

**Tampere Peace Research Institute**

**GLOBALIZATION AND STATE  
IN THE MIDDLE EAST**

**Aini Linjakumpu  
(ed.)**

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### **Tampere Peace Research Institute**

Åkerlundinkatu 3

FIN-33014 University of Tampere

Tel. +358 3 215 7696

Fax +358 3 223 6620

Homepage <http://www.uta.fi/tapri>

The sale of TAPRI publications

TAJU, Yliopistonkatu 38

FIN-33014 University of Tampere

Fax +358 3 215 7150

Homepage <http://www.uta.fi/laitokset/kirjasto/taju>

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# Globalization and state in the Middle East

*Aini Linjakumpu*

## 1 Introduction

In the context of international politics, the 1990s has been seen as a transitional period in which basic foundations of international politics have changed considerably. As a consequence, there has been an impression that the post-Cold War societies are decisively different than before.

It is true that many changes have taken place, but it has to be remembered that this cannot be considered a universal phenomenon. Socio-political changes occur constantly in all societies, yet, in different ways and with different intensities. For example, in Europe, the European Union has dramatically altered the traditional tasks and positions of nation states. Despite these transformations, tranquillity has prevailed in Europe.

In the Middle East the situation is very different: social and political crises have characterized last two or three decades. One of the central dimensions of these crises has been *the position of the state*. States have not achieved a stable and legitimate position within the Middle Eastern political reality. Some of the most crucial problems have been the élitist

state structures and the unsatisfactory distribution of power.

The governing élites consist of relatively small and closed groups that are capable of controlling an entire political system (including elections and local governance), legislative procedures, and police and security structures. Furthermore, these political élites define a symbolic space that is directly linked to the distribution of power. As a consequence, there is no functional diversification of state actions.

Of course, there are great differences in the socio-political situations between the Middle Eastern states. However, the small size of the governing élites and their attempt to maintain the political status quo could be considered a common feature, even though the situation has been, and still is, open to either violent or non-violent interventions or changes.

One major denominator of changes in the contemporary world, including the Middle East, is *globalization*. The phenomenon and concept of globalization has occupied discussions related to the current world economy, world politics, and local problems and responses. There are innumerable definitions, opinions, and dimensions of globalization. It is also closely linked to other theoretical currents, such as localization, networks and networking, and the politicization of identities and cultures.

It is impossible and fruitless to attempt cover an entire phenomenon. The present publication examines globalization with particular reference to Middle Eastern statehood. Normally globalization is seen primarily as a Western phenomenon, but, as is known, there is no place to hide from it. Therefore, like other regions and states of the world, the Middle Eastern states are not isolated entities but are increasingly part of the

international and globalizing networks in which actors, meanings, and discussions are more and more connected to each other.

Globalization has sometimes had a very notorious tone. It has been argued that globalization is “guilty” for example of homogenizing of the world, of making the world unequal, or of strengthening Western hegemony. These assertions are correct, but only in a limited sense. Globalization is a far more complicated phenomenon, and it is not only bad or good, e.g., bad for Middle Eastern states and people and good for Western states. On the contrary, there have been no homogeneous effects of globalization on the Middle East, but very diversified and multidimensional outcomes and consequences.

The leading idea of this publication is to focus on states and especially on the challenging dimensions of Middle Eastern statehood. In other words, what are challenges that the Middle Eastern state system is facing at the moment, and from another perspective, what are responses to globalization in the context of Middle Eastern politics?

The publication consists of five contributions, which were originally presented at the congress of the International Peace Research Association (IPRA) in the year 2000 in Tampere, Finland.

The first article is a contribution by Ivan Ivekovič (University of Cairo) and is based on a structural and economic analysis. There has been extensive debate on the effects of the integration of the Middle East and North Africa into the global economy. It has been argued that such integration might decrease the economic and socio-cultural gap between a Western and non-Western worlds. Ivan Ivekovič is, however, very critical in his article towards this kind of thinking. He argues that economic development and the modernization process have not

succeeded in combining the forms of traditional economics.

Structural adjustment programs – which can be considered one form of economic globalization – have not changed the situation, because those programs mainly benefit Western countries. According to Ivekovič, an unsuccessful economic transformation – distorted development – causes political violence, which is practised by both states and opposition groups. This violence is a by-product of rapid and one-dimensional modernization, which potentially has a transnational form.

Ivan Ivekovič refers to potential sources of political violence in the Middle East. In this context, political Islam – Islamism – has many times mentioned as such a threat. In her article, Aini Linjakumpu (University of Lapland) tries to provide more finer-grained picture of Islamism and its relation to Middle Eastern politics. The Middle Eastern political reality is largely governed by state élites. In many Middle Eastern countries, the main opposition forces are the Islamists, who are not seen as a potential political force but as a threat to political stability. Islamism is considered a threat not only to national but also international peace.

Somewhat less attention has been given to the potential positive sides of Islamism. For example, it has to be remembered that the Islamic movements have been actually only relevant and popular challengers of governing élites during the last couple of decades. The purpose of the article is to examine the relation between globalization, Islamism and states: the meaning of Islamic universalism, Islamic terrorism in relation to processes of democratization and Islamism as a local response and alternative to global tendencies.

Hassan Gubara Said (University of Helsinki) continues to problematize the relation between globalization and Islam. The worldwide Muslim diaspora and emergence of Islamic movements have prompted a need to conceptualize Islam in terms of global structures. The article first examines the relation between Islam and globalization from the historical point of view. Secondly, it considers how the relation of Islam to globalization has been constructed from Islam itself and the Islamic doctrine. In this context, the work of three major Muslim ideologists – Hassan al-Banna, Sayyid Qutb and Hassan al-Turabi – is analysed. The political dimension of Islam as a universal and global religion is reflected in their ideas. In addition, the concept of global Islamic state is evaluated.

Islamism is certainly the major challenger of the Middle Eastern state system. At the same time, different ethnic groups have also extended their influence in the region. Transnationalism and ethnic nationalism have increasingly called the sovereignty of states in question. However, the idea of nation still has a central role in the construction of political discourse and collective identity, and in the construction of minority identities as well. In her article, Terhi Lehtinen (University of Helsinki) examines the process of nation building among the Berbers in contemporary Morocco and Northern Africa.

According to Lehtinen, the concept of nation is highly relevant for Berber identity, although in the globalizing world the construction of a “discursive nation” does not require a concrete state. Therefore, reconsideration of the relations between state and nation, and territory and nation is important in the context of the global world. The article focuses the Berber Amazigh Cultural Movement.

Maaret Tervonen (University of Tampere) continues a consideration of meaning of identities and nation building in politics. The role of national identities is interesting even in the era of globalization, when cultural, political and value-related influences spread readily from place to place. The article analyses the interpretation of history in the identity-building process with special reference to Jewish identity. According to Tervonen, the past – as presented in academic historiography and in common explanations of history – is used to strengthen identity and nation building. Furthermore, the past can be used as tool for the legitimation of present political actions.

## **Some notes on developmental violence in the Middle East and North Africa**

*Ivan Ivekovič*

Apart from the apologists of “Open-Door Policy” and “Structural Adjustment Programs” most local and foreign analysts agree that the growing integration of the Middle Eastern and North African (MENA) countries into the world economy did not bring “better life” to the majority of the inhabitants of this regional laboratory. It seems that the process of globalization has widened internal income inequalities and socio-cultural cleavages. The benefits of quantitative economic growth have been appropriated by privileged elites, while the quality of life of the masses is stagnating or even regressing. This is clearly reflected in growing disparities in consumption of even essential items as foodstuffs, health and educational services. It is, as colleague Galal Amin (1998, 35) has remarked describing the Egyptian situation, as if “two nations” were on the way of emerging side by side in the same country.

## **1 The modernizing state**

This paper is primarily focussed on Turkey, Iran (Pahlavi's and on the "Islamic" republic) and Egypt, which are perhaps the best examples of modernizing societies in the MENA. In all of them the process of transition from agrarian stationary communities to mass, mobile and anonymous industrial society seems to have been particularly hectic and painful. In spite of all the efforts of various governments and of their experiments with various models of development, this transition is still inconclusive. The gulf separating the modern sector of the economy from the traditional "bazaar" and petty-commodity production is widening, increasingly reproducing the image of culturally fractured society. Such distortions seem to reproduce again and again political violence.

The three countries on which this paper is focussed had attempted to achieve a "big push" from above. Economic growth was relatively rapid during the last decades but could not cope with demographic explosion. The modern sector of the economy is unable to absorb surplus manpower. The three of them have a high number of young people in proportion to the total population. In spite of spectacular urbanization, the majority of the population still lives in agriculture and the "peasant problem" remains unresolved. The ranks of the poor and extremely poor are increasing. The middle classes had been tremendously bolstered but are a fluctuating and an unstable social category. Social and cultural polarizations are extreme.

The Turkish Republic has the longest experience with secular development promoted from above (Trimberger, 1978). The model

introduced there by Atatürk later inspired Arab nationalist officers, who seized power in Egypt, Syria, Iraq and Libya. The latter, together with the Front of National Liberation (FLN) of Algeria, experimented with various forms of “Arab Socialism.” Viewed from another perspective, the same type of development was labelled by some authors as “state capitalism” (for a neo-Marxist elaboration of the concept see Jessop, 1990). Whatever it was, they all attempted to promote an autarkic model of development. Today it is evident that such a type of development reached its economic *cul de sac*, although it put these countries on the general track of modernization.

Before he fled Iran, Shah Pahlavi experimented with another type of modernization from above, the so-called White Revolution, which generated a social drama and an Islamist neo-populist backlash that led to his overthrow and to the establishment of the “Islamic” Republic. Thereafter, the Iranian theocracy imposed its own brand of “Islamic” development from above, which has perhaps eliminated some of the most salient contradictions of the previous period but economically and socially is far from being a success story.

Pahlavi’s Iran, as well as the “Islamic” Republic, belong to the group of “oil industrializers.” Turkey, which departed from the import-substitution model, joined the group of NICs (newly industrialized countries) and the type of its development is presently very similar to the Mexican model. Starting with Sadat’s *infitah*, or economic opening, Egypt also went into the same direction adopting the recommendations of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) (Ajami 1982). The club of “IMF countries” in the MENA is gradually enlarging and the neo-liberal model of development seems to be on the way of expansion.

Nevertheless, neo-liberal development associated with processes of economic globalization reproduce, even more than the previous models of modernization, distorted development. The famous take-off stage, predicted by the liberals, is delayed again and again.

## **2 One-sided modernization and distorted development**

Any development, for better or worse, implies transformation. It has always been a dialectical and multidimensional process that generates technological, economic, demographic, environmental and social, political and institutional as well as cultural change. It has always been

an unsettling, disruptive, painful process. The comforts of traditional habits are lost as these habits are uprooted. In modernizing societies, new processes and institutions always seem to be trapped in a state of becoming and, as a result, the expected uncertainties of the past had given way to more frightful and unknown insecurities of the present. (In societies which) have seriously begun to modernize, any slowing or reversal of the process causes great stress. Yet the uneven supply of national resources, the shortage of technical skills and the weakness of political leadership are all severe impediments to continuing modernization. Modernization is a process in which expectations necessarily race beyond their satisfaction. However satisfaction must never lag too far behind. (Bill and Springborg 1994, 5)

Karl Polanyi vividly described the social drama caused by the enclosure of open fields in the 18<sup>th</sup> century's England:

The lords and nobles were upsetting social order, breaking ancient laws and customs, sometimes by means of violence, often by pressure and intimidation. They were literally robbing the poor of their share in the common, tearing down the houses, which, by the hitherto unbreakable force of customs, the poor had long regarded as theirs and their heirs'. The fabric of society was being disrupted; desolate villages and

the ruins of human dwellings testified to the fierceness with which the (industrial) revolution raged, endangering the defense of the country, wasting its towns, decimating its population, turning its overburdened soil into dust, harassing its people and turning them from decent husbandmen into a mob of beggars and thieves. Though this happened only in patches, the black spots threatened to melt into a uniform catastrophe. (Polanyi 1960, 35)

A similar social drama is presently unfolding in the MENA. As in the 18<sup>th</sup> century's England, it is a by-product of distorted development. By distorted development I mean unbalanced and uneven economic, social, political and cultural development of various segments/sectors of the society, which reproduce acute tensions; these tensions could lead to conflict that polarize the society into two or more opposed camps. The most salient syndromes of distorted development in the MENA are, telegraphically, the following ones:

- A non-standardized population and a class structure perverted by modernization, which generated, among else, hybrid and non-adapted social groups: a marginalized peasantry only partly producing for the market and still toiling the soil for the satisfaction of its immediate needs (subsistence economy); a commuting class of industrial workers with one foot in the countryside nurturing a "peasant mentality"; a mass of marginalized inhabitants of shanty-towns living on the solidarity of employed relatives, or engaged in informal activities varying from gray to black; a buttressed but unstable and fluctuating middle class mostly of modest social origin often linked to small provincial towns, or to the countryside; related to the previous group are "hybrid" intellectuals linked also to the same provincial milieu; an oversized and underpaid state bureaucracy, administrative, military and economic; a small strata of

extremely rich persons among whom the “*nouveaux riches*” are especially visible.

- An unbalanced development of different economic sectors: “traditional” agriculture was not transformed into “modern”, in spite of the fact that it provides for the living of an important segment of the peasantry; relatively developed production of “luxurious” commodities (perfumery, beverages, cigarettes); modest tool and machine production; recent proliferation of “dirty” and labor intensive industries.
- A predominantly neo-patriarchal and authoritarian civil society that resists modernization from above in the name of an utopian “just society”. In all the countries under observation it operates mainly through informal networks (family solidarity; household production; regional, religious and ethnic affiliations) and less through formal association (political parties, trade unions, professional association). The “traditional” segment of the civil society is nevertheless often overlapping with the “modern” one (example: professional associations in Egypt, which are controlled by neo-Islamist groups).
- Weak and/or non-consolidated legal institutions of the political system (elections, parliaments, local assemblies, courts), which are most of the time circumvented by the ruling elite itself. Day-to-day politics proceeds through informal networks in which different cliques belonging to this elite compete with each other. The level of popular participation in the decision-making process, nevertheless,

varies from country to country.

These distortions are related to the still inconclusive transition from “traditional” agrarian to “modern” industrial society. As Samih Farsun remarked:

These transformations of interlocked and mutually reinforcing capitalist and pre-capitalist forms of production and labor processes have not caused an irrevocable rupture with social relations, ideology and culture associated with previous “traditional” social formations. On the contrary, they helped reproduce those traditional social relations associated with the pre-capitalist social structure of economic activity, social values, kinship relations and political behavior. Patriarchy, patronage and the mercantile spirit became intertwined with new capitalist relations to produce a unique amalgam, which manifests itself in the behavior and values of contemporary Arab society. The resultant heterogeneous and fragmented social forms produce fragmented and heterogeneous social views and social action. Less energized by nationalist issues than the previous generation, this fragmented urban (I would say rather–suburban, I.I.) mass is also less likely to engage in class organization. It is more likely to engage in social and political action based on kinship or on neighborhood, street, ethnic, sectarian, or religious organizing. This will be more so in the absence of socially conscious and relatively autonomous (from the government) political parties. (Farsun 1997, 15–6)

During the initial stage of modernization in the MENA, the rapid quantitative and qualitative growth of productive forces in the “modern” sector of the economy was apparently able to dilute the negative effects of class distortions. Later on, however, when the state-enforced social structure of accumulation (SSA; for the concept see Gordon 1978 and 1980; Gordon, Edwards and Reich 1982) became a major obstacle for more balanced growth of the same productive forces, pre-existing social cleavages were suddenly inflated, beginning to undermine not only the

system and its SSA but also the social consensus that was previously holding the society together. The most visible consequence of such developments is the apparent revival of traditional values with which the wounded society is trying to protect itself from distorted modernization.

### **3 Distorted internal development and globalization processes**

According to Polanyi, the “great transformation”, i.e. the introduction of capitalist relations in England, was characterized by a “double movement”: one element was the unprecedented expansion of commodity markets and the other was a counter-bore attempting to protect society from the pernicious effects of market-controlled economy (Polanyi 1957, 76). A similar “double movement” could be observed in most MENA countries but it has actually two dimensions:

- C Internally, state authorities try to promote “free market” but, fearing in the same time the explosion of social and political discontent, they maintain various levels of state control over commodities and services of mass consumption, subsidizing essential foodstuff, services (public utilities and transport, education, health) and often housing.
  
- C Externally, the state is stretched between “Open Door” policy, seeking the integration of the national economy into the expanding world capitalist system, and autarkic pressures demanding the

protection of national production against cheap imports.

Exposed to such contradictory demands and pressures most MENA governments play balancing games. For example, the suspension of subsidies for foodstuff as part of “Structural Adjustment Programs” has provoked a series of “bread riots” in a number of Arab countries and the concerned governments rapidly backtracked.

“Structural Adjustment Programs” suggested/imposed by international financial institutions are intended to promote “globalization”, which is for the time being a one-sided affair. Its benefits are clearly unequally distributed: they work in favor of highly industrialized countries, while the developing/underdeveloped countries seem to pay its social cost. The “openness” advocated by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank is also one-sided and it does not include the free circulation of labour. Barriers against immigration have indeed been erected around the European Union and on the southern border of the United States.

“Structural Adjustment Programs” are supposed to standardize the state in developing countries, their legislations and economies in order to serve “globalization” processes. This, however, does not mean that these countries will be fully integrated into the emerging global economy. Integration indeed proceeds by production sectors, not country by country. Oil industry is for the time being the only MENA production sector that is fully integrated. Local revenue from oil industry paradoxically is used by MENA rentier states (see Belbawi 1990) to bribe its citizens with different types of subsidies.

## **4 Developmental violence**

Political violence, characteristic both of the contemporary state and of Islamist neo-populist movements in the MENA, seems to be an unavoidable by-product of rapid and one-dimensional modernization. It is not the consequence of an allegedly retrograde “political culture” as claimed by Almond (1956, 396), of “fanatic” ideologies, or of an alleged “clash of civilizations” (Huntington 1993). Essentially, it is developmental violence perpetrated on one side by the modernizing state and on the other side by mass opposition movements mobilizing the uprooted, the marginalized and non-adapted individuals who are themselves the by-products of distorted modernization.

Different political ideologies may provide the banner for such a political mobilization: in the region on which this paper is focussed and until the 1970s – nationalism was such a mobilizing ideology; today it is Islamist neo-populism. Both projects were and could be combined with each other and with other ideological world views.

Developmental violence as such is not a new phenomenon. The struggle for the appropriation of natural resources or of the products of other people’s labour is as old as human history. Appropriation was first on behalf of the community and later for private benefit. The “mode of appropriation” is perhaps a more adequate concept than “mode of production”. In fact, the two overlap at least since human communities were internally divided into two categories of individuals: on one side

the producers and on the other the non-producers. From that time dates the appearance of the state as a coercive agency over the social community and from that time also dates the resistance of those who feel dispossessed and oppressed by this agency. Both the mode of appropriation and the mode of production are integral parts of the long-term historical trajectory of human society. Both are parts of the process of modernization. In short, economic development and political violence, both external and internal, were always inter-linked. Resistance from below always met the process of socio-economic change imposed from above.

In the regional laboratory of the MENA resistance from below took the form of different ideological projects. Sometimes they overlapped. The best example for the latter is perhaps the Algerian war of national liberation in which nationalism and Islamist neo-populism provided the two complementary force-ideas, which mobilized the Algerian masses against French colonial rule and colonial modernization. Another example is offered by the 1952 Free Officers' coup in Egypt that was initially supported by nationalists, Muslim Brothers, socialists and communists alike. The mass movement that overthrew the Iranian monarchy was initially very heterogeneous: it included not only the mullahs and Islamists of various shades but also "Marxist-Islamists", socialists, communists, liberals and other disgruntled elements of the Iranian society. It is only in the final stage of the revolution that the Khomeini group came at the top and ruthlessly eliminated its former associates. In 1990s Turkey there have been at least three parallel opposition projects challenging the system: the Kurdish project (Kurdish Workers Party-PKK) ideologically justified with a mixture of

Kurdish nationalism and “Marxism-Leninism”; the neo-populist Islamist project of Necmettin Erbakan (*Refah* and derivatives); the amorphous and not clearly articulated opposition of the Alevi minority, which feels discriminated in this “secular” state.

## **5 Two faces of internal political violence**

As underlined, developmental violence from above perpetrated by the state is invariably met by resistance from below by the segments of the population that were alienated by the process of distorted development. This confrontation is always political, although in the MENA it took the form of armed clash in few countries only. In most others, state authorities were able to check Islamist opposition groups or to force them underground. Each of these cases is unique, although the causes of social and political tensions that led to the eruption of political violence, as I tried to demonstrate in this analysis, were basically the same. But what is political violence?

Adopting Nieburg’s (1969, 13) effect-oriented definition, we may agree that political violence consists of “acts of disruption, destruction, injury with purpose, choice of targets or victims, surrounding circumstances, implementation and/or effects (that) have political significance, that is, tend to modify the behavior of others in a bargaining situation that has consequences for the social system”. To the difference with some other definitions (see for example the contributions to the volume edited by Merkl 1986), the advantage of Nieburg’s approach is that it sees political violence as a process that

takes place between various groups or categories of actors within a political system and that it does not limit itself to acts performed by rebels against the state. It also includes violent activities carried out by the state against its own citizens.

