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3. Re-Interpreting the *Umma*: Islamic Nationalism and Transnationalism

Introduction

Integral to the resurgence of Islam have been the growing significance of the *umma* (Islamic 'community') and the perceptions of a global Muslim community or nation. Reasons for these trans-national feelings and loyalties include changing patterns of communication and transportation associated with globalisation and the perceived movement towards supranational and subnational collectivities identified across nation-states.[1] Clearly, globalisation is central to understanding both the processes by which attachments to Islam globally are established today and the networks within which they are expressed. Through globalisation universal affiliations between Muslims and common loyalties are strengthened. Less attention has been placed upon how the *umma* has been adapted by militant Muslims to engender trans-national support. Similarly the reasons why Muslims have become attracted by this wider form of allegiance at the expense of localised ethnic and national identities require further exploration.

To this end it is important to examine the factors behind the growing popularity of a concept that crosscuts nation-state boundaries and the failure of secular institutions in Muslim societies and the West to embolden particularistic, localised attachments. Transnational and localised processes that have contributed to the significance of Islam within collective identities across the generic Islamic resurgence are explored. This is because militant Islam emerges from within the broader growth in religiosity

and shares commonalities with less radical interpretations. All the groups within militancy are, to varying degrees, aiming to implement an Islamic state within society governed by purified Islamic discourse with peoples' primary loyalty being to Allah. Yet the boundaries of the 'Islamic nation' and the processes through which it should be achieved are sources of considerable disagreement. Thus nationalist groups like Hamas, Kashmiri Jaish-e-Mohammed and Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) seek to achieve national independence and introduce localised Islamic governments. By comparison, groups associated with al-Qa'ida strive to attain fundamental global changes. Both national and transnational groups within militant Islam are explored here to attain a greater understanding of both collective identities that are part of their appeal and the processes that contribute towards their formation. Adopting McCrone's (1998) view that studies of nationalism (and by extension transnationalism) need, wherever possible, to bridge the structure/agency dichotomy, this chapter seeks to identify both relevant global and national events and processes and to analyse individual militant perceptions and group discourse. By using individual explanations and biographical accounts to supplement structural analysis, a more composite picture should emerge about the interaction between global and local processes and their impact upon collective identities. Finally, the significance of the fractures within militancy is explored and it is argued that despite al-Qa'ida's emphasis upon trans-nationalism, national loyalties remain that influence the behaviour and interests of members. A useful starting point is the sociology of nationalism which has, however, tended to neglect the significance of religion within nationalist movements.

The Sociology of Nationalism

The impact of the sociology of nationalism has tended to follow political developments and perceptions. During the discipline's early development, nationalism was rarely accorded significance. Among the founding fathers only Weber acknowledged the importance of a 'community of sentiment,' albeit viewed un-problematically. By comparison, Marx and Engels were dismissive of nationalism as a capitalist ideological tool. Indeed the persistence of national identity has continued to be problematic for Marxists, who have associated such particularistic allegiances with the development of industrial capitalism. Consequently these forms of collective loyalties would dissolve within broader processes of historical transformation. Durkheim was also opposed to nationalism for very different reasons. Perturbed by events in French society, he denounced it as 'an extreme and morbid form of patriotism.'[2] Social scientists did not become fully interested in the potentialities and consequences of nationalisms until the latter part of the twentieth century. It was not until the 1980s that the sociology of nationalism attained prominence through the debate about the nature of nations and nationalism and the extent to which these are products of modernity. The sub discipline was given further legitimacy following the end of the Cold War and the emergence of new forms of nationalism and nations, highlighted most dramatically by the break up of Yugoslavia, the emergence of Bosnian, Croatian and Serbian violence, ethnic genocide in Rwanda and ongoing conflict between Palestinians and Israel. And despite the emergence of supranational collectivities like the European Union, national identities remain prominent and the nation remains a primary source of allegiance.

Throughout this period, nationalism and nations have been widely viewed as a Western construct. Kedourie (1960: 9) exemplifies the Eurocentric approach, arguing that 'nationalism is a doctrine invented in Europe at the beginning of the nineteenth century,' although there are arguments that the concept emerged much earlier.[3] And as with much development, Western processes have been taken as the templates with which to compare other parts of the world. As Kohn (1944) noted, liberal nationalism was associated with democracy, civic rights and universalism and was considered to be typical of the West where the cultural nation was seen to coincide with the state's political territory. By comparison, illiberal nationalism was found in the East and was particularistic and ethnic, based in part around conflict over the state boundaries that did not accord with cultural perceptions.

Arguably, the focus upon secular political ideologies and movements, the ongoing prominence of the secularisation thesis within sociology and reluctance to apply concepts and theories across sub disciplines has contributed to the significance of religion being relatively neglected within studies of nationalism.[4] While both Anderson and Gellner acknowledge that religious symbolism and liturgy are retained, religion is portrayed as a traditional social resource that was believed to have been lost in the 'progressive' transition of societies. By comparison, nationalism is aligned with modernity. Yet extensive interrelationships exist between religion, ethnicity and nationalism, most notably within recent conflicts in the Palestinian territories, Sri Lanka, former Yugoslavia, Kashmir and the partition of India. Equally similarities between the forms of discourse are neglected. As Kinnvall (2002) and Rieffer (2003) point out, religion, like nationalism, provides a sense of security, universalism, unity, symbolism and explanatory discourse and is based on the notion of an imagined

community. Both often involve the construction of the 'other'. Turner (2001: 135), when analysing the rise of citizenship identities, observed that 'nationalism required negative images of outsiders, and as a result modern politics became a politics of friend or foe.' He points out that nation-building ideology usually assumed a religious character. Kedourie (1971) also explores the interrelationship between religion and nationalism, identifying nationalist leaders who aroused emotive support from the populace in part by associating their slogans, actions and symbolism with religious prophets like Jesus, Moses and Muhammed. Significant religious dates were adopted for national festivals. The intertwining of religions like Islam, Judaism, Sikhism and Hinduism within collective senses of identity, nation-states, national and international movements suggest that the exploration of nationalism needs to be more inclusive. Consequently while this chapter primarily aims to utilise the sociology of nationalism to enhance levels of understanding about militant Islam, it is also hoped to contribute to the extension of the subject matter incorporated within the sub discipline.

Origins of Nations

Within the sociology of nationalism, considerable attention has been placed upon the origins of nations and the central dichotomy between primordialist and modernist approaches. These different perspectives influence the definitions that are developed and applied for ideological concepts like nationalism, and associated terms like nation, that often refer to geographical boundaries that overlap with the state. For example, Anderson (2006: 6), who is viewed as a leading modernist, considers the nation to be 'an imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and

sovereign.' The numerical scale of the nation means, he suggests, that individuals can never personally know all other members and must imagine the wider community and social interconnections that attach them to the national entity. In this sense, individuals imagine themselves to be part of a wider entity, the nation. This connection is incorporated within a sense of identity, a personal characteristic that incorporates cultural and national identity and as such is the basis for allegiance within the nation.

For Anderson, nations are a modern construction. He traces the emergence of the nation, and by extension nationalism, to the formation of nation-states based upon secular rationality associated with the Enlightenment, the French Revolution and industrialisation. For this to happen, hierarchical dynasties and the 'divine right of kings' to rule as direct intermediaries and representatives of deities had to be challenged and ultimately rejected. However, the removal of rulers' infallibility, divinity and the usage of sacred texts and languages that gained the support and submission of the populace had to be replaced. And in a manner associated with Tönnies' (1887) *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*, a shift occurred that replaced communities based around blood and localised territory with associational ties between individuals; in the context of the nation, then larger swathes of territory could be added. In other words, if unity was to be developed and maintained within the national boundaries, a new form of consciousness had to be nurtured.

The development of Western societies and subsequently other nation-states[5] is associated with industrial modernisation and the associated processes of technological advancement, growth of commerce, urbanisation, rapid expansion of bureaucracy, the

division of labour and increased literacy. National consciousness was, Anderson (1991) argues, heavily influenced by the emergence of what he refers to as 'print capitalism' and which connected to the growing rates of literacy through expanded educational programmes. Developments in printing and transportation considerably improved the availability of information and destroyed the monopoly of the written word held by the *anciens regime*. Books, novels and newspapers were published and raised awareness about senses of time and space in which readers were located. Such forms of media also provided the mechanisms to challenge perceptions of divinity and fatalism through growing confidence in scientific discovery and methodology. And through the formation of a popular language, print capitalism was able to provide common narrative for the populace, helping to engender national consciousness which provided the basis for shared institutions and laws. Similar processes are identified in other parts of the world. Van der Veer (1994) examines the role of print, radio, television and film within nationalism in colonial and postcolonial India. However, instead of eroding the sacred languages and associated communities, as Anderson claimed, at least some of these languages were reinforced with Hindi and Urdu becoming increasingly significant for Hindus and Muslims respectively. Equally Arabic has grown in importance across the world through similar processes.

