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The Muslim Brotherhood *80 years, 1928-2008*

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MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD *Vs* SALAFI-JIHADI ISLAM:



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CONFRONTING THE "BLACK SHEEP" OF POLITICAL ISLAM

Marina Eleftheriadou

Marxism, Anarchism, Socialism, Leninism, Stalinism, Trotskyism, Maoism... It took 150 years of theoretical-ideological evolution and still for some it's just "commies of slightly different shades". In this light, it is barely a surprise that nearly a century of existence and 30 years of active involvement in regional politics are far from sufficient to surpass the all-inclusive characterization of "Islamists". Nevertheless, Political Islam currently encompasses the most vivid and interesting politico-philosophical discourse. A discourse still in "evolutionary formation" with plenty of overlaps and vague "borderlines".

The nucleus of the debate within Political Islam lies on the "Salafi-Wahhabi" substratum and the primary polemic is centered around intra-Salafi theoretical battles rather than on a Salafi-versus-Wahhabi order of battle, as is commonly believed. In fact, the Wahhabite establishment that solidifies the Saudi regime is no more relevant

than the official clergy (ulema, Al-Azhar), despite the fact that both - either voluntarily or with governmental prompting - seek to play a role in this debate. Then the inclusion of the Wahhabi "stratum" comes as a result of the Wahhabi-enriched Salafism, brought about by the intersection some time during the 1980's of the parallel courses of

these two Islamic schools of thought. The former produced little innovation and was unable to supplement the original ideology of Ibn Abd al-Wahhab, thus becoming subordinate to the dynamic development of the latter which built on the works of the 19th century Islamic theoreticians Muhammad Abduh, Rashid Rida and, especially, Jamal al-Din al-Afghani.

This "intermarriage" (made possible through the influence of several Salafis who, persecuted by the authorities in the birthplace of modern political Islam, Egypt, found sanctuary in the Gulf States and, conversely, through Arab labourers in the Gulf returning to their homelands) took place relatively smoothly due to converging views concerning the corruptive and pervasive influence of the West in the Muslim world and their repugnance for innovation or *bida'*, (either Western-driven or initiated by Muslims themselves), both of which, according to Salafis and Wahhabis, drive contemporary Islamic practice away from the -earthly- "platonic ideal" of Islam's Golden age under Prophet Muhammad's rule and that of the first four "rightly guided" Caliphs (the Prophet's companions).

The various politico-philosophical approaches which have developed along the Salafi-Wahhabi spectrum lack clear-cut theoretical distinctions. Nevertheless, to avoid generalizations or oversimplifications, we could distinguish between two distinct schools of thought which, although interacting inside the confines of the "paradigm" described above, take a different position concerning some issues, as a result of additions or interpretations by subsequent influential scholars. The first school comprises the "Muslim Brotherhood trend" (the

term denotes the MB only in its contemporary form, because all "Salafi" groups in some sense sprang ideologically from the original MB) and the second one the "Salafi-Jihadi trend".

The latter can be divided into two further categories: the "nationalist-" and the "internationalist-oriented" Salafi-Jihadism - though of late this division has become increasingly difficult, even more so since important representatives of the nationalist strand (Al-Gamaa Al-Islamiya, Islamic Jihad), following their defeat in countries like Egypt, have chosen the path of ideological revisions and retractions, the most recent example being a book entitled "Document of Right Guidance for Jihad Activity in Egypt and the World" by IJ's Sayyed Imam al-Sherif (author of the "Foundations of Preparation for Holy War" which was used as a manual in al-Qaeda training camps). However, even if we overlook those who were left behind at the enemy camp -who receive comments such as that of Ayman al-Zawahiri who, referring to al-Sherif, asked: "Do they now have fax machines in Egyptian jail cells? I wonder if they're connected to the same line as the electric-shock machines"-, the internationalist-oriented Salafis' emphasis on the "near" and the "far" enemy, far from being a doctrinal issue, rather stems from operational opportunities and concerns.

In any case, the central dividing line between the two main schools of thought lies on their proposed methods by which to restore Islam's grandeur through the creation of an Islamic state. The "Muslim Brotherhood trend" builds on the teachings of its founder, Hassan al-Banna, who was in favour of bringing about the Islamic Revival

through a long term bottom-up process of educating and Islamizing the Muslim society (the "dawa" approach). On the other hand, the Salafi-Jihadi approach bases its militancy on the works of Sayid Qutb and Sayyid Abul Ala Mawdudi. Qutb built on Mawdudi's reinterpretation of the Muslim term *jahiliyya* (the historic period of "ignorance" before God's message to Muhammad) to justify the application of the rules pertaining to the *Dar al-Harb* (meaning jihad) to the un-Islamic settings inside the *Dar al-Islam*. (The notion was further developed by Dr. Abdullah Azzam -al-Qaeda's first ideologue- who restored the importance of the jihad against external threats to Islam, and to a lesser degree, by Ayman al-Zawahiri.) The jihad against infidel Muslim regimes was not only permitted, but imperative and urgent. As Islamic Jihad's Abdessalam Farag wrote in his pamphlet "The Neglected Duty": "it was useless to wear oneself out in social works the only way to establish an Islamic state was to strike the "impious" state at its head".

The emphasis on *dawa* is not the only point of dispute between the two trends. What creates most of the contention are the policy implications resulting from this approach. *Dawa* is legitimate but what is to be done in the meantime, that is, until the formation of the "Muslim man" is completed. Al-Banna advocated the postponement of the shift from educational to political work for only after the entire society endorses the Muslim Brotherhood's message. However, with the passing of time the Muslim Brotherhood, in Egypt and beyond, had to find a way to deal with the regime politically. As soon as the militant elements of the MB turned autonomous, evolving into Salafi-Jihadi groups with

a nationalist agenda, and the organization decided to abnegate violence, the road was open for participation in the established political structure (either through affiliated parties and cooperation with other opposition forces or as independent candidates). The ideological justification was spelled out by Yusuf al-Qaradawi - leader of the international Muslim Brotherhood and maybe the only exception to the general theoretical stagnation inside the MB - who in his book "Priorities of the Islamic Movement in the Coming Phase" formulated the "*wassatiyya*" doctrine which reserves an important role for "*ijtihad*" (the process of reasoning in the interpreting Islamic law) thus paving the way for a more modern, accommodationist MB.

As Muslim Brothers in Egypt, Algeria, Jordan, Morocco and Palestine turned to the ballot box, criticism ran high. Ayman al-Zawahiri denounced the MB's participation in Egypt's parliamentary elections: "Today you are winning 80 seats and after five years you will win 100 seats. Hence, at whatever time your behaviour improves, we will offer you more. Once you become secular and falsely affiliated with Islam...we will let you assume power provided that you forget about the rule of Sharia, welcome the Crusaders' bases in your countries, and acknowledge the existence of the Jews". This type of accusations were also directed against Hamas when, in a videotaped message, Zawahiri warned the organization not to engage in the "American game called political participation". The same atmosphere prevailed during the Iraqi elections.

Besides the fact that, as Mohammed al-Maqdisi (dubbed the "most influential living Islamist thinker" by a study on the material posted on al-

Qaeda websites conducted by the Combating Terrorism Center at West Point in 2006) asserted, "democracy is a religion", thus constituting a "sin" equivalent to that of conversion from Islam into another religion and hence deemed synonymous with apostasy, according to the Salafi-Jihadist logic the democratic process is also part of the "Crusaders' war against Islam" and, as such, it should be fought against. While the MB considers the West as a "Land of Dawa"-although it supports the "defensive jihad" against the occupiers in Iraq- and, at least before the Iraq war, it had contacts with Western officials, the Salafi-Jihadists not only shrug off any possibility of dialogue with the West but they also see in it another reason to castigate the "apostates". Accordingly, the use of the "takfir" doctrine (religious excommunication), although traditionally used with precaution, has of late been widely used -and debated- especially while Zarkawi's was still the leading Salafi-Jihadi figure in Iraq. The "Zarkawi question" refers to the legitimacy of killing those Muslims deemed to be "kafir", on the grounds that they are collaborators in the "American project" and they adopt an un-Islamic conduct. By implication, it also refers to the legitimacy behind targeting the Shia who are not only an essential part of the "American project" but also "rafida", rejectionists (of the true Islam).

The "Zarkawi question" dominated to a certain degree the general discourse, tipping the balance to the intra- "Salafi-Jihadi" level (that doesn't preclude an intra-MB discourse channelled either via generational differences or comradely disputes between the mother organization, the branches and the offshoots). The "Zarkawi question" produced a large amount of intellectual by-products of this odd

"theoretical battle" for the soul of the true -and potent- Islam. Zawahiri (touching on these issues in an alleged letter to Zarkawi), al-Maqdisi (in a 2005 public debate between Zarkawi and his ex-mentor imprisoned in Jordan), Abu Mus'ab Al-Suri and Osama bin Laden felt obliged to take a stand on the issue. At the same time that the theoretical gravity leans towards the Jihadi pole, the social outcome could be described as "the revenge of the dawa approach". Islam, as a force affecting and determining all aspects of life, is spreading in most Muslim societies (including those in the West). However, this "*dawa*" is a "Jihadi-sparked dawa" and its advance is unfolding in connection to the "Salafi-Jihadi" discourse. It's not enough to compare the photos of Muslim women in Cairo, Ramallah or Algiers in a forty years time span ... those veiled women walk under the "sleepless eye" of the martyrs. ■

Muslim Brotherhood and social values

What do Islamists say and want today?

Giorgos Gregoreas
Jan-Hinrich Wagner

The Muslim Brotherhood is struggling between its traditional identity as a social movement and its participation in the political system in Egypt. The social values underlying its actions and the possible resulting political aims are presented here.

In January 2007, the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood's Supreme Guide, Muhammad Mahdi 'Akef, announced the organization's intention to release its political platform. Although this intention has not been realised yet, a draft of the platform has appeared on the media, as the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) had sent it to some intellectuals. The draft fuelled an intense debate not only between the MB and its opponents but also within the ranks of the organization. The central issue in this debate concerned the stance and views of the MB regarding society: Democracy, civil state, minorities' rights and women's position. This article aims to examine the current MB stance towards social issues, taking also into account the historic dimension of the subject.

