

The Geopolitics of Energy & Terrorism

Part 10

Iakovos Alhadeff

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Introduction

The following chapters are independent essays written in July and August 2016, and they can be read in any order.

The wars for the global resources of oil and natural gas are the topic of most essays. To a large extent, the wars of the 20th and 21st centuries were the result of energy rich countries competing to secure their exports, or the result of energy poor countries competing to secure their access to energy resources.

Many episodes of the energy wars of the 20th and 21st centuries are described in the following essays.

I.A.

August. 2016

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Sunni VS Shia : The Origin of the Schism

Very nice article from the Council of Foreign Relations about the origins of the schism of Sunni and Shia Islam.

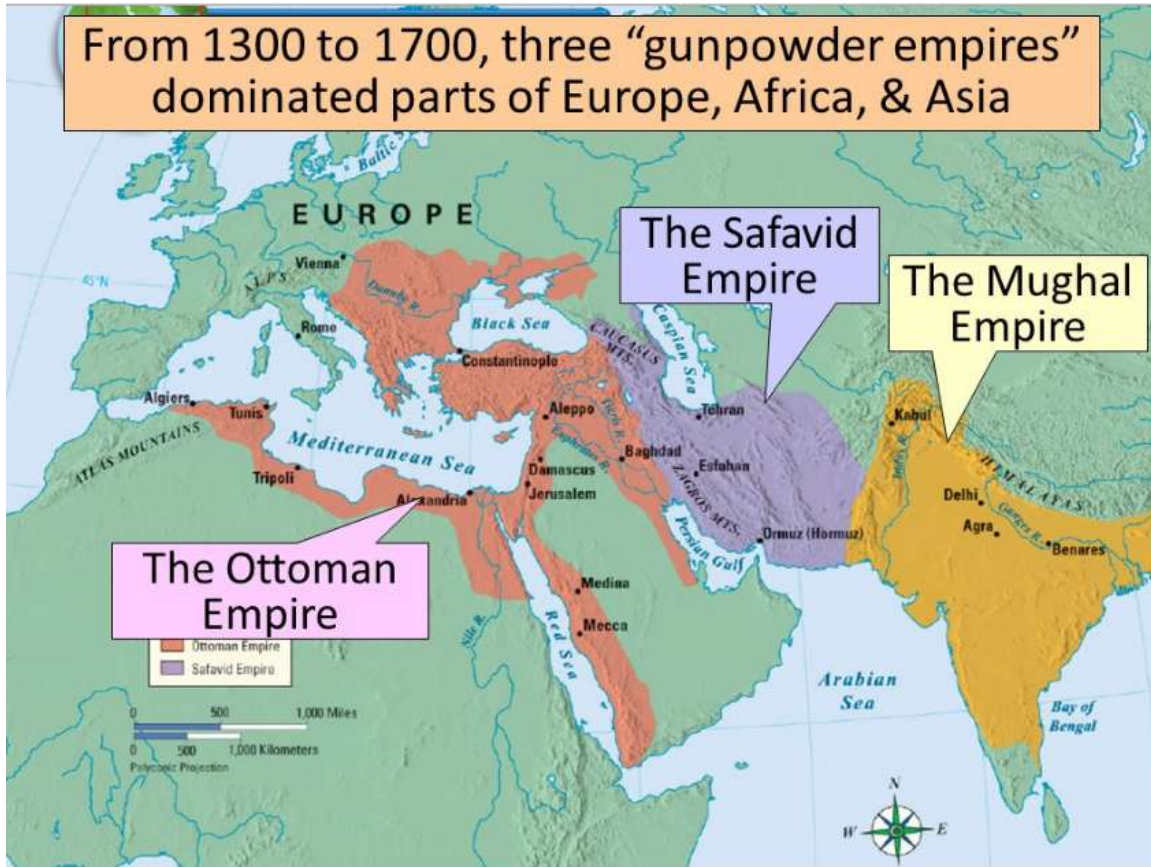


<http://www.iranpoliticsclub.net/maps/images/155%20Safavid%20Persian%20Empire%20Map.jpg>

The Persians (Safavids) converted to Shia Islam in 1501 A.D. in order to fight the Sunni Ottoman Caliphate. The borders of the time determined today's distribution of the Sunni Shia population, with Iran, Iraq and

Azerbaijan being Shia majority countries, and the rest of the Muslim World being Sunni majority. Bahrain is also a Shia majority country.