For the potentialities of print capitalism to be maximised, large numbers of the population would have to be capable of reading the new materials. This was achieved through the widespread introduction of schools, curricula and other forms of socialisation that emphasised components central to the 'diffusion of a state ideology of national identity' (Halliday 2000: 115). The development of an educated populace also had unintentional consequences. Gellner (1983) argues that most susceptible to

the lure of nationalism were the educated and relatively economically privileged who felt politically under represented. Rarely were the poor identified as its cornerstone. And as the following sections indicate, a range of Islamic nationalisms emerged in reaction to colonialism, across a broad spectrum of the population, both educated and unschooled. But in the following chapter it is argued that the tremendous increase in Islam within education has contributed to contemporary militant collective consciousness.

From these modern origins, people shared a sense of belonging that was solidified through the printed history of the nation; they were connected to this civic model of the nation through the past and in the present, even though much of the former was not factually correct. Halliday (2000: 7) suggests that,

> the pretense of both nationalism and religion is that they represent a true reading of a given, the past or the doctrine; the reality is that different groups, in power or out of it, in the region or in exile, constantly redefine and reselect to serve contemporary purposes.

History is important, as primordialists argue below, but Halliday (2000) asserted that there is no continuity with pre-modernity. Instead symbols and narratives from the past are selected, reformulated and fabricated. National consciousness therefore emerged as individuals imagined that they belonged within discrete parameters, shared with the living and dead. Adopting a teleological position, Anderson argues that nations can only be formed when humans have the ability and means for

construction and as these only existed within modernity, nationalism can only be a modern phenomenon.

Pre-modern roots

By comparison to the modernist approach, primordialists, which arose with the work of Shils (1957) and Geertz (1963), argue that although nations may appear to be a modern construction, they 'may have pre modern precursors and can form around recurrent ethnic antecedents' (Smith 1999: 11). Consequently the nation should not be reduced to modernity but instead can be traced to the pre modern era and the cultural realm. Smith, while critical of both approaches, has been associated with primordialists and certainly provides illuminating explorations of pre modernisation. However, he also recognises the importance of processes associated with modernity and provides a broader definition of a nation that reflects this. For Smith, a nation is (1991: 14) 'a named human population sharing an historic territory, common myths and historical memories, a mass public culture, a common economy and common legal rights and duties for all members'. Nationalism is 'an ideological movement for the attainment and maintenance of autonomy, unity, and identity on behalf of a population some of whose members deem it to constitute an actual or potential "nation"' (Smith 2003: 24). These definitions seek to incorporate the interplay between the past and present as well as Smith's belief that nations are historical products that orientate around shared descent and ancestry. He argues that 'no enduring world order can be created that ignores the ubiquitous yearnings of nations in search of roots in an ethnic past, and no study of nations and nationalism that completely ignores the past can bear fruit' (1986: 5). And while he acknowledges

that the languages used to describe nations may be products of modernity, this did not prevent ethnic communities with collective identities from forming, embedded within and transmitted across generations of, popular culture. Actions, beliefs and affective emotions are integral to understanding the long term processes rather than over-concentrating on the actions of the elite, an approach associated with the modernists. Certainly nations are imagined but must also be willed and felt. Imagination alone cannot explain, Smith (2003: 22) argues, the 'exercise of collective will and the arousal of mass emotion.' Within this perception, the 'ethnie', or ethnic community, is integral, providing a sense of solidarity that is connected to a shared culture that includes myths, traditions and historical memories and links with territory. For Smith, this highlights that collective consciousness and loyalties to larger units predate modernity.

Guibernau (2004) argues that Smith's account places inadequate attention upon the role of the nation-state and consequently is unable to explain nationalism in the twenty-first century. History, it is argued, cannot explain the present. What people or movements 'do in the present is dictated by present concerns, and the past is the source from which legitimation, justification and inspiring examples can all be drawn' (Halliday 2000: 38). Halliday (2000) is also critical of primordialists, and by extension, elements of Smith's work; namely while cultures and social allegiances existed prior to industrialisation, this does not mean they were nations as they are understood today. Smith is also criticised for overestimating the robustness of nationalism and placing insufficient attention upon the Enlightenment culture (Llobera 1994).

However, while Smith identifies the legacy of pre modernity in modern national consciousness he also acknowledges the contributions of processes engrained within modernity and identifies two methods through which nation-states formed. Within what he describes as 'the lateral route', aristocracies associated with West Europe and the newly formed centralised states incorporated the frequently disparate populace and regions through bureaucratic processes. By utilising the judiciary, military and administrative systems a composite community was formed based upon cultural traditions and ethnic norms and values that formed civic or state nationalism. As Hutchinson and Smith (1994) point out, this required an intermingling between the peoples and a subsequent broadening of cultural identity. Alternatively nations emerged as part of a challenge to the established foreign, namely colonial, rulers through a vertical route. Demotic ethnies who shared religious values and traditions were mobilised by educator-intellectuals and emphasis shifted from looking backwards and inwards to activist opposition demanding liberation. For Smith (1991: 64), intellectuals were able to politicise the ethnies through vernacular mobilisation that drew upon historical traditions and 'the poetic space and golden ages of the communal past' within ethnic nationalism. By emphasising components of history that individuals and groups shared, common support was mobilised in defence of a cultural legacy, national characteristics and associated territory. For many Muslim militants, the golden age of the communal past stems from the time of Muhammed and the formation of the umma.

Religious Nationalism

The concept of religious nationalism is defined as 'a community of religious people or the political movement of a group of people heavily influenced by religious beliefs who aspire to be politically self-determining' (Rieffer 2003: 225). Religious beliefs, ideas and symbols are integral to the movement and are often closely connected to attempts to enhance levels of religiosity within communities. Despite the widespread belief that nationalism had replaced religion, as the above examples indicate, religious influence and loyalties have continued to permeate throughout nations and indeed have become the most prominent form of collective identification. Conversely, secular nationalisms often reject many central religious tenets and practices. But, as Smith (2003: 17-8) comments, if examined beneath official discourse, the nation binds its members through selective ritual and symbolic practices and mythologies that stem from deeper cultural resources and sacred foundations that connect both to 'chosen' people and holy land through memories, sacrifices and memorials. Thus when seeking to explain the durability and strength of national identities, Smith (2003: 77) focused upon nations' collective beliefs and sentiments and their relationship with older beliefs, symbols and traditions associated with religions. Myths associated with religion have a 'capacity for mobilizing and motivating communities and states, and underpinning a sense of national identity through a sacred communion of the elect.' Using the example of Zionism, but which could also be applied to other religious nationalisms, Smith (2003) argues that the connection with the past and ethnic election is essential to understanding the mobilization of Jewish people and the aim to return to spiritual roots. And within nation-states,

religious cultural resources and sacred foundations have been entwined with contemporary ethnicity.

However the tendency to over-concentrate on Western processes and crude division between East and West has resulted in analysis frequently being over-generalised and important trends overlooked. Even Smith's exploration is restricted to European societies, although he does express the hope that a similar analysis can be adapted to other religious and cultural traditions, in particular within southern and Southeast Asia. In many parts of the world, religion remains embedded within the nation, religious activism is increasing and secularisation is less dominant than in many parts of the West. For example, Chatterjee (1993) examines the struggle for national independence in India and argues that the movement integrated religion within national identity. And van der Veer (1994) explores the programs instigated by the radical Hindu party, Shiv Sena, in 1993. Religious images were utilised that had recently been reinforced within popular Hindu culture, for example the widely popular television dramatisation of Hindu stories. In Poland, throughout communism, Catholicism was intertwined with national identity (Zawadzki (2005). Anderson (2006) acknowledges that religions like Islam and Buddhism cover large swathes of territory. But when applying the example of Islam he argues that different languages meant communication was impossible beyond ideographs to be located within the sacred classical Arabic texts, with the Qu'ran until recently untranslatable. This made the communities distinct from today's imagined communities because, Anderson (2006: 13) suggests, the linkage with sacred languages provided the older communities with greater 'confidence in the unique sacredness of their languages, and thus their ideas about admission to membership'. However, it is also important to

avoid over stressing the role of language which, in isolation, does not result in nationalism. Indeed, as Weber (1978: 395-6) pointed out, many nation-states have more than one language.

Although Smith concentrates on processes through which predominately western nation-states utilised religion, there are more explicit religious adaptations. Zawadzki (2005) observes that not only do nationalist movements appropriate religion, but religious movements have reconstructed nationalism. Juergensmeyer (1993) examines the processes through which 'religious nationalists' use the corruption and alienation associated with modern societies as factors to mobilise the 'return' of the community to righteous behaviour. Religion is also utilised by secular nationalist leaders to help solidify support, strengthen collective consciousness and legitimise behaviour, particularly during times of crisis. Contrary, therefore, to popular perceptions, religion was integral to the emergence of nationalism and remains influential individually, ethnically and within nation-state discourse, often providing a moral benchmark upon which current behaviour is measured by 'religious nationalists'.

It is also important to acknowledge that conflicts commonly associated with religion are not purely religious but also incorporate nationalist sentiments and intentions. In the 1979 Iranian Revolution and aftermath, Halliday (2000) identifies a range of sentiments that drew upon the concept of the nation and Persian traditions. In other countries like Egypt it is possible to note political leaders seeking to connect to Egyptian, Arab and Islamic loyalties according to the issue (Zubaida 1989). Halliday (2000: 45) also points out that religious transnationalism crosscuts and predates

nations and from which it is distinct. 'All three Middle Eastern monotheistic religions allow for arguments that deny the legitimacy of particular states, often on the grounds that the establishment of such a state does not meet the ethical or scriptural expectations which the religion lays down'.

