

FOREIGN PENETRATIONS OF THE MIDDLE EAST AND THE
EMERGENCE OF NONTRADITIONAL ELITES AND IDEOLOGIES IN THE
REGION: A PERSPECTIVE

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For hundreds of years, the Middle East has been a target of foreign penetrations by a variety of means: military, economic, educational, political, and ideological. In the period between the advent of Islam and the advent of the Industrial Revolution, this region experienced a long period of absence of foreign penetrations, with the notable exceptions of the Christian Crusades and the Mongols.

These two foreign penetrations occurred before the Industrial Revolution. Their impact on the economic and political life of the people was minimal, besides the destruction of property and human life. No basic changes occurred in the economic, political or religious systems of the people. They continued their traditional methods of livelihood: military, farming, craftsmanship and business. Some were religious teachers and a smaller number was engaged in bureaucracy. Islam remained the preponderant religion in the region; these penetrations posed little challenge to the religion's supremacy.

The penetrations that occurred after the Industrial Revolution left a much deeper impact on the region's political, economic, educational and ideological systems. Thus these penetrations gave rise to new groups of elites and introduced a set of economic means as commercial and industrial capitalism created a class of predators, initially only among the Jews and Christians in the region. Napoleon's attack against Egypt created circumstances that encouraged the introduction and adoption of territorial nationalism, first among the minority groups, and later among the Muslims. This was so because, Islam discouraged artificial boundaries among Muslims. The implementation of the concept of territorial nationalism would not have benefitted the Muslims who enjoyed a political and religious hegemony over the region.

The introduction of Western education by the American missionaries in the Middle East, once again, initially, kept the Muslims away from the church related institutions. The main beneficiaries of Western-style education at

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this stage were the non-Muslim minorities. Muslim families started to send their children to Western-style educational institutions only after economic factors and new economic realities constrained them to change their minds. Western education also introduced the concept of secularism. Thus, Western education created a group of new elites who believed in territorial nationalism and secularism. These three groups—the compradors, the nationalists and the secularists—emerged as the opinion-makers and the exponents of foreign ideologies in the region.

Basically, the era of European and Russian colonialism was opposed and led by the traditional leaders who were joined by the new elites, since the latter had little popular support in the Nineteenth and early Twentieth centuries. In the era of colonialism, foreign ideologies and political concepts found the Middle East a fertile ground for propaganda. The colonial powers encouraged the introduction and propagation of religious and political concepts opposed to Islam, the only force capable of uniting the masses against foreign occupation. While this era gave rise to a new class of anti-Western elites, apart from the traditional elites who had been consistently in opposition to Western colonialism and military expansion, it seriously damaged the power base of the traditional elites and caused a reorientation and a structural change in the region's economy for the benefits of the colonizers.

The era of colonialism also witnessed the introduction of the political concept of Zionism and the establishment of Israel on Arab lands. This last act of the dying European colonialism has given rise to a number of anti-European and anti-Western political groups. Inadvertently, the creation of Israel has strengthened the influence of the traditional elites and ideology in the region. While secularism has been successful only in the Republic of Turkey, no other Middle Eastern country has seriously considered this political model for implementation. Since the 1970s the political trend is towards adopting an Islamic model. Political and economic performances of both the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia have put into serious doubt the previously and widely held view that traditionally educated elites would not be able to organize and supervise modern economies and deal effectively with a highly complex international system.

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The Middle East, like most other parts of the world, has been a target of foreign penetrations since time immemorial. The region's geographic location, its fertile river valleys and the ingenuity of its people to develop agricultural farming and settled life caused envy among foreign peoples who often succeeded in penetrating the area and occupying it for economic exploitation. The region's natural endowments and the location of religious sites within its confines often were excuses for the foreign forces to invade the area.

In this article we use the word "penetration" to mean the imposition of a foreign political or economic will by means of a military force, the threat of use of military force, the use of religious minorities by foreign powers to achieve certain political and economic goals in the region, and the use of foreign religious missionaries and educational facilities to achieve political ends.

Although the Middle East has witnessed a long and painful series of foreign penetrations, from the West, the North and the East, broken only by intermittent periods of peace imposed by strong and occasionally wise governments, the intensity and impact of these penetrations have been uneven. This is so because of a variety of circumstances and factors that prevailed both within and without the region. The question is why certain foreign penetrations have left a stronger impact than have the others? Is it due to the ruthlessness of the penetrator? Or is it due to the Middle East peoples receptivity to foreign ideas or their inability to resist foreign pressures?