Such violence has invariably a developmental dimension. Social conflict imply competition of at least two protagonists, who “struggle over values or claims to status, power and scarce resources, in which the aims of the conflicting parties are not only to gain the desired values but also to neutralize, injure, or eliminate their rivals” (Coser 1968, 232). The threat to use force or the effective use of force is integral part of the conflicting relationship existing between rival actors, each one of them having his own agenda, means and strategy. Unless the actors agree to sort out their conflict by compromise, violent conflict is unavoidable. Once the conflict has erupted, the ability of one actor to achieve his aims will not only depend on the human and material resources with which he disposes, but to a large extent on the choices, options and the means at the disposal of the other party (Schelling 1960, 5). Violence ends with the victory of one of the actors and with the imposition of his views, or with bargaining and compromise between the involved parties, or with the intervention of a third party imposing its own formula for the end of hostilities. The direct compromise between the belligerents is sometimes the outcome of an elite settlement (Burton and Higely 1987, 295–307), whereby the leaders that fought each other not only engage themselves to respect their end of the bargain but also are able to check their subordinates. In other cases, however, the warring leaders are removed or isolated while new and moderate representatives of the two parties negotiate the compromise.

Here we are essentially interested in political violence involving two protagonists: on one side the state and its agencies and on the other side opposition groups. As Fred Von Der Mehden underlined, “it is clear that all states consider violence in the maintenance of domestic tranquillity and the threat of violence – from the nightstick to capital punishment – a deterrent to deviant behavior. Violence, then, in certain forms and constrained by certain limits, is considered legitimate by all societies, whether democratic or not” (Mehden 1973, 37).

Indeed, even the most democratic states use “necessary violence” to maintain public order, although such a violence is supposed to be “legitimate”, “restrained” and/or “controlled”. The problem is that state agencies enforcing public order in the MENA are most of the times not restrained at all and that parliamentary or public control of security matters is practically non-existing. Amnesty International reports confirm that police brutalities are routine even in “normal” situations. In times of insurgency such state-sponsored brutalities escalate and often take mass proportions harming not only the militants of opposition groups but also non-involved civilians. For the Israeli political establishment, for example, “breaking the bones” of Palestinian teenage stone-throwers as well as the collective punishment of the families of Palestinian “terrorists” is still today a “legitimate” state practice. Counter-insurgency “search and kill” massive practices are apparently widespread in Algeria. Hundreds of political prisoners were massacred in Syria in 1980 (Palmyra prison-camp) and in Algeria in 1994 and 1995 (Berrouagia jail and Serkaji prison). Fighting an Islamist uprising, the Al-Assad regime in Syria did not hesitate in 1982 to destroy the old city-centre of Hama, killing during the days of fighting between 5,000

and 25,000 town-dwellers (the regime admitted 3,000 “militants” only) (Seale 1988, 332–8; Dam 1996, 111–7). Saddam Hussein’s regime used in 1987 poisonous gas against helpless civilians in order to quell the Kurdish revolt. In Upper Egypt, security forces are destroying/burning sugar-cane plantations because they are supposed to be hideouts for terrorists (they compensate the owners but not the workers who are left without jobs). Those are only few examples of unrestrained state violence. The long list would also include, besides the arsenal of legal methods, such as the maintenance of Martial Law, prolonged curfews and special tribunals, assassinations of political opponents both at home (for the case of present-day Iran see Haeri 1999, 9) and in foreign countries (practised sporadically by Morocco, Iraq, Syria, Libya and Iran), torture, illegal detention, “disappearances”, harassment of the families of supposed militants, etc.

Political violence from below, as it was demonstrated in the MENA during the last decades, took different forms: (1) of “quiet encroachment” from below; (2) of food riots and other spontaneous explosion of anger; (3) of peaceful mass demonstrations and continuous mass pressure; (4) of armed struggle by organized underground opposition groups that use also terrorist methods; (5) of personal and group feuds and vendettas; (6) of criminal acts. These forms may be superimposed or combined with each other.

## **6 Transnational violence**

This short overview would be one-sided without mentioning

transnational violence, which has also a developmental dimension. This may involve a number of actors, such as states, ethnic or religious communities, or international “terrorist” networks, or transnational corporations, or a combination of some of them.

The Gulf War that was initiated with the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait had from the very beginning a developmental dimension related to the exploitation of oil in the border zone between the two states and to the Iraqi debt to its Gulf neighbours (accumulated during the war with Iran). In spite of its rhetoric, Operation “Desert Storm”, led by the United States, had more to do with oil than with the concerns with the fate of the Kuwaitis, or the future of the Al-Sabah dynasty. The embargo imposed later on Iraqi oil exports had less to do with Saddam Husein’s dictatorship than with the then depreciated price of oil on the world market. It is interesting to note that almost in the same time sequence an embargo was imposed also on Libya. Now when the price of oil reached a new height, Iraq was overnight authorized to export its oil for a value of \$ 8 billion! The sanctions penalizing Libya were cancelled before when Col. Gaddafi conveniently delivered the two Libyan suspects in the Lockerbie case.

The Palestinian *Intifada* is not only a struggle for the recovery of “national sovereignty” but also a reaction of the Palestinian masses against the type of perverted “modernization” imposed by Israeli occupation. One important aspect of Palestinian “national sovereignty”, which is most of the time ignored by foreign observers of the “Peace Process”, is the fact that the Israeli side intends to keep Palestinian territories entirely economically dependent, as a kind of appendix of the Israeli economy and a useful reserve of manpower (125,000 Palestinians

from the Occupied Territories used to come to Israel each day). Israel even refuses to give up its total control of the existing water resources, although it is difficult to imagine a future “independent” Palestinian state entity without water.

Behind the Israeli reluctance to evacuate the Golan are not only questionable “security concerns” but also the Israeli interest to control the water resources in territories it had amputated from Syria in 1967 (Lonegran and Blake 1993). This is not only political but developmental violence.

Developmental tensions related to the unilateral Turkish use of the waters of the Euphrates and Tigris also exist in the relations between Ankara on one side and Baghdad and Damascus on the other side. Downstream Iraq and Syria have good reasons to be worried (Kolars and Mitchell 1991). Water scarcity in Egypt may in the future provoke similar tensions between Cairo and Nile’s upstream countries (Waterbury 1979; Guariso and Whittington 1987; Al-Atawy 1996; for a general overview of water problems in the Arab world see Rogers and Lyndon 1994).

The geometry of oil and gas pipelines crisscrossing the MENA has serious implication on interstate relations. Each one of these trans-border tracks implies specific political arrangements/alignments and the unilateral closure of each of them has not only economic but also political implications. The aim of such closures is again to neutralize, or injure, the perceived or real enemy. Such was clearly the intention of the closure of the Iraqi pipeline crossing Turkey and Syria.

Some authors, such as Homer-Dixon (1991 and 1994), argue that environmental changes and especially water scarcity, might generate

violent conflict. This is certainly true for the Middle East, as illustrated by the existing tensions related to the use of the waters of the Euphrates and Tigris, or by the water dimension of the actual Israeli-Palestinian-Arab confrontation. Unfortunately, the conceptual framework suggested by Homer-Dixon focuses only on environmental change and scarcity, ignoring the fact that overexploitation of land, water, minerals and human resources, as well as the resulting pollution, desertification or the depletion of the ozone layer, are by-products of distorted development, linked today to the processes of globalization. The fact that the Arab world is today unable to feed itself with its own agricultural output is not primarily linked to desertification and overpopulation but to one-sided modernization.

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# **The challenge of Islamism to Middle Eastern statehood**

*Aini Linjakumpu*

## **1 Introduction**

Over the past few decades, politics in the Middle Eastern states has been marked by continuing unrest and efforts to maintain the status quo. These political problems are caused by a multidimensional instability in the spheres of economics, social welfare, and cultural life. At the same time, the process of globalization has prompted increasing demands for statehood throughout the world: remarkably, states are losing their traditional positions and functions. Moreover, globalization coincides with localization, a process of political activism based on local circumstances.

Globalization and its consequences have had a great deal of influence on states, although there are considerable differences between different states. Generalizing somewhat, it can be asserted that a common feature in the Middle East is that states have tried to keep their traditional positions of power even if there have been an increasing number of demands for changes at different levels.

One of the most prominent challengers of the contemporary Middle Eastern state system is political Islam. In the post-Cold War era, Islamic radicalism – political Islam, or Islamism – has been one of the most widely discussed social phenomena outside the Middle East. It has been commonplace to argue that Islamic political activism is one of the new threats to world peace.

World or Middle Eastern politics have paid comparatively less attention to the “productive” dimensions of Islamic movements, because of the many negative representations of political Islam that have colored the entire idea of Islamic politics and culture. For the most part, the fact that Islamic movements have in practice been almost the only real forces of opposition in most Middle Eastern and Mediterranean countries has been ignored.

The aim of this contribution is to interpret the process of globalization in relation to statehood in general and to discuss its impact on Middle Eastern statehood in particular. I examine the role of Islamic movements – Islamism – within the context of Middle Eastern statehood, addressing the questions how globalization affects Islamism and how Islam as a global religion could utilize globalization.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>My intention is not to cover the entire heterogeneous Middle East in detail. Rather, I focus on the general ideas and peculiar characteristics of Islamism and its relation to statehood within the context of the Middle East. In some places, I use examples to illustrate themes.

## **2 The concept of globalization**

Globalization is far too complicated and multidimensional to be comprehensively defined. It is also unnecessary to touch upon all the different dimensions of the phenomenon, because this would lead down an endless path. It is more useful to focus explicitly on the impacts of globalization on states, in particular, on how certain dimensions of globalization affect the idea and content of a state.

Traditionally, a state has independently occupied several different functions of social life: politics, political participation, and different kinds of collective action. The nation-state has been seen as a site of politics; politics belongs to a state and a state is essentially political (cf. Schmitt 1976, 20; Cerny 1995, 595). According to this traditional idea of politics, political participation is also attached to a state.

However, despite its undeniable importance, the traditional state is no longer the only determinant of political space. Political space is affected by cultural and the economic domains, territories, and actors that are not linked to states. In this context, globalization represents a kind of umbrella concept for the different mechanisms to be observed in the changing world.

According to Roland Robertson, globalization refers to the compression of the world and the intensification of the consciousness of the world as a whole (Robertson 1992, 8). It is a kind of time-space compression: the socio-political space has changed and new technologies and the logic of activities construct new mechanisms of social life that are independent of a state, or, in reality, that states are unable to control. For example, computer networks (i.e., the Internet)

have created social spaces that are inherently transnational and cross-border.

At a certain level, the process of globalization is transforming the Hegelian or Schmittian concept of politics within a state system. In a global world, politics and political participation are increasingly independent of state politics. Anthony McGrew argues that globalization relates to processes which cut across national boundaries, integrating and connecting communities and organizations in new time-space combinations, making the world interconnected in both reality and experience (McGrew 1992, 65–6).

It has to be remembered that the process of globalization does not occur separately from its opposite phenomenon, *localization*. The two represent different sides of the same process. Anthony Giddens puts these concepts together by defining globalization as the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distinct localities in such way that *local happenings* are shaped by events occurring miles away and vice versa (Larrain 1994, 151).

Regional cooperation and different networks are concrete manifestations of global-local connections. Here, the concept of interdependence is relevant: the concept refers to a situation in which different actors and actions exhibit a strong mutual dependence in a certain geographical region. Moreover, states are increasingly linked to one another through different ties, for example, international agreements and unions.

All these new dimensions of the global world are challenging the privilege of the state to determine the content of its politics and political participation. However, despite the transformations in the state system,

the state as an institutional structure is not totally withering away (Cerny 1996, 618). In other words, globalization is not an exclusive phenomenon, because “pre-global” structures, systems and the like still exist. Thus, globalization increases the complexity of political systems.

### **3 Islamic representations in a global world**

Globalization has changed and is changing several conventional mechanisms of statehood and state politics. One of its principal manifestations is the emergence of a new kind of actorness. Religious movements and groups have gained attention especially in the post-Cold War era. Political Islamic movements, i.e. the phenomenon known Islamism, have received particularly wide media coverage and public consideration.

Islamism represents local activism which nevertheless has a global presence. During the 1980s, Islamism steadily increased its importance in many Middle Eastern and Mediterranean countries (e.g. Turkey, Egypt, Tunisia, and Algeria). The “heyday” of Islamism was at the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s, when there was an apparent “integration of the Islamic movement into the existing political framework and its inclusion in the process of liberalization” (Krämer 1994, 200).

Despite the promises of Islamism, Islamic groups have generally failed to integrate themselves into political processes and structures. During the 1990s, governmental responses to Islamism steadily tightened, and by the end of the decade the significance of Islamism was

relatively minor in most Middle Eastern states. Now, it is more or less a forbidden and underground phenomenon.

However, Islamism is still a relevant common denominator in Middle Eastern politics, and the manifestations of political Islam are still present in different ways in the globalized world. In this contribution, I focus on three dimensions of Islamic representations in the global world: the universal idea of Islam, Islamic terrorism, and Islamism as a local response to global threats.

### 3.1 *Islamic universalism*

Although Islam as a global religion is a diversified, heterogeneous phenomenon, it has also been argued that different Islamic cultures and their local expressions “all share a world view that can best be described as an Islamic *Weltanschauung*. This world view is the basis of the holistic Islamic civilization of the past, a civilization that continues to prevail in Islam today in the midst of a world of modern nation-states.” (Tibi 1998, 6) *Umma* represents the communal dimension of the Islamic world view. The basis of *umma* lies in the practice of the Prophet Muhammad. At the end of his life, the Muslims of Medina formed a distinct community, which later became the ideal model for all Muslims regardless of their geographic location (see Ahrari 1996, 94).

The Islamic world view is based on religious principles and doctrines in which the practical and symbolic orientations of Islam are defined. Accordingly, the political dimension of Islam is related to Islam as a whole. It has been argued that Islam is an inherently political

phenomenon and that Islam and all social life are therefore inseparable:

Islam is not just a religious order. It is a complete way of life for the individual, the society, the state, and the nation. Islam does not recognize national, racial, or linguistic boundaries; it is a universal doctrine that does not permit a separation between the secular and the religious. ... All human action and interaction within the Muslim community is by definition regulated by Islam. (Ismael & Ismael 1991, 44)

In this example, Islam is seen as a universal system in which all dimensions of human life are linked together. It is a manifestation of the doctrine of *tawhid* (monotheism)<sup>2</sup> and, particularly, the inseparable combination of *din* (religion) and *dawla* (state or government) (cf. Salamé 1994, 5). This argumentation and reasoning, in which Islam and politics and Islam and all social spheres are inseparable, basically means that everything is religious and, accordingly, everything is political in an Islamic society.<sup>3</sup>

The Islamic world view and the concepts of *tawhid* and *umma* have, in theory, a global, transnational political form – pan-Islamism. An attempt was made at the end of 19th century to promote this idea as a reaction against European political power. (On pan-Islamism, see Young 1962, 194–221; Chubin 1997, 30–44) However, pan-Islamism as a political movement has remained unrealizable. As stated by Bassam Tibi: “Islam, though universal, has not been able to spread the da’wa/Islamic mission throughout the modern world” (Tibi 1998, 15).

Since a pure or homogeneous Islamic political or religious system

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<sup>2</sup> See Esposito 1987, 39 and Esposito 1988, 26; Ahmad 1992, 37–8.

<sup>3</sup> This is typical of oriental tradition and Islamic religiously based thinking. (See the critiques of this in Haynes 1998, 128 and Linjakumpu 1999)

does not exist, one has to concretize the idea of Islamic universalism, i.e., to think where or in which way Islamic universalism can be practiced. In many cases, Islamic politics are linked to Muslim states; i.e. Muslim states represent Islamic politics. However, most Muslim states cannot be regarded as constructed exclusively on a religious basis; on the contrary, most such states are – at least to a certain extent – secularized.

Here, secularization means the development of society towards “greater interdependence from religion in the fields of government, science and scholarship, the economy, the school system, art, family and law” (Haugom 1998). Furthermore, secularization can be seen as a process in which the bonds between religious and political institutions are loosened. For example, political decisions and representation are transferred from religious to secular agencies (Haugom 1998).

At a certain level, Iran, Saudi Arabia, or some other countries might represent the idea of Islamic statehood.<sup>4</sup> However, states are not, in my view, the most pertinent embodiment of the universal idea of Islam. In the context of this paper, the more relevant issue is the question of Islamic groups, or Islamism as a phenomenon, as representatives of Islamic universalism.

There is a clear difference between Muslim states and Islamic groups, because their respective involvement in political practices is

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On the other hand, it has to be pointed out that there are also opinions that secularism has never been acceptable to most Muslim states and, furthermore, that the Muslim states interpret their “Islamness” differently from the West. For example, Egypt, Algeria, Syria, and Tunisia do not consider themselves less committed to Islam than other Middle Eastern countries although they are often regarded as secular by the West. (See Ahrari 1996, 105 & 107)

controversial. While states “produce” concrete politics for the present time, Islamic groups are basically committed to the future (and in a very abstract manner) since they have no political structures or possibilities to accomplish their programs. Thus, the basic difference between state governance and Islamic groups is that states represent actual political processes and prevalent political power structures, while Islamic groups are not at all normally included in these.

What kind of politics do Islamic groups seek then? First, it has to be remembered that Islamic groups differ considerably from country to country and from group to group. There are moderate groups with very conformist and non-radical political programs and militant Islamic groups whose intention is to change predominant political structures – using violence if necessary. Several different groupings can be found between these two extremes.

However, even if there is a clear difference between Islamic groups, they do share at least one common feature: most of them want to establish an Islamic state (cf. e.g. Tibi 1998, 27), which would be a concrete realization of the very idea of Islamic communality, *umma*. The establishment of an Islamic state is the ultimate goal that directs the political programs of Islamic groups – even if this goal can be seen as an unachievable basis of Islamism (as was the communist state for communists) because there would always be contradictions regarding the content and idea of such a state. (See Linjakumpu 1999, 160–3)

Islamic groups promote the concept of *umma*, which is a transborder, global idea of communality within Islam. This is a highly theoretical construction of *umma* because there are no concretized, long-term political programs produced by Islamic groups. Although this

is only a theoretical conception of state, it nevertheless runs contrary to the traditional concept of a state, because umma is essentially a cross-national and transborder concept. In other words, “Islamic perspectives are not restricted to national or regional boundaries” (Tibi 1998, 15). On the other hand, even though the precise nature of an Islamic state or governance would remain unclear, “its establishment serves as the chief motivating factor underlying the political activities of all Islamicist groups in the Middle East” (Ahrari 1996, 98).

The state response to Islamism has been based on legal principles: laws and official rules. In Egypt, for example, the party law, which was prepared by the government, demanded adherence to principles that the regime claimed to represent (e.g., the values of religion, national unity and sovereignty, and the Arab-Islamic character of state, culture, and society). The law actually ruled out truly alternative candidates, including parties based on religion or ethnicity. It was argued that religion in general and Islam in particular constituted a common ground shared by all and therefore no monopoly over them by any individual or group could be tolerated (Krämer 1994, 201).

The state response in Egypt means that Islamic movements are not allowed to use the idea of Islamic universalism. That is, the state remains the guardian and protector of the religion. However, it has to be remembered that the “legal” response is in practice only partly legal or democratic. In this context especially, the question of Islamic terrorism is related to issues of Islamism and state responses.

### 3.2 *Islamic terrorism and the question of democracy*

The universalist idea of Islam seems to be essentially a bringing together of groups that advocate political violence or extremism. John Waterbury's argument is a good example of a rejection of Islamic politics because of its undeniable danger to democracy: "to include them [intégrists, i.e. Islamist groups] without prior conditions is to invite the destruction of the democratic process and of the territorial state" (Waterbury 1994, 41). According to this kind of argument, Islamism is essentially an anti-democratic concept and against the idea of the nation-state. (See also Zartman 1995, 52)

In the context of Middle Eastern statehood, Islamism represents a political enemy that is not only nationally but also internationally organized: Islamism has a global presence. According to Larbi Sadiki, President Ben Ali of Tunisia, for example, has intentionally developed Islamism as an international threat. As Sadiki argues, Ben Ali formulated the term *fundamentalists' internationale* in referring to an international enemy, much as the former communism ideology did. In the process of being internationalized, presence of Islamism has been extended from the national to the international level. As Bassam Tibi observes: "Even while they [Islamic fundamentalists] are dismissing the nation-state as an expression of a Western understanding of order that is alien to Islam, and in its place seeking their own authentic order, they are unleashing disorder, and the effects of this process may be global" (Tibi 1998, 8).

This kind of thinking also has larger and non-Muslim contexts. The Euro-Mediterranean cooperation, manifest most clearly in the Barcelona

Process,<sup>5</sup> provides a highly illustrative example of the global representation of politicizing Islam. In the Barcelona Declaration, Islam has two kinds of articulations:<sup>6</sup> firstly, it is a cultural phenomenon that represents the very cultural essence of those Muslim countries involved in the process; secondly, it is articulated through terrorism. The cultural articulation is nationally focussed, but Islam as terrorism has a clear international tone.

Although Islam is not explicitly mentioned in the Barcelona Declaration, it is clear that religions, and especially Islam, are the focus of attention. This assumption is based on the discourse before and after the conference during which Islam was linked directly or indirectly to the activities of different religious extremist groups. (See Anderson & Fenech 1994, 17–8; Tovias 1996, 9; Spencer 1998, 140–1 & 150–1) In order to govern and control terrorism, including religious terrorism, the Barcelona Declaration emphasized:

[In this spirit they undertake ... to] strengthen their cooperation in preventing and combating terrorism, in particular by ratifying and applying the international instruments they have signed, by acceding to such instruments and by taking any other appropriate measure.

[In this spirit] they agree to strengthen cooperation by means of various measures to prevent terrorism and fight it more effectively together. (Barcelona Declaration 1995)

Terrorism is interpreted as a common threat to the EU and its

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<sup>5</sup> The Barcelona Process refers to the cooperative process between the European Union and the non-European Mediterranean countries launched in 1995 in Barcelona.