The Rise and Fall of the 'Islamic Nation'

In a manner akin to other more 'orthodox' nationalists, religious groups also utilise the past. Smith (2003) points out that perceptions of the past are instrumental in people making sense of the present and the ways in which members were bound into communities sharing common history that revolves around memories of battles, poets, heroes and heroines. 'Golden Ages', when the community was powerful, prosperous and creative, contributing to culture, religion, moral purpose and knowledge, are drawn upon in the present. This belief in the glorious past underpins the sense of national identity held by many, encourages virtue, provides feelings of collective dignity, especially in periods of oppression or division, and often inspires emulation. The fact, as Dieckhoff (2005) remarks, that aspirations to restore lost cultural purity are largely illusionary with their origins rooted in myths and cultural cross breeding overlooked, should not detract from the social effectiveness of invoking the 'Golden Age'. By emphasising components of history that individuals and groups share, common support has been mobilised in defence of a cultural legacy, national characteristics and associated territory. This is clearly apparent in militant Muslims' emphasis upon the exploits of Muhammed and the time of the four *caliphs* when Islam was the dominant global discourse. During this period Muslims were believed to be pure, devout practitioners governed by righteous leaders through the *shari'ah*.

A Yemeni veteran of the Afghan conflict against the Soviet Union encapsulates these sentiments within religious nationalism,

> Afghanistan reminded Muslims of all colors and races that what unites us is much more important than the superficial differences wrought by colonialism, secular nationalism, and other material ideologies. We felt we were on the verge of re-enacting and reliving the Golden Age of our blessed ancestors.[6]

The golden age of the communal past stems, for most Muslims, from the time of Muhammed and the formation of the *umma*. Across denominational interpretations, the *umma* retains a significance that has arguably increased in importance. The perception of this community is highly contested and has led to the *umma* being considered by Khosrokhavar (2005: 61) to be an 'imagined community', because although 'Islamic *societies* exist in the real world… there is no such thing as *an* Islamic society. Crucially for militants, the *umma* is achieveable and indeed contactable. The leading ideologue, Sayyid Qutb (1906-66) for example, considered the *umma* to be,

> a collectivity of people whose entire lives – in their intellectual, social, existential, political, moral, and practical aspects – are based on Islamic ethics. Thus characterized, this *umma* ceases to exist if no part of the earth is governed according to the law of God any longer.[7]

Drawing upon the seventh and eighth centuries when Islamic control spread beyond the Middle East into North Africa and Spain, Qutb argued that the Islamic community could only be restored through the leadership of a vanguard of the *umma*. Throughout this period and beyond, the religion continued to spread and Islam became both politically and numerically dominant in many areas. Yet Lapidus (2002) suggests that by the eighth and ninth centuries, the *caliphate* was already evolving into a colonial and secular regime. In the new era, which Lapidus dates between 950 and 1200AD, Islam went from defining the political elite to expressing 'the communal identity of the masses of Middle Eastern people' (ibid.). Consequently the religious and ethnic characteristics of the region that are commonly associated with the emergence of the religion developed over 600 years and have continued to evolve. Since the emergence of the *umma* under Muhammed's leadership and the onset of the Muslim conquests, followers have belonged to a multitude of communal groups and loyalties. Their roots stem from family, tribal and ethnic ties, rural and urban societies and preceding civilizations, religions and paganism that were dominant prior to the emergence of Islam. In other words, like other forms of collective allegiances, 'Islamic identity' has always been heterogeneous, interwoven with local influences like ethnicity, culture, gender and socio-economics.

Islam within the Middle East, and the religion more generally, became influential in other parts of the world but again important vicissitudes can be noticed. The military conquest of the Indian subcontinent began in the eight century and Islamic regimes became dominant in the region by the end of the twelfth century. Sub-Saharan Africa encountered Islam through a range of trading and teaching networks and processes of

migration. The spread of Islam slowly permeated southwards. Muslim communities developed in parts of Somalia and Ethiopia from the ninth century and had become integral in parts of Sudanese towns by the twelfth century but did not become influential in the Ivory Coast and Guinea until the nineteenth century. After Southeast Asia first encountered Islam in the seventh century, the religion was not established until between the thirteenth and fifteen centuries in a similar manner to sub-Saharan Africa (Rubenstein 2002). People were often introduced to Islam through Sufis, commercial activities and the conversion of leaders for realpolitik purposes but not through military conquest. China provides an example of the introduction of Islam being both violent and peaceful (Braudel 1993, Esposito 1999). From the seventh century, the religion was encountered through the 'Silk Road' trade and militarily through Turkic and Arab invaders. In these different contexts Islam was localised. For example, the conversion of leaders and their maintenance of power resulted in the continuity of pre-Islamic values and practices in Southeast Asia. Similar processes can be noticed in the latter conversion of the Muslims of central Asia, where large-scale conversion among many groups like the Kazakhs did not occur until the eighteenth century (Lapidus 2002). In neighbouring Dagestan, however, Islam was introduced in the seventh century and had spread across the region by the sixteenth century (Roschin 2006).

The emergence of the majority of today's recognisable Muslim nation-states generally commenced throughout the first half of the twentieth century. Legitimation for the formation and continuation of separate defined Muslim territories for moderate Muslims, in particular, can be found in the break-up of the early Caliphate. Certainly today an examination of Islam and associated frontiers details a lack of a

generic transnational approach. Instead some countries like Turkey and Tunisia subordinate religion to state control; although the balance is slowly shifting, Malaysia, Indonesia and Mauritania promote what Lapidus (2002: 837) refers to as 'Islamo-nationalist identity' and Afghanistan, Iran, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Sudan have all declared themselves Islamic states over recent years. There is therefore a strong argument that connects identity formation with ideological dominance within communities and defined territories. A central component, a point echoed by both militants and to a lesser extent Western academics like van der Veer (1994), is that colonialism has been instrumental in the formation of modern nationalism in Muslim societies.

Impact of Colonialism

Today, nationalism is largely opposed and viewed by transnational militants as either a western imposition or the outcome of struggles for independence against colonialism. In some respects, there is historical evidence that supports this perspective. Habeck (2006: 101) reports on the view that nationalism was introduced to weaken the Muslim community by splitting it into racial and ethnic groups. Concepts like 'integration' and 'multiculturalism' 'are specifically designed to reduce a Muslim's attachment to the community and Islamic ideals, while convincing Muslims that other religions and cultures are the equal of Islam.' Yet at the same time, colonialists were promoting more moderate forms of Islam and collaborated with religious leaders who defended the regimes and even helped recruit military support.

European domination was frequently associated with conflict as local ethnic Muslim groups fought against the colonial invaders. For example, across East and West Africa, the Madhists in Nigeria, Tuaregs in Niger and Sufis in Mauritania and Somalia fought prolonged struggles. Ultimately however, foreign domination was generally enforced. In Turkestan, opposition to Russian control also included militant Muslims, most notably Muhammad al-Khailifa Kabir (1856-98) who led a short-lived campaign. The impact of the *jihad* spread to neighbouring regions until they were finally defeated. More substantive challenges were noticeable in the aftermath of the 1917 Russian Revolution when, during the fighting between Russian Reds and Whites, Muslims in Azerbaijan, the Caucasus and Kazakhstan sought independence. Finally in Indonesia, the first nationalist mass movement, Sarekat Islam, was formed in 1912 and quickly split under the pressures of internal conflicts. Two groups emerged out of the religious anti-colonial struggle, Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama, that were to remain influential long after independence had been attained (Cederroth 1996). During the 1920s, nationalist and Islamic groups developed political and cultural networks that cut across regional, ethnic and discursive differences to achieve a common challenge to the Dutch colonialists.

For transnational militants, the influence of the Indian born Sayyid Abul Al-Mawdudi within the challenge to British colonial control of India is embedded within perspectives of nationalism. Al-Mawdudi opposed the formation of the Pakistani nation-state, arguing that nationalism implied the sovereignty of the people. By comparison the true Islamic state was founded on the principle that sovereignty belongs to God. He therefore considered nationalism to be a process through which ignorance (*jahiliyya*) was instilled in the populace. Ayman al-Zawahiri[8], when

arguing that the establishment of a global caliphate was the duty of all Muslims, stated 'we do not recognize Sykes-Picot [the 1916 agreement that resulted in the division of the Middle East].' Kepel (2005) reports on the comments of the *Jama'at Islamiyya* member, Isam al-Din al'Aryan, who declared that nationalism in post-independent Egypt was simply a new form of westernisation. But as Pappé (2005) notes, nationalism is now an integral component of non western societies, *albeit increasingly interwoven with religion.* At the level of Muslim nation-states, Halliday (2000:130) explains that while they may be involved both in rhetorical threats to the West and individual acts or strategies, 'Muslim states are incapable of mounting a concerted challenge, let alone of redrawing boundaries.' Arguably, the strategic weakness of Muslim nation-states is fuelling trans-nationalism and asymmetrical conflict by other forces operating outside government control.