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While in its wake the use of ruthless force has left destruction of monuments and human life, new and alien ideas have been responsible for the destruction of the whole sets of value systems. While the destroyed monuments can be rebuilt, a rebuilding of the value system is less likely. Middle East history shows that the foreign penetrators who tried to use force to maintain their presence in the region have always failed to achieve their goal. Sooner or later they have either been assimilated or expelled from the area. The foreign penetrators who have left a more permanent mark on the region happened to be those who unwittingly or deliberately introduced new economic, political and ideological ideas in the region. The introduction and the ultimate acceptance of the new ideas changed the economic and political systems of the region. The managers of the new system are the elites that emerged as a consequence of the penetrations of the region by foreign powers by military, economic, cultural and educational means.

In this article we attempt to show that while all major attempts by foreign military, economic, educational and ideological penetrations were resisted by a correspondent Middle East system, the latter's power of resistance proved inadequate to maintain its cohesion.

In this article we classify all successful penetrations of the Middle East into two periods: the pre- and post-Industrial Revolution penetrations. Although the Middle East experienced more military penetrations during the pre-Industrial Revolution period than it did during the post-Industrial Revolution period, the impact of the latter penetrations has been more profound.

THE PRE-INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION PENETRATIONS AND THEIR IMPACT

One could argue that the external penetrations of the area began with the rise and expansion of the Greek and Roman empires which dominated the region for several hundred years. The Greek Empire gave way to the Roman Empire which in turn succumbed to a more powerful foreign force from the East—the Huns. After the destruction of the Roman Empire, the Middle East region remained safe for hundreds of years from foreign penet-

rations. During this period, the region was protected from external threats by the Byzantine and the Persian Empires. Their perennial conflict and the inability of either to eliminate the other, however, weakened both powers and thus opened the way to the expansion of the Islamic Empire. Following the establishment of the Muslim rule in the region, the Middle East remained protected, except for two major exceptions.

These exceptions were the Christian Crusades and the Mongols who successfully penetrated the region for a brief period of time and left their indelible marks on the region. Although both the Crusaders and the Mongols have left indelible marks on the physical features of the region and on the memories of its people, their respective impact has been radically different.

Although both the Crusaders and the Mongols brought untold misery and havoc to the region, the professed purposes of these two penetrators of the Middle East were vastly different. Whereas the Eleventh through Thirteenth century Crusades were organized under the auspices of the Christian Popes and other European potentates for the express purpose of expelling the Muslims from Jerusalem and other parts of Palestine, the Mongol penetrations lacked religious motivation. The Mongols entered the Middle East without any malice toward Islam.

Furthermore, while the Crusaders penetrated and established a number of kingdoms in Palestine which lasted from a few to less than a hundred years and were eventually destroyed by a coalition of Muslim forces, the Mongols, who also occupied a portion of the region and established a powerful kingdom in the eastern parts of the Middle East, were assimilated into the region. The mongols came as conquerors and missing line stayed there as occupiers for a limited period, after which they were expelled by the force of arms.

While the Crusaders acquired scientific knowledge from the Middle East and transmitted it to Europe, they failed to understand Islam's ethical and moral values, due to their inherent antagonism toward the most powerful competing ideology. The Crusades are still remembered by Muslims and to some extent by the Orthodox Christians and Jews for their cruelty, brutality, greed and inhumanity towards the local population.

Although the Mongols also are remembered for their cruelty and savagery, a recollection of their misdeeds does not evoke as much a violent reaction as they deserve. Several reason may be identified for this difference in attitude towards the Mongols and the crusaders. First, after the initial destruction and slaughter by the Mongols, there was a long period of regional peace imposed by them. Secondly, although the Mongols, like their European counterparts, were foreign penetrators and occupiers, they showed no hostility toward the religious and social values of the people under occupation. On the contrary, the Mongol showed a great deal of interest in the ethical and moral values of Islam and within a generation of their occupation of parts of the Middle East the entire Mongol population with regin became Muslim. Finally, the Mongol penetration and occupation proved to be an aberration from the East; were no continuous and organized attempts to penetrate the Middle East for the express purpose of destroying a competing faith, as had been the case with the Christian Crusaders.

Although in the late Fourteenth and early Fifteenth centuries another Eastern horde under Taimur penetrated the Middle East and caused much destruction to human life and physical property, his invasion caused little damage to the Islamic institutions, values and ideals. Taimur who was a Muslim, brought with him Muslim scholars and students, some of whom remained in the region to teach and learn about Islam. Furthermore,

Taimur in his military campaigns in the Western extremities of the region defeated the last remnant of a Christian Kingdom and thereby expanded the territory of darul Islam. For this act, Taimur received adulations from Muslim historians and writers.