Map



http://images.slideplayer.com/24/7228575/slides/slide_2.jpg

As I have said before the Sunni-Shia schism is to a large extent the result of the fight between the Ottomans and the Persians for the fertile lands of Mesopotamia, the lands between the rivers Tiger and Euphrates.

Map



<http://mesopotamia.mrdonn.org/mesopotamia%20map.gif>

Map



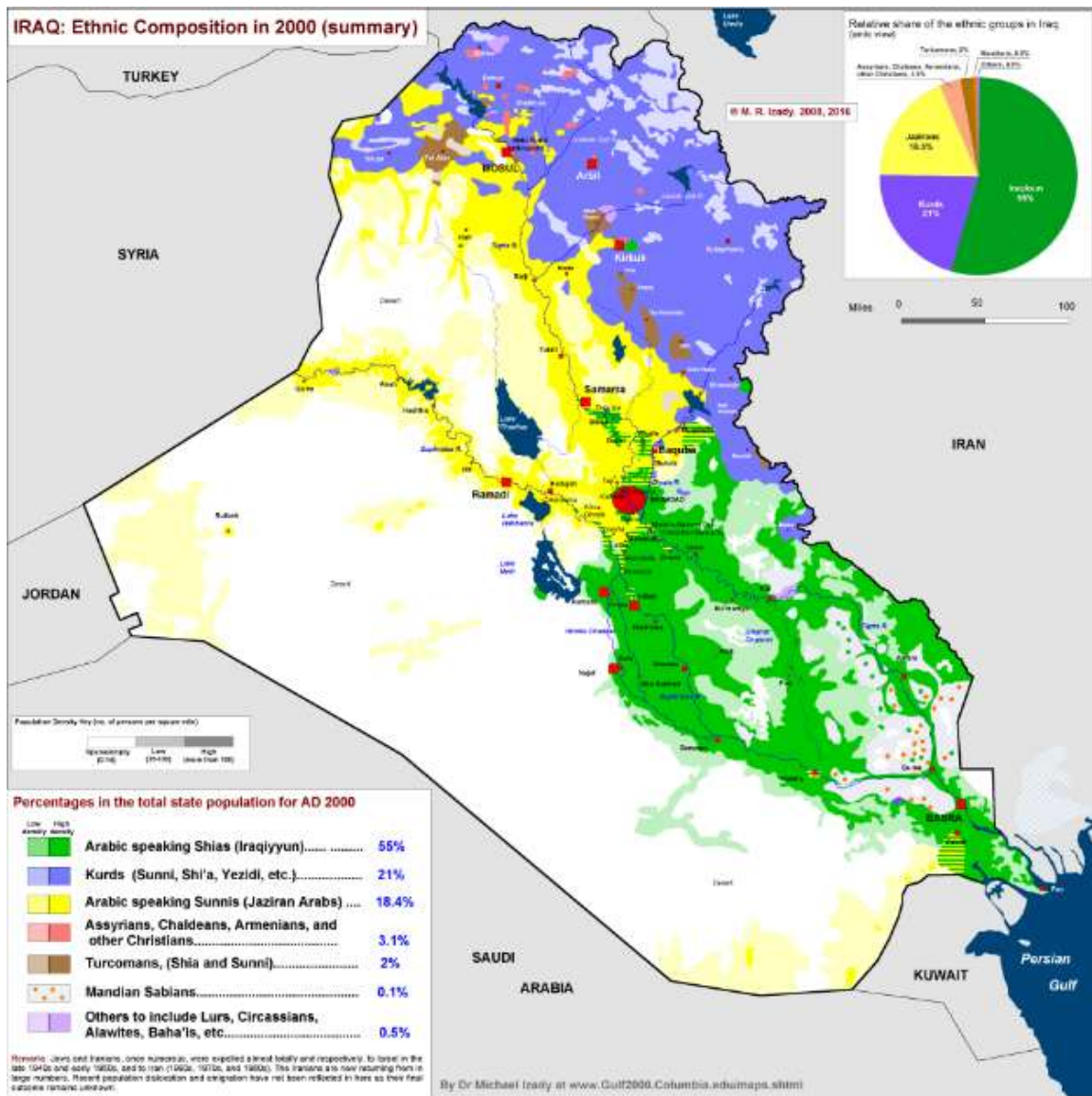
http://www.mrdowling.com/images/603fertilecrescent_small.png