The issue that currently preoccupies most analysts about the MB is its relation with democracy, an issue on which, expectedly, divergent views are being expressed. The MB's draft platform states the organization's commitment to free and transparent elections but, at the same time, it calls for the recreation of a "Supreme Council of Clerics" which the President and the legislative branch must consult. This point was severely criticised by those who point out that the notion of democracy cannot be reduced just to a ballot box. Concern about similarities with the Iranian paradigm is also strong: "Egypt will never be Iran. The president will never be helpless in the face of an angry religious movement that wants to usurp the country and make it hostage to its aspirations", stated Muhammad 'Ali Ibrahim, who is editor of the Egyptian government daily Al-Gumhuriyya and a member of the "Egyptian Shura Council". The MB's response



was that the role of the Council will only be advisory, intending to demonstrate that the accusations about similarities with Iran are unjustified. What is more important though is the internal debate on the platform, as such a move indicates an intention to go forward with the creation of a political party. An important part of the MB (the so-called old guard, of which the most prominent figure is one of the movement's spiritual leaders, Sheikh Muhammad 'Abdallah Al-Khatib) considers the creation of a party to be in contradiction to Al Banna's guidelines. Al Banna had given more weight to societal reform by means of education and social activity and by focusing on the family, while he considered the creation of a party as an obstacle to this objective. Thus throughout its history, the MB participated in the electoral process with independent candidates, despite the pressures exerted upon it by the Egyptian government which at times took the form of hard persecution. This long history of MB participation in the democratic process, despite the above odds, is perhaps the strongest argument against the accusation that democracy is just a means for the organisation to impose an authoritarian and theocratic rule. The question that remains though, concerns the ways in which this participation is going to be pursued in the future.

As mentioned above, MB critics insist that democracy is not limited to free and fair elections and they accuse the MB of reducing it just to this, as well as of ignoring the values of equality and civil rights. Those critics (either supporters of the regime or liberals) focus on the fact that the draft manifesto excludes non-Muslims (mainly the Copts which constitute about 9% of the Egyptian population) from the presidency, while it does the same with women. This point was even criticized by Sheikh Rashed Al-Ghanushi, head of the Tunisian Islamic movement Al-Nahdha, and by the Supreme Guide of the MB in Syria, 'Ali Sadr Al-Din Al-Bayanouni. The leadership of the MB nonetheless does not seem willing to abandon this stance. Its justification regarding the Copts is that the president is responsible for the protection of the Islamic society and therefore a Christian is apparently not suitable for this position. Besides, they add, such a possibility is by its nature, too remote and thus not of major importance. Dr. Muhammad Mursi, the head of the committee that shaped the draft platform stated: "Have we ever seen a non-Christian at the head of the Vatican? Has Israel ever had a non-Jewish president?" However, the Copts are an ancient religious group of Egypt that the MB cannot easily ignore, and definitely such statements do not contribute to the creation of an ambience of friendship and trust.

As far as women are concerned, the MB's response was that the duties of the President are not compatible with the female nature, whose main role is the upbringing of children and the well-being of their families, tasks considered to be central for the functioning of an Islamic society.

As far as the MB is concerned, one has to point out that it has never been a completely homogenous movement after all. Different trends from within the MB have emerged over time, some of which remained with the MB, while others felt that their differences were so serious that they had to establish their own separate organisations. The MB was mainly abandoned by all those who turned to violence and terror, creating organizations only vaguely influenced by the MB.

On the other hand, those who believed that it was time to participate in the Egyptian elections in the form of a political party left the MB in 1996 and created the Wasat (Centre) Party. The draft of MB's political platform, as it was laid out and distributed by Muhammad Mahdi 'Akef, can also be understood as indicative of the general atmosphere prevailing in the wider MB movement itself. The ruling group around Akef belongs to the so-called da'wa (missionary) fraction, which has long withstood the demand of other parts of the Brotherhood to form a political party. The da'wa fraction follows Al Banna's vision of transforming society into an Islamic one, which will ultimately undertake the task of establishing a truly Islamic state. At the same time, the da'wa fraction is under pressure from a restless and young grassroots wishing fast change and not gradual evolution over an unspecified period of time. In this sense, the draft manifesto can also be seen as being addressed not to the MB as a whole but to its current leadership. The implicit meaning could thus be described along the lines "If ever a political party, then on these terms!"

In any case, it is questionable why especially Islamist movements have to prove their adherence to democratic values over and over again, even though they act in and stem from very undemocratic political environments. Under such conditions, elections are rigged and are used to the benefit of ruling parties which are hardly more democratic than any other political formation. ■



Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood: *A return to the roots?*

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It was only after the outburst of the 1st Intifada in the occupied territories (1987) that Hamas, an organization linked to the Muslim Brotherhood, assumed an active role in the Palestinian resistance. It is likely that the new realities with which Hamas currently has to cope may shift its activities to more traditional methods of Islamic political action.

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The involvement of Muslim Brotherhood (MB) in the Palestinian territories dates back to 1935, when Hasan-Al-Banna, the founder of the MB, had sent his brother to establish contacts in the region. Following the war of 1967, the Palestinian resistance movement has acquired increasing popularity in the Palestinian society, which started to actively aspire to its national liberation. In contrast, during that period the MB was preoccupied with the so-called "upbringing of an Islamic generation" which would materialize through an institutional reform, focusing on the establishment of religious schools, social clubs, and charity associations. However, a notable development in its organizational structure took place in the late 1970s, as the societies in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank merged into a single organization called "The Muslim Brotherhood Society in Jordan and Palestine". This resulted in the gradual politicization of MB organizations in universities, a development that coincided with the growing ideological influence of the Iranian revolution and with Palestinian disappointment over the poor achievements of the resistance movement.

Those factors created a fertile ground for the uprising of an Islamic movement that was antagonis-

tic to the MB. The "Islamic Jihad" (IJ), a radical organization whose leverage on Palestinian society and politics was limited at the time, had been ideologically influenced by the MB, but mainly drew its inspiration from the armed movements that had emerged from the ranks of the MB in the mid-1970s. Although both the MB and IJ shared the same vision for an "Islamic State", they differed in their practices. Thus, before the outbreak of the 1st Intifada, the MB was politically antagonized by the nationalist/secular movement Fatah (PLO) and the IJ, both of which were launching attacks against Israel in the occupied territories.

The outbreak of the 1st Intifada (December 1987) as well the massive popular support it enjoyed, was a turning point in the process of the Islamic movement's politicization in the territories. Responding to the new reality, the MB formed Hamas (the "Islamic Resistance Movement"), which, under the leadership of Sheikh Yassin, extended its network by establishing branches in the West Bank and Jordan. It should also be noted that during that period Israel initially tolerated or even encouraged the activities of Hamas as a counterweight to the secularist PLO that was then leading the national uprising.

The increasing popularity of the Islamic movement derived from the failure of the PLO and its nationalist/secularist ideology to resolve the Palestinian issue. Between 1987 and 1993, Hamas emerged as the main political counterweight to the PLO, but without managing to eliminate the power of the latter. In fact, in subsequent years, the relationship between Hamas and Fatah was characterized by consecutive tensions, oscillating between negotiation and armed clashes. The imprisonment of many Islamist fighters by the PA President during the post-Oslo years (Hamas had rejected the Oslo Accords of 1993), as well the constant targeting of Islamists by the Israeli army over the same period, resulted in Hamas' adoption of violent methods both against the foreign occupier and often against the nationalist forces represented by Fatah.

During the post-Oslo period and in the years following the eruption of the 2nd Intifada (September 2000), Hamas benefited politically from the increasing frustration of the Palestinians over the fact that the PLO-initiated negotiations with Israel had led nowhere near the establishment of an independent state. On the contrary, everyday life was becoming increasingly miserable, while at the same time the Palestinian elite which had formed around the new PA institutions was gradually distancing itself from the majority of the population. The decision of Hamas to participate, for first



time, in the legislative elections of January 2006 brought it in the, rather unexpected and peculiar, position of becoming the electoral winner.

Despite the fact that since then Hamas has been confronted with hostility by the international community and denied large proportions of the sharing of power, the organization has found itself before new responsibilities. That is, Hamas' electoral victory has changed the stakes altogether. The organisation currently seems to be caught in a cross-fire, as it has to establish a balance between its traditional commitment to liberate the entire "Historical Palestine" and the need to practise a 'realpolitik', which will allow it to cope with more mundane and pressing political matters.

Hamas' historical links with the MB branches of the neighbouring countries are significant in this respect. Hamas is believed to maintain close relations both with the Egyptian and the Jordanian

branches of the MB. The Egyptian branch is more influential in Gaza, while the Jordanian one in the West Bank due to the region's historical background. Up to the 1967 war, Egypt was administratively responsible for the Gaza Strip, while Jordan administered the West Bank (a significant number of Jordanian citizens are of Palestinian origin).

The Jordanian branch of the MB, in particular, has provided a lot of financial and military support to Hamas. One has to bear in mind though that the support of the Jordanian MB to Hamas is subject to what the Jordanian regime is willing to accept, given that the Jordanian MB is generally tolerated by the ruling elite and has even been allowed a share of power - which apparently the organization cannot afford to lose. However, Hamas' 2006 electoral success has emboldened the Islamist movement in Jordan, which has recently become more assertive in its criticism of the Hashemite monarchy. Addressing the Jordanian parliament, Dr. Azaam al-Huneidi, the head of the "Islamic Action Front" (the political party of the Jordanian MB), asked the Jordanian government to implement fair democratic rules in political life, something that, according to him, would lead to the rise of the MB to power. In this respect, he evaluated Hamas' victory as the most important model-case for Islamists. However, the Jordanian regime has responded by arresting a number of Hamas' members, while on March 22, 2006 Hamas was called to abstain from getting involved in Jordanian internal affairs. What provoked this warning was the election of Zacki Bani Irshid, who is considered to maintain strong ties with Hamas, as the General Secretary of the "Islamic Action Front".

The Egyptian Brotherhood also hailed the electoral victory of Hamas as a victory for the entire MB movement, and its leader, the Supreme Guide Sheikh Muhammad Mahdi Akef, recently stated (30 November 2007) that the MB could recruit 10.000 men to send to Palestine if the Egyptian government was will-

ing to arm them. The relations between Hamas and the Egyptian MB constitute a major headache for Mubarak's regime, which is concerned that the ties between the two organisations are not just of an historical nature. In April 2006, the Egyptian MB was accused of creating militias, while after a military-style parade at the Al-Azhar University (which featured many green Hamas flags) members of the organization were arrested by Egyptian authorities. Some critics even maintain that Mahdi 'Akef has served as Hamas' spiritual leader after the assassination of Ahmed Yassin in March 2004.