The militant critical dismissal of nationalism also overlooks the manner in which religion was intertwined within opposition to colonialism and provided a unifying discourse for otherwise disparate groups to enable popular mobilisation. The strengthening of national identities was often invigorated by the formal division by the colonisers of the indigenous populations into religious groups, like the Hindus and Muslims, and Buddhists and Hindus, in India and Sri Lanka respectively. For example, in response to British rule, Shah 'Abd al-Aziz declared a *fatwa* in 1803, demanding that Indian Muslims fight against the colonialists in Holy War.[9] In the Senegambian region of Africa, the *jihad* led by a Qu'ran teacher, Ma Ba (1809-67) sought to achieve independence while attacking indigenous enemies and perceived pagans and seeking to conquer other areas and peoples. 'Throughout West Africa Islam had come to be the almost universal language of political ambition and moral

reform… . In many cases Islam provided for the unification of heterogeneous peoples and the creation of states.'[10]

Rise of State Nationalism and Decline of Religious Influence

For modernists like Ernest Gellner (1978), nationalism strongly correlates with nation-states. It is the ideological cement that connects people to the nation-state and civil society and protects state culture. In this sense, Gellner has been criticised for his assumption that nationalism as a challenging discourse is over. Nations became embedded within West European territories and competition between them for influence and resources led to the pursuit of land to colonise a variety of ethnic groups, which were divided and controlled through the establishment of maps and boundaries. Post World War II, Anderson (2006) argues that the 'last wave' of nationalisms possess their own characteristics but these can only be understood in terms of the success of Western nations. While modernists have examined the impact of colonialism, Chatterjee (1993) suggests that Anderson in particular over-concentrated on processes within the West and failed to fully identify the role of colonialism. The imposition of foreign governments made a huge contribution to the emergence of nationalism within the colonial territories that sought independence. For example, Anderson (2006) dates the emergence of nationalism in Malaysia and Indonesia, when both were subjected to colonial rule, to be 1938 and 1928 respectively. In the latter example, Anderson explores the formation of nationalism across a large population that was fragmented across some 3,000 islands and numerous religious allegiances and ethno-linguistic diversity. The establishment of government schools, he suggests (ibid.: 121), and 'uniform textbooks, standardised

diplomas and teaching certificates, a strictly regulated gradation of age groups, classes and instructional materials, in themselves created a self-contained, coherent universe of experience.' Anderson tended to concentrate upon these policies as an extension of dynastic governments, a point he acknowledged in the 2006 edition of Imagined Communities. In this edition, he added that across Southeast Asia, accommodation was made with different religious affiliations that had 'served as the basis of very old, very stable imagined communities not in the least aligned with the secular state's authoritarian grid-map' (2006: 169). Why these religious imagined communities were not considered to be nations was not explained. Nor was the significance of universal processes in contributing to anti-imperialist movements fully explored.

The formation of Muslim nation-states is also contentious. Milton-Edwards (2005: 73) comments that in many instances,

> new nations and new peoples who were subject to statehood were declared with little evidence of consultation with the leaders of pre-existing religious and other communities in these areas. It was little wonder that the legitimacy of such states and their locally appointed leaders were called into question by the fundamentalists.

The majority of today's Muslim nation-states formed through independence in the first half of the twentieth century. Previous local elites, family, tribal or community membership had to be replaced. New allegiances were built 'upon a fusion of historical lineage, ethnic, linguistic, and Islamic symbols recast in linguistic-ethnic

and nationalist terms.' [11] Processes designed to achieve modernisation were embedded with slogans and symbols designed to appeal to a common collectivity. Gershoni and Jankowski (1987) detail the long standing attempts within Egypt to introduce a well developed pre-Islamic history that stressed distinction and separation. In Turkey, Atatürk initiated a similar scheme with a fictitious Turkic past which became a template for adaptation by many modernising Muslim governments. A process adopted across the Arab region. Iran also emphasised a pre-Islamic past that identified unique national characteristics. Arab nationalists reciprocated and a process evolved that contributed to wider cultural and political divides. In Egypt, nationalists failed to embed the Pharaohic past within twentieth century nationalism because there was a distinct lack of continuity across language, symbols and culture. Across Muslim societies, these attempts at 'imagined pasts' were only partially successful.

This can be partly attributed to the interrelated processes of secularisation and modernisation that have been adopted across Muslim societies and, as the following chapter details, have only been partially successful. Education has been central within attempts at modernisation and the strengthening of national consciousness across Muslim societies. In the following chapter, the impact of educational schemes is examined in more detail. It is important here to note that the role of schooling upon national consciousness is mixed, with education paradoxically instrumental both in the formation of secular and Islamo nationalism.

At a structural level, nationalism is present within Muslim cultural, political and economic institutions in a 'top-down' approach. But McCrone (1998: 40) suggests,

'the everyday affirmation of national identity is an active process, reinforced by the banal symbolism of national identity.' The successful transmission and acceptance of nationalism is therefore dependent upon people identifying with both the discourse and 'imagined' community. In turn it could be argued this identification feeds into broader social processes and the reproduction of historical memory. Within many Muslim societies, these processes have failed to overcome the imposed origins of the nation-states that did not connect to popular sentiments and attachments. And, national governments have failed to integrate their 'top down' approach within civil society, with many people disengaged or disillusioned with the failure of nationalist discourse to deliver promises. Equally, other broader social identifications like Arab nationalism have also been seriously undermined through association with failure, most notably defeat for a coalition of Arab nation-states in the 1967 war against Israel.

National and Transnational Identity

Despite considerable efforts to embed nationalist loyalties within territories, identities remain diverse. This is not unusual. McCrone (1998: 183) suggests that 'the power of nationalism in the modern world lies in its capacity to reconfigure personal identities and loyalties in a way more in tune with the social, cultural and political realities… .' But this is not to state that nationalism is inevitably the paramount form of identity. Instead McCrone acknowledges that nationalism may not have priority over multiple identities, other forms of social identity like socio-economic class or gender. Today, other economic, political and cultural forces have eroded the universalism of the nation-state for many. Interpretations of the nation, what it means, the boundaries and the selective use of history are, as Halliday (2000) points out,

contingent and ever changing. The internalisation of nationalism and level of accordance will therefore depend on the extent to which it accords with individual identity and other collective consciousnesses in rapidly transforming contexts. In this sense, national identity is not fixed and immutable but, like identity more generally, 'always in process' (McCrone 1998: 138). Again, the interaction between discourse and identity is an inherent feature of the internalisation of religious values generally and militancy in particular. Islamic movements are therefore subverting 'the principle of not only the nation-state, but also, possibly, of nationalism' as Dieckhoff and Jaffrelot (2005: 266) argue. Instead, Islamic militants are promoting a form of nationalism that challenges the dominance of western forms of nationalism.

Alongside geographical boundaries, the globalisation related transformation of media, communications, transportation and migration have contributed to new forms of identity that transcend national, racial, ethnic and socio-economic barriers. Factors identified by van der Veer (1994) in the mobilisation of religious nationalism among Hindus and Muslims in India, like religious travel, pilgrimage and migration, became accelerated through global processes. There has been a proliferation of transnational and global Muslim movements that include 'such diverse groups as publication and propaganda organizations, missionary (da'wa) societies, Sufi brotherhoods, banks, youth associations, emigrant communities with international ties and others (Lapidus 2002: 868). However, despite the greater interlocking between Muslims, and shared experiences, there is little evidence to support Lapidus' (ibid) claim that there is a 'universalistic identity.' This overlooks the tremendous variations within identity formations, beliefs and other cross cutting loyalties. Lapidus does acknowledge that there are other forms of loyalty that root people within particular communities. And

certainly there are some similar practices and beliefs, but the variations of implementation, behaviour and accommodation with political discourse result in religion varying from being a small component on which to base individual identity to an all-encompassing framework. Prior to the latest burst of globalisation, Milton-Edwards (2005: 29) observed that 'pre-fundamentalists' like al-Afghani, Abduh, Sayyid Khan and Rashid Rida responded to fears of foreign domination and the need for enhanced religiosity and utilised 'technological development in communications, travel and culture to get their message across to a wider audience.' In some respects, the 'pre-fundamentalists' provided an early template for later generations to adapt.

Militant Islamic Nationalism

Although ethnic identities remain important in localised conditions for groups like Kurds, Berbers and Chechens, Lapidus (2002) outlines how many people within other ethnicities like Indonesians, Malaysians, Bangladeshis, Turks and Algerians now place greater emphasis on religion as their primary source of collective identity. This process is being aided by encroaching religious influence within government relations, ranging from the introduction of the shari'ah in Mauritania and in several Nigerian federal states to the incorporation of Islamic parties within political processes across the Middle East, North and East Africa, South and South East Asia. For example, Sudan is divided according to geography, religion and ethnicity with Northern territories populated by Arabic speaking Muslims and the south controlled by non-Muslim Africans. Lapidus (2002: 781) suggests that in Africa it is only where substantial numbers of Muslims claim Arab descent that 'national identity is expressed in Islamic terms.' 'Despite their claim to be supranational, most Islamist

movements have been shaped by national particularities. Sooner or later they tend to express national interests, even under the pretext of Islamist ideology' (Roy 2004: 62). Similarly processes of rising Islamic nationalism are identified by Schwartz (2005 TM 21/10/5) who points out that extremists in the northern Muslim states of Nigeria want to install the shari'ah but as the form of government within a separatist state.