85% Sunni and 15% Shia



http://www.cfr.org/peace-conflict-and-human-rights/sunni-shia-divide/p33176#!/?cid=otr-marketing_url-sunni_shia_infoguide

Map Ethnic Groups of Iraq Green=Shia Arabs, Yellow=Sunni Arabs and blue=Sunni Kurds (white=desert)



http://gulf2000.columbia.edu/images/maps/Iraq_Ethnic_lg.png

“The Sunni-Shia Divide”

http://www.cfr.org/peace-conflict-and-human-rights/sunni-shia-divide/p33176#!/?cid=otr-marketing_url-sunni_shia_infoguide

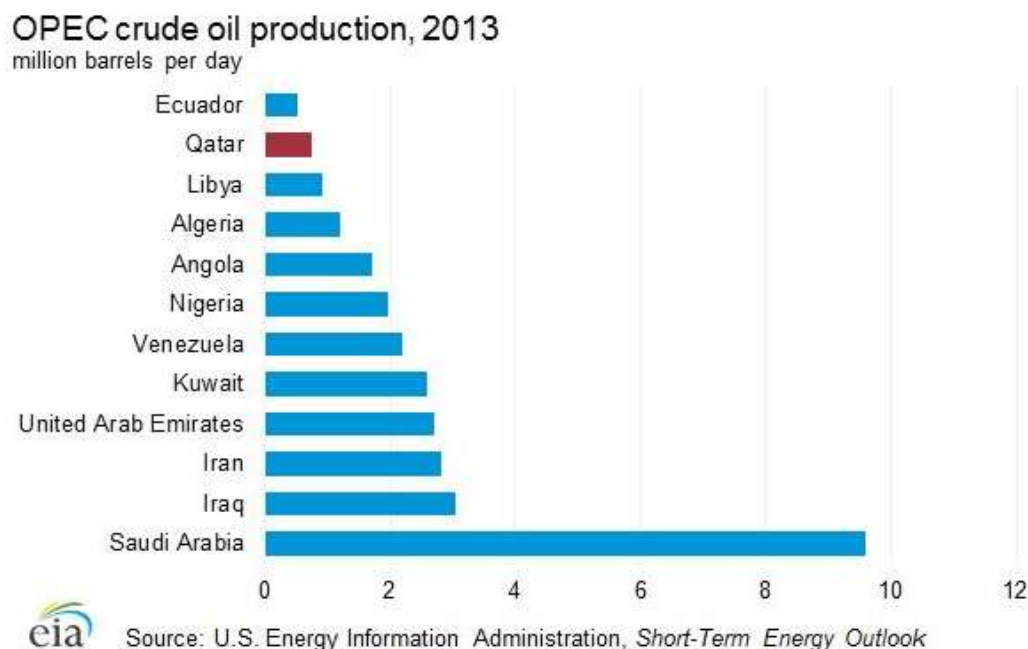
“This 16th Century Battle Created the Modern Middle East”, August 2014

<http://thediplomat.com/2014/08/this-16th-century-battle-created-the-modern-middle-east/>