At the same time, following the 1991 Gulf War the relations between Hamas and Iran have also improved to a significant degree: Hamas has opened an office in Teheran while Iran has provided military training to Hamas. It should be noted though that Hamas has no regional aspirations and its main objective is the liberation of the occupied territories, a goal shared by the nationalist/secularist Palestinian movement.

Hamas' attempts to 'open up' and negotiate with the Israeli side following its electoral victory were rejected by the latter. At the same time, Hamas is confronted with hostility (as well as with consecutive attempts to undermine its authority) stemming both from the international powers and its local political opponent (Fatah). It should also be noted that currently the organization essentially dominates only the Gaza Strip. Given those facts, Hamas currently appears to have resorted to the 'traditional' practices followed by the MB everywhere: preparation and education of the Muslim society through an extended network of social services and local institutions, before a 'jihad' can be unleashed at an unspecified time in the future. In this sense, its current strategy does not appear to be much different to the pre-1987 approach of the local MB branch which, under the pressure of the Intifada, had given birth to Hamas as an organized movement. ■

What if the Muslim Brotherhood rose to power?

The effects of possible regime changes in the Middle East

**Pinelopi Kafetzidaki
Dania Paschopoulou
Ilias Tasopoulos**

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Western public opinion is often repelled when their governments support, in any way, Third World repressive regimes. However, it seems that, when it comes to the Middle East, for a host of Western analysts the alternative is more frightening; if the Middle East's authoritarian regimes become less repressive, more democratic and representative, this would most probably lead to the rise of political Islam, primarily the Muslim Brotherhood and its offshoots.

For as long as the authoritarian Middle Eastern regimes contributed to the containment of the communist Soviet Union during critical phases of the Cold War, the West did not see the democratization of these states as a priority. In the meantime, the influence of political Islam in these societies was having an upward course; the inability of the established regimes to meet the basic needs of the population and their poor performance against Israel were utilized by the Islamists to delegitimize anything that could be associated with a "Westernized" state. Inspired by the creation of the Muslim Brotherhood in 1928, the Muslim Brothers (MB) in Egypt, Syria and Jordan offered social services that the "corrupt" Middle Eastern state could not.

By offering efficient medical care, housing and other forms of assistance, the MB boosted its social status, as well as its political power. In Egypt, according to an estimate, there are 7,000 official local MB branches and an extensive network of mosques and charities which run schools and provide medical services and financial aid to the poor. In addition, the majority of the Egyptian professional syndicates is controlled by the MB. By improving the financial condition of syndicates, scientific societies, and student unions the Brotherhood has secured a source of funding and a way to influence society directly. Although they could have had an overwhelming control on both the Medical and the Law Association elections, the Brotherhood chose to allow room for pro-regime representation in an effort to manifest their adherence to democratic values ahead of the 2005 elections. Likewise, the MBs have had considerable success in the subsequent municipal elections in Jordan.

The MB has the advantage of promoting a political program that has never been implemented in the Near East in modern times. Additionally, the organization has often been as vague as possible in translating its view into concrete policy proposals that could be refuted, while it continues to offer practical solutions for the daily lives of the people. The group has called for state intervention in the operation of the mass media, while encouraging practices such as the study of Islamic history and the increased supervision of government employees. At the same time, they believe in rigorous physical exercise and total abstention from alcohol, gambling, dancing and Western style clothing.

There are some analysts in the West who argue that in the interest of regional stability, the West should come to terms with Islamic groups that are willing to accept the institutions of the modern nation-state. After all, the nation-state contributed significantly to the unprecedented levels of stability and prosperity that the Western world has enjoyed in the last decades. The continuation and the expansion of the nation-state in the Middle East can be the way to prevent a possible violent seizure of power by more radical factions who deny the notion of the nation-state. Specifically, in 2007, the US Democratic House Majority Leader, Steny Hoyer, met the Brotherhood's parliamentary leader, Mohamed Saad El- Katani, in Cairo while, according to American sources, a meeting between Washington and the Syrian National Salvation Front was held, in which the MB participated, in order to discuss and find out mechanisms to make Syria's political system more democratic. (The National Salvation Front was formed in 2005. The Damascus Declaration was based on the agreement between the MB and other dissident groups for common action against the regime. However, members of the Muslim Brotherhood oppose the Damascus Declaration, rejecting any cooperation with the West that could result from this move.)

Coming to power the Brotherhood will have to face the same foreign policy challenges that the current regimes face; the Jordanian case seems to be an exception. Maintaining his rule seemed to be the top priority of King Abdallah's foreign policy (and that of his father, King Hussein). An ascendance of the MB in power could, most improbably though, alter the security considerations of the new regime; they would probably not see the control of the Palestinians (the majority of the population) inside Jordan as a top priority. The MB would be interested in consolidating its rule, probably by co-opting the Palestinians. Given that the Jordanian MB appeals to many Palestinians, it could become the main organization gaining the support of Jordanian Palestinians and thus following a different approach towards Israel.

In the past, the MB had declared its opposition to the peace treaty with Israel; the 1994 peace treaty had

ignited a serious confrontation between the MB and the monarchical regime. However, Jordan would continue to be dependent on Western foreign aid so as to cover the basic needs of its population. The opposition of the MB to normalised diplomatic relations with Israel could be a potential problem. If the MB severed Jordan's ties with Israel, it would be hard for the US to maintain its close alliance with Jordan. In that case, the MB might once again turn to the Gulf for financial support.



Unlike other Islamist movements in the Arab world, the Syrian MB had also participated in electoral politics in order to pursue its goals, decades before the Hama massacre. Since 1981, when Hafiz al Assad ordered the massacre of MB supporters following the insurgency in Hama, the Syrian MB became a weakened outlaw organization; the regime repressed the MB destroying much of its infrastructure or driving its members to exile. The MB rise to power could have been facilitated by a violent overthrow of the current regime, but it would alter the ways of conducting foreign policy rather than the main policy issues.

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It would be quite interesting to examine how Syria's foreign policy vis-a-vis Lebanon would be shaped, had the MBs gained power. According to the MB rhetoric, Syria should not interfere in the internal affairs of Lebanon. A leading member of the MB, Ali Bayanouni, declared that the Ba'ath regime repressed the Lebanese in the same manner that it has been repressing its own people for decades. Apart from that, the MB would prefer to destroy the current state of affairs in Lebanon, in which the Syrian security services play a dominant role in the political and financial life of Lebanon and support the Ba'ath regime. Gibran Tueni, the assassinated Christian editor of Beirut's leading daily newspaper, An-Nahar, is often quoted regarding the financial aspects of Syria's involvement in Lebanon; he estimated that the Assad regime yields at least ten billion dollars a year from Lebanon, almost half of Syria's total GDP. Therefore, we would expect a major shift as far as it concerns Lebanon, which is likely to converge in some points with the American position.

On the contrary, we would not expect a major shift vis-a-vis Israel. One could argue that a compromise would be possible, based on the return of the Golan Heights from Israel and the official recognition of Israel from Syria. However, if the MB assumed power, they would declare their willingness to hold peace conversations with Israel after an Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories.

It might also be possible to see a change in American-Syrian relations. Even if Syrian- American relations are connected with Syrian-Israeli relations, the Iraq issue could come to the forefront. In the past, Bayanouni has admitted that Syrian Sunnis sympathize with the Iraqi insurgents, while he has also defended Syrian fighters in Iraq. The fact that he does not preclude the possibility of cooperation with the US in the "war on terrorism" highlights the dilemma of the Muslim Brotherhood in Syria: to what degree is cooperation with the West consistent with their professed principles.

MB's doctrine would probably lead to alienation between Syria, the Iranian Shia' regime and the Lebanese Hezbollah. Although not stated explicitly, the Syrian-Iranian alliance is seen by the MB as a temporary tactical move of the Assad regime. It is highly possible that the MB would not want to preserve this alliance

which unsettles its relations both with the West and with other Arab states.

As the MB in Syria is too weak to mount a serious challenge against the current regime, the most probable place in the Middle East where the MB could rise to power is Egypt. Due to external and, chiefly, domestic pressure, the Mubarak regime has been obliged to permit a bigger role of the MB in national politics although a large part of the ruling elite fears that the Brotherhood's aim is the total domination of politics and not merely power-sharing. The MB comprises an urban, middle class that would rather militate for a steady Islamization of the state than pursue armed jihad in order to topple it. The state has to mobilize political support against the institutions that the Brothers control and not simply forcefully confront them. In any case, it is difficult to think that the regime would peacefully transfer power to the MB; in 2007 the constitutional referendum on Mubarak's proposed amendments is believed to have been held so as to prevent the opposition from mounting a meaningful campaign. (Since the last presidential elections, the Mubarak regime has to confront a vibrant opposition force inside the parliament as well- as the Muslim Brotherhood holds 20 per cent of the parliamentary seats. The Brotherhood has been a banned political party in Egypt since 1954 and its members ran in parliamentary elections as independents.)

In any case, it is difficult to think that the regime would peacefully transfer power to the MB; in 2007 the constitutional referendum on Mubarak's proposed amendments is believed to have been held so as to prevent the opposition from mounting a meaningful campaign.

Coming to power, through elections or otherwise, the Brotherhood would probably maintain the hegemonic stance of the Egyptian foreign policy. However, there might be serious reconsideration of the relations with Israel and the US. For example, Dr Abul Futuh, a probable successor to Mohamed Mahdi Akef, firmly states that the US controls the Egyptian regime. According to Futuh, the US knows that the Brotherhood would change Egypt's policy towards Israel and re-examine the two countries' 20-year peace treaty if it assumed power. Referring implicitly to Israel the draft of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood's political platform, leaked to the media in 2007, states: "International law, as well as international treaties and agreements, offer ways to probe the extent of commitment of the sides, while at the same times providing avenues for their revision should any of the sides feel that the agreement in question discriminates against it, harms its status, or undermines its security."

It is quite probable that the MB would not consent to the isolation of Hamas in the Palestinian territories. Egypt would probably assume a more active role in the Israeli- Palestinian dispute and shift its current stance which favours Abu Mazen. The Israel-Egyptian peace treaty and the US- Egypt alliance could be put in jeopardy by such moves. As part of the peace treaty with Israel, Egypt has made a lucrative agreement with USA which yields it more than 2 billion dollars every year in developmental assistance and -technologically advanced- military equipment. The MB has stated its opposition to the continuation of this relationship.