With the exception of the events noted above, the Muslim Middle East remained immuned from external penetrations for a long period. During this period of peace and prosperity, great strides were made in the fields of medicine, astronomy, mathematics, music, chemistry, physics, architecture, craftsmanship, the fine arts, and other fields of human endeavor. A long period of peace, economic prosperity and a high degree of achievements in the social and physical sciences gave the Muslims a strong sense of pride in their spiritual and material achievements. In their immediate and traditional regions of contacts, Europe and India, the Muslims found no other people at par with them in spiritual and material accomplishments.

To sum up the impact of foreign penetrations of the Middle East during the pre-Industrial Revolution period, it has been argued that although foreign penetrations during this era left significant marks on the region's physical environment and on the collective memory of the people, these penetrations introduced no perceptible structural change in the economic and political systems. While the pre-Industrial Revolution penetrations were instrumental in exchanging religious and scientific ideas, the basic economic and political structures of the region did not see significant changes. Most people continued to earn their livelihood from the four basic professions available to them: military, agriculture, business and craftsmanship. A relatively small number of people were engaged in religious education and a smaller number yet, in bureaucracy. The foreign penetrations of the pre-Industrial Revolution era did not alter this social and economic structure. When new rulers established themselves, the surplus wealth was transferred to the them; the new rulers usually spent their wealth on luxury goods and on building monuments. Because these foreign penetrations caused no structural changes in the political and economic systems of the region, they may be classified as "infertile" penetrations.

Since the post-Industrial Revolution penetrations (PIRP) did produce substantial structural changes in the economy and the educational, political and social systems of the region, they may be classified as "fertile" penetrations. The PIRPs gave rise to a set of new elites and equipped them with new ideas and ideologies. It should be emphasized that while new circumstances caused the emergence of new elites, the masses for a considerably long time remained untouched by the new ideologies and they remained firmly tied to the traditional elites and traditional education. Thus, an ideological chasm began to develop between the new elites and the general population of the region. This gap between the masses and the new elite would be further enlarged with the introduction of such alien ideologies as communism and socialism.

How and why did this happen? To understand the reasons for the existence of a chasm between the new elites and the general population of the region, we should briefly recall the traditional system as it existed prior to the Industrial Revolution. The purpose of this discussion is not to repeat what has already been said elsewhere about the traditional system but to present a brief account of the psychological and intellectual system that stood as a stalwart against foreign penetration of the area. It was an Islamic system of government and culture that for so long prevented alien values and culture to take root in Middle East soil.

This Islamic system was nurtured by the religious schools and sustained by the political and economic systems the Muslims had developed since the advent of Islam. The psychological and intellectual source of this system was the Holy Quran and other religious sources of inspiration. A sustained and long series of political and economic victories over their contemporary adversaries created in the minds of the Muslims a deep sense of superiority, almost invincibility. Long periods of peace provided by strong and dynamic rulers offered rich economic benefits to the people. Among the Muslims, this affluence reinforced the sense of superiority generated by their military and political victories.

Thus, the psychological environment was that of high degree of self-confidence and feeling of superiority over foreign cultures, especially that of the West. Similarly, the moral and ethical values of Islam were deemed superior to all other competing religions. Since in the eyes of the Middle East Muslims, there was nothing of moral and spiritual value to be gained from Europe, they found little reason to travel to Europe. Instead, they invited European traders to the Middle East markets and there traded goods with them. Consequently, a group of Europeans settled in the region and often joined hands with the non-Muslim minorities, Christians and Jews, to establish commercial and business links deemed necessary for a successful penetration of a commercial and monopoly capitalism into the Middle East.

In addition to the military means of penetration of the Middle East, foreigners also attempted and succeeded to penetrate the region by means of Christian missionary activities, foreign educational schools, the imposition of colonial rule, the support of Zionism and neo-colonialism. Each of these thrusts and foreign penetrations created a reaction among the people. Consequently, while the foreigners managed to achieve some of their political and economic goals by means of such penetrations, these penetrations also gave rise to a series of strong and protective political and ideological groups to oppose the foreigners.

COMMERCIAL AND MONOPOLY CAPITALISM AND THE EMERGENCE OF COMPRADORS

Although foreign commercial penetration of the Middle East had been going on ever since Western commercial capitalism emerged as a significant force in the expansion of international commerce and trade, the initial impact of this new force on the core population of this region was marginal. The impact of this foreign penetration was felt primarily by the Christian and Jewish populations, who lived at the periphery of Middle East society. This was evidently so because the Muslim population of the Ottoman Empire was neither prepared to meet the challenge posed by a new commercial phenomenon nor did they consider such activities worthy of their efforts. Additionally, the foreign capitalists felt more at ease with local Christians and Jews, some of whom knew European languages; they also enjoyed some personal and family links abroad. Thus, the penetration of commercial capitalism created a group of Christian and Jewish compradors who became a primary link between the European capitalists and Middle East producers of raw materials. These compradors enjoyed their unique position during the colonial period; their monopoly in this and other commercial areas ended with the end of the colonial era in the region.