<sup>6</sup> On articulation and the politics of articulation, see, e.g., Hall (1992, 368–9), Laclau & Mouffe (1985, 105), Grossberg (1995, 209, 250 & 268–9) and Linjakumpu (1999, 55–9).

partners in the Mediterranean region. It is also a common mission to prevent its presence and extension, even at the cost of democracy. It cannot be denied that violent political or religious activism is intolerable. However, the problem does not lie in the potential existence of terrorism itself: attention should be directed to defining terrorism, and which phenomena are part of that terrorism and which are not. The problem is that the concept of terrorism is inherently open to contradictory definitions. Where is the limit of political activism and terrorism, and who may define that limit?<sup>7</sup>

In the Barcelona Process, Islamism is seen as a difficult problem and therefore maintaining the status quo seems to be more important than advocating democratic rules. John Waterbury's argument about advocating democracy can also be found within processes like Euro-Mediterranean cooperation:

We must be very careful, therefore, in advocating democracy at all costs. Rather, a period of confrontation and bargaining may be what is needed to hasten the process of re-interpretation so that a paced transition to democracy can begin, in which all parties accept the logic, if not the spirit, of the rules. (Waterbury 1994, 45)

It must be remembered that it is actually states' responses that produce violence and political turbulence. Many times, Islamic groups have been conformist and even reactionary in their actions, not revolutionary in the name of religion. As has been argued: "The high profile of Islamist groups owes more to the character of state repression

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By way of example, Alex Schmid has defined terrorism as "an anxiety-inspiring method of repeated violent action, employed by (semi-) clandestine individual, group or state actors, for idiosyncratic, criminal or political reasons, whereby – in contrast to assassination – the direct targets of violence are not the main targets." (Schmid in Badey 1998, 91)

in the past than to the exceptional religiosity of Muslim societies” (MERIP in Waterbury 1994, 32). In other words, the political dimension of Islamism is not demonstrably based on the religious content of Islamic groups or Muslim societies, as government responses tend to suggest; rather, it is based on the groups’ *political* demands.

The problems of Middle Eastern societies should not be unquestioningly related to opposition forces but to the governing élites themselves, which are apparently incapable of solving social problems or at least reluctant to do so. According to Ali Abootalebi, “political élites and entrenched interests continue to resist political reforms and economic adjustment policies that they perceive as threatening the status quo” (Abootalebi 1999). Abootalebi is also critical of the Western powers that in the past 50 years have promoted the political status quo in the Middle East through, for example, their support for conservative oil-producing authoritarian states and arms sales to friendly but autocratic regimes. (Abootalebi 1999)

All in all, a combination of international and national responses to Islamism, for example, in the Barcelona Process, homogenizes a whole – the diverse phenomenon of political Islam which clearly consists of violent factions and moderate as well as conformist Islamic groups. In this sense, the Barcelona Process is concerned not only with encouraging democratic development in the Middle East and the Mediterranean (there are certain elements that function as democratizing elements, such as the promotion of civil society) but also with maintaining the status quo.

The question of terrorism is not separate from the question of democracy: the homogenization of the Islamic political opposition into

a terrorist movement leads to the exclusion of Islamists and forbidding their political participation. By opposing increased participation, political élites maintain their own control and stability. As Robert Rothstein argues, “high levels of participation may increase legitimacy and efficacy over the long term but generate demands that cannot be met in the short term” (Rothstein 1995, 67).

The situation is very similar at the international level. For example, the actors in the Barcelona Process are not ready to challenge prevailing Middle Eastern and Mediterranean political orders. At the same time, the democratic participation of Islamic groups – which are basically the only relevant opposition forces – is deliberately viewed through the lenses of terrorism. Of course, it has to be remembered that the Barcelona Process is a highly vulnerable forum, whereby the European partners have been careful in their perceptions of democracy and the political participation of their non-EU partners. Actually, the question of democracy is being touched upon by encouraging civil society through, for example, increasing the level of exchange of non-élite people, i.e., scientists, artists, etc. However, despite limitations and the “good will” of the Barcelona Process, it is difficult to escape the idea of double standards: state violence and political extremism are tolerated for governing élites in order to prevent potential social changes – be they positive or negative.<sup>8</sup>

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Ghassan Salame is also critical of the European capability to understand and solve political problems. In her view, the Middle East and North Africa “are viewed in Europe primarily as geo-strategic rather than economic or political issues, while pan-European institutions are far from being equipped, let alone ready, to devise a strategic approach”. (Salame in Abootalebi 1999)

### 3.3 *Islamism as a local response*

The above dimensions of Islamic universalism consider Islam as a global or at least international phenomenon which has common universal goals and practices. However, the whole idea of Islamic movements should be viewed more in the light of localized phenomena. In other words, there is no international or global Islamic revivalism struggling towards a common goal.<sup>9</sup>

The basic assumption behind the Islamic universalism represented by Islamic groups is that the groups act as a threat to the social and political order and, furthermore, are somehow a backward phenomenon within modern political structures. According to the thesis of secularization and modernization, the public role of religion will inevitably decline (Haynes 1998, 209). The underlying assumption of the danger of participation of religious groups is that “secularism is commonly viewed as prerequisite for viable democracy, the rise in fortunes of Islamic revivalism is viewed with alarm” (Nasr 1995, 262). The political participation of Islamists is seen as a direct path to totalitarianism. However, as Nasr argues, “the challenge of Islamic revivalism to the secular state and its views on and role in the democratization process are far more complex and nuanced than

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<sup>9</sup> In a US policy statement on Islam, Edward Djerejian (US Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs) argued as far back as 1992: “In countries throughout the Middle East and North Africa, we thus see groups or movements seeking to reform their societies in keeping with Islamic ideals. There is considerable diversity in how these ideals are expressed. We detect no monolithic or coordinated international effort behind these movements”. (Djerejian in Kramer 1992, 193)

modernization theory suggests” (Nasr 1995, 263).

According to Nasr’s arguments, it is also possible to consider Islamic groups as political actors that could be alternatives to the prevalent political structures. Here, the ideas of globalization and statehood take on a different aspect. Firstly, on a large scale, Islam and Islamic movements can be the proponents of a cultural and political response to globalization. In this context, Islamic movements represent a local manifestation of a universal vision and, accordingly, are able to provide an alternative way of interpreting and illustrating the world. As Bassam Tibi argues, “the concept of world order posed by these fundamentalists *competes* with Western universalism” (Tibi 1998, 15).

It has been argued that the rise of political Islam in the Middle East is “the last phase in the cycle of identity formation and reformation in the region” (Soltan). Islamism is part of a global ethno-political “awakening” which has clearly marked the turn of the millennium. The *politics of identities* has been one of most prominent forms of political participation and political opposition in countless countries and regions all over the world over the last fifteen to twenty years. Therefore, Islamism is not a separate or isolated Middle Eastern phenomenon, but a logical expression of the politics of identities that has no specific or limited geographical manifestation.

Phenomena parallel with Islamism are, for example, Jewish fundamentalism, the increasing presence of other world religions (e.g., Buddhism and Hinduism), the ethno-national movements in Catalonia and Ireland, and the neo-religious movements in the USA. (Cf. Haynes 1998, 146 & 209) Jeff Haynes calls this “a global religious revival,” which means that religious concerns figure highly on the agendas of

many peoples, groups, and governments (Haynes 1993, 10).

By comparing Islamism with these phenomena, it is easy to notice that Islamism is not an exception in the world of politics. Even if scholars and politicians have different opinions, it has to be remembered that Islamism is not primarily a religious or spiritual phenomenon; rather, it consists of political movements like those against which it is struggling (e.g., governing élites or parties) (cf. Salamé 1994, 7). In other words, Islamic movements have to be seen as political enterprises and not primarily as religious ones.

In theory, globalization may help to further civil society – including Islamism – and accordingly promote democracy by weakening the economic and social control of the state on the whole (see Abootalebi 1999). The Middle Eastern states have used their position as oil producers and their important strategic allies or enemies for a long time. In a global world, the significance of these issues is not decreasing, but the logic of international cooperation has become more complex.

Islamism can be an alternative way for people to cope with the global world. Here the position of a state is not that dominant or repressive, because the Islamic response is initially local. In this way, globalization does not exclusively refer to “a process of convergence, a homogenizing force, with social, economic, and political structures becoming more alike in a shrinking world” (Cerny 1996, 618). Globalization is also a fragmenting or polarizing phenomenon that includes diversified political and cultural elements. In this context, Islamism is a local manifestation countering globalization and its different dimensions.

From a different point of view, when we think about the content of

the ideas (agendas and modes of action) of Islamic groups, globalization can be regarded as having had a significant effect; that is, Islamism can be seen as a *product* of globalization. Islamic groups are increasingly aware of global discussions and the practices that have an effect on their ideologies and political programs. For example, the widely debated issue of the position of women in Islam has not arisen primarily from Islamic groups themselves but from the world around them.

“Agenda setting” is an adaptation of contemporary globalized cultural values and, at the same time, a way of gaining acceptance. In a way, Islamism speaks “a global language” that is understandably outside national borders.

#### *The case of the Muslim Brotherhood*

One of the most prominent Islamic groups in the Middle East has been the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, for which it is easy to find both of the aforementioned dimensions of local response (i.e., a reactionary *response* to globalization and a taking *advantage* of globalization). Furthermore, the Muslim Brotherhood is also a revealing example of relations between a state and an Islamic movement: the Muslim Brotherhood has received strong accusations of terrorism.

The Muslim Brotherhood was founded in 1928 by Hasan al-Banna, who was one of the leading Muslim thinkers and politicians of the 20th century. The movement itself developed and expanded quickly and has been a model for other Islamic groups in the Middle East. It can be interpreted as a moderate Islamic group that recently has strictly

rejected the use of violence, even though the group had a violent wing until the 1970s.

Historically, the relations between the Muslim Brotherhood and the Egyptian state have been diverse: the Muslim Brotherhood has never been given legal status but its activities have been tolerated from time to time. The movement had its most “promising” era from the mid 1980s to the beginning of the 1990s: it was allowed to participate in governmental and municipal elections under the banner of other parties that had achieved reasonable support. After this period, the position of the Egyptian government became less tolerant, and since the mid 1990s the Muslim Brotherhood has in practice been banned and suppressed. (See Linjakumpu 1999, 164–5)

The Muslim Brotherhood has been a difficult challenger to the Egyptian government and state system. On the one hand, the Brotherhood has modified its political program to be suitable for a democratic state system and, on the other, it has tried to give an alternative vision for a democratic order. At the beginning of the 1990s, the Brotherhood produced several different statements on various issues. For example, the organization declared the so-called *15 Principles*, the purpose of which was to give guidelines on Egyptian political and social life. In these principles, the Brotherhood demanded free and fair elections, the right to form political parties as well as the freedom of opinion and the right to express one’s views publicly. (See Muslim Brotherhood 1995, *15 Principles for agreement*)

It is easy to notice that the demands were directed at the Egyptian state and the governmental élite (i.e., the ruling party, the NLF). The “purely” political demands (the right to political participation, etc.) of

the Muslim Brotherhood are not articulated through religion. Rather, they could be the demands of any party with democratic ideals, and not necessarily religious ones. The Muslim Brotherhood considers the state system legitimate, but the problem is the functioning and governance of the system. To the Brotherhood, the contemporary governance of the state does not legitimate and proper channel for democratic demands. Changing the logic of the political order in the short run brings the ultimate goal of the Muslim Brotherhood and many other Islamist movements – an authentic Islamic state – closer.

Religion has been articulated more clearly in other programs. The program on the position of women and program on *shura* are examples with religious articulation. The Muslim Brotherhood also demands the establishment of an Islamic state. Although an Islamic state is the ultimate goal of the Muslim Brotherhood, its short-term demands are probably more relevant. In these demands, the religious dimension is less clearly articulated than in the “pure” political demands (especially the 15 principles), which are actually the most challenging for the government. In other words, the Muslim Brotherhood certainly claims that the government is *un-Islamic* (as Islamic groups are many times said to declare) and therefore the establishment of an Islamic state is necessary (see, e.g., Ahrari 1996, 109). However, the underlying claim that the government is *undemocratic* is politically more challenging.

The publication of these programs is an indication of the Brotherhood’s consciousness of an international “spirit” or “ethos”. It is acting not only as a national movement but also as an internationally credible movement (although its programs are directed towards national politics). Moreover, the Muslim Brotherhood conducts its activities

outside Egypt – in the Middle East and Europe. For example, an information center in London serves as a good example for the activities of an internationally orientated Islamic movement.

All these dimensions are examples of a globalized Islamic movement that tries to adapt to a political system and to reorient and reconstruct the content of socio-political life. The distinctive question is not whether to reject secular or non-Islamic governance and to establish religious governance, but to construct a reliable and legitimate political order. In the contemporary global world, religious resurgence is not seeking religiously motivated order only; the driving force is finding alternatives for *political* participation and ideologies. In this context, religion functions as “a globally diffused idea” (term from Robertson 1992, 166), which means that that local actions have a global consciousness.

#### **4 Islamic challenge to the state**

In many ways, Islamism is a heterogeneous phenomenon and it is also seen from the outside in different ways: to some, Islamic groups represent terrorism; to others, they are the proponents of change. From the point of view of states, Islamism is mostly interpreted as an enemy and, essentially, an illegal phenomenon: Islamic movements are not potential political actors because they are seen as being inherently the opposite of democratic pursuits and therefore the opposite to the entire idea of statehood. Thus, opening up democratic processes to Islamic groups has been interpreted as a threat to the very idea of national

existence and security.

However, these interpretations are clearly expressions of double standards: in many cases, governments have used non-democratic measures against Islamism in order to prevent Islamic groups from carrying out potential non-democratic changes. For the most part, the threat is generated by governments whose aim is not to save democratic structures – their existence is in any case questionable – but to save prevailing political positions. In this situation, the processes of globalization are used as a “promoter” of the threat of international terrorism. Anti-terrorism measures are nowadays very international, cross-border activities in which the target might be similar but the motivations of the actors involved different (e.g. within the Barcelona process).

In another perspective, Islamic movements are almost the only real challengers to the prevalent political order in the Middle Eastern states. The issue of terrorism has masked the problem of democracy and political participation. The support of Islamic groups has not arisen from the desire for violence but, as Robert Rothstein argues, from “the experience of repeated failures and disappointments which translates into demands for an entirely different kind of society with a new set of goals” (Rothstein 1995, 79).

The Middle Eastern states have been challenged by globalization and global phenomena. However, some dimensions of globalization (e.g., increasing transnational cooperation between state actors) are actually strengthening certain political functions of the states. At the international level, the Middle Eastern states are still major representatives of social life, while the actors of civil societies remain

relatively weak.

The future of Islamism as a meaningful political force in the Middle East is unclear. During the 1980s, Islamic movements experienced a rapid rise in popularity but during the 1990s, their political significance was virtually eliminated by the states. On a global level, however, the awakening and expansion of different identity groups – be they religious, ethnic, or nationalist – has not slowed. Moreover, solutions to the social and political problems of Middle Eastern states are yet to be seen. Therefore, it can well be presumed that the story of Islamism in Middle Eastern politics is not at its end.

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# **Islam's global dimension and state: an overview of the ideas of Hassan Al-Banna, Sayyid Qutb and Hassan Al-Turabi**

*Hassan Gubara Said*

## **1 Introduction**

The introduction or insertion of a new Islamic awareness into the day-to-day social and political life of the many Middle Eastern societies is increasingly becoming an incontestable reality. In the Middle Eastern countries like the Islamic Republic of Iran, Sudan and the war-ridden Afghanistan, state power has already been violently captured by radical Islamic movements. For other, such as Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt and even the so-called secularist Turkey, there is a deadly intensity with high stakes as numerous civil associations, organizations and groups define themselves as Islamic and, as a result, violently challenge the political legitimacy of the existing political regimes. Even the less contested countries like Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan, Islamic awareness or awakening assumes a more prominent place in the articulation and making of political life and the provision of motives and programs for political activism, both peaceful and violent.

Furthermore, Islam's cultural expression and the presence of diverse Muslim immigrants in several Western countries highlight the global influence of Islam beyond its established physical or territorial boundaries.

As in the words of Ahmed S. Akbar, "the contemporary phase of globalization has resulted in more people than ever before becoming involved with one than more cultures. Of course, it is not technologies, which carry cultures across national boundaries, people clearly do as well, and the twentieth century has witnessed dramatic developments with the ease with which people cross from one state to another. Moreover, unlike the population movement of the past, the post-industrial diaspora occur in a world where even the old geographical and territorial certainties seen increasingly fragile" (Akbar 1994, 4). This populace spreading and cultural crossing and engagement stimulate John Tomlinson (1999, 2) to define globalization as referring to "the rapidly developing and ever-densening network of interconnections and interdependences that characterize modern social life. That the notion of connectivity is found in one form or another in most contemporary accounts of globalization". That Muslims constitute a large proportion of this population movement or diaspora world-wide and cultural "connectivity" which have become a significant constituent element in the social set-up and cultural features of Western countries e.g. Britain, Germany, France and the United State Of America. The diaspora of Muslims world-wide and the resurgence of Islamic movements have led to the conceptualization of Islam within global structures and have increased the awareness of the intensity to investigate Islam and movements of Islamic resurgence in a global context.

To explicate these points more earnestly, this chapter shall be divided into three sections. The first generally explores globalization and its most current relationship with Islam and its resurgence in the Middle East. This allows us, first, to explain globalization by identifying the historical connection between Islam and the West: the major pioneer in setting globalization in motion. Second, shedding light on the processes and factors of social change and their concomitant crisis conditions or environments which have likely strengthened Islamic resurgence in the Middle East and given rise to movements for orthodox reform and renewal of Islam. Expressed differently, the section will have the task of explaining the main factors, Western colonialism and modernization in particular, that have provided stimulation to a greater religiosity in the Middle East, and to a greater intensification of religio-political activism. The second section investigates the understanding, by Hassan Al-Banna, Sayyid Qutb and Hassan Al-Turabi, of Islam as a monolithic, comprehensive and universal/global religion that does not permit separation between the temporal and the spiritual or the political and religious. The third section builds on this theme and introduces an overview of an alternative Islamic notion of an international or global Islamic state as presented in the writings of Hassan Al-Banna, Sayyid Gutb and Hassan Al-Turabi: three Middle Eastern ideologues of modern Islamic resurgence.

## **2 Globalization and Islam: historical connection**

Ideas of globality or universality find currency in extensive writings on world culture, society and governance. Furthermore, globalization has become, as depicted by Paul Hirst and Grahame Thompson, a fashionable concept in the various fields of social sciences, a core dictum in the prescription of organization and management specialists and a catch-phrase for mass media experts, journalists and politicians representing various political parties and schools of thought. A common theme in these writings, including those of social sciences, management, journalism and politics, is the wide assertion that humanity lives in an era in which the greater part of social life is determined by global processes, in which national cultures, national economies and national boundaries are dissolving. Central to this perception is the emergence of a global consciousness where modern cultural practices lie at the heart of globalization. That by the last decade of the twentieth century it has become almost impossible to avoid the influence of the nation-state, the global economy, the global communication system and the world military order i.e. the structural aspects of globalization.

Many scholars have the inclination to perceive globalization either as a variant on Westernization or as a consequence of late modernity. Tony Spiby stresses the Westernizing character of globalization by stating that “a different definition of the origins of globalization is in terms of the aftermath of the voyages of Christopher Columbus in 1492 and Vasco da Gama in 1497–1498, when Europeans began to exert an influence on the rest of the world and implant their cultural institutions on all continents. The acquisition of a world-view by Europeans produced as its long-term outcome the world’s first truly global culture” (Spiby 1996, 1). That during the fourteenth and sixteenth

centuries, European were denied direct access to the Indian sub-continent and China by an Islamic Empire that controlled, through military conquest, the Eastern Mediterranean and stretched from Spain in the West to India in the East. It was a situation that stimulated or prompted Europeans to embark upon a process of maritime expansion that was to make possible the world's first truly global culture. The motivation for this, argues Bernard Lewis, came partly from "the obvious weakness and disunity that had meanwhile overtaken the Muslim world" (Lewis 1982, 21). And partly from a spiritual desire to continue the Christian crusades against Islam and a much more earthy desire to engage in trade for commodities, on the supply of which the Islamic Empire held a monopoly.

The Christian crusades against the extensive Islamic Empire, were from the outset, just as clearly acquisitive and had two significant impacts. One was the worsening of the position of the non-Muslim subjects or People of the Book – the Dhimmi, i.e. Jews and Christians, of the Muslim State. The animosity resulting from the long rivalry between Islam and Christianity, and the requirements of security in areas of mixed Muslim and Christian population at a time when religious loyalty was of prime significance, all combined eventually to bring about a harsher attitude on the part of the Muslims. From this period onward, relations between the Muslims and their Christian and Jewish subjects became more distant and often more antagonistic.

The other vital impact of the Christian crusade against the Islamic empire, was relevant to the relationship between the Middle East and Europe. The crusader state initiated a new form or structure of relationship, which their Muslim successors found it expedient to retain.

Under crusader rule European merchants, particularly Mediterraneans, had established themselves in Muslim ports where they formed organized communities subject to their own chiefs and governed by their own legal legislations. European merchant adventurers, operating out of home bases that formed parts of an existing independent “Pan-European market system”, had buying power, organizational and communicational ability to ensure their commercial success and staying ahead of other cultures, including Islam, not only in navigation and commerce but also in state-building and administration. Later on, the Industrial Revolution was to provide the invention and manufacturing capacity for Europeans completely to supersede or transcend alternative manufacturing industrial ventures in other parts of the globe. Thus, navigation, commerce and industrialization are clearly a significant factor in the diffusion of the European culture and institutions worldwide. That these institutions include not only religion (Christianity) and trade but also the political and military mechanisms developed in Europe as part of an expanding state administration.