The MB has argued that the acceptance of US aid leads to increasing dependency on and control by the US; they have instead prompted President Mubarak to turn down US aid. Specifically, Maamoun Al- Hodeiby, an MB spokesman, stated "We have always been sure that any aid from the United States is not in our benefit. It is better that we do not depend on foreign aid". Saad Al Hussein, the assistant secretary-general of the Muslim Brotherhood's parliamentary bloc, declared that "the MB bloc's attitude towards US aid is clear: we reject the US aid as a whole and the US aid conditions". He also explained briefly that most of the economic aid has been invested in specific sectors favoured by the US.

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Although according to the above, one would expect that the MBs would cut all links with the US, another aspect should be noted. Members of the MB, who have acquired money, power and social skills from their time in the Gulf, are in favor of free enterprise, capitalism, and the privileged international alliance with the United States. As Gilles Kepel eloquently describes "...they left with cultural assets, which, in the Nile Valley, gave them access only to the very lowest remuneration in the public sector. On the peninsula, however, they had been able to valorize these assets, becoming teachers, experts, and professionals." They

would favour an Islamic regime whose financial and economic policy would lean towards the free market with the private sector being the backbone of the economy. They would not wish to abandon the US-Egyptian relationship, although they could favour a more assertive Egyptian foreign policy.

This example is indicative. Although among the MB there is a powerful resistance to the increased reliance on the West in matters of security, there is also a growing conviction that enhanced financial relations between the West and the Arab states could be beneficial for the latter. It is clear, however, that this current is not dominant, as there is widespread suspicion regarding dependency in the economic realm as well. ■

The *Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood* and the Pakistani *Jamaat-e-Islami*: Parallel paths?

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Christina Prifti

Not only were their founders Hassan al-Banna, Sayyid Qutb and Abu al-Ala Mawdudi all born in the first decade of the 20th century and all well-learned in Islamic studies but also the socio-political circumstances in which the MB and Jamaat-e-Islami have been shaped are very much alike. Nonetheless, the current situation facing the two organizations is very different, whereas the role of the Deobandi movement in Pakistan is a factor that cannot be ignored.

Even though the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood (MB) was created in the late 1920's and the Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) in the early 1940's, they both grew as a response to the presence of European colonialism. For Hassan al-Banna it was crucial to promote the implementation of the traditional Islamic law, Sharia, in order to restore the faith of those Muslims corrupted by Western influence and turn the Islamic ethos into an opposition force that would manage to undo the injustices of the British imperial rule. Likewise, for Mawdudi British imperialism and Hindu nationalism had carried the Muslims away from the straight path of God and therefore the enforcement of Islamic law was placed above every other task.

The two movements also found themselves competing against rival ideologies, the ascent of nationalism in particular, which in many cases took the form of violent

conflict with existing national governments. After a short period of tolerance from Nasser's regime, the MB was violently suppressed in 1954 and reappeared in Egypt only after Nasser's death in the 70's. During that time, the members of the MB either kept underground networks in Egypt or found shelter to other Muslim countries, mainly to Saudi Arabia. In contrast, and this where an important difference between the two Islamic movements lies, Islamism in the Subcontinent developed ceaselessly from the 1930's up to the present day. In a period characterized by nationalistic fever, the Islamic identity remained strong vis a vis national identity and this why Mawdudi's party, as well as the ulemas, were able to confront successfully the measures taken by the Pakistani governments against them in the 60's. In contrast, the MB was not able to outdo the power of the Egyptian national identity, so vigorously promoted by Nasser.

Mawdudi was strongly in favour of the creation of an Islamic state in all of India. Nevertheless, with the partition of India and Pakistan in 1947 which also gave way to the split of Jammat-e-Islami into two groups, he had to set himself a new goal: the Islamization of Pakistan and the creation of a truly and thoroughly Islamic state. Mawdudi declared Islam a political movement aiming to penetrate all aspects of Muslim life. The five pillars of Islam were to him merely a vehicle through which to prepare Muslims for a greater duty: the Jihad.

Sayyid Qutb had also embraced the idea of an Islamic state, adopting an even more radical and revolutionary course of action. Nevertheless, Qutb and his successors would once again be forced to pursue their organizational activity under circumstances of illegality and of frequently violent confrontation with Nasser's regime. Mawdudi's party, on the other hand, succeeded in being a legitimate participant in the Pakistani political system for a significant period of time.

Nevertheless, the Jamaat-e-Islami would not gain the support of the masses, and therefore, its electoral successes would be mediocre. Its social base was mainly restricted to the lower and middle-class educated and not to the majority of the poor, among whom the use of the Urdu, which Mawdudi and his students used in their speeches and writings, was unpopular. The MB would gain both the support of professional classes, intellectuals, educated middle-class people and that of the lower classes. Furthermore, it is important to stress that both movements were and still are supported by Saudi-Wahhabi oil money, which finances the MB activities in Arab countries and has helped establish thousands of madrassas or Islamic schools in Pakistan. During this time, the MB and JI developed and maintained close brotherly relations, and established links with other Islamic movements and missions in different continents and countries. In 1952-55 Said Ramadan, a prominent MB figure and Hassan al-Banna's son-in-

law, was in Karachi to help the JI organize student branches to maximize its activism. In the '60s Ramadan visited the JI's Lahore headquarters to learn how to integrate MB revolutionary practices into mainstream national politics, like the JI.

However, the creation of an all-Islamic Pakistan - the main goal of JI - was rooted in a form of Islamic fundamentalism known as Deobandi. The Deobandi movement, drawing its name from the leading madrassa founded in 1867 in the town Deoband, north of Delhi, began as a reformist movement in India directed against British oppres-



sion. Overtime, the Deobandi movement coalesced in the idea of a Muslim state in Muslim-majority parts of British India and created a network of religious schools, the madrassas, which focused on promoting a literal and austere interpretation of Islam, related to Sufi Islam. Furthermore, the Deobandi penetrated in all Pakistani civil institutions, education and media (almost 40,000 madrassas are estimated to function in Pakistan). It is said that the Taliban movement has its beginnings in Pakistan's Deobandi madrassas and this is why over the years the latter has been synonymous with religious extremism and fanaticism in South Asia. Unlike the MB, the Deobandi has not only been anti-Western and anti-Zionist but is also opposed to Muslim reformism, whereas the MB has refrained from turning against any other Muslim, including the Shia.

The current military regime in Islamabad has so far treated the Deobandi, and more particularly the Deobandi madrassas, with considerable restraint. This is not surprising as the Pakistani military and the Pakistani intelligence services (ISI) have since 1979 repeatedly relied on Islamist forces, even the most radical among them, to boost their popular support and legitimacy. The fact that President Musharraf's promises regarding madrasa reforms in order to reduce extremism (register of all madrassas, measures to stop the use of madrassas for political and religious declarations and nationalization of religious schools) were never actually realized, highlights the government's reluctance to constrain the Deobandi movement. Furthermore, the Pakistani government has tolerated the flow of Saudi money for the construction of Deobandi madrassas, as it now is able to spend more money on defense and nearly nothing on education. In addition, the madrasa-trained jihadis constituted for the Pakistani army and the ISI a valuable help for their covert support to the Taliban in

Afghanistan and the war in Kashmir. After all, the Pakistani government leans on the madrassas to suppress the ethnic nationalism that could lead to the development of separatist aspirations by Pakistan's various nationalities.

Even though it is allowed to function normally only so long as the regime finds its behavior satisfactory and despite the fact that its leaders and activists are periodically arrested, the MB still maintains its prominent role in the Egyptian civil society, which is distinct most of the times from that of radical Islam. JI has pledged to use peaceful methods in the fulfilment of its goals; however it has not managed to always do so, as it has often found itself towards more radical directions.

Today Pakistan is on the brink of an internal crisis. The recent assassination of Benazir Bhutto indicates that Islamic fundamentalism has a strong say, or to be more accurate, a strong do in the Pakistani society. The alleged links between JI and al Qaeda and the boost of the Deobandi movement are raising serious concerns for the country's stability. It is doubtful whether the JI will manage to sustain its role as a moderate Islamic party in order to legitimately promote the interests of the Muslims, as in the cases of the MB in Egypt and Jordan or the PKS in Indonesia. After all in a country with a 97% Muslim population, what other options are there? ■

The Muslim Brotherhood in *Europe* Islamism in the *West*

**Alexandra Karaiskou
Madalena Papadopoulou
Jan-Hinrich Wagner**

Europe has served the Muslim Brotherhood for various purposes during the last decades - safe haven for refuge in times of persecution, resource of funding and recruiting and as the first line in its conflict with the 'West'.

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Since 9/11 and the subsequent terrorist attacks from Bali and Istanbul to London, the 'Western world' has become aware of the fact that many in the 'Muslim World' are after the destruction of the West and everything it stands for. The concept of Western modernity was and is being challenged. How can this form of religious fundamentalism, which in part is against the fundamental values of the 'West', be accommodated? Is fighting the West synonymous with defending Muslim religious values? We have to realize that both the 'West' and the 'Muslim World' are cultural constructions which do not exist as monolithic geographical/political blocks but are rather very much intertwined at all levels. Unfortunately it is the extremes from both sides that usually attract most media attention, often giving the erroneous but perhaps convenient impression that they represent the mainstream position in the West and the Muslim World.

The Muslim Brotherhood (MB), an Islamist organization which originated in the Middle East, maintains European connections dependent in varying degrees on the mother organization. The Muslim Brotherhood's presence in Europe can be traced back to the second half of the 20th century, when several of its members found refuge in the continent fleeing from Gamal Abdel Nasser's repressive regime. West Ger-



many received a number of eminent members of the organization, among which, Said Ramadan, Hassan al-Banna's personal secretary and son-in-law, and Yusuf al-Qaradawi, a prominent theologian and spiritual leader, both key figures in Islamic institutions and organizations. As in its cradle (Egypt and then Saudi Arabia), the organization infiltrated the Muslim communities of Europe, through a well-organized network of mosques, charities, schools, research centers and student organizations. Their services have been essential, especially in the case of underprivileged followers. Labelling

Europe Dar al-dawa ("Land of Preaching"), instead of Dar al-Kufr ("Land of Unbelief"), they emphasized the freedom of Muslims minorities to perform their religious duties peacefully.

The Muslim Brotherhood is thought to have a great influence on some of the Islamic organizations that spread out all over Europe, such as the "Islamic Society of Germany" (IGD) or the "Islamic Centre of Geneva", both founded by Said Ramadan. Large Islamic Organizations, such as the "Federation of Islamic Organizations in Europe" (FIOE) and the "Forum of European Muslim Youth and Student Organizations" (FEMYSO), are umbrella organizations, operating at a national level along with others in England, France, Italy, Sweden or even the Netherlands. They stand out and constitute Europe's main dialogue partner when it comes to Islamic issues.

