

The Chickens Are Coming Home to Roost in Pakistan.
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Muslim governments always blame foreign meddling for all their ills. The once great Muslim world has been on the skids since 1200, when it encountered three disasters: the Bubonic Plague, the Mongol attacks cutting off old trade routes and killing as many as half the population in Persia and Byzantium, and Muslim clergy blaming lax religious adherence for these disasters. From that time, Muslim intellectual life went dark.

These disasters also opened the door to a new imperial power in the Muslim world, the Ottoman Turks, who conquered Christian Byzantium and established their imperial power throughout the North African Muslim world for 500 years, until the end of World War I.

Europe was suffering just as Muslims were in about 1250 AD. The Little Ice Age began then, which changed Europe's climate and caused widespread famine and vulnerability to the global pandemic of Black Death. But Europe came out of it and rebuilt. Their institutions of Greek and Roman learning and law, as well as Church contract law, helped them to thrive.

Why did these two civilizations take different paths? The key to Europe's rebirth was the revival of ancient learning: Greek science, Roman engineering and law, and some materials from antiquity saved by the Muslims and then adopted by the Europeans. Islam too could have had a renaissance but did not, largely because they had closed the book on learning anything new. Islam had no modernizing reformation either. They are still stuck in a world of narrow and increasingly outmoded culture and religion.

But back to pinning blame. The Muslim world remembers only European colonization, from which they have all been freed almost a century ago. They have forgotten their 500 years under Turkish colonization, probably because the Turks were Muslim and not foreign. Whom can the Arab Muslim countries blame now for their internal murderousness if not themselves?

What about non-Arab Muslims (Iranians, Turks, Afghans, Pakistanis)? Whose fault is their dysfunction? Iran still blames the British (who created their oil industry) and the Americans (who helped them modernize) instead of their own corrupt governance and hangovers from feudalism. They are just beginning to recognize that their real problem is, and has long been, internal: bad governance and for some, Shiite Islam, a religion forced on them.

Turkey, the most modernized Muslim country, has been reversing course in an attempt to re-Islamize, much to their detriment. Islam has never had a model like that of Roman secular law for their governance. It is not something that they do well.

And one need only look at Afghanistan to see dysfunction on every level, despite all of our blood and treasure wasted on them.

And then there is Pakistan, a real problem for the world. Pakistan began as a modernizing secular state, took a turn under a dictatorship into restoring its Muslim identity, and has been failing at almost everything ever since. They have nuclear weapons that could, at some point, destroy them if they stupidly decide to go to war with India.

Nuclear weapons cannot provide what they really need: a universal modern education system, clean water and sewage disposal, and good governance. Instead, they have damaged their neighbor, Afghanistan, by creating and financing the Taliban, a fanatically Islamist cult carved out of the Pashtoon tribes living on both sides of the Pakistan-Afghanistan border. Now this Pakistani-created puppet is at war with their Pakistani masters. They are attacking targets, both military and civilian, with lethal results throughout Pakistan.

Pakistan was outraged over America's drone campaigns against Taliban and Al Qaeda living in the Pashtoon tribal region of Pakistan. Now Pakistan's military is attacking this enemy themselves. Their Air Force bombs Taliban hideouts near the

Afghan border and they would like our drones to help them. There is no more talk about making peace with the Taliban. This whole problem is their own fault, not ours. The worm has turned.

When the entire Muslim world recognizes that they have nobody to blame but themselves, they might begin to change and join the modern world community. For now, the chickens have come home to roost.

682 words

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