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A PATH TO DESTRUCTION

EXPOSING THE CORRUPTION OF OUR LEADERS



Origins of the COLONIZED MIND

by Hatem Bazian

A small man equal in size to half of the trunk of the elephant can control the elephant. The trainer trains the elephant from infancy with a painful chain around his neck, eventually searing the image of the chain in the mind of the elephant. When the elephant grows up, the chain is no longer needed as an instrument of control because the mental image is far more powerful in subjugating the elephant than the actual chain itself.

The current leadership in the Arab world is the child that was brought up as the elephant in training. A relationship of master and slave was cemented from the early period of nation-state establishment in the Arab world.

The foundation of these modern regimes was constructed in order to serve the interest of European powers at the expense of Muslim and Arab society. Those who participated in the Arab revolt against Ottoman rule, those who cooperated with the British in the Gulf region and their descendants are the very ones that currently rule

many Muslim nations.

The story of the 'Great Arab Revolt' is a fairy tale that has been propagated by some Arab countries and individuals in the hope of donning on themselves the ropes of legitimacy as they moved to establish the nationalist nation-state structure. No single event in the past hundred years has transformed the landscape of the heart of the Muslim world to such an extent as did the 1916 "Arab Revolt" against Ottoman rule. In a short period of time, Muslims in the Arab world found themselves transformed into subjects of British and French colonialists.

Not only did direct colonial rule usher in the end of Ottoman Islamic rule over these territories, but it also initiated a total collapse of the Islamic structures in place for some 400 years. The change was not limited to the physical plane, but encompassed a complete and painful transformation of a society's world view and understanding of itself in relation to the rest of the world.

Muslim lands in the heart of the Arab world were protected from the ravages of European colonialism for almost 400 years by the power of the Ottomans. While colonial rule was not established until the 19th century, its roots were already being planted as early as the 15th century. The last time

that these vast lands were in the hands of non-Muslims dates back to the period of the Crusades. The "Arab Revolt" brought back the Europeans as "allies" in the "Arab cause" against the Ottomans.

The birth of a number of Arab countries was a product of the European powers' plans for the region. Countries that lacked any cohesive continuity were created to further the interest of the colonial powers. Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq and Kuwait are but a few such countries that were founded by the Europeans at the end of the first World War. The end of the war came at the same time as the direct project of colonialism was coming to an end, sparking the need for a class of "collaborators" who would maintain the colonial interest in territories that were governed directly by the Europeans.

The class of collaborators in the Arab world was already educated, trained and financed to step-in for the Europeans once independence was granted to these countries. While there are obvious exceptions in a number of countries, most Arab countries engaged in a high level of collaboration with the Europeans at the expense of their own people.

In Jordan, the British appointed Prince Abdullah as *amir* (leader) of Trans-Jordan, assigning

him an annual salary of 180,000 British pounds. The same was done with the prince of Iraq, who was placed on the throne by the British around the same time. Rules of conduct and limits were placed on these countries and these became ingrained in the state apparatuses.

The consequences of this process has led to a continuous state of dependence and the complete linking of the economy of each Arab country with its colonial master. Economic linking and behavior is explained in a variety of theories, but the main cause that many leave unexplored is the relationship of colonialism and the collaborators structure. One can make a case that many of these countries are independent and are making economic decisions based on their understanding of the market forces. However, these countries act in the market in a way that is to the detriment of their own interest. The total amount of inner-Arab trade stands at 10 percent of each of the country's overall trade while the other 90 percent is mostly directed toward the ex-colonial country or group of countries.

If the "Arab Revolt" was carried out to liberate the Arab lands from the foreign Ottoman domination, why is it that Arabs are made to feel foreign in

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CHECKMATE

under whose BANNER?

tragic reality of current muslim leadership

by Ahmed Shama

When King Hussein died, millions of Jordanians were in tears. The sadness quickly spread past the borders of the shaken Hashemite kingdom. The entire Middle East as well as the non-Arab Muslim world grieved the loss of the fallen leader. Such widespread mourning could mean one of three things. The first possibility is that King Hussein was an outstanding leader, an example for humanity and a beacon of light. Anyone with these credentials would certainly be missed after their passing. The second possibility is that he was a corrupt dictator, but with corruption so widespread, his actions seemed commonplace and nobody really looked down upon them. The third possibility is, again, that he was a corrupt dictator, but nobody realized it.

This may sound ridiculous to some, but what if it is true?

In no way is this an attempt to speak ill of a Muslim who has passed away. The debate about how to treat the late Hussein has fluctuated wildly. Some argue that since he was a Muslim, we must ask Allah to forgive him. Others argue that because he was oppressive, we mustn't feel sorrow for his loss. The decision on how to react to his passing is left to the reader.