The "European Council for Fatwa and Research", another umbrella organization founded by al-Qaradawi, is responsible for issuing fatwas, guidelines that help European Muslims lead their everyday lives. Al-Qaradawi is an influential figure, a driving force behind several other Islamic institutions, as for example the al-Taqwa bank. Referring to "Muslim ghettos", he preaches the implementation of the Sharia law on Muslims territories. Under the veil of a moderate rhetoric - in an effort to gain European governmental acceptance - his radical agenda is brewing. While he officially renounces terrorist attacks, such as those against the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon and those in Madrid and London, at the same time he anticipates the reign of Islam as a religion and a social constant throughout Europe. What is more, he does advocate suicide bombings against Israel and American troops in Iraq and aids in the funding of Hamas or other affiliated groups through the "101 Days Charity Coalition". This is another umbrella organization that includes Islamic charitable foundations and belongs to the "Union of God", established and commanded by Al-Qaradawi. Moreover, Italian intelligence suspects the al-Taqwa network of financing the MB's official magazine *Risalatul Ikhwan*. Al-Qaradawi not only belonged to the "Sharia Board" of al-Taqwa Bank but he was one of the bank's largest shareholders. Despite the fact that he

advocates against al-Qaeda terrorism, he is suspected to be part of a terrorism financing network.

For many Europeans, the terrorist attacks of 9/11 blurred the borderlines between Muslims and terrorists and deteriorated the relations between Islamists and the West. The Al-Taqwa bank was designated by the US State Department as a global terrorist organization connected to al-Qaeda and shortly afterwards, in November 2001, the US government froze its assets. Ghaleb Himmat, Ramadan's successor at IGD, along with Yussef Nada, another Brotherhood leader, banker, and associate in the foundation of al-Taqwa Bank, were proclaimed as terrorism financiers by the US Treasury Department, while the latter's assets were frozen by the Egyptian government in January 2007. Since November 1999, Qaradawi's entry to the United States had been forbidden.

Apart from the enmity and polarization between the 'Muslim world' and the 'West', it seems that at the same time there is a deep cleavage within Europe's Islamic movements themselves as well. Thus, there is segregation between the moderates and the radicals. The "Union of Islamic Organizations of France" (UIOF), which reportedly maintains bonds to the Muslim Brotherhood, responded to the riots that took place in 2005 in the degraded neighbourhoods of Paris cautiously. It issued a fatwa in which it repudiated the agitation and, according to the French intelligence service, the Islamists abstained from the riots. Thereby, the UIOF was viewed a reliable partner in the dialogue with the French authorities. The same applied in the case of the hijab issue. The UIOF's moderate stance deviated from the Muslim Brotherhood's expectations for a tougher attitude towards the prohibitive law. This stance was diametrically opposed to the organization's position during the 1989's turmoil, when, in its effort to attract the Muslim community, it was a proponent of the veil. In general, the UIOF is trying to disclaim any bonds to al-Qaradawi and maintain a conservative stance towards the Palestinian issue. Another moderate reaction was that of the "Federation of Islamic Organizations in Europe" towards the Danish cartoon affair. Though critical of the print, it called for cooperation between Muslim and non-Muslims populations.

On the other hand, the "Muslim Association of Britain" seems to be an ardent supporter of al-Qaradawi. In July 2004, he was welcomed by London's mayor, Ken Livingstone for the annual session of the "European Council for Fatwa and Research". Following the July 2005 bombings in London, a survey showed that, out of 1.6 million British Muslims, one in four "felt no loyalty to Britain", while one out of a hundred appeared to have a grudge against British society and its moral decay, and thus, to be prone to violent acts.

In conclusion, the Muslim Brotherhood's strategy in Europe is to introduce itself as a moderate organization and an official representative of the Muslim communities. Attempting to detach itself from terrorist actions, it seeks to gain political control through democratic institutions and become a reliable partner for European authorities. Whether this is the ultimate goal or a sign of 'flexibility', the Muslim Brotherhood does not pursue the assimilation of Muslim Diaspora communities in Europe but rather their integration, which provides the tools for maintaining their moral principles and religious liberty. ■

The Muslim Brotherhood in Africa: *An identity crisis*

Ioannis V. Mantzikos

Sudan is the only country in Sub-Saharan Africa where a group related to the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood has been officially founded. While in the rest of sub-Saharan Africa many Muslim intellectuals admire the teachings of Hassan al-Banna and Sayyid Qutb, Nigeria and Sudan are the only African countries where political Islam in its reformist version has been used as a powerful instrument for political and social mobilization.

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The Sudanese students' movement in Cairo founded its own branch of the Muslim Brotherhood in 1955. Ten years later, in 1964, the movement established a political organization called the Islamic Charter Front (ICF). However, the ICF was not a mass movement but an organization based on middle class professionals working mainly in universities and high schools. Thus, the ICF's prime goal was to get involved in campus politics that provided a launching pad for broader political action at the time.

The insistence of the Sudanese Brothers on their own unique identity can be explained by several factors. First, unlike their Egyptian counterparts, who began by preaching to the masses, the Sudanese Brothers were adept at Islamizing the society from the top down, in the mold of the Jammāt al-Islāmī in Pakistan. Furthermore, the Sudanese Brothers used the Islamic banking system to shape a devout lower middle class that would ally with the Islamist intellectuals and army officers that took power in the 1989 military coup. The issue of women's rights under Islam is central in the Sudanese Brothers' ideology. Indeed, Hassan al-Turabi has written a book entitled *The Place of Women in Islam*. Finally, there was widespread concern that a united front with the Egyptian Brotherhood would automatically exclude the anti-Egyptian Ansar, one of the Sudanese Brothers' most cherished allies.

Following the overthrow of Jaafar Nimeiri's military regime in 1985, the Muslim Brothers and their political offshoot, the ICF, reorganized into a broader political party, the National Islamic Front (NIF). Unlike the ICF, the NIF was a large and multifaceted coalition representing an alliance of diverse forces, ranging from tribal blocks, business groups and state employees within the Sudan.

Moreover, in the post 1989 period, Sudan has faced the internal power struggle between its most prominent

men: Sudanese President and Secretary General of the ruling National Congress Party (NCP), Omar al-Bashir, and Speaker of the Parliament (1999), Hassan al-Turabi. Turabi tried to undermine Bashir in order to influence the forthcoming elections and in 2001 established the Popular National Congress (PNC). Another fact with serious repercussions for the Islamic movement is the death of Mohammed Ahmed Taha, who was beheaded in 2006. Taha was a former NIF member, chief editor of the Sudanese daily *Al-Wifaq* and with close ties with the Muslim Brotherhood. Despite that, on a number of occasions he challenged the government's position on several issues. The spiritual emir of the Muslim Brotherhood Sheikh al-Qaradawi called this an "intellectual apostasy" and Taha was prosecuted for blasphemy and apostasy by the government.

The above situation demonstrates the confused nature of the contemporary Islamic trend within the Muslim Brotherhood. Modern Sudan has produced liberal Islamist thinkers such as Mahmoud Taha, who was executed for advocating rejection of the Sunnah of the Prophet and for standing up against Hassan al-Turabi. On the other hand, the traditional Muslim Brotherhood rejects critical evaluation, which shows that the liberalization and grassroots reform movements in Sudan and the region are regressing.

As far as Nigeria is concerned, despite the fact that secular Islam has gradually been transformed along strict Wahhabi lines, the Muslim Brotherhood has also had channels of influence. In the colonial era, support from the Sudanese and the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood led to the expansion of Koranic schools and wider use of the Arabic. More specifically, one of the most important Islamic organizations in Nigeria, the Jamaat Nasril al Islam (JNL), was founded by the Wahhabi admirer, Abubakar Gummi in 1962; however, Gummi established relationships with prominent Egyptian Islamist intellectuals.

Another organization with links to the Muslim Brotherhood was the Muslim Students Society founded in Lagos in 1964. The group split into factions, with the so called Umma wing being more firmly devoted to the

implementation of the Sharia and the establishment of an Islamic state. The Umma wing split again into a group called Hodayibya which favored an accommodation, at least temporary, with the secular state.

Moreover, numerous Islamist movements formed on the basis of the Izala movement of the traditional Sufi brotherhoods. The Ikhwan led by Ibrahim El Zak Zaky emerged in the late 80's and early 90's as a major player in Nigerian Islamism, proclaiming that: "there is no government, expect that of Islam". The Ikhwan has been heavily funded by Iran and radical sects of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood.

Significantly, the several military dictatorships that ruled Nigeria in the post independence period enforced the country's secular character. In 1999, when the first civilian government led by Olusegun Obasanjo took power, Islamists embarked on a campaign to transform social and political life; Alhaji Sani Yerima, governor of the Zamfara state proclaimed that his state would be governed by the Sharia. The announcement in fact, was made following solidarity visits from Saudi officials as well as Sudanese and Egyptian Muslim Brothers, while Yerima in 2001 undertook a marathon trip to Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the Sudan in order to gain access to informal Islamic banking networks. In general, the Sharia revival movement in the north has made advances because of substantial external support from sources in Sudan, Egypt and Libya.

In all, the Muslim Brotherhood's appeal in Sub-Saharan Africa, apart from Nigeria and Sudan, has remained on a rather theoretical level. This can be partly attributed to the domination of Sufi brotherhoods, such as the Tijaniyyah and Qadiriyyah in West Africa, and mainly to Saudi Arabia's policy. The brotherhoods spearheaded their movements and extended their networks throughout the colonial transportation infrastructure, the regional commercial and cultural networks in the post independent Africa. Riyadh's policy was to export the state faith and to spread the Wahhabi doctrine; therefore the Saudis used more effectively the oil revenues and the non-governmental organizations to achieve this goal. ■



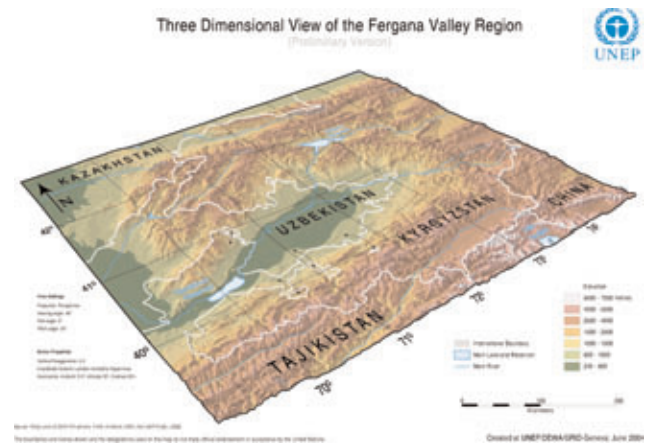
Islamic radicalism in Central Asia and Caucasus

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**Veatriki Aravani
Aimilia Nathanail
Rodoula Psylla**

Destabilisation in Central Asia in the early 1990's coupled with domestic political and social crises, has resulted in the current revival of Salafi-Jihadi Islamism in the wider Caucasus area. The traditionally prevalent Hanafi School is steadily giving ground to the radical trend of Wahhabism, which seems to have become the new basis of the Islamic social order.