It was this class, later to be enlarged by the addition of groups caused to emerge by further foreign penetrations, that would be closely identified

with foreign imperialism and colonialism. As this group of Middle East minorities increased their economic dependence on foreign capitalists, foreign governments were able to manipulate the non-Muslim minorities, to seek political and economic concessions from the Ottoman Empire. First unwittingly and later willingly, these minorities became tools of foreign powers who unabashedly manipulated them to create favorable conditions for their own nationals and countries. The Middle East compradors used their newly acquired commercial influence and wealth to enhance their political role in the region.

Commercial and monopoly capitalism created a new class of rich people whose wealth did not come from the traditional sources of affluence: land. Thus, a European penetration of the Middle East by means of commercial and monopoly capitalisms caused the emergence of a new and prosperous class of elites in the region and made international commerce, once again, a respectable and enviable human activity, from which Muslims would reap benefits only in the post-colonial era.

NAPOLEON'S ATTACK AND THE EMERGENCE OF MIDDLE EAST NATIONALISTS

A more significant penetration of the Middle East occurred in the last decade of the Eighteenth century when a French military force under Napoleon Bonaparte invaded Egypt, a heartland of the Middle East. This foreign military penetration of the Middle East occurred nearly six hundred years after the last of the European Crusaders had been forced out of the region. Although Napoleon's stay in Egypt was of short duration, the presence of a large number of foreigners, military personnel, archeologist, engineers and other camp followers, introduced a new and revolutionary political concept territorial nationalism. This concept not merely challenged the established political order but also after a few years, shook the very foundations of it. Until then the region was confidently invulnerable against pressures exerted by foreign political concepts and practices. Although Europe had accepted the concept of territorial nationalism in 1648 (Westphalia), this political concept had not been found useful by Middle East Muslims. However the arrival of the French forces and the subsequent political developments in the region created a favorable climate for the introduction of this concept in the region.

Since the concept of territorial nationalism claimed its supremacy over all other models for organizing linguistically and religiously diverse groups under one government, it posed a direct and an unacceptable challenge to the currently operational millet system that had allowed Muslims and non-Muslims to flourish in the Ottoman Empire. In missing line the concept of territorial nationalism as a viable alternative to the existing system. They realized that the concept of territorial nationalism, if applied to the Middle East, would further weaken the Ottoman Empire and thus the entire Muslim ummah, most of which had already been conquered by foreign powers.

Since neither the religious scholars (ulema) nor the Muslim educational system subscribed to the concept of territorial nationalism, most Muslims remained committed to the notion of indivisibility of the ummah, although for all practical purposes the ummah had been living in a divided state for a long time. The non-Muslims, however, had no such constraints. If some of them did believe in a universal Christian millet, their focus of loyalty naturally would be oriented towards Europe and other Christian populated countries. The non-Muslims in the Ottoman Empire began to propagate the

made it clear that their government would place the interests of the Turks above all others. Thus, the Young Turks opened the way for other ethnic groups in the Ottoman Empire to demand independence on the basis of their own respective nationalisms. These events not only weakened the Ottoman Empire politically but also sowed seeds for a further fragmentation of its successor states, many of which would be composed of multiethnic and multilingual groups; each claiming its inherent right to independence and national sovereignty.

concept of territorial nationalism with the fervor of a new convert. They argued that in a country such as Egypt or Syria where Christians formed about 10 per cent of the population, they would be given equal rights and equal opportunities if these countries became independent "nation states." With the help of foreign powers, these new converts in the cause of territorial nationalism organized "freedom" movements aimed at dividing the Ottoman Empire into its various ethnic components. The non-Muslim exponents of nationalism were fully supported by foreign powers as well as by the compradors and other commercial agents of foreign economic interests.

Although the non-Muslim groups in the Middle East showed a great deal of receptivity to the concept of territorial nationalism, their Muslim counterparts were slow to accept this alien political model. It took many generations and continuous debate about the merits and demerits of the concept of nationalism before it became an acceptable political tool in the hands of Muslim activists to obtain independence from the foreign occupying powers. This political concept was finally given legitimacy it had lacked for over a century by the Young Turks who, in their public pronouncements, made it clear that their government would place the interests of the Turks above all others. Thus, the Young Turks opened the way for other ethnic groups in the Ottoman Empire to demand independence on the basis of their own respective nationalisms. These events not only weakened the Ottoman Empire politically but also sowed seeds for a further fragmentation of its successor states, many of which would be composed of multiethnic and multilingual groups; each claiming its inherent right to independence and national sovereignty.