The struggle for national independence is noticeable in places like the Palestinian territories, Chechnya, Philippines, Thailand and Kashmir where large numbers of Sunni Muslims feel they are being suppressed. Militant groups operate in these identifiable boundaries like Palestinian Islamic Jihad, Hamas and Moro Islamic Liberation Front. All these groups have specific objectives orientated around the attainment of independence and/or an Islamic nation-state within a localised geographical region. Seesemann (2006) notes that Islamic groups, like these, are focused on internal social and political transformation; the global *umma* is subordinate within their priorities.

In other regions, religious nationalism has become noticeable in different circumstances. Unlike many post independent regimes that initially relegated the role of religion, the demise of the Soviet Union was accompanied by a noticeable rise in religious fervour across the Islamic spectrum, from moderation to militancy. The demand for an Islamic state within Kazakhstan, Tajikstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan has been noticeable from the point at which Soviet repression was lifted. For millions of Central Asians the demise of the Soviet Union provided them with greater freedom to develop and express different forms of collective identities and explore ethnic and internal and international religious associations that had been

suppressed following the communist revolution and the subsequent division of the territory into socialist republics (Rashid 2002). Islamic awareness was aided with the arrival of Islamic educators, advisors and funding for mosques and Qu'ranic translations. Religious nationalism therefore increased markedly in these regions and transnational fighters are known to have located to the region (Rashid 2002). Yet there is little evidence to suggest any significant contributions from central Asian Muslims outside the region.

Perceptions about, and the attempts to mobilise on behalf of, and defend, the *umma* therefore vary between and within groups. Transnationalists refer to religious obligations to defend Muslims across the world and to implement international change. Militants operating within national contexts will focus upon mobilising a localised *umma* while seeking to utilise the globalised neo-*umma* to attract wider support. Hamas' (1988) Covenant provides illuminating examples of a localised group that utilises the global *umma*. Reference is made to the Islamic world being on fire, fighters who 'have sacrificed their lives on the soil of Palestine,' to support from the 'vast Arab and Islamic world' with the liberation 'bound to three circles: the Palestinian circle, the Arab circle and the Islamic circle' and the duty of every Muslim wherever they maybe. The Islamic Resistance Movement (HAMAS) is described as 'a distinguished Palestinian movement whose allegiance is to Allah, and whose way of life is Islam. It strives to raise the banner of Allah over every inch of Palestine' which has been consecrated by Muslims 'till the Day of Judgement.' 'Nationalism, from the point of view of the Islamic Resistance Movement, is part of the religious creed. Nothing in nationalism is more significant or deeper than in the case when an enemy should tread Moslem land.'

Many other less well-publicised nationalist groups adopt similar tactics. For example, foreign intervention, mutual misgivings and mistrust between Hindus and Muslims in Kashmir have led to both groups increasingly considering the 'other' as a growing threat. The perceived lack of integration into the Indian nation-state has contributed to Kashmiri identity steadily becoming synonymous with Kashmiri Muslim identity (Blom 2007, Rao 1999). Inequality, repression and feelings of injustice have Islamised Muslim national identity while contributing to the Hinduisation of the Kashmiri conflict for Hindus. James and Özdamar (2005) point out with respect to Kashmir, and which can be applied to other nationalist conflicts, that the rise in Islamic identity causes tensions between different interpretations within communities and solidifies perceptions of difference between Kashmiri Muslims and Indian Hindus and in the process reinforces ethnic antagonisms. Similar, if more complicated yet condensed processes can be observed in the spiralling of violence between orthodox Serbs, Catholic Croats and Muslim Bosnians. Despite long standing historical grievances and ethnic disputes, the Tito government had been able to enforce security and some cohesion through federalism. However after the death of Tito in 1980 and rising economic and political insecurities, ethnic solidarities fractured and old disputes were inflamed by political nationalists. Religion became the most immediate method of identifying and ultimately attacking the 'other'. In turn attacks and threats of attack strengthened group loyalties around the social identity they held in common and which was ironically being used as the grounds for their 'otherness' (Iveković 2002, Milton-Edwards 2005). In other words this multiple reciprocal process quickly spiralled into greater religiosity and violence. For the Bosnian Muslims, this meant that their previously secular beliefs were replaced by

religion and Islam became more dominant during the conflict. However as Berger (1999) points out this did not mean that the conflict was inspired by religion. Instead religion became a source of identification and in some instances a source of justification for actions. The involvement of religion in the conflict is further complicated by the participation of transnational Muslims. For the wider militant movement, Bosnia became symbolic of Western inaction and indifference to Muslim deaths. However many foreign fighters were dismayed by what they considered to be the lax practice of the Bosnians. And following the creation of the Bosnian nation-state in the mid 1990s, Islam has gradually diminished in significance with politics dominated by secular parties.

A different example of the relationship between national and transnational militancy can be found within another underreported example of Islamic militancy in Libya where the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG) seeks to overthrow the Qadhafi regime. This is in order 'to save the Libyan Muslims from the oppression, tyranny and even more importantly, from the deviation of Qadhafi from true Islam'.[12] LIFG also attempts to mobilise support for the conflict amongst Muslims within Libya and across Muslim societies and incorporates theological influences from global figures like Qutb, Azzam, al-Shankiti and al-Uthaymin with local martyrs like Omar al-Mukhtar who was hanged by the Italians (Terdman 2005). But within Libyan militancy, there are also Muslims who advocate a duty to other *jihadis* and conflicts, witnessed by the discovery that some Libyan nationals had been arrested or killed fighting in Iraq.[13]

The break-up of the former Soviet Union has also contributed to the resurgence of Islam generally and greater integration between religion and nationalism. Mili (2005) and Wang (2003) argue that this impact has permeated outwards to neighbouring states and has influenced Muslim sentiments amongst the Uygurs who comprise more than seven million of the Xinjiang region of China's seventeen million population (Rubenstein 2002). Changes in neighbouring countries, involvement of some Uygurs in the fight against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan and the relaxation of transport restraints contributed to enhanced links with surrounding Muslims and greater religious awareness. Alongside these factors, long standing economic failure and corruption resulted in growing demands for Islamic political involvement, which have developed into demands for independence and the imposition of the shari'ah. The East Turkistan Islamic Movement has used terror tactics to try to achieve this. In the North Caucasus, after becoming riddled with ethnic divisions, the Pan-Caucasus movement failed to attain independence and the Confederation of the Peoples of the North Caucasus (KNK) became more explicitly Islamic, aiming to unite around religion and install an independent Islamic state in Chechnya. At the time one of the leaders, Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev, declared that 'all the Moslem countries should participate in the Chechen jihad, providing it with both military and humanitarian support'.[14] The participation of Arab mujahideen within the Chechen conflict indicates a transnational component. Until his death in 2002, the Saudi Emir Khattab sought an Islamic state in the North Caucasus. Islamic government in Chechnya was to be the first stage in the process of regional development. Consequently conflict in Chechnya was a means to a broader ends but as Tumelty (2006) points out, the focus remained regional with the American 'far enemy' not featuring in military or even rhetorical attacks. Following the succession to leadership of Abu Walid and then Abu

Hafs al-Urdani this changed and attacks against the United States were advocated. Yet the conflict in Chechnya also includes Chechen religious nationalists who may fight alongside the transnationalists for shared outcomes, blurring distinctions between groups. But many Chechens led by Shamil Basayev, are ultimately fighting for self-determination[15] and can be considered to be part of the evolution from nationalism to Islamic nationalism with roots in the nineteenth century struggles against Russia (Larzillière 2007), Milton-Edwards 2005, Thornton 2005). Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) provide a further localised example, aiming to impose an Islamic government initially in Indonesia before the formation of a unified Southeast Asian Islamic state that stretched from southern Thailand across the Malay Peninsula and the Indonesian archipelago and into the southern Philippines (Shuja 2005).

Religious nationalism can also be prominent where Islam is not the dominant religion or other religions are considered to be too influential and/or are responsible for moral denigration. In countries like the Philippines and Thailand, Muslims are a minority and undertake violent nationalist struggles against the Catholic and Buddhist majority respectively while also attacking the perceived decadence of local Muslims. These are, as Chalk (2002a) mentioned in respect to the Malay districts of Thailand, localised and nationalistic conflicts led largely by the Pattani United Liberation Organisation. In the Philippines, MILF fight for localised issues but have links with JI and a commitment to a global agenda including a religious obligation to assist other *jihadis* (Abuza 2003, 2006, Chalk 2002b). By comparison, another leading terror group, the Abu Sayyaf Group, is more militant than MILF advocating no co-existence with other religious groups who are considered to be the legitimate target of attack including the beheading of women and children. The group is considered to be closer

to the global transnational networks. Another Southeast Asian nation, Indonesia is the most populous Muslims country, with a greater aggregate population than the Arab Middle East, but faces tremendous pressures to maintain unity across a multi-ethnic nation that JI seeks to exploit. And in the Moluccas there is ethno-religious fighting between Christians and Muslims, supported by the militant Laskar Jihad (Houben 2003, Noorhaidi 2002). It should be stressed, as identified in Chapter One, that the national against trans-national chasm which is found within Sunni Islam is much less noticeable within the smaller *Shi'ite* denomination with its closer association between groups and nation-states.