The Ferghana Valley, a region divided among Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, has proved to be the most fertile ground for the spread of radical Islamic movements in Central Asia and the Caucasus. Over the years, the main movements have been divided into smaller groups whose identification and containment poses difficulties. In the aftermath of the USSR's collapse, Hizb ut-Tahrir (The Islamic Party of Liberation), the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), its derivatives (Islamic Movement of Central Asia, Islamic Jihad Group), and smaller groups like Akramiya and Tabligh Jamaat (TJ) became active in the region.



Islamic radicalism in the Ferghana Valley was expressed mainly by the Akramiya and Hizb ut-Tahrir groups. Despite their diverging methods, all have rallied around a common cause which is the creation of a caliphate ruled by the Shariah. In particular, IMU followers are considered to be seeking to create an Islamic base in south Kyrgyzstan as a springboard for jihad in Uzbekistan, in collaboration with Uyghur extremists and Al Qaeda.

The Hizb ut-Tahrir (HT) is perhaps the only organisation in the region that its roots can be traced within the Muslim Brotherhood's realm. Also known as the Islamic Party of Liberation, was founded in Saudi Arabia and Jordan in 1953 by Diaspora Palestinians, led by Sheikh Taqiuddin an-Nabhani Filastyni of the Sunni Shafi'i school of Islamic religious law. According to a Terrorism Focus report "the initial core of the party consisted of members of the Palestinian branch of the Muslim Brotherhood and after the death of Takiyeddin al-Nabahani al-Falastini in December of 1979, the amir (leader) of the party became Abd al-Qadim Zallum. He was born in 1925 in the Palestinian town of al-Halil and is currently residing in Jordan. It was under his initiative that the party extended its activities to the former Soviet Republics, and especially to the Muslim states of Central Asia." The party is relatively moderate, advocating a peaceful and educational Jihad and refraining from guerrilla tactics. The HT's core belief is that jihad will spread through preaching and dialogue -even though the ultimate goal is to topple Central Asian regimes. The movement has not been characterized as a terrorist organization by the US, but it is seen as a potential threat due to the possibility of establishing ties with other Central Asian terrorist groups.

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Beyond the Ferghana Valley, Islamic radicalism is also present throughout Tajikistan, in the southern parts of Kyrgyzstan as well as in nearby states. However, there are mainstream Islamic voices: the Islamic Revival Party of Tajikistan, also known as the Islamic Renaissance Party (IRPT), is legal, national and open to democratic change and it condemns Jihadi activities. With Azerbaijan being more susceptible to Western influence, radical political Islam's activity there is relatively limited.

Compared to the situation in Central Asia, Islamic radicalism across the Caucasus has increased in the past decade, mainly as a culminating effect of the conflict in Chechnya (1994-1996). Islamist movements in the northern parts of Caucasus have developed through networks, known by different names such as the Islamic International Peacekeeping Brigade and the Special Purpose Islamic Regiment. Supporters are mainly Chechen fighters as well as Arabs who adhere to the doctrine of Wahhabism, but the groups also mobilize militants from Ingushetia, Ossetia, Georgia, and Azerbaijan. Their operational activity focuses on fighting Russia with the aim of creating an independent Chechen state. Training camps are mostly located in south-eastern Chechnya, subsidised and operationally supported by Al-Qaeda affiliates and through financial connections with the Gulf region and Middle Eastern countries. This is a great cause of concern as those movements can appear suddenly, due to their undercover political and military action.

Islamic militant groups have been to a great extent trained by militants linked to Chechen guerrilla fighters, led by Shamil Basayev, as well as by the Arab leaders of the Chechen Jihad, Al-Khattab and Abu Al-

Walid. In particular, the propagation of radical Wahhabism is overt not only in north eastern Caucasus, Chechnya and Dagestan, but in the north-western Caucasus as well (the Kabardino-Balkaria area and Karachaevo-Cherkessia). The latter had been a cradle for moderate Wahhabis until 2005. However, the military suppression of Islamists, following the second Chechen war (1999-2000), combined with political and economic turmoil in the region, have helped reinforce Islamic fundamentalism in north-eastern Caucasus as well. Furthermore, South Caucasus, where ethnic and religious diversity is remarkable, is considered a Wahhabi-Jihadi region, especially in Azerbaijan's southern areas around Lenkoran and in parts of Georgia.

The moderates, meaning those who emphasize on the importance of Islamic education as the key means for the gradual re-Islamization of the region, are gathered mostly in Azerbaijan and South Caucasus. On the contrary, the radical Islamists or jihadists have embraced the introduction of Islamic rule modelled on the nineteenth century Imamate of Imam Shamil, the Avar religious and political leader of the anti-Russian struggle in the Caucasian war (1817-1864). Being in constant collision with local governments, some of them have been closely linked to the international Islamist centers in Pakistan, Afghanistan and Jordan. They are primarily funded by Islamic foundations based in the Gulf, receiving scholarships for young Muslims to study abroad and subsidies for the construction of mosques and madrasas.

Of special significance, however, is the conflict between Wahhabis and Sufis (tariqatists), a rather esoteric Islamic trend, in the area of Dagestan. While the former view jihad as an armed struggle, the latter interpret the jihad mainly in spiritual terms. This differentiation has political repercussions, as Sufis are openly accused by the radical Wahhabis for their support of the Mukhu Aliyev regime.

Last but not least, Dagestan has witnessed the merging of Islamism with terrorism represented in the activities of the jamaats Jennet (Paradise) and Shari, radical Islamist groups commonly found in South Caucasus area. The latter are trained for acts of subversion and ideological indoctrination, while one of their new tactics has been shahidism (suicide in the name of Islam), a quite alien practice to their culture and religious traditions. Supportive of armed resistance and guerrilla acts, they are reinforcing the already sturdy North Caucasian Wahhabi Islamic network.

However, the existing doctrinal controversy is not likely to lay the groundwork for a mass Islamic movement in Central Asia. Radical Salafism is still attached to strict religious textualism, in an area where secularism has already gone a long way in undermining religious norms. It remains to be seen whether radical movements can re-emerge and re-assert themselves; until then they will surely remain a disruptive force for Caucasian governments to deal with. ■

The Muslim Brotherhood and its legacy in North Africa

**Rodoula Psylla
Marina Tomara**

The states of the Maghreb have adopted various ways to cope with the Islamist movements which have developed in their territories, depending on the political structures and the general socio-economic conditions prevalent in each country. The local regimes' strategies to control the tide of Islamism which threatened their legitimacy have alternated from tolerance to repression.

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In North Africa, Islamic activism can be separated in two trends; the Salafiyya movement and the Society of Muslim Brothers (MB) and its derivatives. Much like the MB in Egypt, in the 1928-1940 period, the Islamic movements in the Maghreb countries, were preoccupied with educating the people and strengthening the Arabic language. On an ideological level, they shared the same strict religious convictions. They took part in the struggle for independence and they managed to cooperate with the nationalist movements. In contrast to the Egyptian MB, the Islamic movements in Algeria and Morocco were not confronting the nationalists during the post-colonial period and up to the 1980s.

Significantly, the MB in North Africa followed a path of moderation in the beginning of 1980s, at a time when a wave of Islamic activism had emerged. In that period, different Islamic trends had developed across Africa, among which the transformed Salafiyya which turned into a jihadist trend. The MB explicitly disassociated itself from that trend. Nonetheless, the regimes in North Africa had followed an ambivalent stance towards the Salafi current,

using it as a counterweight to the Brotherhood's political Islam.

At present, the MB both in Egypt and in the Maghreb preserves its moderate character. The MB supports Western constitutional and democratic ideas and renounces militant Islam manifested in the recent resurgence of violence in the region. Similarly, MB-inspired parties in Algeria and Morocco support the parliamentary institutions. The future of those Islamic movements depends on the success of their resistance to the regimes' attempts to manipulate and co-opt them. The connection of the region's parties to the Brotherhood varies between groups identified themselves as direct offshoots of it and others which merely maintain a vague ideological reference and a common political practice to the mother organization.

In the case of Algeria, the Islamists co-existed with the secularists until the 1980s, that is, for as long as the Islamic groups did not oppose the regime. The Islamic movement's first campaign to re-Islamize the society had emerged in 1963, a campaign in which persecuted mem-

bers of the Egyptian MB had been actively involved. Nonetheless, this trend was limited to the cultural and educational domain and did not pose a direct threat to the regime. Similarly to the Palestinian Muslim Brothers before the outbreak of Intifada, they were preoccupied with education and charities. It was only at the beginning of 1980's that Algerian Islamism began to actively oppose the regime. Subsequently, the emergence of the Algerian Islamic Movement came as a form of popular reaction to the worsening social conditions and depicted a renewed interest in Islam in Algeria. The Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), legalized in 1992, was partly influenced by the ideas of the Muslim Brotherhood, seeking to apply the Shari'a judicial system to contemporary social structures. The long bloody civil war (1992-1997) divided and radicalized the movement that remains illegal to this day, contrary to three other parties identified in part by their relationship to the MB.

A great number of armed organizations emerged throughout the 1990s, among which the Armed Islamic Group (GIA) which included Algerian veterans of the war in Afghanistan. The Salafi Group for Preaching and Combat (GSPC) which emanated from GIA dissidents, is still active in the region, claiming a formal alliance with Al-Qaeda. The new generation of radical Islamists that emerged in Maghreb is completely excluded from the society and appeared to be organized in separate independent groups, drifting into crime. These new Salafi groups have close ties with their counterparts in other Maghreb countries.