This allowed for, to quote Tony Spybey, “the centralized administration of territory, the resultant concentration of revenue collection and the enhanced maintenance of the whole arrangement through the provision of standing armies with a monopoly of the means of violence. These developments represent the extension of European colonialism” (Spybey 1996, 18) which, in turn, provides the setting for the second major historical encounter between Islam and globalization in its European or Western. During the period of Western colonial hegemony, “Islamic societies came under severe strain and experienced a deep sense of internal weakness, frustration and alienation. Self-doubt

superseded an unshakeable faith in the intrinsic superiority of Islam. Western technology and ideology undermined Muslim Self-confidence. Subjection of vast areas of Muslim empires, either through direct European control or through politico-economic arrangements humiliated and parcelled the Ummah i.e. the Community of the Faithful. Newer forms of identification, mainly through ideas of nationalism and liberalism, led to the break up of the Islamic community” (Mustapha Kamal Pasha and Ahmed I. Samat 1997, 193–4).

The impact of Western colonialism on the Muslim and Middle Eastern societies made manifestation in yet another structural dimension of globalization: the economy. With the phenomenal growth of the world market and European power during the nineteenth century, it was the global diffusion and stable consolidation of capitalist property and state forms that became the project of the leading classes and powers. And it was against this backdrop that projects of modernization were launched. For Simon Bromely, the transition of Muslim and Middle Eastern societies from pre-capitalist Islamic forms of to capitalist modernity would have to involve two linked processes. In the first instance, “the state apparatus must be able to hold its authority and monopoly of coercion against other sites of political command, such that the general, public functions of society become the concern of a single body of rule-making and coercive enforcement (the modern, sovereign state). And second, there must be a significant degree of separation between the institution of rule and the mechanism by which surplus labour of the direct producers is appropriated, thus uncoupling the material basis of the power of the ruling class from the formal exercise of state political power (the creation of capitalist property

relations). Taken together, the emergence of a sovereign public sphere in conjunction with the privatization of command over surplus labour provides the basis for of the liberal-capitalist form state and economy” (Bromley 1994, 44–5). In other words, Western imperial and colonial dominance over the Middle East and the Muslim World which, extends beyond “national and ideological differences” and which also, gradually, creates what Martin Albrow characterized as the “new age” talk (age of automation, atomic age, space age, electronic age, solar age i.e. the remarkably persistent idea of modernity which promises to its adherents new futures and visions of a globalized world with a realization of world government, a single world market, a new world order and a global culture” (Albrow 1997, 1).

The main point to all of these arguments is that political (nation-state), economic (capitalism), and cultural institutions have been globalized. At present there is virtually no one on the planet earth who can participate in socio-economic, political and cultural activities without reference to globalized institutions in some form or another. Anthony Giddens has referred to this as “reflexive modernity”: a globalized form of life that touches on everyone and causes individuals – including Muslims and Middle Easterners – to orient their thoughts and actions towards it. For him, “the reflexivity of modern social life consists in the fact that social practices are constantly examined and reformed in the light of incoming information about those very practices, thus constitutively altering their character” (Giddens 1992, 38). Differently expressed, in late modernity intensified globalization provide the individual with increased information with which to engage in social interactions. People all over the world, including Middle

Eastern and Muslim societies, are confronted with an extensive range of imagery information, thanks to the information revolution, involving model of citizenship (nation-state), forms of capitalist production, means of distribution and styles of consumerism, modes of communication, principles of world order and, in addition, ways of reacting to all of these in the form of new social movements e.g. environmentalist, feminist and religious.

Of relevance here is the question that globalization or/and its multidimensional structural aspects of nation-state, global economy, global communication system and world warfare industrialism, produce or yield anti-global reaction of which movements of Islamic resurgence are but one form. That, in appearance, the movement of Islamic resurgence, awakening, assertion, revival and so on to use but some of the terms utilized to describe the phenomenal growth of the hegemonizing tendency of West-centred and oriented globalization. They are a response to globalization defined in historical specificity of the West and a restriction against political hegemony, economic exploitation and cultural/intellectual invasion: factors that have stimulated Islamic resurgence and strengthened disciplined religiosity in the Middle Eastern and Muslim societies. A significant characteristic shared by all these movements of Islamic resurgence is the dynamic notion of seeing Islam as a comprehensive religion, which visions a global Islamic state. By introducing the view of Islam into an analysis of the age and what John Tomlison depicts as an emerging “global culture”, these movements have the intention to transcend, first, globalization both in its Westernization and reflexive modernity variants and, second, the set of intermingled and interwoven factors that

contributed to their emergence. These factors include: (1) integration into the international/global capitalist-liberalist system (Western imperial conquest and colonial experience) and (2) the concomitant results of the process of modernization. Among such results are: (1) development of transport, communication and mass media, (2) the spread of literacy and education, (3) urbanization and (4) the incorporation of the masses into the political societies. Combined together, these factors can be identified as the processes of social change or transformation and their concomitant “crisis conditions” experienced by the majority of Middle Eastern countries and societies.

In view of the great social, economic, political and cultural diversity of the Islamic world, including the Middle East, substantial differences exist in the domestic conditions of the various Muslim countries. Yet the existence of significant cross-national similarities between countries permits generalization about macro-level crises attributes that seem valid for the larger Islamic environment. In a useful article Professor R. Hrair Dekmejian specifies the main elements of these crises in a manner that warrants extensive quotation:

identity conflict, legitimacy crisis, political conflict, culture crisis and military impotence which act as the catalysts of Islamic revivalist responses ... Furthermore, the most distinctive features of these crisis conditions are (1) pervasiveness – the crisis condition is not limited to certain countries, but pervasive throughout the Islamic world, (2) comprehensiveness – the crisis is multifaceted, at once social, economic, political, cultural, psychological and (3) cumulativeness – the crisis situation is cumulative, representing the unsuccessful efforts in nation-building, socio-economic development and military prowess ... Still another distinctive feature is (4) xenophobia. A sense of xenophobia pervades Muslim societies. The feeling that Islam itself is facing a mortal threat by non-Islamic forces of secularism and modernity. (Dekmejian 1988, 7–10)

In other words, there is a causal relationship between the above-mentioned processes of social transformation, their consequences or concomitant crisis conditions and Islamic resurgence. That, in order to comprehend the character of modern Islamic revival, particularly in the Middle East, as a religio-political movement that aspires to establish a global Islamic state, it is imperative to analyse these processes and factors of social change, Western colonialism and modernization in specific, and their repercussions: “the crisis conditions”.

### *2.1 Western colonialism and the Middle East: integration into the global capitalist-liberalist system*

Awareness of decay in the Muslim world, including the Middle East, is an integral theme of the religio-political discourse of the movements of Islamic resurgence where Islam is dissected and re-evaluated under the covetous eyes of an expansionist West. Making Western colonialism their first point of departure, the leaders and ideologues of such movements, including Al-Banna, Qutb and Al-Turabi, consider that the European military, economic, political and cultural penetration of the Muslim societies, including the Middle Eastern ones, changed both the historical context and intellectual perspectives of Muslims. Europe had fully grasped the possibility and beneficial results of seizing the unprecedented opportunity to exercise direct political control over the vital economic resources and strategic positions of the Muslim world. As the triumphant military power of Europe transformed the world into

a vast network of market-oriented economies, various Muslim and Middle Eastern countries became a source of raw material and cheap labour forces as well as outlets for receiving European manufactured commodities, articles and streams of Western thoughts, values, lifestyles ... etc. In other words, “it was the West in its economic domination, political systems and military presence which appeared in the background as an authoritative code of practice” (Choueiri 1990, 35).

Such domination occurred at a time when Europe ceased to be the distant ambiguous continent of the “infidels” or “unbelievers” and was steadily penetrating with its invading armies, goods, civil administrators and culture the urban and rural areas of the Muslim world which consequently suffered, and still, from what Muhammed Abduh called “a mediocre situation of poverty, degradation, weakness and defeat” compared with the “civilized nations’ wealth, pride, strength and triumph”. Hassan Al-Banna, one of the main ideologue of the modern Islamic resurgence, explained the harmful consequences of Western invasion to the Muslim world as follows:

The disease affecting those Eastern nations assumes a variety of aspects and has many symptoms. It has done harm to every expression of their lives for they have assailed on the political sides by imperial aggression on the part of their enemies and by factionalism, rivalry, division and disunity on the part of their sons. They have assailed on the economic side by the propagation of usurious practices and the exploitation of their resources and natural treasures by foreign companies. They have been afflicted on the intellectual side by anarchy deflection and heresy that destroy their religious beliefs. They have assailed on the sociological side by licentiousness of morals and mores. They have assailed through the working positivist laws and through anarchy in the policy of their education and training. They have been assailed on the spiritual side by a death-dealing despair, a murderous apathy, a shameful cowardice, an ignoble humility, and all-prevailing impotence, a niggardliness. (Al-

Banna in Wendell 1978, 61–2)

That with the onslaught of Western colonialism and the gradual dissemination of Westernization as a cultural phenomenon in the traditional milieu or environment of Islam and Muslim countries, Muslims in general and Islamic scholars (ulama) in particular were alerted to a multitude of ruptures in their societies that were political, economic, social, intellectual, cultural, spiritual and even linguistic. In this respect, the resurgence of Islam should be thought of as a direct reaction to an aggressive Western culture of, again, socio-economic, political, and cultural modernization and its concomitant consequences of developing transport, communication and mass media, urbanization, the spread of literacy and Western secular education and mass political participation within the framework of the nation-state system(s). These consequences are reinforced in Nikki Keddie's survey of "Ideology, Society And The State In Post-Colonial Muslim Societies":

The profile of countries with strong Islamist movements nearly always include the following: one or more nationalist governments which tried to unify the country by relying more on national than Islamic ideology the ... rapid economic development and dislocations which have brought rapid urbanization and visibly differentiated treatment for the urban poor and urban rich ... virtually all have profited from oil economies at least at second hand ... a longer and a more radical break with an Islamically-orientated past government and society than is true of a country like Yemen. Most have experienced a heavy Western impact and control and Western and secularly orientated governments. (Keddie 1988, 17)

## 2.2 *The process of modernization and its concomitant consequences*

Western colonialism, in its global march, aimed, also, at modernizing the world- including the Middle East and superseding the limited scope of traditionalism. Significant in this context is the development of the mass media of communication, and transportation: a major structural aspect of globalization. That the advent of “printed word” which finds embodiment in terms of books, magazines, periodicals, newspapers, home-pages on the internet, creates a public domain in which the literate member of society can participate. The institutions of public debate, sermons in mosques and lectures add to the vitality of activity in this public sphere while perhaps also expanding its confines to include some of the semi-literate. That the creation and enlargement of the public realm, by the media of communication and transportation, provides the conditions for the rise and sustaining of socio-political and religious movements including the Islamic ones. Under the influence of global mass media and information technology Islam was transformed into a modern doctrine radicalism and opposition to Westernization or modernization, promoting Islamic ideas of equality and change against Western democratic views of political and cultural participation. Islamization, under the umbrella of the movements of Islamic resurgence involves, therefore, a re-definition and re-allocation of institutions and values with an Islamic state.

The re-definition and re-allocation of institutions, traditions and values within the framework of an Islamic state involves, in particular, a re-organization of the means of spreading literacy: educational institutions and their detachment from Western secular orientation. In terms of economic system, movements of Islamic resurgence put a great emphasis on the traditional Islamic objectives of an equal of income and

wealth and the creation of certain welfare institutions for the orphans, the needy and the poor or destitute. In terms of legal system, they demand the reinstatement of Islamic shari'a the only source of legal legislation thereby excluding secular Western forms of legal organization and jurisprudence. On the ideological level, Islam is believed to have the ability of filling the gap between the promises of Westernization and Marxism and the actual reality of social change at the everyday life.

Movements of Islamic resurgence, while different in their Middle Eastern national and local manifestation, share a rejection of the modernist secular period on a variety of grounds. These include the perception that modernization has failed because its secular character could no offer coherent values. In addition, modernization has failed because too rapid urbanization produces social dislocation – migration from villages to towns, anomie and marginality. Furthermore, there is the notion that Western liberal institutions have failed because the policies of nationalist state system did not allow genuine political expression and democratic participation. That while the Western secular program or alternative was seen to be in ruins, Marxism also had little to offer in the way of either ideology or successful economic policy. Marxism remained the ideology of an elite and failed to appeal to the masses through a popular discourse, which utilized traditional Islamic themes. It was also associated with the former Soviet Union, atheism and, like Western colonialism, foreign domination e.g. the invasion of Afghanistan in 1979. In addition, and as Said, Samir Arjomand states,

Neither nationalism nor Arabization has solved the crisis of identity since independence ... The failure of parliamentary democracy, socialism and communism leaves the Muslim world and the arena of mass politics to the Islamic ideology as the

uncontested panacea which, furthermore, can claim authenticity in contrast to the imported ideologies of the preceding decades. (Arjomand 1986, 107)

The inescapable conclusions suggested by this analysis are, first, that Western colonialism has transformed itself in the modern Middle Eastern and Muslim world into complex political, economic and cultural phenomenon known as modernization, which possesses a radically different outlook than that of Islam. That is what makes Islamism, as a modern religious movement, a reaction to the onslaught of modernity and its philosophical outlook. As a result of the enduring impact of modernization one can not but view of the thought of Islamic resurgence in the context of the social and historical transformation of colonial and post-colonial Middle Eastern and Muslim societies. The engrossing impact of Western colonialization – understood here as modernity and modernization – ought to have been resulted in a response at the levels of thought and activism. The movements of Islamic resurgence were not an exception to that.

Second, the development of the media of communication and transportation led to the increased reintroduction of Islamic values and thoughts which are, in a broad sense, against what Richard Falk termed as “false universalism” i.e. masked or obscured Western civilizational hegemony. For him, “such hegemony is far greater than the sum of its political economic and even cultural parts, as it is civilizational, including distinctive ideas, memories, beliefs, practices, misconceptions and symbols that go to the very core of human identity ... That one feature of false universalism and its relation to Western hegemony has been, and continues to be, the suppression of civilizational identity and difference, with a particular historical/ political emphasis on the threat

posed by Islam” (Falk 1997, 9).

Third, the reintroduction of Islam into the globalized mass media where electronic equipment is used for data storage, visual recording and reproduction, helped reinforce the concept of Islam as a global system. At the same time these institutions of global communication spread, world-wide, the message of “Pan-Islamic community”:

Ironically, the technological tools of modernization have often served to reinforce traditional belief and practice as religious leaders who initially opposed modernization now use radio, TV and print to preach and disseminate, to educate and proselytize. The message of Islam is not simply available from a preacher at a local mosque. Sermons and religious education from leading preachers and writers can be transmitted to every city and village. (Esposito 1984, 212)

Islam, at present, has the capability to self-thematize Islamic religion as a self-reflexive global system of cultural identity over and against the diversity and pluralism involved in the current global culture where the rapid evolution of electronic media has transformed the importance of time and space or location for social and inter-civilizational interaction. Differently expressed, “In the social and cultural realms, globalization operates to extend ideas, norms and practices beyond the settings in which they originated” (Roenu 1997, 362). Globalization helps Islam to transcend its territorial realms of origin and claim internationalism not only as a divine message but also as a global Islamic state and a universal ummah (Islamic community). One major premise of Islam is that it cannot be practised except in the context of an Islamic political system. Therefore, one significant goal of Islamic resurgence is the establishment of an Islamic political regime. This objective has been, again, a response to the failure of the forces of modernization and secularization in Middle Eastern and Muslim societies. To come to grip

with the relationship of Islam to politics and/or state, let us overview the political ideas of three Middle Eastern ideologues of Islamic resurgence: Hassan AL-Banna, and Sayyid Qutb of Egypt and Hassan Al-Turabi of the Sudan.

### **3 Islam: a monolithic and comprehensive religion**

A significant approach in the religio-political and ideological discourse of Hassan Al-Banna, Sayyid Qutb and Hassan Al-Turabi is their stress or emphasis on the imperative that Islam should be understood as the best divinely revealed religion (din). That Islam is the World's immanent as well as transcendental salvation because it is a practical religion that offers guidance in social, political, economic and international affairs. If contemporary Muslims and non-Muslims capture the comprehensive and global zeal of Islam, it will radically transform their political conditions as well as other facets of their lives. In other words, Islam should be seen as an ideology, a righteous program of principles and action which can galvanize mankind, Muslims in particular, by the passion of its commitment to the fusion, not fission, of religion and state, the achievement of social justice through the transformation of the appalling political. Social and economic conditions prevalent in the world including the Middle East.

The fundamentalist doctrines of Al-Banna, Qutb and Al-Turabi with respect to the comprehensiveness of Islam (shumuliyat Al-Islam), is solidified by their belief in the Oneness and Unity of God i.e. monotheism (tawhid). More than an important tenet in Islam, the

Oneness of God serves as the foundation of a program of action in which Islam radiates as the proper point of reference or referential framework for all walks of life in this world and the Hereafter. If there is only One God and divine Sovereign for mankind, it is not possible to separate politics, economics and society from religion i.e. Islam. Thus, the essential message of Al-Banna, Qutb and Al-Turabi holds that the rules of Islam and its teachings, both divine and Prophetic, are comprehensive and Islam as a universal faith regulates all mundane matters.

Hassan Al-Banna, the spiritual father of Muslim Brotherhood in both Egypt and Sudan, summarizes the totality and all-encompassing nature of Islam in his tract “the Message Of The Teachings” by stating, that “Islam is a comprehensive system which deals with all spheres of life. It is a country and a homeland or a country and a nation. It is conduct and power and mercy and justice. It is a culture and a law or knowledge and jurisprudence. It is material and wealth or gain and prosperity. Islam is Jihad (Holy War) and a call or army and a cause. And finally, it is true belief and correct worship. The glorious Quran and the purified tradition (Sunnah) of the Prophet (peace be upon him) are the reference point for every Muslim to acquaint himself with the rules of Islam” (Al-Banna 1996, 6–7). To this Islamic comprehensiveness Al-Banna adds that “recognizing Allah’s (God’s) existence (may He be exalted), believing in his oneness and glorifying Him are the sublime beliefs of Islam” (Al-Banna 1996, 6–7).

Like his predecessor, Al-Banna, Sayyid Qutb constructs his ideological discourse on the argument that Islam is a divine socio-economic and political system that emerged as an answer to human

existential requirements and social and historical necessities. Therefore, Islam, as a religion, is far from being peripheral or marginal, superficial and temporal. That “Islam is not only ritual performed, an ethical call, a mere system of government, an economic system or a system of international relations. ... All these are some of the several aspects of Islam, not the whole of Islam” (Qutb 1974, 22). For him, the essence of Islamic doctrine (aqida) is its vision or conception (tasawwur) of God, life or the cosmos or universe which constitutes the basic foundations for all aspects of Islam: social, economic, political as well as personal, psychological and else:

Islam is a system for practical human life in all its aspects. This is a system that entails the ideological ideal – this convincing concept which expounds the nature of the universe and determines the position of man in it as well as his ultimate objectives therein. It includes the doctrines and practical organizations, which emanate and depend upon the ideological ideal and make of it a reality reflected upon everyday life of human beings. For instance, these doctrines and organizations include the ethical foundation and its sustaining power, the political system together with its forms and characteristics, the social order and its bases and values, the economic doctrines, philosophy and institutions and the international organism with its interrelations. In fact this Islamic system is so comprehensive that it covers all aspects of human life and the various genuine needs of man as well as his different activities. (Qutb, 5–6)

To explicate Qutb’s view in a different way, Islam is an all-encompassing system whose realm of activity is the whole of life: spiritual and materialistic or religious and mundane. It is a religion that cannot be rightly practised in isolation from society. Furthermore, Islam is a religion whose essence is faith: an argument greatly emphasized by yet another ideologue of Islamic resurgence: Hassan Al-Turabi of the Sudan.

Hassan Al-Turabi builds his argument of the universalism and comprehensiveness of Islam on the conception of faith (Iman) where “Islam is only pure religion whose fundamentals are kept genuine while other religions have experienced distortion or transformation in their dogma and shari’a” (Al-Turabi 1984, 6). That the core of Islam revolves around the axiom of faith, which constitutes the ‘infrastructure’ for facets of life: social, economic, and political as well as personal, psychological and others. For Al-Turabi, the significance of the concept of faith, as distinguished from other positivist doctrines, should be seen in the light of “the materialistic and the intellectual hegemony which trivializes transcendental religious facts and suppresses will in the faithful human soul. This in turn results, first, in human despair with respect to his/her life in the Hereafter – the ‘there and absent’ and on this earth – the ‘here and present’. Second, the alienation of religion and the domestication or habituation by man of various spiritual, intellectual and materialistic approaches. Third, factors of religious oblivion and old-agedness have punctured or penetrated the true fundamentals of religion thus leading to the disappearance of its meanings and the alteration of religious manifestations which have become an accumulation of inherited traditions and conceptions. Domestic innovation (bid’a), itself dominated by domestic impression and affected by historical circumstances has become the rule of the day” (Turabi 1984, 6).

Furthermore, the importance of the concept of faith can be considered in the Muslims’ needs for comprehensive interpretation for existence, an interpretation that brings closer the nature of great facts which include Divinity, monotheism (tawhid) or Oneness of God, the

cosmos, life and man. The concept of faith channels to man the knowledge of his position and goal in the universe which, in turn, leads him to knowing his proper role: being God's vicegerent on earth and defining his appropriate socio-economic and political approach and method in life. Consequently, the political system that governs or rules human life becomes, for its sources, validity and correctness dependent upon the comprehensive interpretation of the concept of faith, its values and impacts on human life, both on earth and in the Hereafter.