WESTERN EDUCATION AND THE EMERGENCE OF SECULARISTS

Western style education was another effective instrument of foreign penetration of the Middle East. Western style public education was first introduced to the Middle East by American Christian missionaries who initially had been sent to the region to proselytize. The first wave of American Christian missionaries was composed of Protestants who came to the Middle East to "save the souls" of Catholics, Orthodox Greeks, Armenians, Jews and Muslims. Since the millet system would not recognize Protestantism as a separate millet for thirty to forty years after the arrival of American missionaries, their initial years in the region did not bear fruit of labor. The American missionaries could not produce a convincing argument in favor of conversion, in the face of opposition by the established and recognized religions. The American missionaries, however, were not easily discouraged; having failed to "save the soul", they offered to "save the mind"!

Since public educational facilities in the region were inadequate, one could have assumed that additional educational facilities provided by the American missionaries would prove to be an immediate success. This,

however, was not the case. Initially, American missionary education was welcomed primarily by the non-Muslim minorities in the Ottoman Empire. For a long time, Muslims did not join these educational facilities, because they were attached to and financed by American churches. Muslim families feared that by sending their children to the church-related educational schools, they would expose their children to Christian propaganda.

There was, however, one American educational group that showed no interest in associating education with religion. The American Friends had developed and used in the United States an educational system that made little use of religion in its educational curriculum. This curriculum focused on reading, writing and arithmetic; and it was adaptable to the needs of both adults and children. The adult aspect of the curriculum was highly attractive to the Turkish military which had begun to provide basic elementary education to its soldiers. The acceptance of an American education system by the Turkish military slowly opened the way for Muslims to send their children to those American schools which assured the parents that no attempts would be made at proselytization of their children.

Although the introduction of the concept of territorial nationalism preceded in time the introduction of a Western style educational system in the Middle East, nationalism as a political concept did not become acceptable to the Muslims until Western-style education became more widespread. Gradually, The Western-style educational institutions in the region began to produce graduates who admired the American system of secular government. They must have argued that if American secular system could hold together under one government a vast number of foreign ethnic, racial and linguistic groups, why the same principle would not succeed in the Middle East.

As foreign political and economic penetration of the region increased and with it the demand for Western-style educated persons, more and more Muslim families began to send their children to foreign-sponsored schools. This change occurred over a period of 50-70 years. As a consequence of this economic necessity, the traditional educational system, while continuing to educate the masses, began to decline. Their graduates were no longer in demand in the market place.

Although the influx of foreign commercial and monopoly capital prevented the formation and expansion of local capital and created a class of compradors whose economic and often religious links oriented their loyalties more to foreign entities than to their own; and while the acceptance and propagation of the concept of territorial nationalism first weakened and later destroyed the Islamic political system and planted a seed for a further fragmentation of the Middle East; the introduction and continuous presence of foreign educational institutions shook the very foundation of the society. It created a permanent chasm between the Western and Islamic educated elites whose sources of spiritual inspiration and politico-economic aspirations were often opposed to each other.

Before the advent of Western education in the Middle East, there was a commonality of spiritual values between the leaders and the masses both drew inspiration from a common religion. The religious scholars, Muslim ulema, Christian priests and Jewish rabbis, alike, were common links between the masses and the ruling class. The religious scholars were both protectors of the masses and guides to the ruling class in the affairs of the millets. Until the end of the Nineteenth century, the religious scholars were successful in maintaining peace and harmony between the millets. The introduction of Western educational system broke that spiritual bond and

created a mutual alienation between the elites and the masses. The spiritual unity that had existed for centuries between the ruling elites and the masses disappeared. No other ideology, spiritual or economic system has replaced that common spiritual identity. Today, we see and hear leaders claiming to be inspired by a variety of alien ideologies communism, socialism, Maoism, Bauathism and a number of other isms. One Social Democrat Pasty leader in Turkey was proud to report that his source of spiritual inspiration was a Hindu religious tract, Bhagavat Gita!!! One would have to seriously doubt the ability and capability of such leaders to command the respect of the masses who continue to be inspired by their own religious sources.

Unless the ruling elites and the masses make a concerted effort to evolve a common ideology, based on the regions's cultural norms, and form a consensus juris, the social and political chasm that separates the two groups will continue to grow. And the social upheavals that have become synonymous with the region's name will remain a common occurrence. How would a common ideology and a consensus juris evolve? It would evolve through an educational system that took into serious considerations the cultural, ethical, and economic needs of the people; it would evolve by a vigorous and mass education of the people; it would evolve when we stopped creating elites in a handful of elite educational institutions and began to offer quality education to all. Furthermore, and most importantly, it would evolve when we reintroduced religious education at all levels. In a cohesive society, both the elites and the masses must enjoy a common spiritual bond: for our societies that bond has to be the bond of religion, unless we wish to have an alien bond imposed upon us.