Regarding now the groups associated with the MB, the Movement for Society and Peace (MSP), known until 1997 as the Movement for an Islamic Society (HAMAS), is led by Aboudjerra Soltani, after its founder's, Sheikh Mahfoud Nahnan, death in 2003. Nahnan, the main representative of the MB in Algeria, was closely connected to the MB as early as the 1960s. The second is the Movement

for National Reform (MRN) founded in 1999 by Sheikh Abdallah Djaballah. This movement is affiliated with the MB political tradition, since it sprang from Ben Badis' Association of the ulama, although it has always refused its dependence on the MB. The last one is Nahda Movement (MN), led by Lahbib Adami, which has been significantly weakened after the May 2007 parliamentary elections.

All three parties share the same doctrine, that is, they accept the existence of an Algerian Nation as well as democracy. Concerning the enforcement of the Shari'a, they demand that state law becomes compatible with Islamic law in a way that protects Islamic principles. The recent elections have shown that these parties cannot form a real alternative to the regime of President Abdelaziz Bouteflika. While the MSP, due to its political decision to collaborate with the regime, is part of the coalition government, the MRN and the MN lost considerable support. In a climate of widespread political disaffection, these parties don't seem capable to represent the lower classes.

In Morocco, the first Islamic movement, founded by Abd al-Karim Muti and influenced by the MB, made its appearance in 1969. Its emergence caused the reaction of the government, followed by a split of the movement in 1977. The outcome of that split was the creation of al Jama'a al-Islamiyya and Ursat al-Jama'a. The first organization endorsed a less radical strategy in order to avoid regime's repression. This has resulted in a blending of moderate Islamist organizations and monarchist insiders. The coalition between those two elements was renamed to 'Justice and Development Party', in 1998. Even as a political party, it continues to be attached to the 'Moroccan Unification and Reform Movement' (MUR), which is a religious association. The PJD, which is considered to be the MB's political representative in the area, stands for the application of



Shari'a as a long-term project. After the Casablanca terrorist attacks by Moroccan Islamic fundamentalists in 2003, the ensuing criticism has obliged the party to adopt a more moderate profile. It is doubtful whether the Moroccan militants are related to Al-Qaeda. In contrast to the 2002 elections, when its parliamentary representation was reinforced, in the 2007 elections, the PJD did not perform as well as expected, although it was not co-opted by the regime.

The Tunisian constitution, in particular, bans political parties with a religious agenda. Despite the fact that there was a Tunisian Islamist movement in 1972 which transformed into Hizb al-Nahda in 1989, most of its members have been either imprisoned or exiled since the early 1990s, including its founder, Rashid al-Ghannushi. Contrary to the MB movements, it has stayed away from religious revisionism since it is still focused on political activism. As far as Libya is con-

cerned, political parties are considered illegal by the Qadhafi regime. Even the Brotherhood's ideology, transferred there by persecuted Egyptian members in the late 1940s, was restricted in the intellectuals' community. Therefore, the MB could only have a rather clandestine presence among Libyan citizens who lived in

the US and the UK.

In the post 9/11 period, radical Islamism in the region was reinforced, at a time when USA has inaugurated a policy of close relationship with local regimes based on the antiterrorism struggle and on the importance of great energy recourses at Algeria's and Libya's disposal. The new American policy may lead to a radicalization of regional politics, given that the population's ideas contrast with those of the authorities and that the regimes popularity are rather weakening due to the existing insufficiencies at the level of justice, social development and education. The continuation of western support to authoritarian regimes can trigger a new cycle of political Islam's opposition to the North African regimes and create pockets of support to the Islamic extremists. ■



The '*Realm of Islam*' re-emerging: The Muslim Brotherhood and Hizbullah

Evangelos Venetis*

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The Islamic world is currently going through a transitional period which can be very crucial for the future of Muslims. This brief analysis focuses on the Islamic point of view about modern developments in the Islamic world.

According to the Islamic doctrine, the world is divided into the Realm of Islam (dar al-Islam), where the believers reside, and the realm of War (dar al-Harb), where the non-Muslims/infidels live. These two parts of the world are in constant battle and they will remain so until the Realm of Islam prevails entirely over the Realm of War. A second aspect of the Islamic doctrine is that when the Realm of War violates the geographical and cultural barriers of the Realm of Islam, then this is a reason for jihad [= lit. 'striving (in the path of God)', war against the infidels].

So far this twofold division of the world and the rivalry between the two realms has characterized Islamic history. The colonial and post-colonial periods have been viewed by Muslims as periods of political, religious and cultural violation of the integrity of the Realm of Islam. The conflict between Western ruling elites and Muslim masses in each Islamic country has been going on for centuries. Islam as a political power has intrigued the imagination of the masses both in the Shiite and the Sunni worlds of Islam. The formation of the Muslim Brotherhood in 1949 and the active role of the Shiite clergy in Iran throughout the 20th century, especially in its second half, were the culmination of a long process of thought and literature by various Muslim scholars and thinkers, such as al-Afghani. The creation of Israel in 1948 was a key development for the emergence and expansion of Islamism at the expense of nationalism in the Islamic world.

Throughout this conflict between the Western powers - the forces of modernism - and Islam, the Sunni Islamists have failed to revolt against the secular elites who rule 85% of the world's Muslim population. Instead it has been the Shiites who succeeded in this endeavour. Western expansionism in the Middle East came to a halt by the Islamic Revolution in Iran in 1979. Since then the Islamic revival has been gradually growing in the Middle East.

A key remark concerning Islam and the forces of Islamism today is that they maintain the traditional division into Sunni and Shiite branches. This division has been always the case after the death of the Prophet of

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Islam (632 AD). In the past, there have been some rare examples of co-existence and brief periods of collaboration between the Sunnis and the Shiites. Yet, since 632 AD both aspects of Islam have had a competitive relationship. Throughout the 20th century Sunni Islamists have followed a different path from their Shiite co-religionists, albeit they share a common goal: the defeat of Western expansionism in the Middle East. The Sunni-Shiite rivalry has been a tool that the secular powers in Islamic countries have used to manipulate the Islamist movement.

In 1979, following the Islamic Revolution in Iran, Ayyatullah Khomeini stated that the Sunnis should also revolt against the pro-West elites and establish an Islamic state based on the Sunni tradition. According to Khomeini, Sunni and Shiite Muslims should unite against the common threat of dar al-Harb. His message was a direct threat for Western interests in the region. Khomeini's message and policy grew quite popular amongst the Sunni countries but faced major setbacks because of the Iraq-Iran war and the weakening of the military and economic capabilities of Iran.

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Yet the impetus of Khomeini's message and Shiite Islamism continued to resonate because of the establishment of Hizbullah and the Lebanese-Israeli conflict in south Lebanon (1982-2000). Throughout the '80s and the '90s the conflict in Lebanon escalated and resulted in the radicalization of the Palestinian resistance and the withdrawal of Israel from South Lebanon. Both of these developments had a strong impact on the Palestinian issue and this is a key for understanding the rapprochement between Sunni and Shiite Islamists today.

The Islamization of the formerly nationalist-secular Palestinian resistance in the last twenty years is mostly due to Shiite Islamism, originating from Iran and instrumentally being spread through Hizbullah to the Palestinians. Given that the Palestinian problem is at the heart of all international problems in the Islamic world, it is plausible that developments in the Sunni Palestinian Islamic Resistance have an essential impact on the Islamist movements of other Sunni countries, such as that of Jordan and Egypt. But the question is how it is possible that the Sunni world can be attracted by an Islamic movement of Shiite origin.

The various networks of the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan, Egypt and Palestine are in close contact and collaboration. Despite the fact that they have been marginalized in the political process in Jordan and Egypt, there is no doubt that the Muslim Brotherhood has remained socially influential in the past fifty years. The lack of free political expression, the constant political marginalisation of the Brotherhood by the government in the domestic political scene of each country and the lack of political initiatives on behalf of the various Arab governments regarding the unresolved problem of Palestine have increased the Brotherhood's popularity in recent years. The confirmed political vacuum in these countries results from the fact that there is no political freedom and an increasingly worsening financial situation.

In Palestine the Islamization of the Palestinian resistance began in the 1980s, following the Islamic Revolution in Iran and the formation of Hizbullah in Lebanon. The decline of the secular partisan formation of PLO and Fatah was a simultaneous development, resulting from the failure of this secular movement to materialise the dream of Palestinians for a free Palestine. In addition, the corruption amongst Fatah members who had been responsible for the financial administration of the Palestinian Authority's revenues boosted the image of Hamas and other Islamist organisations in the eyes of the Palestinian people. The role of a divinely protected movement acquired more influence than that of a national-secular movement.

Hamas has been the only successful, in operational terms, branch of the Sunni Muslim brotherhood since they've managed to win the hearts of the Palestinian society, achieve victory in the last elections and form a government. Interestingly enough they won the elections in a non-sovereign Sunni country. Hamas is significant for another reason: it is the first Sunni Islamic organisation to have established and preserved links with their fellow Shiite co-religionists in Lebanon. Probably this is a unique development in the last eight centuries of Islamic history and this development highlights a turning point for the Islamic world.

The establishment of close contacts and the collaboration between Hamas and Hizbullah lies on religious, social and political-military foundations. The link between the two parties is their common goal of establishing an independent state in Palestine and of diminishing the power of Israel. Their rapprochement initially took place at the Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon. Although there is no essential doctrinal difference between the Shiite and Sunni traditions, the formation of a Sunni-Shiite alliance directed against Israel has been a breakthrough, largely unexpected because of the strong differences on rituals and worldview that the two factions of Islam have. For instance the military influence of Hizbullah on Hamas is manifested in the policy of rocket attacks in the form of Katyousha or Qassam rockets from the Gaza strip to Israel.

Hamas was, and still is, heavily influenced by the initial aspirations of the Muslim Brotherhood. Yet Hamas leaders see that the Shiites so far have been the only victorious Islamist faction in their battle for political, Islamic and national sovereignty. Thus Hamas leaders have taken the groundbreaking step to establish an alliance, receiving at least spiritual and technological assistance by the Shiites of Lebanon in their battle for independence.

The leading role of Hamas as the only successful branch of the Muslim Brotherhood has had an impact on the branches of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and Jordan. Additionally, the outcome of the 2006 Lebanon war and the strengthening of the role and influence of Hizbullah have increased the popularity of the Shiites of Lebanon amongst the Sunnis all over the world. Thus, through the Hamas movement the rest of the Muslim Brotherhood seem to reconsider their view on their operational status. They are now open, certainly more open than they were back in 1979, to the prospect of forming an alliance with the Shiites of Hizbullah, or at least to considering the Shiite strategy and policy for the Palestinian issue and their attitude toward Israel.