The Production of Oil and the Price of Oil

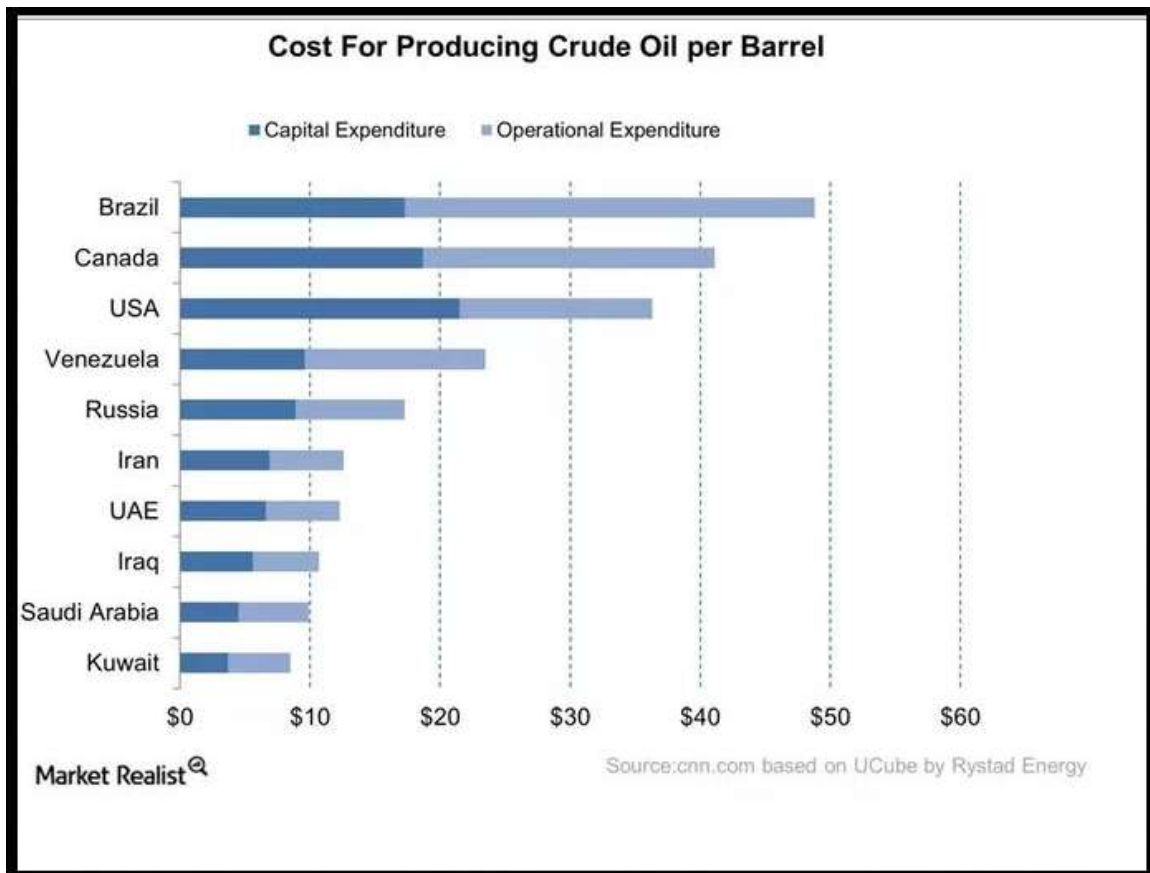
In picture 1 you can see the oil production of the international oil cartel (OPEC). You can see that Saudi Arabia can produce 10 million barrels of oil per day, far ahead from everybody else. Russia and the United States, who have similar production capacities, are not included.

Image Oil Production by Country



In the second picture you can see the cost of producing a barrel of oil in each country. You can see that Saudi Arabia, with a cost of 10 dollars per barrel, is again the lucky one.

Image 2



The above two pictures explain why we often see sworn enemies leaving aside their differences in order to attack Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia is a huge problem for other oil exporting countries.