As a dominant theme in Al-Turabi's ideological discourse, the concept of faith makes him believe that it guarantees coherence in character and energy for the entire Muslim individuals, family, society and nation (ummah). It also prevents personality split, disorientation and dissipation that are caused by Western positivist creeds and conceptions including secularism. Furthermore, "faith has not been legislated by God in vacuum but to be realized through practical living on earth and interaction with its objects and humans" (Turabi 1984, 10). In this respect the Al-Turabi defines faith not only in terms of concepts and principles but also in those of behaviour and culture. For him, "when an individual's faith is perfect and his devotion to God is sincere, the spirits of religion will penetrate or break through all his life and organize all his actions which are possible by divinely predestined circumstances. Faith (iman) will, thus, first, incarnate itself into the political field as God's rulership (hakimiyyah), as a rejection to the rule of tyranny and aberration, as God-fearing with respect to the handling of authority and allegiance and as a strife (Holy War/Jihad) against the forces of evil. Second, faith will manifest itself in the economic field as a confession of God's ownership and man's inheritance of wealth, as an

orientation or direction of livelihood towards the objective of devotion and refraining from self-indulgence and as the establishment of economic relation upon the base of God-fearing and obedience. Third, faith will also be evident in the scientific field as a unification of both traditional or narrated and rational sciences for the sake of more knowledge about God and for the usage of such knowledge for the extension of God's devotion or worship" (Turabi 1984, 10).

Al-Turabi's rejection of any divorce of politics from religion and the division of life as belonging either to economics, society, politics or any other aspect, follows as an outcome of his belief in the existence of a strong relation between the nature of an objective social order and the metaphysical concept of faith. He believes that the compartmentalization of human life into public, private, politics, economic and society prevents an understanding of God, the universe, life and man. Faith, Al-Turabi argues, entails action and Muslims' aspiration for the establishment of a true Muslim society. This argument can be made evident by the example Al-Turabi gives to stress the effects of faith upon the first Muslim community created by The Prophet Muhammed at Medina in the sixth century. That the first Muslim community was brought into existence by having faith in God as One. That the effect of faith was not only individualistically spiritual but also communally objective or substantial: the creation of an Islamic Ummah (nation). Such (nation) managed to, "transform, first, sectarianism, tribal fanaticism and political fragmentation into unity and a comprehensive central government. Second, poverty into a heaped wealth and an extensive regional base that helped to establish a sublime economic renaissance. Third, subjugation into superiority, freedom and political

leadership whose stage was the world. Fourth, civilizational parasitism into a magnificent civilization that enriched the world for long centuries. Fifth, and finally, illiteracy into a scientific knowledge that illuminated Europe's Dark Ages. We should attribute all this rapid and great renaissance to the factors of faith (Iman) which aroused the Muslim community and mobilized its energies for an immense campaign in which Muslims interacted with existing condition only to construct that superior social, economic, political, civilizational and scientific glory" (Turabi 1984, 11).

Accordingly, faith (Iman) is not an inactive or morbid concept that resides in the realm of human consciousness while satisfied with existing theoretically in an abstract configuration. It is, above all, a dynamic design, although unarticulated, to construct a reality where human faith and action are preserved. The concept of faith can, thus, be understood as having two dimensions. First, faith as a motivating force in the life of the individual believer and as an impulse to create a faithful group or an embryo of a faithful community which in turn serves as a base for a larger Muslim Ummah (nation). Second, faith as a design for the construction of an Islamic alternative. In brief, faith in Islam necessitates its own fulfilment i.e. the establishment of a global Islamic state.

#### **4 Islam's global state: an overview of the ideas of Al-Banna, Qutb and Al-Turabi**

In his translated book, 'State in Islam', Yusuf Al-Qaradawi (1998, 9)

argues that “Western imperialism which had ruled the world could implant in the Muslims’ minds and souls a very strange and malicious idea that Islam is a religion not a state. The Western conception of the word *din* (religion) has nothing to do with the state’s affairs, and is governed by (human mind) only in accordance with its experience and ever-changing conditions. The West wanted to apply what has been practised on Christianity in the West on Islam in the East. Believing the Renaissance came only after freeing Europe from the yoke of religion, thus a renaissance in the East must also be based on the ruins of religion”. Differently expressed, Muslims never encountered any separation of religion and state until Western ‘modernization’ and secular thought raised a misleading slogan: ‘religion is for God and the fatherland is for all’. That Islam, as Al-Banna states, is “comprehensive and includes the people’s affairs in the world and the Hereafter. Those who believe that the teachings of Islam deal only with the spiritual side of Islam are mistaken. Islam is an ideology, a fatherland and a nationality, a religion and a state, a spirit and action and a Holy Book and a sword” (Al-Banna 1991, 119).

The ideological state: a state that adopts a given idea or ideology upon which its whole internal affairs and external relations are based, is in the very nature and origin of Islam which is believed to direct life, rule society and regulate human course in accordance with God’s laws. Islam cannot suffice itself with delivering sermons and exhortations to do Good and leave its rules, commandments and teachings that cover all aspects of life to individual consciousness only. The first thing Islam needed, and still requires, was a state to adopt and apply its comprehensive and universal message. That desired state is believed to

be an Islamic obligation. It is also a human necessity for it will introduce to the world a living example of the combination of religion and worldly life. It will also serve as the first brick in the construction of a major Islamic caliphate that unites all Muslims of the globe under the banner of the Quran and Prophetic traditions (sunnah).

For Al-Banna, Qutb and Al-Turabi, the concept of the state, as an independent, political and Muslim entity, started to take configuration during the sixth and seventh centuries of the Prophet's migration to Medina. Such migration was primarily an endeavour to establish a distinguished Muslim community governed by a unique Muslim state in accordance to, again, divine rules and on three interdependent pillars: (1) the Muslim leader's responsibility, (2) unity of the Muslim Ummah (nation) and (3) respective of collective will. Al-Banna, Qutb and Al-Turabi ground the system of government in Islam on the following Quranic verses and prophetic traditions:

“And this He commands judge thou between them by what Allah hath revealed and follow not their vain desires” (Quran 5:49);

“We have sent down to thee the Book in truth, that thou mightest judge between them, as guided by Allah: so be not (used) as an advocate by those who betray their trust” (Quran 4:105);

“Appoint one of you as your amir (leader)” (Prophetic tradition);

“The sultan (ruler or leader) is Allah's (God's) shadow on earth” (Prophetic tradition).

The three ideologues argue that above-mentioned Quranic verses and Prophetic traditions not only confirm the fusion of politics and religion but also present and contain spiritual authority for the legitimacy of Islamic political rule. Such legitimacy centers its function as a material and political defence of the Islamic Ummah (nation)

against internal decay and external aggression and hegemony. That the overall importance of the conception of the state lies also in its function as a body that rectifies principles and doctrines and develops juridical mechanisms. Because they view Islam as complete and comprehensive system regulating all spheres of life and including a system of social norms, government, legislation, laws and education, any true reform must, of necessity, touch on religion. Mere religiosity without solid commitment, social, political and economic activism is useless in the service of the Muslim society and Ummah (nation).

They subject the origin and constitution of legitimacy to the basic Islamic goals including commitment to Islamic shari'a and the spread of the Islamic call (da'wa) world-wide. In other word, central to their political vision of an 'international' Islamic state and order is the reinstatement of Muslim religious law and the concept of rule by consultation (shura) believed as applied in its fullest extent by Prophet Muhammed and his guided caliphs. That, "the body of law must be derived from the prescriptions of the Sacred law, drawn from the Noble Quran and in accordance with the basic sources of Islamic jurisprudence. For the Islamic Sacred law and the decisions of the Islamic jurists (fugaha) are self-sufficient, supply every need and cover any constituency and produce the most excellent results and the most blessed fruits" (Al-Banna in Moussali 1993, 89). Al-Banna, Qutb and Al-Turabi often quoted the slogan: (the Quran is our constitution) and the following Quranic verses to solidify their political vision:

"And consult them in affairs" (Quran 3:159);

"Who conduct their affairs by mutual consultation" (Quran 42:38);

"If any do fail to judge by what Allah hath revealed, they are unbelievers" (Quran 5:44).

As long as the Muslim community is governed by these general Quranic principles, the political form of government is secondary. Western secularism is ruled out by their i.e. Al-Banna, Qutb and Al-Turabi, interpretations of the early Muslim polity as being one where the ruler (imam) was elected and mutual consultation (shura), accountability, respect of public will were practised.

Because Islam calls for integration and unity and warns against division, fragmentation and dissension (fitna), Al-Banna, Qutb and Al-Turabi rejected multi-party system and denied political sectarianism and blind factionalism. However, their view, they argued was based on what they experienced and observed at a time when Western liberal democratic governments and political parties representing both Left and Right were dividing the Muslim nations, including Egypt and Sudan, and leaving them helpless in front of their enemy: Western political, economic and cultural hegemony and policies of exclusion. In his analysis of the failure of democratic experiences in the Third World countries or non-Western societies, Al-Turabi specified four significant reasons. They are: (1) social (the existence of a traditional social nature, (2) economic (the prevalence of backward economies), (3) political (the setting up of military and authoritative political regimes backed up foreign powers and (4) cultural and psychological (the absence of individual and political awareness a prerequisite for systems of representation, delegation and democratic public opinion. That, “the practice of democracy in the Third World was nothing more than mobilizing the masses to participate in the worship ceremonies set up by rulers to enhance their international status and image. The fact of the matter is that people were weakened throughout time by having neither

the right of initiation nor the authority to criticize and control. Despotic rule and coercion became the law and order. Furthermore, states' constitutions, flag, national anthem and democratic slogans became just international adornment" (Al-Turabi 1987, 65).

Another principles and values that Islam preaches, argued Al-Banna, Qutb and Al-Turabi, are social justice, tolerance and protection of non-Muslim minorities, people of the Book (Ahl Al-Kitab) in particular Christians and Jews and safeguarding the rights of foreigners. Such Islamic tolerance is based on what Al-Banna termed "rectitude and sincerity" of such minorities and foreigners. But, "if their consciences grow corrupt and their crimes increase, the Quran has already defined the position we should take regarding them: "O you who believe do not take for confidants those who are not of you, they will not fail to hinder you, they are pleased with what troubles you. Hatred has been revealed out of their mouths, what their hearts conceal is yet greater. We have made the signs clear o you, if you but understand. Behold, you love them but they do not love you" (Wendell 1987, 120–1).

Besides it preaching of tolerance and social justice, Islam and its state has the obligation of not only strengthening the Muslim armed forced but also instilling the ethos or spirit of Jihad (Holy War) to defend and protect propagate God's mission i.e. Islam world-wide. However, for Al-Banna, Qutb and Al-Turabi, Jihad is a necessity not only for the universal propagation of the Islamic call but also for the establishment of the Islamic State. Their notion of Jihad was developed by the literal interpretation of the following Quranic verses:

"And fight them on until there is no more persecution and religion becomes Allah's in entirety" (Quran 8:38); and

"Fight those who believe not in Allah nor the Last Day, nor hold that forbidden by

Allah and His Messenger, nor acknowledge the religion of Truth, from among of the People of the Book, until they pay the *jizya* (poll-tax) with willing submission. And feel themselves subdued” (Quran 9:29).

Sayyid Qutb proclaimed that the final objective of Jihad, besides the protection and defence of creed (*aqida*), the creation of a Muslim society and the establishment of an Islamic state, is to address humanity or mankind in general and to prevail over earth in total: “Creed (*aqida*) and the method (*manhaj*) into which it is incarnated and the society where such methods prevails are the only considerations in the Islamic sense. Earth, in itself, has neither consideration nor weight. Its value according to the Islamic conception (*tasawwur*) is derived from the dominance of God’s method, rule (*sultan*) and sovereignty (*hakimiyyah*) over it. Consequently, it will be the incubational spot of creed, the realm of method, the abode of Islam (*Dar Al-Islam*) and the spearhead of human liberation” (Qutb 1982, 85). In other words, being simultaneously revolutionary and universalist, Islam has, as its main goal, a world-wide revolution that transcends artificial geographical boundaries and national territories. Jihad (Holy War) is, then, the process of revolutionary struggle initiated to accomplish the sublime objective of Islam: ending persecution and making religion belong to Allah (God) in its entirety. Furthermore, since the Islamic mission is universal, neither restricted to a certain place, time and nation nor a social class, it follows that the Islamic State is also global.

The globality of the Islamic state is stressed by Al-Qaradwi who states, “the Muslim State is neither an ethnic nor a territorial state. It is not limited to tribal boundaries or geographical borders. In fact is an open state to every believer, based on free choice without compulsion

or force. It is a state based on concepts and beliefs. In it differences of race, nationality, language and colour melt away. Her sons are of one faith, One God, One Prophet, One Book, one Gibleh (Islamic direction of prayer), one ceremony, one law or constitution and one culture. The unity of nations stems from the unanimous word for the Oneness of Allah or word of monotheism". In this respect the inspired – for Islamic State is a land of purity, which may coincide with, exist within or transcend existing and internationally recognized territorial or national borders. That is, the Islamic State may, strictly speaking, be sub-national, national or international in geographical location and orientation. In any case the Islamic homeland and state is an imagined community that extends beyond domestic, regional and international groupings. It is a global Islamic alternative where religious identity i.e. being Muslim or a believer, becomes the exclusive and absolute foundation for the reconstruction of political, socio-economic and cultural order.

The endeavour and quest by movements of Islamic resurgence to create such an alternative often requires charismatic leadership and well-defined organizational structures, depends on disciplined, ideologically indoctrinated membership and holds or adopts a host of short and long-terms objectives whose realization entails abundant financial resources. Like nationalism, movements of Islamic resurgence possess hegemonic political ambitions and, again, demand colossal sacrifices from their devotees: Jihad or sacrifice of self and wealth for God's sake. They claim for the realization of an international or Pax-Islamic vision and brotherhood. In other words, there has been a rejection of all kinds of nationalism and a rhetoric embrace of the

Islamic Ummah: the universal nation or community of Muslims. Such nation, which supersedes all national and regional political configurations, is conceived of as a deep “horizontal comradeship” or “sacred fraternities” for which the believers are ready to sacrifice their souls and wealth, both in cash and kind, for an eternal reward in the Hereafter. As Al-Banna states, “Islam does not recognize geographical boundaries and distinctions based on blood and race. It considers Muslims as one unified Ummah (nation) and the Islamic fatherland as one despite territorial remoteness. The Muslim Brothers sanctify this unity, believe in it and strive to congregate Muslims and glorify Islamic brotherhood. They appeal that their fatherland is any land inhabited by a Muslim who states that, ‘there is no god but Allah is the God’ and call for international unity as an Islamic objective” (Wendell 1987, 142–4).

In his tract *Nahw Al-Nour* (Towards The Light), Al-Banna also states, “Islam has extended the domain of the Islamic fatherland. According to the Islamic understanding, the fatherland comprises: (1) the particular country first of all, (2) then it extends to the other Islamic countries, for all of them are a fatherland and an abode for the Muslim, (3) then it proceeds to the first Islamic Empire which the pious ancestors erected with dear and precious blood and over which they raised God’s banner. (4) Then the fatherland of the Muslim expands to encompass the entire world. Do not you hear the word of God (Blessed and Almighty is He): “And fight them till sedition is no more and the faith is God’s” (Quran 2:193)?. Thus did Islam reconcile the sentiments of local nationalism with that of a common nationalism, with all the benefits thereof for all humanity: O mankind We created you male and female and We created you people and tribes that you might know one another

(Quran 49:13)” (Wendell 1987, 110). Reinforcing this notion of Islamic globalization is the current and increasingly articulate expression of grievance and demand on the part of those who affirm their Islamic identity, and increasingly adopt a critical stance of normative and emotive distance from the Western-emplaced, still largely prevailing, structures and processes of world order.

## **5 Conclusion**

That, in appearance and as a conclusion, Islamic resurgence is a reverse movement against the hegemonizing tendencies of Western-centred globalization, resisting a universalism defined in historical specificity of Eurocentrism. It is a struggle of the indigenous people of non-Western societies including those of the Middle East. This struggle took shape against what Richard Falk calls “a background (and foreground) of exclusion, discrimination and persecution, even extermination, assimilation and marginalization that were expressive of confusing admixtures of arrogance, racism and ignorance” (Falk 1997, 11). Furthermore, such struggle of the indigenous people is waged for protecting the remnants of their shared civilizational identity, an identity that is coherent and self-consistent and defined only in relation to religion i.e. Islam on a global level and the ‘otherness’ intensified by the structural aspects of globalization. Movements of Islamic resurgence claim that Western civilization as the dominant force in international economic, political and cultural life is having a destructive effective and that Islam, properly comprehended, presents the reality of a constructive

and an international alternative: the Islamic state.

However, movements of Islamic resurgence are not driven only by intensified and Western-dominated structural aspects of globalization. Another catalyst for their resurgence is their leaders' conviction that they are the bearers of drastic social change and the acute awareness that the presence of Islam transcends established boundaries of linguistic, ethnic and political settings. This awareness is a central feature of their projection in the modern 'global' world as a whole. The fact that the groups of Islamic resurgence constitute only domestic movements operating against state authority does not mean they necessarily accept the existing state order. Waging a holy war (Jihad) against corrupt and illegitimate political regimes and transforming the present state and society represents a duty that binds all able Muslims, without it the concretization of the Islamic state remains a wishful thinking.

Furthermore, resurgent Islamic movements capitalize on the crisis of identity which plagues all Third World Muslims particularly those living in the diaspora. Such crisis imposes on Muslims the problem of self-definition and of how they develop and propagate interpretations of their own presence in different national and cultural milieu i.e. in countries of quite different socio-economic, political and cultural makeup. Islam helps Muslim solve this crisis of identity by, again, showing that they are acutely conscious that their 'Islamic' presence transcends such diverse setting and that such consciousness is a cornerstone in their projection of the world. Expressed differently, Islam is a religious form which cuts across, goes beyond conventional religious boundaries and draws its particularity from its distinctive

insertion and interpretation within the framework of contemporary processes of economic, political and cultural globalization.

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# **Beyond Moroccan state – the transnational nation-building of the Amazigh cultural movement**

*Terhi Lehtinen*

## **1 Introduction**

Many social scientists have anticipated the decline of the nation-state. The double process of transnationalisation and ethnic nationalism is currently challenging the idea of state sovereignty. Yet, the conceptual model of nation still remains the dominant reference in political discourse and the main ideological goal for collective identity construction.

Nation building is a historical process of political legitimization. Some periods have been marked by the uprising of national feelings: the 19th century “national-romantic” state-building, the 1920s European empires’ disintegration, the post-1945 decolonization and the year 1989 national blooming are all signs of the same phenomenon (see for example Horsman & Marshall 1994, 3–22). Nevertheless, it seems that the awakening of local minority identities is challenging the traditional concept of homogenous nation as a basis for state legitimacy. The

model of nation in today's transnational system is very complex and it is interesting to analyse this dynamic model in a specific case of minority identity construction.

In this paper, I propose to analyse the nation building of the Berber<sup>10</sup> population in today's Morocco and in whole North Africa. The Berber case shows the persistence of the model of the nation as a main reference in the minority identity construction. Yet, this construction of discursive nations does not require any concrete state building process in the increasingly globalized world. Therefore, we must rethink the relationship between the state and the nation as well as between territory and people.

The Berbers have raised consciousness about their specific identity by creating the Amazigh Cultural Movement, which has recently become more visible in Moroccan public sphere through cultural activities, debates, declarations and demands for linguistic rights. The notion of "amazigh" means "a free man" (pl. imazighen). The Berber language is called tamazight. It is used by Berber speakers to valorise their own identity instead of using the notion of "Berber" (referring to old Greek term "barbar"), which has a negative connotation.

The Berbers form a transnational community ranging from Siwa oasis in Egypt to Canary Islands and from Mediterranean to Burkina Faso (Camps 1987; Chaker 1990). Their presence has been documented

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<sup>10</sup> The "Berber" is not a "racial" category in the sense that even most arabophone North Africans have local (= Berber) origins, but the only really distinctive feature is the Berber language, so it would be proper to talk about "berberophones" when talking about Berber identity construction. In this paper, the concept of "Berber" and "Arab" should thus be considered mainly as linguistic and even ideological categories.

long before the Roman hegemony in the Mediterranean and the arrival of Arabs and Islam in the Maghrib (Camps 1987). Today, the Berber population is situated especially in Morocco, where it represents around 40% of the population; in Algeria, where it represents an estimated 25% of the population, and in the Sahel region, mainly in Mali and Niger (Chaker 1990). Traditionally, the North African Berbers have lived in mountainous regions, where migration to major cities and abroad has always been a part of community survival strategies. The Berbers form marginal minority in political, economic or social terms in all the countries of North Africa. Consequently, they share a common struggle for cultural and linguistic recognition; a struggle that articulates multiple forms, levels and dimensions. Process of globalization has led to the establishment of transnational networks of local Berber groups, thus creating new forms of identities beyond state borders and existing state-centric loyalties. State authorities attempt, usually in vain, to control these de-territorial identifications that undermine the exclusive sovereignty and legitimacy of the nation-state.

Morocco, independent since 1956, has created a specific political culture characterized by elitist segmentary rivalries around the royal palace. The state is largely exterior to society, which has become more “depoliticised” as the masses have no real impact on state practices. However, the state authorities, incarnated by the monarchy, mobilize the society through participation in the national projects, such as the Green March in 1975 and the construction of the Casablanca mosque. The Moroccan state (“makhzen”) holds a specific position in popular imaginary: it is seen as dangerous, which leads to the apparent “depolitisation” of the society (Bennani-Chraïbi 1994; Camau 1991; El

Aoufi 1992). Popular expressions are canalized through cultural and religious movements (see for example de Certeau 1993; Entelis 1989), rather than through institutional political practices. These new social movements (Haynes 1997) are constantly using cultural rhetoric in order to create “alternative spaces of critical expression” that could stay out of state control. Since 1999, King Mohammed VI has opened a new space for more explicit expressions of a new generation of civil society groupings, such as unemployed educated youth (“*chômeurs diplômés*”), Islamist groups, women’s groups and the Amazigh Cultural Movement. Moroccan society is currently undergoing major social transformations, due to new urban social movements and the expansion of post-modern communications (see for example Kharoufi 2000, 35–57).