However, it is not important to argue whether we should honor or defile his name. What is important, however, is the disturbing phenomenon that took place on Feb. 8, an overcast Monday morning in Jordan. It wasn't just that a man who had oppressed so many Muslims during a 47-year tyrannical reign as king was being praised and honored by the royal family. Neither was it the fact that men and women responsible for the shedding of literally millions of Muslims' blood attended the funeral. Nor was it the bold statement made by the new Jordanian king, 37-year-old Abdullah, promising the world that he would continue in his father's style of rule.

Jordanians joined hands in praising their former tyrant. They felt a sense of honor due to all the "glamorous" foreign dignitaries attending the funeral and paying their respects. This was despite the fact that attendees included the likes of American President Bill Clinton and

British Prime Minister Tony Blair, who are responsible for the deaths of over a million Iraqi civilians; Russian President Boris Yeltsin, who is single-handedly responsible for the devastating war against the Muslims in Chechnya; and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Foreign Minister Ariel Sharon, who have both been involved in terrorist attacks against Palestinian civilians. And finally, they wholeheartedly welcomed the young American-educated King Abdullah with open arms, despite his promises to collaborate with Netanyahu, whom he considers a "brother."

The facts are clear: the Jordanian royal family has sold its people out. In pursuit of money and power, it has made its people poor and weak. While implementing a program of Westernization and degradation upon its people, it has systematically combated Islam, attempting to weaken its undying influence in the Middle East.

But this illness, like the grief for Hussein, is not confined to Jordanian borders. To observe this illness in its most manifest form, one needs only to look at the scores of dignitaries — both Muslim and non-Muslim — that lined the halls of the Raghdan Palace to pay their respects to the late monarch.

Muslims often take pride in the fact that the Islamic world extends from Morocco to Malaysia, but they very rarely pay attention to the leaders of these countries. From Moroccan King Hassan II to Malaysian Prime Minister

examples of effective muslim leadership

'Uthman dan Fodio & Ayatullah Ruhullah Khomeini

by Arif Shaikh

Living in an age when Muslim leaders are adopting the use of the Western democratic-capitalistic model to govern, it may seem there is no hope for reform. Since it has established itself as the standard, it may seem as if this Western model is indeed supreme. We must realize, however, that an Islamic system of rule is indeed possible. The absence of Islam as a ruling force in our nations has made us impoverished, "third world" countries that are forced to submit to the whims of the West.

Our supreme model for Muslim leadership is the leadership of our beloved Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). There was none like him (pbuh) in his ways; he was a guide and a teacher for an entire nation. He was the scholar of scholars, as well as a genius in military and political strategy.

Although Muslim leaders will never match the Prophet (pbuh), it is still possible to rule using the divine law of Allah. It is still possible to strive in the cause of Allah cause to build an Islamic state and rise against our enemies. We have numerous examples of people who have accomplished incredible feats using the Islamic system in their rule. Two such examples, in contemporary times, are 'Uthman dan Fodio and Ayatullah Ruhullah Khomeini.

In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, an Islamic revolutionary movement arose in Hausaland (present day northern Nigeria). The movement, led by Shehu 'Uthman dan Fodio, result-

ed in a successful *jihad* (Islamic struggle) to reinvigorate Islam in Hausaland. Islam was accepted in Hausaland by some of the chiefs and courtiers by 1500, but was not widely accepted amongst the masses. At this time, the general populace was still pagan, resulting in a mixed Islam that combined Islamic practices with animist rites and customs.

'Uthman dan Fodio and his companions were brutally persecuted because of their persistent efforts to establish Islam. Because of this, the Shehu made *hijrah* (migration) on a few occasions in order to practice Islam to the best of his ability. In one particular instance, he made the *hijrah* to a territory named Guda. The sultan of Guda dispatched an army against the Islamic community, killing some Muslims and taking others as prisoners. The Sultan sent word to the Shehu, asking him and his community to leave and travel to a distant land. The Shehu responded by saying, "I will not forsake my community, but I will leave your country, for God's earth is wide!"

By the end of the eighteenth century, Muslim scholars became increasingly vocal, criticizing un-Islamic customs and behaviors and urging the adoption of Islamic alternatives. 'Uthman dan Fodio and his companions were among the most capable and articulate of the dissenting intellectuals. Eventually, dan Fodio's frustration compelled him and his companions to use force in establishing Islam. The result was the Fulani *jihad* (struggle), which ultimately gave them control of a large part of Hausaland.

The results of 'Uthman dan Fodio's exploits were extensive. Under his leadership, the majority of the states in Hausaland were swept away and *amirs* (army commanders) were appointed over the conquered kingdoms. The Islamic state created by dan Fodio and his army was all-encompassing. They became a closed, exclusive society whose members saw their survival not only in terms of maintaining their frontiers, but also dependent on the adherence to the strict orthodoxy of Islam.

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