In the contemporary world, the aspirations, values and needs of the masses can not be suppressed, not even by a dictatorial regime. In recent years a number of dictators and dictatorial regimes have been overthrown by a combination of forces the most important factor in these revolutions or attempted revolutions has been religion Iran, the Philippines, the assassination of Sadat and the overthrow of Bhutto. In each of these cases, the ruling elites were inspired by values alien to their respective societies. The ruling elites had lost touch with the masses and their aspirations. If the ruling elites could not be reeducated and reoriented within the context of their own culture and societal values, the masses would have to throw up a new set of leaders who would show as much dexterity in understanding complex economic and political problems as they did of religion and society.

IMPERIALISM AND THE EMERGENCE OF ANTI-WESTERN ELITES

Although anti-Western sentiments had been in existence for a long long time, in the Middle East, the Nineteenth century European imperialism gave rise to a new set of anti-Western elites most of whom had been educated in Europe or in foreign-sponsored educational institutions in the region. Since these Western-educated elites had no popular following, prior to the Twentieth century, they had to manifest their opposition to Western imperialism by joining hands with the religious leaders who had been in the forefront of opposition to Western encroachments on the dar al-Islam.

In the Nineteenth and Twentieth centuries, the military pressure exerted on the Middle East political system by the European powers and Tsarist Russia induced the Ottoman Empire to introduce military and political reforms, in the hope of thwarting foreign interference in the internal affairs of the country and to safeguard its territorial integrity. Although these

efforts did achieve temporary respites, they also eventually proved to be a source of serious and seemingly unbridgeable division among the elites. When faced with serious military threats by the European powers and Russia, the Middle East decision-makers and other elites propounded a variety of mutually exclusive strategies to meet the impending dangers.

Generally, these leaders and their proposed solutions fall into three categories: those who blamed the Muslims for the decline of their own power, accusing them of abandoning the true path of Islam. This group opposed reforms which they believed would further weaken the political and military power of the Ottoman Empire; they called for a return to the traditional Islamic values and governing principles. In support of their argument they pointed out that Muslims achieved their greatest glories only when they were fully committed to Islamic values and goals.

A second group blamed the past generations for the decline of Muslim political influence and power, accusing them of not moving with the time in not reforming Islam and for allowing the religious leaders to interfere in the state affairs thereby preventing the government from achieving the necessary economic, political and social goals. This group, it should be recalled was a product of a Western-educational system. They were very well familiar with the Christian church's obscurantism which kept Europe in the Dark Ages for hundreds of years. They also knew about the long and bloody wars between European kings and the Popes on such issues as their respective powers, the law of divorce, the study of physical sciences and other similar subjects. The exponents of this model did not seem to know or at least did not acknowledge their knowledge of Islamic history that was devoid of such conflicts between the rulers and the ulema. The ulema never claimed superiority over the Khalif or the Sultan; they knew that under the Islamic system, every individual, ruler or an ordinary person, was under the divine law revealed in the Quran. No individual was immuned from its application. Nor did the ulema oppose the study of physical sciences which flourished for hundreds of years under the Islamic rule. If there were conflicts between the rulers and the ulema they pertained to interpretations of the law for which the latter were the sole source.

The assumption of the proponents of the Western model was that "civilization" was moving on a linear path of progress and that since Europe had passed through a religious model of state administration (backwardness) and currently was at the secular model (progress) stage, it would be inevitable for "lesser civilizations" to pass through the same stages of political development, in order for them to enjoy similar prosperity and national cohesion as were being enjoyed by their European counterparts.

For this group the only model worth emulating was the Western/European model and the only civilization that mattered was that of Europe!!! For them the Muslim countries represented backwardness, poverty, defeat, disease and everything else that was deemed unattractive for a "civilized" people. They equated the Islamic system with retrogression and decadence. These alienated Muslims knew little about their own civilization and cared even less. Whatever knowledge they had acquired about their own history and culture was transmitted to them by the Orientalists and their field workers in the region.

A third group of elites tried to strike a compromise by offering a mixed Islamic and Western model for political reforms and economic development. While this group of elites seem to have acquired wider public support, they too failed to draw the masses on their side. The proponents of

Thromixed model failed to realize that the Islamic system was an organic whole and would not mix well with alien values and systems. Neither the exponents of the Western model nor those in favor of mixed model fully realized that the political systems they were endeavoring to introduce into the Middle East could not become operational without inducing major structural changes in the educational system in the country.