The nation-state is simultaneously based on inclusive and exclusive principles: those who recognize themselves in the definition of the Moroccan Nation -arabist, royalist, Muslim-become majority, whereas those who stay excluded, constitute minority<sup>11</sup> (Windisch 1984, 131–4; Badie 1992). As a reaction, the Amazigh Cultural Movement aims to promote the Berbers’ status by creating a new ideological construction that challenges the dominant vision of national ideology. The movement aims to the official recognition of “the Amazigh question”, i.e. the idea of cultural and political presence of Berbers *as such* in the Moroccan national entity and in the whole North African region. The main issue concerns the introduction of the tamazight language to schools and administration, i.e. to official state structures. This minority identity

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<sup>11</sup> The concept of “minority”? does not refer to the minor proportion of the Moroccan population, but rather to the relative marginalisation of the Berber community in the economic and political spheres.

construction has provoked violent reactions from the majority Arabic-speaking population. The ideological opposition to the movement has created a process of semantic struggle for the definition of the Moroccan national identity.

Furthermore, the Amazigh identity construction goes beyond the national space: the structuring of a transnational movement of local Berber groups, through the creation of the Amazigh World Congress organisation, challenges the idea of the homogenous nation-state and opens new alternative spaces for political contestation. The movement stresses North Africa's position in the crossroads between the Mediterranean and African cultural spheres, and considers Arabic and Islamic cultures, which constitute the pillars of the region's state ideologies, as being "imported" to North Africa. The movement aims to legitimate its cultural and political demands at global level by presenting the Berbers as an "indigenous population" of North Africa within the United Nations indigenous people's working group (see for example Crawford 1988).

## **2 Local identities and globalization**

New global phenomena include cultural dimensions that force us to reflect on political aspects of cultural issues (Dalby 1996, 35). Today's transnational practices and the articulation of "local" and "global"<sup>12</sup> tend

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<sup>12</sup> See the concept of "glocalisation" elaborated by Roland Robertson (Robertson 1990). See also Bird, Curtis & Putman 1993; Featherstone 1990 & King 1991.

to undermine the importance of traditional political institutions (Ruggie 1993; Taylor 1996, 99–108). Jan Nederveen Pieterse (Featherstone & Lash & Robertson 1995, 49) argues that the “glocalisation” is at work when “minorities appeal to transnational human rights standards beyond state authorities, or indigenous people find support for local demands from transnational networks.” Horsman & Marshall (1994) describe the articulation of globalism, regionalism and tribalism as a part of a new world order that puts the traditional nation-state under threat. Ethnic conflicts (Brown, ed., 1996; Brown et al. 1997), indigenous peoples’ rights (Crawford 1988) and religious fundamentalism have entered into political agendas in national and international levels. The Amazigh Cultural Movement makes explicit reference to the struggle of the Kurds, Britons and other minority populations and uses Internet and migratory networks for its strategic purposes.

The state-centric world has been based on the idea of territorial sovereignty (Rosenau 1990; Williams 1996, 109–20), whereas transnational networks of communications characterise today’s world and migrations (Fuchs G. & Koch M. 1996, 163–73; Icduygu 1996, 150–9) that transgress state borders. David Held (Eley & Suny 1996, 405–16) has described different “disjunctures” between the formal authority of the state and the interconnected world economy, supranational power structures, international binding regimes and international law and argues that the current international system limits the autonomy of state actors. Bertrand Badie (1995, 80) has characterised the “end of territorial politics” by describing the existence of new “alternative spaces” (migrations, informal economy, terrorism) that slip away from the state control and the rules of that international

law and undermine state sovereignty (see also Williams 1996, 109–20) and the decisions of international organisations. Cultural and political identities have become increasingly deterritorialised and the nation-state is no longer an exclusive object of loyalties and identifications (Badie 1992, 1995; Buell 1994). Horsman & Marshall (1994, 179) have argued that “the erosion of the nation-state has meant that there are several new claims on the allegiance of citizens when it comes to deciding how those commonalties are expressed.” In particular, the failure of the North African state to provide employment and social benefits beyond a limited circle of elites has raised popular discontent, often expressed in terms of identity and politics. The emergence of global networks of local identities constitutes a dilemma not only to state authorities, but also to a social scientist, trying to comprehend these fluid networks connecting dispersed local actors. However, effects of globalization are unevenly distributed in different regions (Kofman & Youngs 1996), and the observer of particular cases should take historical, political and social contexts into consideration when elaborating an appropriate frame of analysis.

### **3 Concept of “nation” and the Muslim world**

The concept of “nation” constitutes an object for academic as well as political discourse (Eley & Suny 1996; Balakrishnan 1996). The main distinction in the conception of nation is the one between primordial and instrumental theories. Primordial theories stress the role of social memory and “ethnic” configuration of nations (Smith 1986).

Instrumental theories define the nation as a conscious symbolic construction and a political instrument for power. Partha Chatterjee (1993) has described the process of “appropriation” of a national history and language in post-colonial states. The discourse on nation aims to elaborate correspondence between nation, people, territory, history, language or some other factors (Hobsbawn 1990). Similarly, it may lead to deliberate invention of traditions (Hobsbawn, Ranger 1983). The creation of national symbols (Anderson 1991) aims to create “imaginary communities” that, have to be constantly renewed. Morocco is particularly rich in symbolic creations, and in strong charismatic and historic legitimations (Waterbury 1975).

It can be argued that especially the question of language as a sign of nation is fundamental (Boukous 1995). Identification to an ethnic group passes through own language and the imposition of dominant state language constitutes a forceful means of nationalisation (Chekroun 1990) of the society. Especially in the case of stateless nations, i.e. populations deprived from their means of linguistic coercion, the survival of a language as a sign of identity constitutes the main challenge facing the danger of assimilation to the dominant culture (Windisch 1984, 131–4). Narratives (Nash 1990) can be considered as a means of creating a national reality. The gradual emergence of the nation always contains a discursive dimension that is primordial for the success of nation building and national legitimacy. Homi Bhabha (1990, 3–4) sees a nation as one of the major structures of ideological ambivalence within the cultural representation of modernity. He also argues that “the ambivalent, antagonistic perspective of nation will establish the cultural boundaries of the nation so that they may be

acknowledged as “containing” thresholds of meaning that must be crossed, erased, and translated in the process of cultural production.” (Bhabha 1990, 4). He turns attention to the “margins” of the nation and the cultural boundaries in it. The discourse of the Amazigh Cultural Movement offers an interesting illustration on the articulation of identity references at local and global levels and on the complexity of discursive nation building in today’s transnational world.

The Muslim political culture (Badie 1986) is based on the unity between religious and political spheres. Therefore, the only division can be traced between the “ideal politics” (unity of the Muslim community, called *umma*, and Islam) and the “necessary politics” (deficient human government constituted against tribal dissidence). The idea of nation, presented in the 19th century, raises the problem of fragmentation of the unitary *umma* into separate nation-states, which is in contradiction with the Muslim ideal unity (Badie 1986, 48). This leads to the ambiguity between the reference to a particular nation (such as Egypt) and the reference to the transnational and extraterritorial “Arabic, and Islamic, Nation”. This ambiguity of the Muslim idea of national space, parallel universal and particular, illustrates the fundamental fragility of the nation-state in the Muslim world. Muslim political power often justifies itself through symbolic rhetoric based on Arabism, Islam and the glorious past. Another major reference in North Africa is the colonial heritage of the French centralised state model, stressing the unity of language, religion and nation-state, which was largely imported to Africa (Badie 1992, 227).

#### **4 Main elements of the Moroccan nation**

The “nation” is a symbolic construction and the main source of political legitimacy. It is interesting to analyse more closely the main symbolic elements of the Moroccan nation as it is presented in the current national ideology. Any critical questioning of these constitutive elements is largely suppressed in the Moroccan political culture.

The Moroccan Nation is materialised in its land that constitutes the main feature of Morocco’s political imaginary. This territorial integrity was symbolised by the “Green March” in 1975, leading to the reconquest of Western Sahara that became the symbol of national reunification. The Saharan mission was presented as historically legitimated, as the territory had been part of the pre-colonial Moroccan kingdom and therefore, the Moroccan Nation could not be fully integrated without this historical territory. Even today, Saharan question remains the source of political debates as the United Nations attempts to organize the referendum on the status of Western Sahara.

The monarchy is the central pillar of the Moroccan Nation (Waterbury 1974; Entelis 1989). Its legitimacy is based on both spiritual and secular authority. The Moroccan state claims to have a long historical continuity and the monarch represents himself as a guardian of the holy trilogy of “God, Fatherland and King”. John Waterbury (1975, 413) has described, at the time of Hassan II, that “Moroccan king confounds the past of his family with the history of Morocco and Islam. He presents himself as a father and guide of the Moroccan people, above all political struggles, as an element of continuity in the context defined in terms of discontinuity and unpredictability. He incarnates the

only real institution in Morocco. His authority derives from People because from God, but he is responsible only to the latter.” The symbolic confusion between the nation, the people and the monarchy constitutes the essential basis of marocanity. The king is considered as being above secular political struggles and therefore, he is the only legitimate guardian of national continuity. The Moroccan Nation is constituted by the mythical tie between king and his “dear People” (expressed in the King’s speeches). The Nation is based on the popular will that is materialised by the monarchy seen as a guardian of its people’s well being. The struggle for independence became ideologically the communion in sacrifice between the Moroccan People and its legitimate monarch. Even today, King Mohamed VI stresses the need for solidarity with the poorest people, guaranteed by King’s personal commitment.

Islam is the main source of political legitimation in Morocco (Leveau 1981; Geetz 1971). Remy Leveau (1981, 11) has described the position of Islam in Moroccan political culture, arguing that “in the lack of ‘political religion’ such as one-party rule, Islam has become the one in Morocco. The construction of private and public mosques has doubled since the end of the Protectorate. It is evident that the monarchy does not want to give any other political actor to bypass him with regard to Islam.” The religious symbolism is materialised in the construction of the Casablanca mosque and in the state presence in popular religious feasts (moussems) (Reysoo 1991). The popular participation in the construction of the mosque was seen as a symbolic act to glorify the religious unity of the Moroccan Nation.

The Moroccan nationalism aims to integrate Morocco to the global

arabo-islamist world. Mohammed Chekroun (1990, 65) argues that “the Arabic language is deep-rooted in the collective unconsciousness, shaped by a double relationship: relationship to the historical reality of the Arab world and to arabo-islamic thinking.” The project of Moroccan nation-state (Chekroun 1990) includes the idea of islamity and arabism as essential values of the nation. This community of religion creates the community of language and culture that is imagined arabo-muslim. The marocanity confounds the need to belong to the Muslim religion and to the transnational “Arab Nation”. Consequently, Arabic has become the only official language of the Moroccan state.

## **5 Berber image in state ideology**

The ideological Arab / Berber dichotomy is very ancient in North Africa: there are signs of this constitutive distinction already in the writings of Ibn Khaldun (14th century) and of Leo the African (16th century). The Berber population has constituted a research object for social sciences in North Africa for a long time. The research has evolved in the context of orientalism (Saïd 1995) especially in the 19th century, characterized by the “ethnographic” interest for local populations in the view of colonial conquest. The first ethnic classifications (Pouillon 1993, 37–49) had their origin in ancient travellers’ descriptions and the prejudices of the epoch. It is interesting to notice, that the Arab / Berber distinction was absent in these first descriptions, where the population of North Africa was called “Moors”. The concept of “Moor” was replaced by the Arab / Berber distinction

since the French conquest of Algeria in 1830. The concept “Arab” was for a long time associated to nomadism and robberies, whereas Berber became a concept designating sedentary, mountainous populations, and the modern use of concept “Arab” only emerged in the 20th century with the awakening of political Arabism. It has been argued that the absence of Berbers as a group in the earlier descriptions was related to their marginality (Pouillon 1993, 43) outside urban sites.

Charles-Robert Ageron (1976, 331–48) argues that the “Berber policy”, elaborated in Algeria since 1830, of the French colonial power was related to the policy of “divide and rule”, distinguishing dissident, nomadic Arabs from superficially Islamised, docile Berbers from the Kabylia region<sup>13</sup>. Colonial ethnography was presenting Berbers in a positive manner, describing them as “good savages”, and living in a kind of “villageous democracy” in the mountains, where they were organized in distinct tribes. This apparently “berberophile” colonial imaginary described Berbers either as “brave warriors” (Guillaume 1946) or as “docile workers<sup>14</sup>” in contrast to “insolent, nomadic Arabs” who were seen as a danger. Therefore, the Berbers were to be isolated from “Arabic” and “Islamic” influence through separate institutions. Despite this idealistic discourse, the conquest of Berber regions (the pacification) was savage and led to progressive destructuring of social

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<sup>13</sup> The Algerian “Berber myth” was later transferred to Morocco since the establishment of protectorate in 1912. The idea of Berbers as good and docile workers led to the encouraging of migratory flows since the First World War. Parallel to this, the Berber resistance against the colonial conquest gave them a reputation as proud warriors willing to defend their mountainous fortresses.

<sup>14</sup> French authorities started to recruit workers and soldiers from North African Berber regions (Kabylia, Sous) since the First World War.

organization and to emerging rural emigration. The Berber ideology was culminated in so called “Berber Dahir” (Ageron 1976) in 1930, set up by the French, to recognize a separate legal status for Berber traditional judicial systems, which finally gave a necessary pretext for the uprising of the Moroccan Nationalist Movement.

As elsewhere in the colonial world in the 1950s, there were ideas of national self-determination in Morocco, where the Protectorate became more and more fragile. Nationalist elites aimed to elaborate unitary national identity in contrast to colonial “divide and rule”-principle (Gallissot 1986). The mainstream nationalist movement stressed the Arabic and Islamic national character and the legitimacy of the monarch, considered as much secular as spiritual leader of Moroccan People (Julien 1978). The independence of Morocco in 1956 signified the reinforcement of the state apparatus with regard to regional powers (Waterbury 1975). The armed resistance against the colonial power, strongly based in the Berber regions, was integrated into the Moroccan Royal Army.

The general picture of the independence was ideological silence regarding the Berber problem. Given the holy alliance of Arabism, Islam and Monarchy, it was impossible to suggest any recognition of Berber profane culture and language, seen as “colonial creations”, in Moroccan public sphere in the early days of independence. The policy of arabisation (Grandguillaume 1983) became the symbol of the national consensus and the sign of national unification, which was to eliminate any linguistic or cultural “dissidence”, considered being against the sacred national unity. The leading elites were inspired by the “Arab Nationalism” (Rodinson 1972;

Laroui 1977). The categorical refusal to discuss the “Berber problem” was coupled with a relative marginalisation of Berber community especially in the fields of administration and education.

## **6 The Amazigh cultural movement and the competing nation-building in Morocco and beyond<sup>15</sup>**

Moroccan educational policy contributed to the “nationalisation” of society through diffusion of the nationalist propaganda. This generalised education also reached the Berber youth, whose most talented members gained access to university studies. In 1960s, a small group of Berber students from Rabat started to collect oral traditions and other elements of “popular arts and culture” (Boukous 1977, 1995). These early studies put emphasis on the “authenticity” of Moroccan “people” in contrast to “corrupted” and “occidentalised” urban elites. The ideas of the 1960s student movements and the emergence of regional languages in France set the context for their cultural debates. Progressively, these passionate debates were materialised in the first (implicitly Berber) cultural association, *L’Association Marocaine de la Recherche et des Echanges Culturels* (AMREC), created in 1967. At this stage, the Berber identity claims were dissimulated behind the notions of “popular culture” and even “folklore”.

The 1970s were characterized by febrile discussions about Marxism

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<sup>15</sup> This section is mainly based on interviews of the main actors of the Amazigh Cultural Movement and on the analysis of main documents produced by the movement.

and panarabism, with any allusion to berberity being rejected as “reactionary”. However, in the late 1970s, the Berber activities were expanding through new associations such as *L’Université d’été d’Agadir*, created by few Susi intellectuals in Rabat, and *L’Association Nouvelle de la Culture et les Arts Populaires* (Tamaynunt). This inaugurated the period of ideological differentiation of the Amazigh Cultural Movement and the beginning of an active identity construction. The uprising of Kabylia Berbers in Algeria during the so called “Berber Spring” and the first conference of *L’Université d’été d’Agadir* in 1980 brought the new Amazigh problem into the consciousness of Moroccan authorities, who reacted repressively in 1982 with imprisonment and prohibitions. The Amazigh Movement passed into the clandestinity until the late 1980s.

In the 1990s, the Amazigh Cultural Movement passed to the stage of an active identity construction: the collapse of Arab nationalism after the Persian Gulf War and the breakdown of the Berlin Wall inaugurated the new era of struggle for Amazigh cultural and linguistic rights. In particular, Moroccan university campuses became the scene for competition between different social and cultural movements, such as the Islamist movement and the Amazigh Cultural Movement. In 1991, the Agadir Charter demanded an equal status for tamazight language as a “national language” in the Constitution. So far, identity claims still remained within the Moroccan territory.

Until 1994, the major problem for the Amazigh Cultural Movement was the apparent indifference of state authorities that never reacted positively to Movement’s cultural and linguistic demands, nor were its self-legitimations confirmed. However, 1994 marked a new turning

point in the Amazigh Cultural Movement's discursive strategy. New claims became more political and gained more interest in media. In particular, the detention of several activists of *Tilelli* association during the 1<sup>st</sup> of May march triggered an active identity mobilization and a wave of protestations. Finally, King Hassan II himself legitimated movement in his historical speech of the 20th August 1994, where he declared: "I talked, my dear People, about the dialects. Why? I estimate that the dialects are components of our authenticity. Arrived with the Coran, Arabic has not suppressed our dialects." This concession must be interpreted in a general political context of Islamist threat and social protestations. The monarchy played his traditional role of balancing existing social forces.

At the transnational level, the organisation of the "Amazigh World Congress" in 1995, 1997 and in 1999, have materialized the first attempts to create a unified organism for Amazigh populations from all the countries of "Tamazgha"<sup>16</sup>. The Congress provided an opportunity for different Amazigh groups to discuss common problems at transnational level. The Congress also introduced the concept of the Amazigh Nation to the ideological debate. It has also contributed to the segmentarisation of the Amazigh Cultural Movement in Morocco. This extreme concept of "Nation" designates the end of identity construction ranging from the "popular culture" via "Berber / Amazigh culture and language" up to the "Amazigh People" and "Nation".

Despite relative media success and several petitions, none of the

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<sup>16</sup> Tamazgha (Berberia) designates the geographical region ranging from Canary Islands to Egypt, but it also has a symbolic signification of unified Amazigh People.

demands have gained an institutional confirmation since King Hassan II's speech in 1994. This resulted in general frustration, progressive radicalisation and politicisation of this initially cultural movement. Similarly, traditional political parties have attempted to recuperate the Amazigh question in their agenda. The opening of political space with King Mohammed VI in 1999 has encouraged the Amazigh Cultural Movement to impose its demands in increasingly political terms, as many activists see the limits of cultural actions. In March 2000, some 230 intellectuals signed a "Berber manifest", including a historical analysis of the "Amazigh problem" and clear demands for "Amazigh rights" in different fields of society. This has triggered a febrile society-wide debate on the Amazigh identity and eventual creation of the Amazigh political movement in Morocco in view of national elections in 2002. International media has paid increasing attention to the Amazigh phenomena in Morocco.

## **7 Transnational space and the creation of the Amazigh nation**

Recently, the action of the Amazigh Cultural Movement has become more and more focused on the transnational cooperation between different Berber groups across state borders. The vision of the "Amazigh Nation" superposes the idea of language, people, territory and history, exactly like in the previous Nation-building movements. The creation of this alternative nation aims to legitimate the aspirations of the Amazigh Cultural Movement in its reality of minority situation.

The strong ideology serves as a mobilizing force, and provides a symbolic reference to the Amazigh Cultural Movement.

The idea of North Africa as the original territory of Imazighen (Berbers) constitutes the basis for the Amazigh ideology. The discourse exposes the mythical tie between the Amazigh people and North African landscape. The movement stresses the Berber presence in the region for thousands of years. North Africa has been ideologically identified as belonging to the Arabic-speaking Middle East without clear connections to the African or Mediterranean cultural spheres. The competing ideology of the Amazigh Cultural Movement, on the contrary, stresses the position of North Africa at the crossroads between western Mediterranean cultural sphere and old Saharan influences (Khair-Eddine 1996, 13). This fundamental change in cultural and political paradigm of North Africa proposes new ideological visions for the region's future.

The Amazigh ideology stresses the long history of sacrifices and sufferings of the Amazigh people, whose territory has been constantly invaded. References to lost kingdoms and to the once so blooming Mediterranean civilisation enhance the feeling of belongingness to the Amazigh people. The people are fragmented in different territories, and therefore, the idea of unity is strong beyond state borders. Mohammed Boudhan (1995, 51–3) argued that “North Africa has experienced, since few thousands of years, successive invasions, that have led to the suffering of the Amazigh culture. When we make an assessment of what remains from the Northern African Amazigh culture after all the ethnocides against it, we cannot find much: only the ruins attest from the once so great civilisation.”