These developments take place on the sidelines of Egypt's and Jordan's political scene. The Egyptian and Jordanian political elites see these developments with uneasiness and are trying to find ways to counter the increasing influence of the Muslim Brotherhood. Although the media in these countries are state-controlled and they tend to conceal the underground developments which are related to the Muslim Brotherhood, these developments do take place and the popularity of the Muslim Brotherhood will continue to grow as long as the Palestinian issue remains unresolved and the Palestinians do not have an independent state. No doubt we have entered a long process of Islamization concerning the Palestinian issue. This Islamization is of multidimensional character and it is certain that it does not, and will not, remain confined to Lebanon and Palestine. Besides, according to the Islamic perspective about geography and politics, there are no real frontiers that can really prevent divine order from being implemented. ■



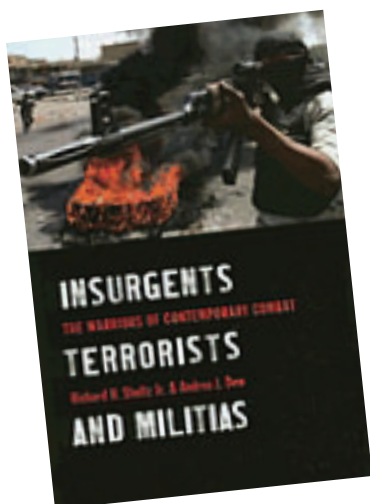
Shultz, Richard H., Dew, Andrea J.,

Insurgents, *Terrorists and Militias*

New York: Columbia University Press, 2006

Marina Eleftheriadou

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We are not done with war yet. World's pacifists can sit aside and think of new ways to uproot the social or political causes of conflict or wait for the next turning point in history to proclaim the end of war and be once again disappointed. In the meantime, as war remains relevant, Richard Shultz and Andrea Dew attempt to shed some light on the "something new, something old" nature of contemporary warfare that seems to puzzle many state officials and academics, even more so since a glaring example of it (Iraq) is bogging down the world's superpower.

The post-Cold War era saw the spread of irregular wars fought in an unconventional way in traditional societies. While this type of warfare is not at all new, the absence of conventional wars has brought it to the foreground. And this is where the problematic attitude that the West has developed towards war lies. While war is as relevant as always, the Western understanding of it as defined by the Clausewitzian trinity (people, government and army - the latter being a well-organized tool in the hands of the former) and Grotius' international law restrictions on "absolute war", is not.

The "Enemy" does not represent conventional armies and while the US army insists on assessing the opponent as a reversed image of itself by using methodologies such as "military capabilities analyses", it misses the point, leaving room for non-state actors (insurgents, terrorists, militias and criminal organizations) to defy even the best trained and equipped armies with more or less "primitive" means. As these irregular warriors wear no uniforms by which to be distinguished and have no tanks by which to be counted and no official military doctrines by which to be intercepted, Shultz and Dew suggest going back to the basics, understanding the otherness of oth-

ers. That is, remembering the dictum of the always relevant Sun Tzu "know your enemy" in order to decipher his modus operandi (when and how he will use his forces). In this case history, anthropology and cultural studies are essential in understanding where, why and how these "new" wars are waged. That is what the two authors attempt to determine by examining four case studies: Somalia, Chechnya, Afghanistan and Iraq.

Given that the book moves beyond international relations or classical military theory, the unit of analysis, unfettered by the bounds of state-centered theories, returns to pre-modern forms of social organization, the tribe and the clan, which were prematurely declared dead under the tide of modernity. The clan constitutes the principal unit which comprises people of actual or presumed common descent. Several clans form a tribe bound together by inter-tribe solidarity (*asabiyya* - quoted from the 14th century Arab historian Ibn Khaldun). The formation of bigger units as well as the cessation of inter-tribe hostilities is possible in the face of external threat or in cases when a new ideology or structure arises, causing tribal *asabiyya* to subside (this role was played by Islam in dynastic eras and by the centralized state in modern times).

The aforementioned concepts are central for the evaluation of the style of warfare which has developed in the four countries examined by Shultz and Dew. All of them are "failed states", lacking a legitimate central authority which either never took root or collapsed when fighting broke out. Thereby a strong clan identity was retained, a reality which became widely evident when foreign invasion occurred. In each of the four chapters devoted to these cases, Shultz and Dew first sketch out the historical and anthropological background of the societies involved in order to explain the particular context in which war took place and evaluate the emerging operational art by examining six factors: (i) the concept of

warfare, (ii) organization, command and control, (iii) areas of operations, (iv) types and targets of operations, (v) constraints and limitations on the use of force and (vi) the role of outside actors.

Somalia, which witnessed the first post-Cold War international intervention, constitutes a classical example of a traditional clan-based society that failed to establish a unifying central identity and effective institutions. Geography (forcing people to a nomadic way of life), clan lineage, social contract (inter-clan coexistence agreements) and Islam shaped the Somali society. The UN and US forces disregarded these factors, adopting misjudged policies that failed to grasp the Somali concept of warfare, still anchored to a warring tradition that not only wasn't swept by the forces of modernity but was accentuated by colonial and postcolonial experiences - especially the ruthless rule of Barre - which disintegrated the system of mediation-conciliation that used to limit inter-clan violence. Foreign forces were confronted with clan-based militias, fighting a guerrilla-style war under the leadership of charismatic and underestimated warlords such as Mohammed Farah Aidid. They proved successful in adapting traditional guerrilla tactics, suitable for deserts or jungles, to urban settings. Women and children, typically protected during fighting, were used as human shields, turning into "collateral casualties". It was apparent that the international law of warfare was not applicable. Moreover, during the war a then new and little appreciated phenomenon made its appearance. Al-Qaeda was indirectly involved in Somalia, creating a precedent that would be repeated regularly in the following years.

Chechnya's setting was similar. A decentralized society of relatively autonomous and self-sufficient villages and clans with a strong military tradition developed through centuries of resistance against Russian domination. When fighting erupted anew after the Chechens

decided to secede in the wake of the Soviet dissolution, the Russian forces which advanced on Grozny to bring Chechnya back into the arms of "mother Russia" underestimated the fighting skills of this mountainous people quickly mobilized under the banner of tribal cohesiveness, Islam and their hate of the Russians. The Russians witnessed small groups operating with the same ease both in mountains and cities, showing great ability for innovation and extending the span of their operations through terrorist attacks in the southern republics and the Russian heartland. Any norm of constraint was not applicable to outsiders and as Russia fiercely intensified its operations sweeping entire villages, the Chechens increasingly targeted women and children. In their struggle they were assisted by foreign funding and jihadist warriors who saw Chechnya as the next battleground after Afghanistan and Bosnia, bringing with them wahhabism and granting a more militant tone to the Sufi brand of Islam practiced in Chechnya.

These jihadists "reached manhood" in Afghanistan during the holy war against the Soviets. Afghanistan with its complex mosaic of ethnic groups, tribes and clans and a pronounced sense of autonomy fairly earned the name of the "graveyard of empires". Virtually every invading power, from Alexander the Great to the British, the Soviets and now the Americans, found out that invading Afghanistan is the easy part, holding it in the long-term (except for a few cities) is impossible. A clan-based system marked by a strong sense of individualism and independence and a long history of protracted and successful resistance against invaders, have formed the Afghan concept of warfare. The Soviets had to deal with a situation that differed largely from the conventional war they were prepared to wage against China or the US. Guerilla units popped up in every corner making even the highways a dangerous place for Russian troops, ambushed by Afghans who, under the unifying force of Islam, strug-

gled to disrupt communication and supply lines and erode the Soviet will to fight, taking advantage of a better knowledge of the terrain and of popular support for the resistance. Afghanistan turned into a magnet for anti-communist and Islamic forces. Funds, weaponry and Muslim fighters were funneled through Pakistan with the blessing of the US. This tactic, though successful in the short-term, was devastating in the long-term. Afghanistan, plunged into chaos after the Soviet withdrawal, was overtaken by the Taliban while the Afghan-Arabs who fought on its battlefields formed Al-Qaeda and vowed to continue the jihad, forcing the US to come back and try to clean the mess in the aftermath of 9/11.

While in Afghanistan the US appears to have learned from the mistakes of the past, opting for the inclusion of the Northern Alliance in "Operation Enduring Freedom" - though it is still faced with the challenge of stabilization -, in Iraq it has displayed the same old poor understanding of the enemy. As Shultz and Dew maintain, US intelligence hadn't even considered the possibility of an insurgency. However, given that the Iraqi societal organization bears similar tribal characteristics to those of Afghanistan (resistance to foreigners, central rule from Baghdad, a high appreciation for a Bedouin style of war) and that Saddam's regime had bolstered those elements during the Iran-Iraq war and especially during the sanctions period in order to boost his army and salvage his rule, the US should have taken them into account in the same way T.E Lawrence had done a century ago.

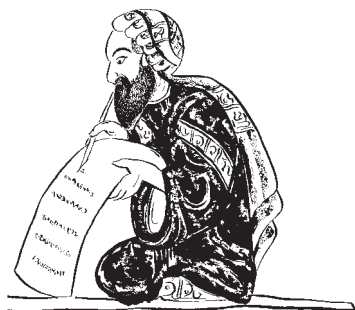
From the seven actors involved in the insurgency (Former Regime Elements, Sunni Arab Rejectionists, Radical Islamists, Financial Facilitators and Organized Crime, Shiite Extremists) the turn to violence for most of them was predictable and containable, if not preventable. The most striking example is that of the "Former Regime Elements". Joining the insurgency was the most

natural thing to do since they had nothing to lose and, though not preventable, they could have been contained if they had been denied access to the "Sunni Triangle".

The result of the US rampage through Iraq has been widespread chaos in both rural and urban areas, where the insurgents have developed new tactics (from traditional raids and ambushes to suicide bombings, kidnappings and beheadings), targeting civilians and combatants alike (Iraqis included) and turning Iraq into an ideal training ground for every wannabe guerrilla warrior. Perhaps the war in Iraq is already lost, but what Shultz and Dew mean to accomplish through this book is not so much to propose particular policies or tactics but to provide an insight into how those warriors think, organize and operate. As the authors argue, there are quite a few

lessons to be learned from the conflicts examined which could prove useful in the future. Sometimes, in the words of the American jurist Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr., "a page of history is worth a volume of logic". ■

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