Moreover Muslim countries like Egypt, Turkey and Pakistan, who have almost zero oil, are threatening Saudi Arabia that they will support socialists or Islamists in Saudi Arabia if the Saudis do not pay them huge amounts of cash, or if they do not give them free oil.

I must say that the countries of the international oil cartel are either socialist or Islamist, and therefore very corrupt, and their corrupt politicians have to

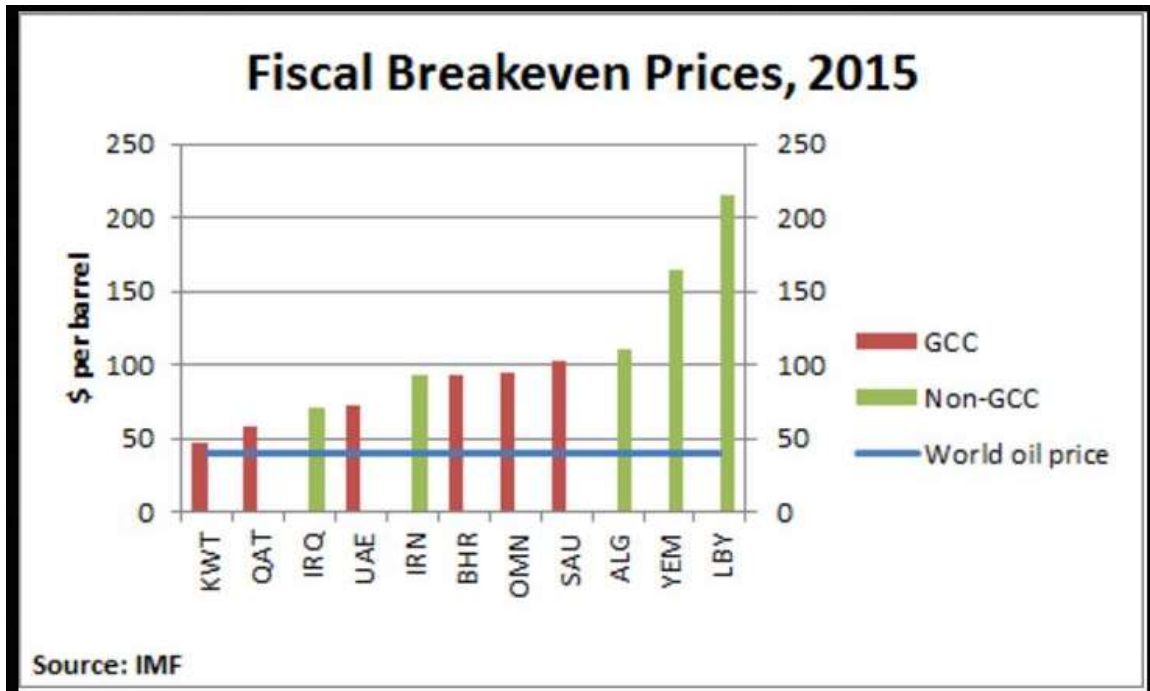
pay the civil servants that support them with the revenues from their oil exports.

That's why the fiscal break even prices of oil are extremely important. The fiscal break even price is the minimum price of oil required to pay all the civil servants. If there is poverty, and if the civil servants are not happy, an enemy of the country can intervene in order to cause an "Arab Spring" or a "Spring", or whatever you want to call it.

Therefore if the production cost of a barrel of oil is 1 dollar, and the country sells 10 barrels of oil, and it has a public sector which costs 100 dollars per year, the country must sell each barrel at 10 dollars in order to receive the 100 dollars which are required to pay the civil servants. It does not matter that a barrel of oil costs 1 dollar. If the country sells at 2 dollars per barrel, wage cuts will be required, and an Arab Spring could follow.

In picture 3 you can see the fiscal break even price per barrel of oil for each country. You can see that Saudi Arabia needs to sell at approximately 100 dollars, because she needs to pay huge amounts to Egypt, Turkey, Sudan and Pakistan, in order not to attack her, while Qatar and Kuwait, with their small populations, can survive with a price of 50 dollars per barrel.