COMPETING MODELS: ISLAMIC, SECULAR AND MIXED

These three groups represent what one might call models for development and government. In the Nineteenth and Twentieth centuries, the exponents of the Islamic model were in the forefront of opposition to the Western and Russian penetrations of the region. While the exponents of the secular and the mixed models line missing of the Islamic model were successful in rallying the people around the flag. During this period, every foreign penetration was countered by a vigorous Islamic response. From Skaikh Abdul Qadir in Algeria to Shaikh Shamil in Daghestan, from the Mahdi in the Sudan to Muhammad bin Abd al-Karim in the Rif (Morocco), and from the Sanusi in North Africa to Palestine, al-Hijra and Khomenini in Egypt and Iran, respectively. All these movements and individuals were inspired by Islamic values and supported by the true believers. While not every one of these Islamic responses were fully successful in achieving their respective political goals, they were and continue to be a deep source of pride and inspiration for future generations of Muslims.

So far, the secular model has been used officially only in Turkey and Tunisia. Turkey's success in implementing this model may be attributed to a long series of historical circumstances and events that affected the fortunes of the Ottoman Empire. However, Mustafa Kemal Ataturk's personality and his success in defeating the foreign invaders of Anatolia must be singled out as two most significant factors in laying a secular foundation of the Turkish Republic. Although nationalist and secularist ideas among Muslims of the Ottoman Empire had begun to penetrate in the middle of the Nineteenth century, Turkish nationalism per se did not become a popular and acceptable political concept until the first decade of the Twentieth century. And secularism, a logical extension of nationalism, eager to contain the loyalties of minority groups who were engaged in separatist activities in the Ottoman Empire, did not emerge as a prominent force until the 1930s. Even then a great deal of coercive force had to be used against the opponents of this concept, to make it operational. In the case of Tunisia, the secular model is being seriously challenged by a strong and well-organized Islamist movement in the country. While the Tunisian government is using force to maintain a secular system, a large segment of the population is opposed to it.

Although no other Middle East country has made a serious attempt to use the secular model for government, there are political movements that aspire to make it a viable alternative to the existing systems. These movements, the Baath Socialist Party, for example, lack popular support and enthusiasm for this model. Turkey's historical circumstances were so unique, compared to the circumstances of its neighbors, that it would not be a surprise if Turkey remained the only secular country in the Middle East.

The failure of secularism to achieve supremacy in the Middle East did not automatically assured success for the other two competing models Islamic and Mixed. Only Saudi Arabia and the Islamic Republic of Iran are claiming

the use of Islamic model for government, economic development and relations with foreign countries. Egypt, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya and Morocco are openly opposed to the movement that is demanding the use of an Islamic model for these countries. Prison houses in these countries are full of individuals who demand the implementation of an Islamic model. This means that while the governments of these countries are not prepared to make an open declaration in favor of secularism, neither are they willing to allow the Islamic movement to succeed. These governments are using a combination of Islamic and non-Islamic principles for government and development purposes.

ZIONISM AND THE EMERGENCE OF ANTI-ZIONIST ELITES

Beside its neocolonial policies that emerged in the 1940s, the West's last and perhaps the most sinister penetration of the Middle East has been in the form of the imposition of the Zionist state in Palestine. The political beginning of this movement in the 1870s and the achievement of its goal in 1948 coincide, not accidentally, with the decline of the Ottoman military Power and the beginning era of colonialism in the region. Ironically, while the Sharif Hussein of Mecca, a selfproclaimed leader of the Arabs, was conspiring against the Ottomans, who for nearly fifty years had defied European pressure to let the European Jews settle in Jerusalem and its environs, his co-conspirators, the British and their allies, the French, had already made secret promises to create a homeland for the Jews in Palestine. Taking advantage of the Ottomans military weakness and its defeat in World War I, the Zionist were successful in getting themselves established in the British-occupied Palestine. Even before the official establishment of Israel in 1948, the Zionist settlements, obtained under the blazing British and Zionist guns created a wide spread resentment and anger among the inhabitants of the Middle East. Just as in the previous cases of Western penetrations, which had elicited strong responses from the local population, the Zionist penetration also created a strong anti-Zionist climate of opinion in the Middle East. Anti-Zionist sentiments were not limited to the religious fanatics but were shared by all shades of political and ideological groups. Today, anti-Zionism is more wide spread than had been the case with anti-colonialism at its apogee.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

To summarize, it has been argued that foreign penetrations of the Middle East first in the form of European commercial and monopoly capitalism (19th c), colonialism (19th and 20th c) and finally in the form of neocolonialism and Zionism (20th c) have seriously impacted all spheres of life of the people of the Middle East psychological, ideological, economic, political, social, military, religious, and educational. We discussed the beginning of the formation of the new elites as a consequence of the impact of foreign penetration of the region. The new elites, distinct from the traditional elites, were the product of foreign penetrations by commercial and monopoly capitalism (compradors and capitalists), military, educational institutions (nationalists, secularists), colonialism (reformists), neocolonialism and Zionism (ideologues, anti-Western and anti-Zionists).