Tamazight language is the core of the Amazigh identity. The debate on language and its standardisation is lively, especially since the opponents to the Amazigh movement talk about dialects, whereas many specialists in linguistics affirm the existence of the united tamazight language. In the absence of the Berber's political unity, the language has become the sign of a spiritual and cultural unity of different groups, all in minority positions in their countries. The Amazigh Cultural Movement raises multiple questions: it proposes a new reading of Northern African history, culture and identity. The movement denounces political manipulation of religion (Mokhlis 1995, 1–2) and stresses the Berber attachment to a universalistic and tolerant Islam. The foundation of identity is the Tamazigh language, which incarnates the Amazigh culture since millenaries. This valorising vision of Northern African reality challenges the dominant ideology in a forceful manner: it proposes a new reading of profound sources of Moroccan imaginary, where berberity is strongly anchored under ideological surface.

## **8 The Amazigh question in the globalized world**

The Amazigh identity construction goes beyond North Africa by referring to universal human rights and the rights of indigenous people in the United Nation's framework. Also, establishment of worldwide migratory networks and use of modern communication tools, such as Internet, are important instruments in the production of new identity references. This global dimension of Berber identity is completely deterritorialised and constituted by flows of people, information and

symbols that affect social practices also in North African states. Local amazigh cultural associations have set up their own Internet sites informing about their local activities, thus explicitly linking local strategies to global connections.

On the one hand, the Berber question emerged at global level when few members of the Amazigh Cultural Movement participated in the International Conference on Human Rights in Vienna in 1993. Several activists had been active in Moroccan human rights movement, but they perceived contradiction between the promotion of universal human rights involving an abstract individual and the refusal of collective rights to the Amazigh people within Moroccan human rights associations. In the context of United Nations, some Amazigh militants were enthusiastic about the decade of indigenous people in 1994, involving annual working groups in Geneva. Especially Berber speaking Tuareg groups' suffering in Niger and Mali has mobilized the international opinion in favor of indigenous people's rights in North Africa. However, there is a controversy on the originality of the Berbers in North Africa, and there is no consensus on the strategy of the movement at the global level.

This internationalisation of the Amazigh problem has contributed to setting up networks between Northern African Berbers and Tuaregs that have traditionally been isolated from each other. Also, elaboration of a globalized Amazigh identity synthesises the elements from different local cultures. For example, the symbolic *Tifinagh* characters, used for writing Tamazight language mainly in Tuareg regions, are nowadays constantly used by Amazigh activists all over the world.

On the other hand, there is no possible understanding on North

African political and ideological reality without taking into consideration its fateful connection to France. Colonial heritage as well as the structuring of migratory networks has linked the two continents tightly together by creating a transnational space between Europe and North Africa (Gallissot 1992, 139–46). Paris is a major “Berber city” together with Algiers and Casablanca, and therefore, its role as a crossroads for the Amazigh identity construction is crucial. Furthermore, contacts with other “indigenous people” or regional groups such as Britons or Occitans in France have enhanced the understanding of identity issues at general level and provided new models and strategies of action. These external contacts are essential for the development of modern Amazigh ideology and will be determinant also in the future. In Europe, the Amazigh Cultural Movement has actively promoted the Amazigh language as one of the European minority languages, through the creation of the Amazigh television channel in France and the introduction of the Berber language in the French high school final examinations (*baccalauréat*).

Migratory practices and new deterritorialised identities involving superficial, fluctuant loyalties are a constitutive part of the postmodern world. Local Amazigh groups use modern media such as Internet<sup>17</sup> (Fuchs G. & Koch M. 1996, 163–73) to communicate at global level, where local kinship-based networks tend to vanish. Internet-supported discussion groups, such as “Amazigh-net”, establish a global

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<sup>17</sup> Naturally, internet is more used by Amazigh people in diaspora, since in North Africa the majority of Berber populations are out of reach of these postmodern communications. However, it is important to note the recent explosion of modern communications in major Moroccan cities and the setting up of internet websites for the Amazigh Cultural Movement.

communication network of Berber speaking actors located around the world: it creates a new virtual Amazigh identity that undermines the traditional tribal basis for social interactions within the Berber society. Discussions on tamazight linguistics, culture and politics involve anonymous actors whose only common feature is the belongingness to the deterritorialised Amazigh community, virtually liberated from state borders and their minority position in North African countries.

## **9 Conclusions: nation and political legitimization?**

Even in the context of globalization of identities and crossing state borders, minority movements continue to refer to the model of nation. Hence, the idea of nation seems to remain the final stage of collective identity construction and political legitimization. In a historical perspective, the majority of nationalist movements have attempted to create not only a nation, but also a state. Until recently, the process of nation building has been associated to the state formation. Bloom (1990, 61) argues that “nation-building requires that the mass of individuals make an identification with the nation-state”.

The model of state has been the major reference of political identification. However, transnational movements have challenged the world of nation-states in a new post-modern world system. Despite the challenge to the nation-state, the idea of nation still remains a powerful means for political legitimization. Horsman & Marshall (1994, 77) argue that “the ‘nation’ is certainly on the way towards being extracted from the nation-state, in any objective measure: the pact between citizen

and state is undergoing a fundamental transformation, and governments can no longer fulfill their share of the bargain.”

These remarks on the “extraction” of nation from state context raises several questions: Could the idea of nation be separated from the state institution? Are we living a period of imaginary nations without any material realization as a state? The Amazigh Cultural Movement has created a new discursive space that challenges the existing national ideology. Establishment of transnational networks of local identities constitutes a powerful instrument for the struggle against existing state structures. Therefore, it appears to be one of the major strategies of minority movements, whose resources are limited in traditional state-controlled national space. The process of competing nation building can be considered as being the main strategy of political legitimisation: the right to people’s self-determination forms the basis for political legitimacy in the state-centred world. The problem of existing nation-states is therefore real: how to conceive the ambivalent relation between the transnational space of Tamazgha and the exclusive national loyalties?

It seems that in peripheral societies, like in North Africa, the systems of nation-state and territorial integrity have never been fully achieved. Traditional migratory networks and transnational ideas, like that of pan-Arab nationalism, could contribute to their transition into the postmodern era, whereas many stable centralist nation-states, such as France, have had difficulties facing the idea of cultural pluralism and transnational flows of ideas and people. The emergence of new phenomena, such as the Amazigh Cultural Movement, forces us to rethink certain concepts, such as nation-state, politics and identity in the

Middle East and North Africa. The analysis of state structures in the transnational world requires a profound calling in question of certain “sacred concepts” of statehood, such as territorial integrity, sovereignty, Western modernity. Many new concepts, such as plurality, cultural revival, transnationality are needed to investigate these new multidimensional phenomena.

The struggle for minority rights by the Amazigh Cultural Movement needs also to be situated in the general context of transnational and diaspora nations, such as the Kurds or Palestinians, which constitute a problem for traditional state structures. Nevertheless, it appears that the Amazigh Cultural Movement is not a separatist movement asking to any territorial arrangement, but its discourse is an important sign of a global quest for meaningful national and regional identities in contemporary North Africa.

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# **Past, identity and globalization.**

## **Meaning of past in defining Jewish identity**

*Maaret Tervonen*

### **1 Introduction**

Questions of identity and nation formation have come to the fore in political studies during the last decades. It has become fashion to study variety of identities like national, ethnic and cultural identities. In the time of increasing globalization when cultural, political and value influences spread freely it seems that it has become even more important to keep tight from all special features of one's own and collective's characteristics. It is even more significant to be distinguished from other nations. It seems, however, somehow contradictory that when ideas and values spread globally, the world gets simultaneously symbolically smaller and still people become more narrow-minded. Contrary to the possible expectations the value of separate identities will not diminish but may even increase by globalization.

The relation between globalization and identities can best be understood as cultures becoming uniform and world becoming more

homogeneous. And when cultures uniform, also traditions, values and separating characteristics of different groups and states diminish making national, ethnic and cultural identities needless. Globalization could at least mean all this, in theory.

Emphasis of this study is not to describe identity-building itself or globalization but to give an overview of interpretation of history in an identity building process and how the identities are reshaped and moulded with the help of past in the changing circumstances. My point will be that past, as presented in academic historiography and in common explanation of history, is used prevalingly to strengthen identity and nation building. Heroic tales, legends and myths of the past are used to prove the existence of glorious past of the people and to give a justification for the actions both done in past and to be done in the future. Secondly I will give an example of the difficulties in talking about Jewish identity/ies and what kind of challenges the Jewish identity has at the time of globalization.

Past can be considered as a kind of treasure chest that is looked through when help is needed in the identity building. Support can be found from a glorious event or a horrifying scene in nation's life, something that still causes strong feelings among the people. In identity building and nation formation, ideas about a common heritage are taken from the past. Past and traditions have become vital especially since 1960's. TV and media have mixed cultural characteristics and new and foreign cultural features have covered the original ones. Folklore and historiography are needed in order to enforce the idea about heritage and history of one's own.

More or less, the story we tell about our past, the history is a

necessity. History means the same to the community or society as memory means to the individual. Without memory or history, individuals would lose their sense of identity. It is only through a sense of history that communities establish their identity, orientate themselves, understand their relationship to the past and to other communities. (Marwick 1989, 14) The power of history can still be seen for example in Europe where relations between different countries even inside Europe suffer or flourish because of what happened during the World War II. Furthermore the common memories of the past, communities will also share amnesia, a collective forgetfulness when forming a nation (Gellner 1987, 6). Thereby also a shared secret can unite people. Understanding the past also affects the present. We try more or less to shape our future in the light of our experiences in the past. (Tonkin 1990, 25) We need history foremost to understand the relationships around us.

History can be used in confirming the idea about a community but it can also work occasionally as a burden. This is what in my opinion has happened in the case of Jewish national identity, in other words Zionist identity. It cannot be denied that the past has been a core to the Zionist idea even though it has been future oriented (Azaryahu 1999, 135). Memories from the past have moulded the identity as such that it has become very difficult to change or renew it. Focus of this paper will be on studying the meaning of past in identity building. How the Jewish history with Diaspora, exiles, persecutions and holocaust has affected Jewish and Zionist identity building processes? It is also relevant to view the differences in Israeli and Diaspora Jewish identities nowadays. Is there still one Jewish identity or many? And how globalization affects

on one's identification to some collectivity in general?

At first it is however relevant to define the terms Jewish and Zionist identity as I understand them in this paper. When it comes to the terms, Zionism and Jewishness and Judaism are always mixed. It has to be noted that Zionist and Jewish identities are nearly two different things. Still they affect to each other and I may use the concepts in my paper quite mixed, hopefully not confusingly. Zionism is a Jewish nationalist idea, which core idea is that Jews are a distinct people and that they need a state of their own where they can live without discrimination. Zionism was originally based on a negative idea about Jews. Zionism believed that anti-Semitism would be Jews' problem everywhere as long as they lived in Diaspora. A Jew who identifies himself a Zionist is a person who believes in Israel's right of existence and will do anything with money or personally, for the existence of Jewish state. Zionism as a national idea is yet based on a Jewish religion and despite of its efforts to be secular, is based on a religious thought. Jewish identity is in principle an identity based on a Jewish religion. A Jewish identity is thus at the same time a cultural, ethnic and religious identity. Differing from Zionist identity, Jewish identity has always been past oriented.

## **2 Diaspora and yearning for Zion**

Since the destruction of the second temple in 70 AD Jews lived in exile for almost two millennia. Jews became accustomed to the states and cultures in which they were living even though they suffered constantly from discrimination and pogroms. However especially observant Jews

tried to hold on own religious traditions and way of living by observing strictly all rules and traditions. In the end of nineteenth century assimilation and secularisation became more common in Central Europe and on some situations Jews assimilated totally to the cultures surrounding them. Still it was widely understood that the assimilation would not be a solution for the Jewish question. Jews would need a place where they could live in peace as a real people without pogroms and discrimination. What Theodore Herzl and other early Zionists since 1890s wanted to create, was a new Jew, active and courageous fighter who would take the future to his own hands and move to Palestine.

Until roughly the end of the eighteenth century, Jews had regarded themselves as members of a distinctive religious and ethnic group that had preserved the traditions of an ancient civilisation. Jews were nevertheless distinguished as separate people, although not a nation in a modern sense. In the end of nineteenth century Zionism challenged the respective of both traditional and liberal Judaism in proclaiming that the Jews constituted a separate entity that was to become a modern nation. Zionism transformed the biblical antecedents into a direct lineage, portraying modern Jewry as descendants and heirs of ancient Judea. (Almog 1987, 9, 11) At this time past and biblical roots were only used in offering links to historical rights in Judea.

For Zionism it was clear that Jews would have to move, preferably to Palestine. The purpose of Zionism was to form a secular Jewish state. The fact was however that Palestine was already inhabited by Arabs causing a serious threat to Zionists' intention. The core myth of the return to Palestine in which Zionism based its legitimacy was the eschatological notion of exile and redemption. The prophetic promise

to the Jews of an end to exile by a return to Zion was the central principle that motivated and legitimated Zionism. This promise was interpreted as historic and religious right. The core obligation for the Zionists was the ingathering of the exiles. (Aronoff 1993, 56) History was employed to prove the legitimacy of the Zionist idea, to justify the choice of Palestine to become the haven of Jews. It was all about the historic attachment to the land. (Almog 1987, 240, 248–53)

Zionism sought to fill Jewish people with the spirit of cultural, social and political renewal. Zionism tried to uproot Jews from their traditional surroundings and to sever their traditional and social ties. Ground of Zionist consensus was the desire to establish a Jewish national centre in Palestine through immigration and settlement and to push settlers into an organised community with its own distinct cultural and political life while maintaining close ties with the Jews in Diaspora. (Horowitz 1989, 98)

### **3 Past as the legitimisation**

It was essential for the Yishuv, Jewish community in Palestine before independence and for the state of Israel, home of “new” Jews, to emphasise the historical link of the Jewish people to a land from which it had been exiled for nearly two millennia. Zionism’s purpose already in the early Yishuv was to establish the legitimacy of the contemporary state by creating a credible claim to continuity with the biblical past. This was accomplished through the use of symbols, myths and rituals that were interpreted differently according to the different parties’

ideologies. (Aronoff 1993, 48) New myths were always constructed, invented and formed when there was a need to strengthen the feeling of collective identity in the time of changing conditions. This has been a common characteristic for collective identities all over the world.

The relation to past, present and future has been a central problem in the Zionist ideology, which has had to wrestle with the central issue of the historical continuity of the Jewish people. The concept of renewal in Zionism treated the present as a passageway to the future. The relationship to the past was still much more complex. Acknowledgement of the past as a source of legitimacy for the Jewish national movement was a notion common to all streams within Zionism since it was implied in the Zionist pursuit of new ways to assure the continued existence of the Jewish people as a cultural entity. Nevertheless the immediate past of the Jewish people in the Diaspora was perceived as an undesirable state. The period of exile and especially the Holocaust were viewed as politically, socially and culturally shameful. Those who totally negated the Diaspora adopted a selective vision of Jewish history that pointed toward their ideal future. (Horowitz 1989, 99–100)

Zionism has expressed a far greater need for historical roots than any other national movement. Zionism turned an eye to the past to compensate for what was lacking in the present. For example Maccabean revolt against the Hellenistic Greeks was portrayed as the valiant war of small people fighting for political and cultural independence. Shmuel Almog argues that in this story Zionism found a symbol that not only invited identification with the glorious past but also implied struggle with the outside world. The driving force behind

Jewish nationalism was the need to respond to the humiliating and hostile attitude of the environment. The form of response recommended here was to foster Jewish solidarity and adopt the Jewish heritage as a *fait accompli*. (Almog 1987, 14–26) After the independence the focus shifted to the 1948 War that became a good example of David versus Goljat myth, a story about few against many.

Besides historical roots Zionism has underlined the importance of Hebrew, as the language of the Old Testament. As Azaryahu argues, Hebrew furthermore provided for and transmitted the secular transformation of Jewish mythology that linked Zionism to the ancient Jewish homeland. The revival of Hebrew was the principal aspect of the new emerging Jewish identity. In addition to Hebrew, also names, popular songs, national festivals, landscape images and historical myths produced a coherent pattern of Hebrew cultural identity. (Azaryahu 1999, 136–8) Hebrew language is nowadays even more a symbol of an Israeli national identity because the language symbolizes both the revival of Jewish people, history and a nation but especially the revival of the Jewish state, Israel.

Zionist historiography in 20<sup>th</sup> century has had an active and integral part in the process of nation and collective identity building. A selected number of ancient symbols and myths were taken from Jewish religion and history and were partially secularised and nationalised to suit Zionist purposes. In this new nationalism the partially reconstructed and partially invented past, or history, was employed to fuse past with present and future. Its purpose was to link the “Jewish past” of the land to the contemporary situation, i.e. the existence of Israel.

Especially after the independence the Jewish past and history were

perceived as major sources of legitimacy for the Zionists' claim over the land in Palestine. It was understood that the agents who create the past also occupy a central position in the present. (Kimmerling 1993, 41–2) Historical explanation and interpretation can also work as a proof to outside observers on one's claims. This legitimisation was needed to show that Jews had not taken the land by force or illegally from Palestinians. It was needed particularly since 1930's when Palestinians were seen as a threat to Jews' plan of independence.

After World War II Jews have harnessed to themselves an identity of victims and innocence that have empowered them especially in collecting more sympathy from the Christians in the West. This identification has been used especially against Palestinians. In this effort Jews have also used their right to carry the suffering and the memory of the Holocaust. Marc Ellis asks very cynically that how Jews are able to speak of their own martyrdom in a world where others speak of their own people as being martyred by Jews. (Ellis 1997, 57–8) In Ellis' opinion there is a strange paradox: "Jews who refuse to forget the Holocaust, who refuse pardons to those who committed criminal acts against the Jewish people, through separation would attempt to forget that Israel came into being through the destruction of Palestine." (Ellis 1997, 58–9)<sup>18</sup> Memories are changeable.

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<sup>18</sup> Ellis 1997, pp. 58–9. Zionist historiography shares commonly a feature of an amnesia especially on Holocaust. In the War 1948, around 22000 soldiers, one third of Haganah were Holocaust survivors. Ones who had been through the Holocaust were then participating in the expulsion of the Palestinians. (Massad 2000, 54–5)

#### **4 Myth of beginning**

Symbolism and narratives are essential in forming a national identity especially when making authenticity and originality significant. It is important for members in the society to know that they belong to a socially and temporally continuous society. It is also what political elite wants to prove outside and inside. National identity seems to base on idea that historical and mythical past is linked to the present. It is very typical to argue that idea about a nation has been connected to idea of ancient national society, which is a mythical, nation's golden era. Concept of continuity is very significant, but the continuity does not ensure the shaping of an "us"- group. There are two kind of basic narratives that work as allegories of identity. First, the factual narratives try to explain the past as it really was. They are not totally without links to myths and ideologies. Secondly, the fictional narratives are the best way to give an idea about the nation. They may describe something that is not virtual or real. National epics are usually fictional narratives. (Kaunismaa 1995, 6, 9–10, 12–3)

Yael Zerubavel argues that every nation reconstructs its own past and creates its own "myth of beginning", a sacred text about an early event in its history that presents a new paradigm in the life of the nation. In his opinion, the myth of Tel Hai was established as an Israeli national myth of beginning, representing the pioneering era in Israeli history. The myth of Tel Hai is about a battle at the small settlement in the northern frontier that took place on 1 March 1920. Eight Zionist settlers died in Tel Hai. To the Yishuv, the battle symbolised a major transformation of Jewish national character and the emergence of a new

spirit of heroism and self-sacrifice. (Zerubavel 1991, 193) This kind of myths were utilised after Holocaust when it was believed that there should be a proof of a new, courageous Jew who would fight until the end. The myth of Masada was used in the same context.

Influencing factors in Jewish identity formation have at all times been especially Bible and the exodus from Egypt. The destruction of the second temple by the Romans and dispersal in dozens of countries and cultures have been the core reasons for the importance of Bible and its study. It has been believed that every situation like discrimination and exile in the present have had its equivalent in the past. Latest factors in identity formation have been the pogroms since the end of 19th century, growing anti-Semitism and finally the Holocaust, which was seen as a climax of anti-Semitism. Jews' behaviour, weakness and giving up in front of the Holocaust were seen shameful in the eyes of Zionism. It took some time until Jews could get their pride back but especially the independence of Israel and the successful wars against the Arab world have helped in the process. The "new" Jew was about to be born.

The old Jewish tradition was also nationalised to serve Zionist state through a selective interpretation of sacred texts and Jewish history. After Israel's independence emphasis was given to the sanctity and centrality of Eretz Israel, and Zionism became to symbolise both loyalty to the state of Israel and to Judaism. The nationalisation of the Jewish tradition also meant its particularisation. (Liebman 1993, 279)

After the Holocaust a vital element in the revival of trampled Jewish pride was the discovery of the glorious past and its use as an object of Jewish identification. (Almog 1987, 81) One of the most prominent features in Zionism since the independence was the negation of

Diaspora, the time before 1948. New Hebrew culture would be totally opposite from the Diaspora culture. Zionism wanted Jews to be like all nations, and to be different from all nations. This contradiction originated from the desire to be normal and from the years old discrimination against Jews. At the same time Zionism saw Jews' suffering meaning actually chosenness. In order to reconcile contradictory messages, cultures usually exploit myths. As conditions change in society, the meanings of myths are interpreted in an appropriate manner. (Aronoff 1993, 50–1) The same happens everywhere. Every generation creates its own myths or renews and reconstructs the old ones.