Image 3



You can also understand how important is the production of oil from shale rock in the United States for these countries, because the American companies can produce a barrel of oil from 40 to 90 dollars, depending on how easy or difficult a specific shale deposit is.

Therefore it is very difficult for the international oil cartel to sell at a price above 40 dollars, because the frackers will step in at a price of 40 dollars, and that's why you see sworn enemies leaving their differences aside in order to attack the United States and its huge production of shale oil and shale gas.

Remember that the Islamist and socialist dictators of the Muslim World, together with the Communist dictators of Latin America, supported the Communist Jewish Bernie Sanders who had promised them to ban the American production of shale oil and shale gas.

The Difference Between Al-Qaeda and the Muslim Brotherhood

To understand the Muslim Brotherhood and Al-Qaeda you need to see them as ideologies and not as organizations. If you see them as organizations you will perceive them as something a lot more concrete than they really are.

You need to see them like the Capital of Karl Marx, which is simply a book, an ideology, which can be used by anybody.

The Muslim Brotherhood is what we call “political Islam”. It represents a socialist economic model, with the Koran as the country’s constitution. But the Muslim Brotherhood supposedly wants free speech and political elections in the country. We do not actually have an example of Political Islam that allowed a free society to develop, but theoretically speaking that’s what the Muslim Brotherhood asks for.

Moreover the Muslim Brotherhood leaves some space for cooperation with the Crusaders (NATO) and Muslim apostates i.e. Muslim leaders who cooperated with the Crusaders.

Al- Qaeda on the other hand does not leave any space for free elections, neither for cooperation with apostates i.e USA, France or Muslim apostates ie. the Saudi King or the Egyptian President.

Al-Qaeda, like the Muslim Brotherhood, also wants the life of the Muslim people to be governed by the Koran.

Many times in the past both the Muslim Brotherhood and Al-Qaeda have been used by Muslim countries against other Muslim countries, or against NATO, or against internal opponents.

The Muslim Brotherhood and Al-Qaeda are communicating vessels, and the best example is Ayman al-Zawahiri, the leader of Al-Qaeda. Zawahiri, an Egyptian, was a member of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood from a very early age, but at some point he went to Al-Qaeda, and he even became the leader of Al-Qaeda after the Americans killed Osama bin Laden in Pakistan in 2011.

The leader of Al-Qaeda is charged with the duty to coordinate the various branches of Al-Qaeda on common interests, whenever that is possible. You should not think the leader of Al-Qaeda like someone who has total control over the whole franchise network.

The important difference between Al-Qaeda and the Muslim Brotherhood is that the Muslim Brotherhood is used to overturn an opponent with elections, while Al-Qaeda is used to attack an opponent with terrorism, when you cannot overturn him with elections.

I would like to give an example.

Example

The Syrian dictator Bashar al Assad belongs to the Alawite minority of Syria, and he also governs the Sunni majority of Syria. The Turks and the Arabs wanted to use this Sunni majority to take control of the country, in order to block Iran and to construct the Sunni energy corridor i.e Qatar-Turkey.

Therefore with the Arab Spring of 2011 the Turks and the Arabs were calling for democracy and free elections, and Assad, who was backed by Iran and Russia, was not willing to go to free elections, because the Alawites are a minority and he would lose them. Therefore the civil war broke out.

But if the Alawites were the majority of Syria, and the Turks and the Arabs could not overturn Assad with elections, and the Iranians and the Syrians were to construct the Iran-Syria pipeline, which would hurt the Turkish and Arab interests, the Turks and the Arabs would use Al-Qaeda, and Al-Qaeda would accuse Assad of cooperating with the Crusaders, and therefore they would attack Assad's pipelines. Therefore with the conditions that prevailed in Syria the Turks and the Arabs preferred to use the Muslim Brotherhood to gain control, and when that did not work they invaded Syria and started using Al-Qaeda and ISIS.

Map Sunni VS Shia Pipelines

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