 107 (Summer 1997), pp. 38-53, http://www.jstor.org.ezproxy.lib.le.ac.uk/stable/pdfplus/1149331.pdf [accessed 10 November 2011].

Rubenstein, R.E. and J. Crocker, "Challenging Huntington", *Foreign Policy*, 96 (Autumn 1994), pp. 113-128

Sagan, S., K. Waltz and R.K. Betts, "A Nuclear Iran: Promoting Stability or Courting Disaster?", *Journal of International Affairs*, 60:2 (Spring/Summer 2007), pp. 135-150,

The Essentially Misunderstood Nature of Political Islam
Written by Ioana Tartacuta

Smith, S., "The End of the Unipolar Moment? September 11 and the future of World Order", *International Relations*, 16:2 (2002), pp. 171-183

Tripp, C., "All (Muslim) Politics is Local – How Context Shapes Islam in Power", *Foreign Affairs* 88:5 (September/October 2009), pp. 124-129.

Walt, S.M., "Beyond bin Laden: Reshaping US Foreign Policy", *International Security*, 26:3 (Winter 2001/02), pp. 56-78.

[1] F. Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (London: Penguin Books, 1993).

[2] S.P. Huntington, "The Clash of Civilization?", *Foreign Affairs*, 72:3 (Summer 1993), p. 22, http ://go.galegroup.com.ezproxy.lib.le.ac.uk/ps/retrieve.do?sgHitCountType=None&sort=DA-SORT& inPS=true&prodId=EAIM&userGroupName=leicester&tabID=T002&searchId=R1&resultListType =RESULT_LIST&contentSegment=&searchType=AdvancedSearchForm&currentPosition=4&co ntentSet=GALE%7CA13187561&&docId=GALE|A13187561&docType=GALE&role [accessed 10 November 2011].

[3] S. Murden, "Culture in World Affairs" in J Baylis, S. Smith and P. Owens (eds), *The Globalization of World Politics – An Introduction to International Relation* 4th Edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 426.

[4] D. Rothkopf, "In Praise of Cultural Imperialism?", *Foreign Policy*, 107 (Summer 1997), p. 43, http://www.jstor.org.ezproxy.lib.le.ac.uk/stable/pdfplus/1149331.pdf [accessed 10 November 2011].

[5] M. Ayoob, "The Future of Political Islam – The Importance of External Variables", *International Affairs*, 81:5 (October 2005), p. 960, http://www.jstor.org.ezproxy.lib.le.ac.uk/sici?sici=0020-5850 %282005%2981%3A5%3C951%3ATFOPIT%3E2.0.CO%3B2-9&origin=serialsolutions [accessed 10 November 2011].

[6] H. Haqqani, "Islam's Weakened Moderates", *Foreign Policy*, 137 (July-August 2003), p. 61, http://www.jstor.org.ezproxy.lib.le.ac.uk/stable/pdfplus/3183693.pdf [accessed 10 November 2011].

[7] S.M. Walt, "Beyond bin Laden: Reshaping US Foreign Policy", *International Security*, 26:3 (Winter 2001/02), p. 64, http://muse.jhu.edu.ezproxy.lib.le.ac.uk/journals/international_security/v026/26.3walt.html [accessed 10 November 2011].

[8] G.W. Bush, "Address to Joint Session of Congress – Transcript", CCN Website, 21 September 2001, http://articles.cnn.com/2001-09-20/us/gen.bush.transcript_1_joint-session-national-anthem-citizens?_s=PM:US [accessed 15 December 2011].

The Essentially Misunderstood Nature of Political Islam

Written by Ioana Tartacuta

[9] Z.A. Kazmi, "Discipline and Power: Interpreting Global Islam – A Review Essay", *Review of International Studies*, 30 (2004), p. 245, http://www.jstor.org.ezproxy.lib.le.ac.uk/stable/pdfplus/20097912.pdf [accessed 10 November 2011].

[10] S.P., Huntington, "The Clash of Civilization Revisited", *New Perspectives Quarterly*, 24:1 (Winter 2007), p. 53, http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com.ezproxy.lib.le.ac.uk/doi/10.1111/j.1540-5842.2007.00868.x/pdf [accessed 10 November 2011].

[11] Murden (2008), p. 429.

[12] Ahmed, quote in Kazmi (2004), p. 249

[13] A.A. Mazrui, "Islamic and Western Values", *Foreign Affairs*, 76:5 (October 1997), pp. 131-132, http://content.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.lib.le.ac.uk/pdf10/pdf/1997/FAF/01Sep97/97120 70263.pdf?T=P&P=AN&K=9712070263&S=R&D=buh&EbscoContent=dGJyMNLe80Sep644z OX0OLCmr0meprVSrq24SLSWxWXS&ContentCustomer=dGJyMPGusUmvrbZIuePfgeyx44Dt6 fIA [accessed 10 November 2011].

[14] Ibid., p.130.

[15] Z. Karabell, "Fundamental Misconceptions – Islamic Foreign Policy", *Foreign Policy*, 105 (Winter 1996/1997), p. 83, http://web.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.lib.le.ac.uk/ehost/delivery?sid=3a3 84753-2c37-4b17-bd1d-b681fb91c836%40sessionmgr15&vid=5&hid=8 [accessed 10 November 2011].

[16] R.E. Rubenstein and J. Crocker, "Challenging Huntington", *Foreign Policy*, 96 (Autumn 1994), p. 114, http://www.jstor.org.ezproxy.lib.le.ac.uk/stable/pdfplus/1149220.pdf [accessed 10 November 2011].

[17] S.P. Huntington, "The West v the Rest", *The Guardian*, 23 November 1996, (electronic version – pagination unknown), http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.lib.le.ac.uk/docview/294991250?accountid=7420 [accessed 10 November 2011].

[18] C. Tripp, "All (Muslim) Politics is Local – How Context Shapes Islam in Power", *Foreign Affairs* 88:5 (September/October 2009), p. 125.

[19] M. Klein, "Hamas in Power", Middle East Journal, 61:3 (Summer 2007), pp. 458-459, http://www.jstor.org.ezproxy.lib.le.ac.uk/sici?sici=0026-3141%282007%2961%3A3%3C442%3AHIP%3E2.0.CO%3B2-F&origin=serialsolutions [accessed 16 December 2011].

[20] Karabell (1996/1997), p. 84.

[21] K. Dalacoura, "Violence, September 11 and the Interpretations of Islam", *International Relations,* 16:2 (August 2002), p. 270, http://ire.sagepub.com.ezproxy.lib.le.ac.uk/content/16/2/269.full.pdf+html [accessed 10 November 2011].

[22] S. Sagan, K. Waltz and R.K. Betts, "A Nuclear Iran: Promoting Stability or Courting Disaster?", *Journal of International Affairs*, 60:2 (Spring/Summer 2007), p. 137, http://go.galegroup.com.ezproxy.lib.le.ac.uk/ps/retrieve.do?sgHitCountType=None&sort=DA-SORT&inPS=true&prodId=EAIM&userGroupName=leicester&tabID=T002&searchId=R1&resultListType=RESULT_LIST&contentSegment=&searchType=AdvancedSearchForm&currentPosition=1&contentSet=GALE%7CA163199297&&docId=GALE|A163199297&docType=GALE&role= [accessed 10 November 2011].

—

Written by: Ioana Tartacuta
Written at: University of Leicester
Written for: Dr. Jan Moran
Date written: December 2011