Consciousness of the past has played many distinct, but essential roles in Zionism. Zionism utilised the heritage of the past as raw material for building a new national Jewishness. The glorious past had been invoked even before Zionism, both as an argument for improving the social status of Jews and as a means to foster their self-esteem. Zionist thinking was based on the link between the affirmation of Jewish identity, recognition of the common fate of the Jews, and the revitalisation of their historical legacy. Zionism was special because of its vital connection between past and present. (Almog 1987, 305–6)

## **5 Means of identification**

The centrality of the Other in defining Jewish identity has always been essential. Jews have always presented themselves, and been regarded by others, in different ways in different places at different times. They may

have constituted a race, a nationality, a religious minority or subcultural group but always they have been and wanted to be separate from the others. (Waterman 1999, 120–1) Jews have always been hated, prejudiced and the target of xenophobia. In the newly established state the intention was to erase discrimination (Pedahzur 1999, 102) but as the state was to become a Jewish state already the idea of a state was discriminatory. Contrary to the wishes Israeli society became a very xenophobic one. The other is nowadays mostly a Palestinian or a gentile, non-Jew. But there are also xenophobic thoughts pointed at some Jews.

Globalization has brought new dimensions into the identification. Jews still want to be identified different from others but global cultural features are effecting also Jewish identity and changing it. Especially American lifestyle with consumer culture modern capitalist values is hold highly in value among young people. Only Orthodox Jews have not been influenced at least so much with globalization. People are strictly holding their own traditions and values.

The past has also played a basic role in the personal search for Jewish identity, especially for Jews from assimilated background. Zionists coming from an assimilated environment looked to history as the link connecting them with Judaism. As Heinrich Loewe, German Zionist once said, “If the nation is indeed a result of historical evolution, a product of its history, then the link with consistent national thinking lies in the acknowledgement of one’s own past.” (Almog 1987, 67) In a normal stable society, ethnocultural traditions offer the continuity along which the collective identity is passed. In Zionism and in Israeli immigrant culture different backgrounds separate individuals from the

tradition of the collective to which they belong. (Carmon 1993, 295) Forming a homogeneous Jewish identity has proved to be problematic. Besides little by little there has developed a new political and national identity, Israeli which has caused circumstances where it has become even more difficult to form a homogeneous Jewish identity.

Constructing the new collective Jewish identity with the help of past has caused some serious problems to the previous Jewish identity. In the late 19th century Zionism based the Jewish identity on anti-Semitism, so at first Jewish identity was expressed in a negative context. In their attempt to raise Zionism's influence in Jewish sphere, it was tried to bridge the gap between Judaism and Jewish nationalism. Zionism shaped an idea of the sameness of Jewish nationalism and Judaism, the Jewish religiousness. (Almog 1987, 167, 195) This has created a situation where Jews have become sensitive to criticism and the way their identity is interpreted. Criticism of Zionism or Israel became somehow criticism of Jews that was considered broadly as anti-Semitism. (Orr 1994, 8–22, 67)

As Jewish identity has always been constructed against the other and otherness, it is obvious that this is still the case. Currently Jewish identity is at first defined contrary to non-Jews, gentiles. In Israel Jews can also be defined contrary to Palestinians, Arabs, Muslims and Christians altogether. Here the division can be seen as ethnic, religious and political. Within Zionism and in Israel it is also possible divide those living in Israel and in Diaspora. In Zionism it is expected that all Jews should move to Israel which however is not happening. Especially Jews living in United States and Europe are not willing to move to Israel. Even though they to some extent identify themselves with Israel

(Schulz 1996, 246).

Jewish identity is practically all-covering identity. It is at the same time ethnic, cultural and religious identity. If a Jew is a secular, not observing and not believing Jew there can be seen a contradiction in his identity. He is still a Jew culturally and ethnically being loyal to the Jewish people, which is most of all a religious collective group. Especially Akiva Orr thinks that secular Jews in Israel and in Diaspora may feel uncertain of their real identity if they have forgotten their Jewish traditions and rules (see Orr 1994). In Israel this so called identity crises is easier to handle especially among young Jews who most of all identify themselves as members of the Jewish community and as Israelis, with national identity. The vast majority of the Israeli Jewish citizens feel that there is an overlap between the two concepts of Jewish and Israeli (Schulz 1996, 246).

## **6 Historical narratives**

Year 1948 was a crucial year in Jews' life. Israel became independent and most of the Palestinians fled from the area of a new state. Jewish historical narrative was to be used as a tool in national collective memory preservation. In order to justify Jews' existence in Israel and the used force against Palestinians, Zionism utilised myths and historical narratives. These myths, as is common to myths, have usually contained some elements of faithfulness to what really happened in the past. They have however been highly distorted or exaggerated, glorifying nation or religious faith, or blackened the character of

enemies. As Arthur Marwick argues the myths exploit the past in order to serve current national, political or religious purposes. In his opinion the purpose of serious historical study is, in advancing understanding of past, to challenge and deflate the myths, while at the same time, maybe explaining their origins and significance. (Marwick 1989, 13–4)

Since the 1948 permanent war has made survival and security focus issues of the national collective. Arye Carmon argues that the security issue has paradoxically reinforced the so called ghetto sensibility that is manifested in a variety of contemporary myths and symbols. The most outstanding is the myth of the few against the many, that is a myth of David and Goljat. The Holocaust has also played an important, if not always conscious role in cultivating the ethos of survival. Powerlessness in Diaspora that culminated in Holocaust, has been a justification for force. Holocaust in Israeli collective memory is a lesson of never again. (Carmon 1993, 300–2) This learnt lesson is still in use especially against Palestinians. The offence is considered as the best defence.

Historiography usually tends to have a political function as moulder and supporter of identity. It can be used to shape the general way of thinking towards the model set by current leaders. This feature can be seen in Israeli historiography as in other historiographies as well. (See Tervonen 2000, 15–6) There are several versions of Zionist historiography, but two presumptions are common to them all. First presumption is the unequivocal right of the Jewish people to the land of Israel and second is that the ultimate and only correct solution to the so-called Jewish problem was the creation of an independent Jewish state. (Kimmerling 1993, 47–8)

Studying Jewish past has been for many a highly personal affair. It

may have included personal feelings toward Judaism and Israel and also thoughts about the political situation in Middle East in general. Researchers have shared different motivations and stands. Research has seldom been objective and emotionless. In Israel, the writing of national history often takes a polemical form. Individuals are at the same time sacred and unprotected from the study. (Penslar 1995, 130) There has been a conflict between Israeli historians as social critics and as guardians of the inevitably selective collective memory, which indicates the capacity of historiography to challenge ideologically controlled uses of the past in Israel. (Ezrahi 1993, 265) Historians have usually been spokesperson for the nation trying to justify the doings of a people.

The last twenty years have witnessed the birth of a new version of Israeli and Zionist historiography that has tried to reveal myths of the official explanation of history. (See for example Flapan 1987; Morris 1987; Morris 1990; Pappé 1992; Segev 1986; Shlaim 1988) Zionist historiography has given a biased picture of the history of Yishuv and the war of 1948 for over fifty years. Most of the Jews have never even called into question the existence of Israel or the right to expel the Palestinians in 1948. Jews were proud of being strong and invincible once so they did not even realize of being aggressors. The knowledge of what really happened during the time of Yishuv and in the 1948 War has brought about an identity crisis among Jews where all the criticism has been understood as a work of self-hating Jews trying to destroy Israel.

The purpose of so called New Historians has not been to blame Jews or deny Israel's right of existence. They have however tried to give a balanced and objective picture of what really happened during the

crucial years in Jews' history. This phenomenon started because of declassification of documents and changes in the political arena but moreover because of the change in attitudes. Global network on the other hand made it possible for information and new ideas to spread among researchers in Israel and worldwide. Internet and media have also had essential roles in the flow of information. Especially the Palestinian part has used Internet on telling their version and counter perspective on the year 1948 and the al-Nakbah, catastrophe.

Akiva Orr and Benjamin Beit-Hallahmi have emphasised especially the importance of Israelis' "identity crises" in relation to Judaism and Zionism that has affected how Israelis see themselves and Palestinians (see Beit-Hallahmi 1992; Orr 1994). This has of course also affected the way Jews have seen their past and themselves in relation to it. Common attitude has been that all the criticism of the birth of Israel, its history, Israelis and Jews in general has been seen as a threat to the state identity and also to personal identity. (See Orr 1994) All this stems from an uncertainty of one's identity. People cannot handle any negative details in their past because they do not really know if it affects them or their identity.

Contradicting situation has its roots in the relation between identity formation and past. When identity is based totally on past, it is very difficult to change or renew it as has been noticed in the case of Jews. Self-image and us-image built on past would crash down if the image of past, history would change. What has sometimes made the debunking of myths easier, is the change in Zionist tradition. The Zionist state foundation period is over and Israel has entered a new stage where new myths and narratives are formed. The myths of Tel Hai and Masada that

were central in nation-building measures have since the 1980s lost their validity (see Azaryahu 1999).

New historiography has been sometimes contradicting in nature; it has showed a “need for truth and the difficulty in stating it; the personal urge to remember and also to forget; the wish to bear witness on the one hand and to remain silent on the other, as a protest.” (Bravo, Davite, Jalla 1990, 97) This is still the case with year 1948. Palestinian fate and refugee problem has partly been neglected and the Jews’ right to the land has been remembered and consolidated.

Nevertheless the new history as a phenomenon has been a positive development. The revelation of the myths of official historiography has changed the total attitude toward the Palestinians and to the common past. Ilan Pappé concludes that the new history of especially the 1948 war has legitimised the historical narrative of the Palestinians and normalised the national collective memory. (Pappé 1995, 79) Still it has to be kept in mind that there still are those defending the official Zionist historical version of the birth of Israel and the year 1948. Actually historical narratives follow the researchers’ political and religious viewpoints and also permanent residence. It could be argued that Israeli Jews originally born in Israel whose parents are also Israelis, are more willing to admit the brutalities and political mistakes done in 1948 than new immigrants with religious backgrounds. The Jews living in Diaspora can roughly be divided into two; others consider Israel as a political and religious saviour of Jews and others consider it just as a state for Jews. Without doubt their historical narratives also follow the same patterns.

## **7 Diaspora versus Israel – excluding identities?**

If we look at the world today we can see at least two trends among people. While others withdraw more and more from the power of religion and religious communities, the others devote more to the religion and its way of life. Modern, secular and capitalist world has a counterpart in a fundamentalist<sup>19</sup> world with traditions and values from their religious belief. Nevertheless fundamentalism is not the only possible religious response to globalizing pressures (Waters 1995, 131) and this is of course an extremely simplifying explanation. Within Jews there are both groups. While orthodox Jews withdraw more from the present world to the world of Torah, the secular Israeli Jews enjoy of American, consuming life without giving much thoughts to their religious or ethnic identities. Most of secular Israeli Jews consider themselves as Jews, but even more as Israelis. The Jewishness is by no means more important in a cultural and ethnic level.

The identity of Jews living in Diaspora is a more problematic issue. They don't actually have to live in Israel because media, Internet and other communication methods make it possible to know everything that happens in Israel simultaneously. At the same time they can enjoy the advantages of their European or American citizenship and feel belonging to the Jewish community in Israel. They can visit Israel whenever they want but most of the Diaspora Jews prefer not to move to Israel. Israel has more a symbolic value for them and it also forms a

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<sup>19</sup> With fundamentalism here I do not mean only Islamic fundamentalist but all religious movements who insist observing their religious beliefs very literally.

great part of their identity. The risk among Diaspora Jews is however their assimilation and secularisation. Especially mixed marriages are a danger for Jewish identity in Diaspora. Old traditions and beliefs vanish as their meaning in everyday life diminishes.

Diverging from the Diaspora before 1948 living in Diaspora nowadays is more of a personal choice than must. Living in Diaspora means only geographical dispersion but not spiritual or mental. Jews can feel aware of each other with the help of global network. Israel is actually essential for the existence of Diaspora. As long as Jews in Diaspora feel connected with Jewish collectivity in Israel and geographical area of the Biblical land they at least maintain their Diaspora Jewish identity and not totally assimilate into cultures around them.

The Jewish identity in Diaspora could be defined millions of different ways. It may be possible for Diaspora Jews to have a certain citizenship but to feel belonging to a religious Jewish community. In this case their cultural and religious identities are based on Jewishness but not necessarily their political or national identity unless Israel's interest is on the fore. Here however the identity is not defined only through Judaism or Jewishness. Jews in Diaspora can identify themselves simultaneously as Jews but also as citizens of a certain country. They can be loyal to Israel and to their permanent residence at the same time and to their companion citizens and to Jews in Israel. The complicated pattern of identities causes also crises in identification and it is best seen in the behaviour and thoughts about Israel. All criticism on Israel can be rejected and taken as personal insults (see more Orr 1994).

It has been difficult to form a one, homogeneous Jewish identity because Jews came to Israel from culturally and politically different backgrounds. The possibility that early Zionists thought functional, was a forming of a secular Jewish state, where people could form a new solid Jewish identity. This idea was materialised but not in a way expected because the creation of Israel gave rise to a totally new identity; an Israeli (see Azaryahu, 1999, 131–47). Israeli society was not a tabula rasa, because immigrants imported their social and cultural traditions from their countries of origin which influenced on behaviour and values. Even the common core of Jewish religious observance and belief was overlaid with local and regional variations in lifestyle and behaviour. (Horowitz 1989, 8) So different cultural and social Jewish traditions and “identities” have mixed into one Israeli identity which naturally is extremely heterogeneous and incoherent.

Immigration to Israel from Diaspora heightened the tensions surrounding the definition and boundaries of individual and collective Jewish identity. The controversy known as “Who is a Jew” came into public focus in Israel since 1950’s. (Horowitz 1989, 13) Defining the Jewish nation has continued until today of being a very sensitive issue. Israel’s urge to find a clear-cut definition of who is a Jew and an Israeli has created an intense research on these issues. Matters of political identity, ethnicity and religion are politically dangerous also in the realm of research. (Schulz 1996, 246)

The centrality of Israel for Diaspora Jewry implicit in Israel’s self-definition as a Jewish state. Still the largest Diaspora communities are located in the United States and former Soviet Union, nowadays Russia. (Horowitz 1989, 10) This is why it may be asked if there is any

collective Jewish identity or is there only a very heterogeneous identity basing on common religion but not on a common culture or ethnicity. However not every Jew feel connected to Israeli collectivity. Weaker congruence is for example among Diaspora Jews who may feel connected or affiliated to another citizenship, ethnicity or geographical territory (see Horowitz 1989, 5). American Jews can be mentioned here as a good example. Sometimes there can be too many possibilities to identify oneself of belonging to a certain group. In the current world the geographical area or ethnic background may necessarily not have a significant meaning especially when people move from country to another after jobs, education and other reasons.

Groups can maintain attachments to external centres outside the boundaries of their society, for instance to motherlands exerting an influence on their Diaspora communities, transnational centres such as churches or ideological movements such as communism (Horowitz 1989, 21). This may also be the case with Jewish Diaspora communities that maintain attachments to Israel even though they don't feel associated to the Israeli collective.

The time will show what happens to Jewish identity in the time of globalization when nations, cultures and states shrivel into themselves and try to isolate themselves from the global influences. This is about to happen at the same time when meaning of geographical borders is going to diminish and when people, money, things, values and traditions spread more easily than ever. Already in Israel a phenomenon of isolation is rising. A vast majority of Jews would like to close the gates of Israel and leave the others outside its borders (Pedahzur 1999, 115). This refers of course mostly at non-Jews.

There are already many cleavages among Jews even though social or religious cleavages are not taken into a consideration. The time in Diaspora has made its cause when giving rise to the distinguishes among Jews in how they identify themselves as individuals and as people. Ethnic cleavage in Israeli society is in many ways unique, since it is rooted in the unusual social and cultural development of the Jewish people in the Diaspora. It still lacks the elements of national distinctiveness that usually mark ethnic cleavages. There are many ways to define the ethnic cleavage in Israel as Ashkenazim versus Sephardim and as Jews of European-American origin versus those of African-Asian origin. Still the essence of ethnic pluralism in Israel is basically cultural. (Horowitz 1989, 64) In other words the same pluralism can be noted in Jewishness in general and seen currently among Israeli and Diaspora Jews.

Israeli identity has become an important identity along with ethnic/religious identities. These two identities, national and ethnic/religious, are not mutually exclusive but complementary, not in a static fashion but in a continuous process of negotiation with the other. For the Jewish population, identities will be related to country of origin, ethnic and religious communities, Jewish and Israeli identities. The presumed linkage between being Israeli and Jewish is a highly debated issue. As with all national movements, the historical myths on a common historical background and faith is closely connected to the way in which the group defines itself. (Schulz 1996, 245)

Alone in Israel the most important identity among Jews may vary depending on age, origin, locality and religiousness. For example in Jerusalem the majority of Jews think that their most important identity

is of being a member of Jewish people when in Haifa the majority think that the most important identity is of being an Israeli citizen. (See Schulz 1996 for more details) So there are no easy answers to the question how Jews identify themselves.

## **8 Globalization and identity**

In the era of globalization it seems that identities are becoming more multi-dimensional and multiple. The identification depends on whom we are talking with and on what subject. The way of identification may tell more about our ideas and values than we even think. It seems obvious that Jewish collective identity is not uniform but multi-dimensional. There are no one Jewish identity but many. In Israel alone Jews can combine Jewish (religious or secular national) Israeli identity with ethnic identity (i.e. Oriental/Sephardi or Ashkenazi) and country of origin (Schulz 1996, 291). In Diaspora like in the United States the Jews may identify themselves more of an American citizen than Jewish or Jewishness may be seen more as a religious identity but also as ethnic identity. None of these identities are however exclusive. Identities have different meanings depending on specific social contextual setting in which individuals are interacting (Schulz 1996, 7–8).

In some occasions it has been argued that rising of nationalisms would be opposite phenomena from globalization. Nationalism could be understood as a reaction against globalization (especially in the third world) but also a product of globalization (national unification as Germany). However nationalism as a doctrine calls for establishment of

separate states. It invokes the distinct culture and history of peoples. It is therefore about how unique peoples are. Doctrine itself has spread across the world as part of international process: as a result of global changes. (Baylis 1997, 360) With other words in nationalism ethnic and national identities are strengthened and reshaped in order to enforce the distinctiveness from others.

Globalization is mostly a social process. Globalization is the direct consequence of the expansion of European culture across the planet via settlement, colonization and cultural influence. It is also bound up essentially with the capitalist development as it has ramified through political and cultural arenas. However it mostly means that every set of social arrangements must establish its position in relation to the capitalist West. (Waters 1995, 3)

Globalization does not necessarily imply homogenization or integration, or even separation and isolation from others. Globalization merely implies greater connectedness and de-territorialization. The possibility arises therefore of an increased measure of ethnic pluralism but in which ethnicities are not tied to any specific territory or polity (Waters 1995, 136). This ensures that for example Diaspora Jews may feel very well identified with Jews all over the world or in Israel and not find it threatening their national identity or citizenship.

Globalization is not however experienced everywhere to the same extent. It still affects mostly city dwellers, professional people and younger generations. So globalization is actually a Western phenomenon. Globalization is by no means straightforward process of homogenisation and it has not brought an end to cultural diversity. For example global films are interpreted differently in different places in

accordance with specific local needs and customs. Many people reassert their distinctiveness even more insistently than ever. In this way globalization has contributed to a proliferation of national, ethnic and religious revivalist movements since 1960s. It is possible to distinguish a mix of tendencies towards cultural convergence on the one hand and increased inter-group differentiation on the other. (Baylis 1997, 18)

## **9 Final remarks**

Identity-building is a series of complex events and factors. In the case of Jewish identity-building the past has been the focal element. The Jewish history since the destruction of the second temple has been about exile, discrimination, suffering, Holocaust and wars. This explains the reason why the look is turned to the glorious past, the time before Diaspora, when Jews were still strong and brave. Identity and collective memory are not wanted to base on the period of weakness and suffering.

Jewish identity is based on the otherness. Whatever happens Jews will always be different and distinctive from others despite the globalisation and the flow of influences and harmonisation of people. Burden of past is probably one of the reasons why Jews will keep up their own identity and try to avoid dispersion to happen again. It could be however argued that moulding and reshaping of identities will become even more common in the era of globalization when exterior changes and expectations cause changes in the values and objectives of nations and ethnic groups. At least narratives tend to be modified as needs change.

Already among Israeli Jews there are wide cultural differences depending on from where immigrants are from. That is why the values and cultural, social and religious habits are different from each other already in Israel alone. Within Jewish society in Israel it is extremely difficult to find people who would associate themselves clearly into one group.

The popular elements of Western culture found a receptive audience at all levels of Israeli society. The only group to remain more closed to these influences was the ultra-Orthodox sector. Otherwise, all classes and communities whether from Europe or Middle East adopted the patterns of consumption and leisure. Whatever original cultural expressions that had managed to emerge in the relatively isolated enclave of the Yishuv were eventually submerged or swept away in the wave of popular Western culture that swept over the global village of the post-war world. (Horowitz 1989, 135)

Globalization has not changed identification patterns except of spreading more influences from Israel to Diaspora and vice versa. The meaning of Israel and Jewish community on global world have enforced during the last 50 years and the support of the United States to Israel has increased Israel's possibilities to have an effect in world politics. This has at the same time strengthened Israelis self-confidence but also made them dependent from American financial, political and moral support.

Common identification as Jews is mainly the only connecting factor between Diaspora and Israeli Jews. There are not so many uniting features among Diaspora Jews except agreeing the role of Israel. The identity of a Diaspora Jew is usually orientated to the territory and citizenship of a person and not to Israel. Nowadays it is possible to

combine adherence to Jewish faith with national identification with another people. A modern nationalist interpretation to Jewish identity would make it possible to feel part of the Jewish people without necessarily being committed to religious belief and observance (Horowitz 1989, 139). Living in Diaspora is nowadays more of a choice than must. Not even Zionists go to live in Israel anymore, they choose to support Israel from a distance. The relation between Diaspora and Israeli community is a complex one, but the only real separating thing is a distance geographically. Even distance doesn't mean dispersion anymore when symbolic exchanges globalize.

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