Although opposition to foreign penetration was jointly waged by the new and the traditional elites, the former group did not attain as much popularity, commanded and respect in the struggle as did the traditional elites. After obtaining political power from the colonial masters,

the new elites, while raising appropriate slogans to condemn the era of colonialism and exploitation, failed to end the economic exploitation of their countries, primarily due to their spiritual, economic and ideological links with foreign sources which prevented them from instituting the much needed reforms that would have created a better rapport between them and the masses. While for hundreds of years foreign penetrations have been the major cause for the emergence of the new elites, most of the people remained immuned from the direct impacts of foreign ideologies. The masses, as usual, remained loyal to the spiritual guidance of their religious leaders.

This chasm between the masses, inspired primarily by religion and religious values, on one hand, and the new elites, inspired by foreign ideologies, models of development and government, on the other, has not been bridged, in spite of a number of efforts made since independence. Islam is a self-contained system, it does not mix well with foreign ideologies and systems. Several Muslim countries have tried to adapt Western political and economic systems to what they perceive to be the needs of the people. Each attempt has, however, failed. This is one reason that the Middle East states have not obtained a sustained period of political stability and economic prosperity. Most of the elites in power lack popular support and thus they tend to rely on foreign powers for protection and consolidation of power.

The above statement should not be construed to mean that the region would achieve instant "nirvana" if leaders immersed in traditional education came to power. Most of today's traditional leaders are ill-prepared to deal with the complex economic and political problems facing the region. (We must hasten to admit that both Saudi Arabia and Iran clearly contradict this argument. In both these countries, the decision-making powers are clearly in the hands of traditionally-educated elites. From King Abdul Aziz ibn Saud to King Fahd, none of the Saudi kings was educated abroad. However, they have managed to create a forward looking state which provides all kinds of social and educational facilities to its citizens men and women alike. Similarly, the Iranian leadership in power today was primarily educated in the traditional educational facilities. Both Iran and Saudi Arabia, however, depend heavily on their Western-educated elites for the implementation of the policies enunciated by the political leaders.) Also, the Middle East region has been too deeply penetrated by external forces, to be able to successfully resist outside pressures and internal dissension that could be easily instigated by foreigners. Much of the current leadership of the region spends enormous efforts and national resources on obtaining foreign protection against internal threats. This effort would be rendered unnecessary when the spiritual and ideological chasm between the masses and the leaders were abridged.

What is needed is a popular leadership steeped in their own cultural and religious values; values that assure equality, justice and freedom of expression. Although the coming to power of such a group of elites might not stop foreign penetration of the region it would certainly reduce the ability of foreign powers to manipulate the economic, political, ideological and psychological environments of the region. While the masses have remained loyal to their traditional values, to their families and religion, the new elites have acquired a sense of loyalty to ideas and concepts alien to the region. The new elites who came to power with the help and blessings of foreign penetrators have been unwilling and unable to force a retreat on their benefactors, who continue to exploit the human and material resources of the region for the benefit of their own countries.

ÖZET

Orta Doğu yüzyıllardır batının nüfus alanını oluşturmakta ve bu olgu kendini bölgede askeri, ekonomik, eğitsel politik ve ideolojik biçimlerde kendini hissettirmektedir. İslamın doğuşu ile sanayi devrimi arasındaki uzun sürede bölge herhangi bir istilaya uğramamış olup istisna sayılabilecek iki müdahale haçlı seferi ile mogollardan gelmiştir. Zaman içinde İsrail'in Arap toprakları üzerine yerleşimi geleneksel elit ve ideolojilerin doğması dönemine rastlamaktadır. Bölgede laiklik yalnızca Türkiye'de başarı sağlarken diğer hiçbir Arap ülkesi bu tür bir politik model uygulama açısından önemsememiştir.

Sömürgecilik dönemi bölgede politik bir kavram olarak siyonizmin ortaya çıkışı ile İsrail'in Arap topraklarına yerleşmesine tanık olmuştur. Ölmekte olan Avrupa sömürgeciliği yapılan bu grişimle Orta Doğu'da anti avrupalı ve anti batılı reaksiyonist grubun bölgede doğuşuna neden olmuştur. 1970'ler sonrası bölgedeki politik eğilim islam modeli arayışı biçiminde ortaya çıkmaktadır.