Militant Islamic Trans-nationalism

Groups associated with al-Qa'ida have sought to establish themselves as the sole representative of true Islam, often viewing themselves as vanguards whose actions and example will inspire and awaken Muslims to challenge Western nation-states and overthrow national governments. By comparison with the nationalist militant Muslims, *Sunni* transnationalists outline religious obligations to defend Muslims across the world and to implement international change. Some groups have been associated with a range of attacks that have been undertaken towards this end, including *Sunnis* attacking *Shi'ites* who are deemed infidels in Pakistan and Iraq. Processes behind the emergence of these groups connect closely to the debate about trans-nationalism and interconnect with the experiences Muslims are encountering across the world. In some respects, these groups, like millions more moderate Muslims, appear to be what Appadurai (1996: 169) has described as 'postnational' and 'divorced from territorial states'. Recently within studies of nationalism, there

has been a growing emphasis placed upon transnationalism which Basch *et al* (1994: 7) argue, is the process 'by which immigrants forge and sustain multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement.' They undertake 'actions, make decisions, and develop subjectivities and identities embedded in networks of relationships that connect them simultaneously to two or more nation-states'.

Developing upon Anderson's 'print capitalism', Appadurai (1996) suggests that new forms of 'electronic capitalism' inherent within globalisation can have a similar, if not stronger, effect that enables the transmission of cultural features, values, symbols and meanings that extend beyond nation-states to transnationalism. Appardurai is not, however, arguing in support of McLuhan's 'global village.' Instead he suggests that the vernacular and domestication of globalisation at local levels results in hybridisation rather than homogeneity. These cross cutting loyalties, while a feature of diasporas, can also incorporate indigenous people. For many individuals though, this form of nationalism is not directly about the demand for self-determination. Nationalism often involves living in a stateless nation and is not therefore inevitably territorial. Clearly these relations have particular resonance within diasporas while conversely often contributing to a reformulation of defensive national identity within societies, e.g. the rise of the extreme right within Britain, France and Germany and its correlation with migration and perceived threats. Anderson (1998) describes the multi stranded relations and loyalties within diasporas as 'long distance nationalism' which is a consequence of evolving capitalism. Like other forms of nationalism, the long distance version is also formed and reformed in relation to the 'other'. But Anderson argues that rather than long distance contributing to a weakening of resolve,

space can contribute to greater radicalism because individuals in the West and their immediate family are freed from the fear of prison, torture, or death. The example of migrants highlights that the attachment to nation is not restricted to those living within territories, nor even specifically is it about land.

For Roy (2004: 38), processes of migration interact with other factors like the collapse of the Soviet Union, closer political and economic ties between Muslim nation-states and Western governments and associated processes of globalisation, to contribute to what he describes as 'deterritorialisation.' This happens when,

> religion and culture no longer have a relationship with territory or given society… It means that religion has to define itself solely in terms of religion: there is no longer any social authority or social pressure to conform… . It has to define itself in comparison with all 'other' – other religions, other values, other environments.

Solace for a minority within transnational communities feeling ill at ease, humiliated and stigmatised in societies where materialism dominates and is the benchmark of success, can be found within the neo-*umma*. And for Roy 'deterritorialisation' can be experienced without the individual leaving their own country. In these localised settings, westernisation and globalisation have challenged local values and are considered to threaten ethnic cultures and marginalise Islam.

Again this is not to stress a uniformity of experience or collective identity. The 'Muslim community' within Europe, North America and Australasia consists of a

multitude of values, beliefs, customs and languages. In other words, religion provides a unifier amongst neighbours, although even here practices and beliefs may be unidentifiable to neighbours. Migrants and Western-born Muslims often have little in common and certainly do not share a communal identity. These processes are noticeable among many migrants to the West and subsequent generations. In different countries Muslims share experiences of racism and forms of covert discrimination provide barriers to integration and strengthen existing social and cultural networks. The rise of Islamophobia has resulted in many Muslims uniting around that which leads to their exclusion, namely their religion, which becomes the basis for the formation of communal and status groups.

Despite Muslims being born in the West their loyalties are being questioned. Yet the overwhelming majority have not given any cause for nation-states to be concerned but government and societal reactions are contributing to processes of exclusion and the re-examination of identities. Marranci's (2006) research discovered that many Western-born Muslims, rather than feeling lost in-between the West and their familial country of origin, stressed their individuality allied to the *umma* which was considered to be shaped in a 'community of emotion' rather than Anderson's 'imagined community.' Within these perceptions Marranci discovered that Muslims were part of a spiritual community and people shared their experiences and emotions. Many rejected nationalist and ethnic divisions. He reports on Western-born Muslims' perceptions being heavily influenced by global media through which many attained Islamic education. Their perceptions of the *umma* differed from their parents with greater emphasis placed upon shared identity and humiliation. For example, a respondent from Paris suggested that 'Islam is one and we should behave as one

nation only' while another based in Italy commented 'when you see what Palestinians and other Muslims around the world are suffering, you feel as if your family has been attacked and your brother or sister killed… the *umma* is like… when you go to a concert of pop-music, you don't know anybody but feel part of the group' (ibid. p107). For in-migrants the *umma* is very much an 'imagined community' within which differences, including religious, nationalism and prejudice against other ethnic Muslim groups, can be observed. Emotions also play an important role in facilitating unity beyond the locality to the wider community. Khosrokhavar (2005) suggests that migrants share a sense of 'non-belonging'. In addition to problematic experiences in Western societies, migrants also share the sufferings of societies they have left, feelings strengthened by enhanced media coverage. For these people, he argues, the *umma* provides a sense of certainty and allegiance. In other words, many Muslims are refusing to compromise their beliefs in order to integrate with the incompatible perception of the Western nation and associated processes of Westernisation. They are experiencing either individually or collectively perceived western neo-imperialism and are reacting in defence of the Islamic nation and sense of honour that comes from addressing the shame that the allegiance is feeling. As the following discussion identifies, this is clearly apparent in the experiences of many migrant and Western born Muslims and is resulting in the 'near' and 'far' distinction being lost; Muslims in Britain are targeting their home country for attack, most notably in the London 2005 bombings.

The most obvious example of militant transnationalism that attracted fighters and supporters from all over Muslim societies and communities can be found in the war in Afghanistan against the Soviet Union during the 1980s. A fighter informed Gerges

(2006: 112) that the war 'internationalized and militarized the jihadist movement further'. Success against the Soviet Union gave confidence and legitimacy in the possibility of a global *umma* and the term became prominent within al-Qa'ida related pronouncements from an early stage. For example, in December 1994, bin Laden declared 'the banner of *jihad* is raised up high to restore to our *umma* its pride and honor, and in which the banner of God's unity is raised once again over every stolen Islamic land, from Palestine to al-Andalus and other Islamic lands that were lost because of the betrayals of rulers and the feebleness of Muslims.'[16] After attacks in Riyadh and Khobar, bin Laden expressed his admiration, declaring the perpetrators had 'removed the shame from the forehead of our *umma*'.[17] Denouncing the feebleness, degradation and corruption of the *umma* and the Crusaders' invasion of Muslim lands were to become regular features of public communications. In 1996, bin Laden draws attention to massacres considered to be occurring against Muslims around the world. Yet 'the greatest disaster to befall the Muslims since the death of the Prophet Muhammad—is the occupation of Saudi Arabia, which is the cornerstone of the Islamic world'.[18] Rectifying events in the 'Islamic' world generally and in Saudi Arabia specifically were early declared aims.

A useful indicator of the transnational nature of groups associated with al-Qa'ida lies in the wide ranging membership across geographical boundaries. Khosrokhavar (2005: 61) suggests that al-Qa'ida members 'belong to a variety of communities… are involved in a plurality of cultures without belonging to any one of them.' Hiro (2002) mentions that notebooks discovered after the fall of Kabul in 2001 identified al-Qa'ida associated representatives who originated from 26 different nationalities, while Bergen (2001) refers to 25 different ethnic nationalities involved in Afghan

training camps. Breadth is also noticeable in the range of conflicts that trans-national militants engaged in after 1989. Gerges (2005: 57) refers to *jihadis* defending co-religionists in 'Bosnia-Herzegovina, Chechnya, the Philippines, Kashmir, Eritrea, Somalia, Burma, Tajikstan and elsewhere.'

The geographical issues promoted by trans-national groups unsurprisingly differ from the specific geo political focus of Hamas, Hezbollah, and Kashmiri Jaish-e-Mohammad and Lashkar-e-Toiba. A brief study of statements by bin Laden shows that following the 2001 attacks, attempts were made to rationalise the actions and broaden the appeal of this strand of militancy. References were notable to 'the *umma* of 1200 million Muslims' that 'is being slaughtered, in Palestine, in Iraq, Somalia, Western Sudan, Kashmir, the Philippines, Bosnia, Chechnya, and Assam.'[19] Greater attention is placed upon the plight of the Palestinians yet ironically in light of the centrality of the Palestinian struggle to militancy today, during the 1990s the appeal of other conflicts led to a downgrading and relative neglect of the Palestinian-Israeli dispute. Even today bin Laden argues, the Palestinian cause must be subordinate to the global struggle. In response to a question that the spate of references to the Palestinians was relatively new, bin Laden replied that 'sometimes we find the right elements to push for one cause more than the other. Last year's blessed *intifada* helped us to push more for the Palestinian cause. This push helps the other cause'.[20] He then argues that there is no conflict between attacking America and the Palestinian cause. By comparison, Chechnya and other conflicts, while occasionally referenced, do not attract the same vocal or pragmatic support amongst militants. This may be due to the lack of familiarity of Muslims with the region, language, history and the lack of symbolism that Chechens and the territory holds within trans-national

identities. In other words, familiarity helps to strengthen international bonds and loyalties. As McGregor (2006) observes, the struggle in Iraq has mobilised international *jihadists* at the expense of Chechnya for cultural, linguistic and possibly climatic reasons.

