

Mon. Morning ---Husain Haqqani (former Pakistan ambassador) with Daveed Gartenstein-Ross (Georgetown University)

H: U.S. doesn't do history or patience well.

- Partition of India into India and Pakistan caused Pakistan's orientation to Mideast rather than South Asia.
- Main problem with Mideast is that countries are contrived --- borders set by colonial powers with the collapse of the Ottoman empire after WWI.
- Examples: Urdu spoken in Pakistan derives from Hindi and the Indus river flows through Pakistan.
- Lebanon created by France.
- Colonials created and supported minority authoritarian governments.
- Egypt, Turkey and Iran are the only Mideast countries with historic borders.
- Contrived nations are controlled by ideology with Islam as a unifier.
- Bad idea to assume liberal democracy will arise from chaos.
- Ideological battle must be fought by locals but US can lead a multinational attack against IS.
- Islamists come across as more authentic, local, less corrupt.
- The population is young; better education would help.
- Women in the Muslim world are more progressive than men.
- Pakistan was 3% Wahabi in 1951, now 33%; all Sufi musicians have fled. Blame Saudis.
- US aid benefits US contractors and corrupt officials overseas.
- Need sustainable projects, e.g. basic low-tech schools (books, blackboards, teachers, not computers.)

D: Isis is great at Twitter: internet allows deep relationships with fringe ideas

- Think of states as legacy industries with non-state actors like IS as new and entrepreneurial industries.
- Situation is very confusing: e.g. Al-Qaeda's Al-Nusra front is supported by US allies because it fights IS.
- US is slow to recognize the power of foreign, particularly religious, ideologies.
- WE should take IS ideology seriously but IS is too authoritarian to rule long-term.

Tues. morning: Jawad Nabulsi (Egyptian activist) and Robin Wright (US journalist)

N: Lived in Canada, returned to Egypt in Arab spring, lost an eye there in demonstrations.

- Egypt: 70% are under 35, 70% of kids in school are illiterate.
- Uprising: 7500 blinded by birdshot, hospitals ordered not to take in protestors.
- Govt. shut down cellular network, caused people to go to the street to find out what was happening.
- Egyptians had new confidence, he thought Morsi gov't. should have been allowed though he didn't like it.
- New military regime killed 600 in one day, secular revolutionaries opposed Brotherhood but also opposed the massacre.
- IS is the greatest threat, Egypt needs to spread moderate Islam.

Tues. Afternoon: Rabbi Michael Melchior (lives in Jerusalem, is also chief rabbi of Norway.)

- He is building bridges between Jews and Moslems in Jerusalem, including radical elements.
- Tries to avoid misunderstandings, e.g. about holidays.
- "The whole world has become Jewish", i.e. insecure.
- In Tunisia the Muslim Brotherhood won, then lost the next election, and some Brotherhood members celebrated the loss as a victory for democracy. That's real progress!
- Moslem "ring of peace" around synagogue in Oslo after threats.

- Press too credulous, believes crackpot “spokesmen” who may represent no one but themselves.

Wed. Morning: Stuart Bowen/Shadi Hamid

Bowen was Inspector-General in charge of auditing US funds spent on Iraq reconstruction.

Hamid is an expert on Islamism at Brookings Institution.

B: All \$62 billion spent on Iraq reconstruction was wasted! (He should know, see above.)

- Four arcs collide in Iraq:
 - Sunni/Shia: 85% of Muslims are Sunni but there is a Shia majority in Iraq.
 - Colonial (British)
 - Totalitarian (Saddam Hussein)
 - Ethnic (Persian/Arab)
- Iraq is now a worst-case scenario.
- Nuri Al-Maliki bears most of the blame for current Iraq situation.
- Huge protests now against Abadi govt.
- Ayatolla Sistani has been responsible for some reform.
- IS provides electricity while govt. can't due to corruption.
- IS is the latest version of Jihadism, which dates from 1978.
- A coalition against IS has not evolved. Most nations have problems they consider higher priority
- The Sunni rebellion against IS has been neglected by Iraq's Shia gov't.
- An opportunity was missed in Syria: the “red line”.
- It must be the locals' fight with our support rather than other way around.
- US erred in their quick shift from “Liberate and Leave” to “Rebuild and Occupy”.