Bin Laden sought to connect with Muslims everywhere through the use of the concept of the *umma*. He has stated, 'our concern is that our *umma* unites either under the Words of the Book of God or His Prophet, and that this nation should establish the righteous caliphate of our *umma*'.[21] However the *caliphate* as a concept had largely been dormant since 1924[22] and had not been popular in many regions prior to that time period because it imposed Turkish rule over Arabs. This leads Devji (2005) to suggest that the *umma's* primary role is in deterritorialized space with no centre or periphery. Later in 2003, the *umma* is explicitly described as a physical entity, with bin Laden hoping 'that God blesses our *umma* with a state that includes all Muslims under its authority'.[23] Such comments connect to Qutb's[24] belief that a 'Muslim's nationality is his religion'. Khosrokhavar (2005: 52) suggests that the modern discourse is addressed to individuals and not the community. 'It is addressed to creatures of flesh and blood, rather than to restricted groups of religious believers who have already been shaped by the religious tradition and who do not have to be convinced of Islam's legitimacy.' As Khosrokhavar (ibid.: 61) acknowledges when discussing Qutb's contributions, the emphasis upon individualism is considered in relation to community, a neo-*umma* is promoted that transcends national boundaries based upon beliefs rather than ethnicity, race or existing nation. In the place of existing geographical barriers 'a mythical Islamic community' is promoted.

By comparison, *Shi'ite* trans-national sentiments have been influenced by clergy rooted within a nation-state. For example, the Iranian leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini's (1900-1989) approach is instructive in reconciling divergent interests. After declaring that Islam has no frontiers, Khomeini then sought to utilise religion to legitimise the new regime within the Iranian boundaries. Reference to Islamic traditions and perceptions of ideological commonality were embedded within transnationalism and helped arouse broader support. Through existing religious links, the Iranian government were able to establish organisational networks in order to export their revolution. Hezbollah, the *Shi'ite* group in Lebanon supported by Iran, also seek to promote cross sectarian unity between *Sunni* and *Shi'ite*. This is noticeable in the emphasis placed upon the liberation of Jerusalem and Palestine, factors introduced earlier by Khomeini to try to mobilise, declaring that 'Israel is a cancerous goiter that occupies the liver of the *umma*: Palestine'.[25]

A Route from Islamic Nation-State to Transnational Islamic Nation

When seeking to understand the militants' expansion into trans-nationalism, al-Zayyat's account of Zawahiri's transformation from leading Egyptian militant into a central figure within the wider movement is illustrative. Initially Zawahiri considered the internal enemy to be the main source of confrontation, arguing 'fight those of the disbelievers who are close to you'.[26] In this, he and Islamic Jihad were not alone. Gerges (2005) examines *jihadis*' writings between the 1970s and early 1990s and found an overwhelming nationalist emphasis upon local affairs. Global issues and the Palestinian-Israeli conflict were neglected beyond the territories and Lebanon. Localised militants were vehemently opposed to American actions, Western values,

its perceived global dominance and neo colonialism. However they felt that this was happening because of the collusion and/or weakness of secular Muslim leaders. If the leaders could be overthrown then the relationship with the West would be transformed and societies would become Islamic. This is not to claim that there were no attacks against the West or its representatives. As Gerges details, Egyptian militants killed tourists and the Algerian GIA attacked targets in France. But these were not part of a concerted campaign, were connected to localised issues and caused tremendous consternation within the respective militant groups and supporters. Zawahiri's participation in the International Islamic Front for Jihad on the Jews and Crusaders in 1998 indicated a philosophical and pragmatic break in his approach. The attack shifted from the Egyptian government to the West, and in particular the United States and Israel. On reflection however it was apparent by late 1997 that Zawahiri was shifting focus, emphasised by the title of an article published at that time 'Muslim *Umma,* Unite in Your *Jihad* on America'.

A number of reasons have been provided for Zawahiri's transformation. These include the failure of violence to undermine the Egyptian government, widespread arrests and detention of members and supporters which had weakened the militants, financial shortages, internal divisions, state infiltration and closer relations with bin Laden which had originated in the war against the Soviet Union. Zawahiri explains in *Knights under the Prophet's Banner* that following the victory in Afghanistan against the Soviet Union, expectations were high that *jihadis* would be able to mobilise the 'masses' to overthrow corrupt government. However across Muslim nation-states like Algeria, Egypt, Indonesia and Saudi Arabia, governments remained firmly established and a fundamental shift in strategy was required, namely shifting

attention to the 'far enemy.' As the militant Kemal informed Gerges (2006) 114) 'Islamists overestimated their real strength and felt overconfident… . They miscalculated'. In other words, failure against one target led to a redirecting of attentions to a different enemy that had long been hated by militants and now became the principle focus of attack. By attacking the United States, Israel and the West generally, it was felt that co-religionists across the *umma* would rally to their support. Through the allegiance with bin Laden, al-Zayyat (2004) suggests that Zawahiri and Islamic Jihad members were able to attain sanctuary and new credibility while retaining the capability of attacking Egyptian targets. In other words a multitude of largely pragmatic factors resulted in the change in approach.

Nations within the 'Islamic Nation'

Today there is contradictory evidence about how extensive transnationalism actually is. For example, despite the strong association of Somalia and Sudan with al-Qa'ida, Seeseman (2006) argues that militants in these countries seek to deliver local and national agendas that seek to purify social relations and politicise religion. Few people become actively engaged in international terrorism. Hamas' strategic targets are localised, overwhelmingly associated with Israel and selected specifically for the purposes of national liberation. By comparison, trans-nationalists associated with al-Qa'ida are considered to be rootless, aiming to implement the *shari'ah* across Muslim communities but without a specific locality to fight (and die for in the case of Palestinian and Iranian 'martyrs') and a less clearly defined enemy.

Transnational militants argue against national territorial allegiance exemplified by al-Zarqawi's claim that 'I am global, no land is my country'.[27] The challenge to geographical boundaries is accompanied by religious trans-nationalism. As one *jihadist* told Gerges (2005: 63) 'we realized we were a nation [*umma*] that had a distinguished place among nations. Otherwise what would make me leave Saudi Arabia – and I am of Yemeni origin – to go and fight in Bosnia.' Yet even within the actions of the most prominent figures associated with al-Qa'ida, there are discrepancies. Bin Laden's roots in Saudi Arabia and the strong association of al-Qa'ida with other Saudi members, exemplified by fifteen of the nineteen September 2001 attackers originating from the kingdom, appear at odds with the trans-national approach. Similarly, although pronouncements associated with al-Qa'ida cover a range of issues in different locations, the Saudi regime attracts a disproportionate amount of attention.[28] As Gerges (2006) remarked, many of those located in the Afghan camps on behalf of al-Qa'ida had already internalised nationalist sentiments. These resulted in suspicion and resentment about the numerical dominance of Egyptians[29] within the inner circle and led to bin Laden broadening the leadership's geographical representation. Steinberg (2005) comments on the approach that trans-national groups like Zarqawi's former network in Iraq must adopt to incorporate actions that appeal to potential multi-national members. Recruitment is easier if the group includes targeted regimes in potential members' home countries. Zarqawi himself was a good example of this, retaining an active interest in Jordanian affairs and seemingly heavily involved in the 2005 suicide bombings in Amman. Roy (2004: 62) encapsulates the tensions within militancy generally, and al-Qa'ida in particular when stating, 'despite their claim to be supranational, most Islamist

movements have been shaped by national particularities. Sooner or later they tend to express national interests, even under the pretext of Islamist ideology.'