H: Lived in Qatar, went to Egypt during Arab Spring.

- In the Mideast it is an existential threat when someone you don't like wins an election.
- Mideast democracy won't necessarily be liberal: there is support for more Sharia law.
- Sunnis in Iraq find IS treats them better than Shia militias do.
- No countries in the region see IS as their main threat.
- Tunisia is a bright spot where secularists and Islamists fight democratically. It needs support.
- Most clerics, including mainstream Islamists, have come out against IS.

Wed. Aft.: Daniel Ferguson, director of film “Jerusalem”

- Canadian (lives in Montreal)
- suggests the book “The Dignity of Difference” by Jonathan Saks.
- 4 perspectives in film: Christian, Muslim, Jewish, Secular.
- film was made at a time of relative thaw in relations among groups. Could not have been made today.
- 3 girls in the film (Muslim, Christian, Jewish) became friends, then grew apart as situation worsened.

Thurs. Morning: Dennis Ross/Ghaith Al-Omari

Both worked on peace process Palestine/Israel, 1999-2001, Al-Omari with Palestinian Authority, Ross with US govt. Al-Omari also worked on the unofficial Geneva Initiative.

R: The gulf between Israel/Palestine is the widest in 30 yrs; the rest of the world is otherwise occupied.

- The Palestinians are weak, demoralized: even to negotiate seems a concession.
- Peace was not an issue in the last Israeli election.
- Today's dialog is about scoring points, not solving problems.
- One-state solution won't work: all binational states in the Mideast are at war with themselves.

O: Alliances are shifting; there's no possible strategy now.

- One state with happy co-existence is impossible, two states give a possible win-win solution.
- In both areas, the majority favors two-state solution but thinks it is impossible.
- Perspective on Camp David: "we were children"
 - expected to get all they wanted.
 - failed to put selves in Israel's shoes.
 - now realize need to compromise.
 - delegitimizing other side doesn't help.
- Agreement between Hamas and PA won't work, one has to lose.
- 56% of East. Jerusalem population would rather stay in Israel, probably because of its more functional administration.

O and R: Now is not the time for negotiations that are doomed to fail.

- Both sides should limit egregious behaviour:
 - Israelis should not build settlements in future likely Palestinian state.
 - Palestinians should be careful when seeking international recognition.
- Both sides should try to improve daily life:
 - Palestinians should improve security co-operation.
 - Israelis should improve access to land.
 - Avoid negotiating, just do good things unilaterally.
- Arabs feel abandoned by US because of Iran deal.

R: Palestinians should put Israel on their maps, perhaps with original borders.

- Palestinians should stop incitement, especially on TV.

Thurs. Aft. : Albert Lincoln (Baha'i)

- Baha'i started as a heretical sect of Shia Islam in Iran.
- Its headquarters were exiled, eventually to Haifa, before establishment of Israel.
- Religion shouldn't conflict with science.
- The largest group of Bahai's is in India.
- No clergy, no missionaries, few rituals.
- Haifa is relatively peaceful, Baha'i people try to build bridges without taking sides.

Fri Morning: Two Iranians: Hossein Mousavian with Emad Kiyael

- Iran could make a nuclear bomb, sanctions didn't work.
- New deal has the most elaborate inspections and controls ever.
- There are only three possibilities: deal, war, more sanctions.
- The treaty could serve as a model for the future.
- Improved Iran/US relations should lead to improved Iran/Israel relations.

Fri. Afternoon: Jodi Magness, American archeologist, currently excavating in Israel

- Archaeology should not be used as backing for modern political arguments, e.g. who was here first.