Trans/national Allegiance and Sacrifice

A central question raised by Anderson relates to the extent of the attachment that people felt for the imagined communities that meant they would be willing to die for it. For Anderson, this is the outcome of the perceptions of the purity and inherent goodness that people feel for the nation. In other words, they possess a strong conviction in the virtue of the nation and would sacrifice themselves for the wider entity. In this sense, Anderson (2006) compares this faith akin to religious imaginings, although he failed subsequently to develop these similarities, as Smith (2003) points out. For Smith, individual and collective sacrifice is essential to understanding nationalist mobilisation. Sacrifices for the nation become part of common memory, remembered and celebrated, but Smith suggests this is not unique to modernity. Throughout history people have died for broader communities, with their actions immortalised. In regions that were not nations according to contemporary definitions, holy places became the destination for pilgrimages like the Wailing Wall for Jews and Mecca for Muslims, fostering solidarity and cultural consciousness. Defeat and sacrifice is particularly emotive for believers and is widely commemorated on particular dates and at certain locations. The crucifixion of Jesus, fall of Jerusalem, and battle of Karbala where Hussein, the prophet's grandson, was killed, continue to resonate throughout religious sentiments and reinforce loyalties. Clearly nationalism not only relies on sacrifice but also on the use of violence on its behalf. Hassner (2005) notes that nation-states have sought to

monopolise violence and implemented processes designed at internal pacification. People are therefore only encouraged to commit acts of violence on behalf of the nation, frequently through inter-state war. And as McCrone (1998) notes, warfare between 1870 and the First World War was instrumental in the formation of national consciousness within Europe. For militant Muslims, Islam 'legitimises sacred death in the service of the community or umma by making it part of the fabric of a war that enjoys religious legitimacy, namely *jihad*' (Khosrokhavar 2005: 52). A recent notable example of this link between sacrifice and religious nationalism can be found in the Iran-Iraq war (1980-88). At the commencement of the conflict, Khomeini utilised religious discourse and the significance of sacrifice within Shi'ism stemming from the martyrdom of Husain**,** in a massive mobilisation of the population to defend the Iranian nation. This is exemplified in Khomeini's claim that 'the more people die for our cause, the stronger we become.' Reuter (2004: 34) describes the sounds of the 'human waves' of the Iranian army, shouting 'Ya Karbala! Ya Hussein! Ya Khomeini!' as they walked towards machine guns and death. The willingness, even desire, of the largely youthful recruits to die in the cause of Iran had a huge symbolic significance both within the country and the opposing Iraqi army. Similar attitudes on a much smaller scale were also noticeable within the protests against the Shah before the revolution, when unarmed demonstrators would confront armed military personnel resulting in the 'martyrdom' of many.

Conclusion

Despite the obvious disagreements within the sociology of nationalism, there is a general consensus that nationalism emphasises similarity, and by implication,

difference. Islamic nationalism and/or transnationalism discourse provides a sense of identity around an 'imagined community' for supporters that places emphasis upon shared similarity with others. These loyalties are very much products of their time, associated with processes of modernisation, state-formation and globalisation that have contributed to closer allegiances within and across geographical regions. However, as Smith would point out, these relationships are built upon religious values, symbols, perceptions of historical events and interplay between the past and present which help provide the legitimacy for religious nationalism today. Within nationalist struggles, contested territories frequently share religious perceptions of sacred space. The collective loyalties that are prominent today within militant Islam are partly a consequence of recent developments within societies, international relations and processes of globalisation. But they are also the outcome of long term processes that can be traced to the heroes, sacrifices and purity of the 'Golden Age' and the immemorial qualities of the 'nation' that in turn provide the 'maps' for the road to national destiny and "moralities"'.[30]

Today, the struggle over strategy remains deeply divisive within the militant movement culminating, Gerges (2005) argues, in a civil war within *jihadism* between transnationalists and religious nationalists who have considerable numerical supremacy. For the former, the failure of the latter proved the need for broadening the attack. But for the latter, the actions of the former were self-defeating, proving detrimental to militancy generally and frequently localised struggles specifically. Certainly the conflict is noticeable within oral and written communications, with components of both strategies vehemently denouncing the other through speeches, websites, books, journals and pamphlets. Groups like Al-Jama'a have been vitriolic

in their statements about the transnationalists' misinterpretations and distortions of Islamic texts. Gerges' (2005: 229) study of *jihadis* led him to conclude that 'there is a general realignment within the jihadist current against, not in favour of, Al Qaeda and global jihad.' Equally, groups associated with al-Qa'ida are bitterly critical of the nationalist focus and in particular alliances with 'near' enemies. For example, Al-Zawahiri has strongly denounced Hamas signing the Mecca agreement, an act which he suggests shows a 'loss of leadership' and the fact that the group has 'sunk in the swamp of surrender,' joining 'Sadat's [procession] of humiliation and capitulation...' and of 'abandoning not only the [Islamic] land but, more importantly, shari'a law – and all for the sake of securing a place in the Palestinian government' (MEMRI 2007).

Considerable disagreement within the militant movement about what constitutes the essence of nation and nationalism raises issues about where Islamic government/s should control and which groups and symbols are legitimate targets towards achieving those ends. A range of Islamic sources is utilised to try to support opposing viewpoints. The picture is further blurred by the range of actions that are undertaken that support both national and trans-national objectives and, conversely, the extent of sectarian attacks between Muslim groups. By implication, emphasis upon similarities as the basis for collective solidarity excludes the different 'other,' people, groups and 'nations' that do not possess the requisite characteristics. This process is also accompanied by explicit denunciation of the 'other', whether Jews, Christians, Hindus, people from the West or even moderate Muslims and other denominations. Yet this behaviour is consistent with nations and competitive nationalism and shares similarities with the earlier involvement of Islam in struggles against colonial control.

The territorial demands of Muslim groups seeking independence are easier to understand according to Western precepts. Religion and nationalism are integral to struggles against 'others' in the pursuit of freedom and territory. Groups associated with al-Qa'ida are more difficult. They need to be considered as part of a trans-national movement that aims to utilise the *umma* concept and unite Muslims around the world in their struggle against the West and localised associates. Militant transnationalism has been formed through broader processes of global communications and improved and more comprehensive education systems, often sponsored by secular nation-states. These have contributed to Muslims being more cognizant about Islam and militant interpretations and national and global events that these perceptions draw upon. Exposure to the concept of the *umma*, and supra national communities within the West and Muslim societies, provide a framework for behaviour and help to provide security and sense of purpose and collective identity that contributes towards greater empathy for Muslims in (other) troubled parts of the world. In these circumstances where local nation-states are seen to be failing, secular nationalism is not firmly embedded and international systems appear overwhelmingly oppositional, many people are attracted by transnational militant Islam and the idea of a super-state and associated collective identities. Ultimately this transnational conflict is driven by a desire to replace Western military, political and cultural influences in Muslim territories with Islamic tenets based upon a synthesis of contemporary and historical discourse, images and symbols. The discussion connects into an 'imagined community' and is inspired by the 'Golden Age' of Muhammed and the early caliphs. In a number of ways, this trans-nationalism is similar to more 'conventional' forms of nationalism and the greater application of theories and concepts from the study of nationalism may help to further enhance levels of

understanding about the phenomenon. The interrelationships between secular and religious, national and transnational processes are further explored in the following chapter through the adaptation of Max Weber's concept of social closure.

Footnotes

[1] For further details see for example, Hobsbawn (1990) and Horsman and Marshall (1994).

[2] Durkheim is quoted in McCrone (1998: 18).

[3] There are some who argue it emerged with the formation of nations in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries (for example Dieckhoff and Jaffrelot 2005, Greenfeld (1992) while Gellner suggested the eighteenth.

[4] Important exceptions include Chatterjee (1993), Jaffrelot (2002), Juergensmeyer (1993), Kinnvall (2002), Rieffer (2003), Smith (2003) and Van der Veer (1994).

[5] For example, Halliday (2000) examines the development of the nation and national identity in the Middle East.

[6] Cited in Gerges (2006: 111).

[7] Cited in Kepel (2005: 43).

[8] Al-Zawahiri is reported in Ulph, (2006: 4).

[9] Al-Aziz is reported in Lapidus (2002).

[10] Ibid. p.427.

[11] Ibid. p.819.

[12] Quoted in Terdman (2005: 6).

[13] Point raised by Pargeter (2006 TM 30/11/6).

[14] Quoted in McGregor (2006: 3).

[15] For example, a declaration made by a Chechen group holding hostages in a Moscow cinema in 2002, stated 'Every nation has the right to self-determination, but Russia has taken that way from the Chechen people and today we want to take back that right granted to us — and to all other nations —

by Allah the Most Gracious, the right to freedom and self-determination.' (quoted in Larzillière 2007: 100).

[16] Bin Laden is cited in Lawrence (2005:14).

[17] Ibid. p. 74.

[18] Ibid. p.25.

[19] Ibid. p153..

[20] Cited in Devji (2005: 69).

[21] Cited in Lawrence (2005: 121).

[22] In 1924, Kemal Atatürk, leader of the recently formed Turkish Republic, constitutionally abolished the institution of the *Caliphate*.

[23] Cited in Lawrence (2005: 202).

[24] Cited in Faksh (1997: 10). Ironically Qutb is most closely associated with the nation-state of Egypt.

[25] Cited in Hamzeh (2004: 40).

[26] Cited in Al-Zayyat, (2004: 63).

[27] Cited in Brisard (2005: 153).

[28] Bin Laden has tried to embed the attention upon Saudi Arabia within the wider struggle, arguing 'this (Saudi) conflict is partly a local conflict but in other respects it is conflict between world heresy and with it today's apostates —under the leadership of America on the one hand, and on the other, the Islamic nation with brigades of the mujahideen in its vanguard' (quoted in Fradkin 2005: 6-7).

[29] In some respects this could be considered to be a further extension of the role that Egyptians have played within international Islamic movements. For example, in the 1950s, many members of the Muslim Brotherhood were denied opportunities in Egypt because of their religious beliefs and gained employment in other Muslim societies and communities, especially in the Gulf states.

[30] Smith (2003: 217).