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## Nationalism in the Muslim World: A Curse or Blessing?

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### Abstract

The paper aims to highlight some drawbacks in the approach of a section of Muslims leaders, scholars, and masses towards the idea of nationalism. They view it as a Western concept implanted in the Muslim world as a conspiracy to divide and subjugate them as well as to undermine Islamic teachings. The paper elucidates the existence of the socio-economic conditions and political situation in the Muslim world that offered apt milieu to the growth of nationalism. Rise of nationalism has not been exclusively responsible for fragmentation of Ottoman Empire. Instead, the religious elements in the Arab world and oppressive rule and suppressive measures of the Turk rulers also contributed to the process. Fairly, nationalism served as a driving force against the imperial rule and helped gain Muslims emancipation from the West. The study also illuminates the difference between territorial and Muslim nationalisms and that how Islam replaced the secularism. The study is qualitative and employs historical and content analysis methods to collect and scrutinise the data.

**Keywords:** Nationalism, Islamic System, Caliphate, Ottoman Empire, Arabs, Turks

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### 1. Introduction

Nationalism is occasionally condemned by the Muslim scholars and religious leaders on the ground that: it is a western idea that was exported to or sowed in the Muslim world; it is based on secularism that undermines religious teachings particularly Islamic injunctions of universal brotherhood; it undercuts unity among the Muslims; it is tool used by the Western nations to divide and rule and ultimately to subjugate the Muslims (Khan & Rehman, 2018). A section of Muslim scholars, religious leaders and general masses view it a conspiracy against the Muslim world. This perspective, is, however, biased and it neglects some key factors, i.e., the existence of domestic socio-economic, cultural and political conditions conducive to the growth of nationalism, role of religious elements in the revolt against and ultimately disintegration of the Ottoman Empire. Moreover, it is ignored that the nationalism along with other Western concepts such as democracy, equality, right of self-determination and fundamental human rights etc., has played a significant role in bringing down the Western colonialism and helped the colonised people to seek emancipation from the western imperialists. This paper aims to elucidate these aspects as well as explicate various facets of the nationalism in the Muslim World. Furthermore, it aims to help understand the context of difference between the territorial and Muslim nationalism.

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## 2. Literature Review

Ahmed (1996) pronounced that nationalism contradicts Islamic injunctions and it deprived the Muslim world of its glorious past. He contends that nationalism in the Muslim world ascended neither naturally nor in reaction to any sorts of sufferings encountered by the people or resentment felt by them. Instead, European powers after their failure to destroy the Ottoman caliphate, deliberately implanted nationalism in the minds of the Muslims in a planned scheme. Antonius (1938) articulated that the notion of Arab nation was “dormant” for centuries before Christian (Protestant) missionaries and Western educators created institutions such as voluntary associations and the American University of Beirut that played a definite role in the renewal of Arabic as a national language and “awakening” of people. National identity grew stronger among the Arabic speaking people of Ottoman Empire in nineteenth century and it became a well-developed revolutionary movement by the First World War. Kayali (1997) gives a detailed account of Arab politics in the Ottoman Empire since the early nineteenth century. He highlights the Arab concerns, demands and political efforts to achieve their goals as well as the policies of the Ottoman government that ultimately led to Arab revolt. Dawisha (2003) argues that religious or Islamic identity was more significant than national identity in the Arab world and the Arab Revolt against Turks was initially announced in the name of Islam, not in the name of Arab nationalism. Arab nationalism gradually became a political movement after the war and it was championed by intellectuals, not by politicians.

Khan (1964) argues that nationalism is a western concept that was exported to the Muslim world as part of conspiracy to divide the Islamic community. He maintains that nationalism also contradicts idea of Islamic universalism that negates all kinds of differences and discrimination based on caste, creed, colour, race, and geographical factors. Tibi (1997) attributes rise of nationalism and consequent emergence of nation-states as an outcome of domestic socio-political factors in the Ottoman Empire and internationalization of international system. Rosenthal (1965) argues that Muslims imported nationalism as an ideology from the West and it brought both benefits and injuries to the Islamic world. Nationalism also contributed to national awakening and independence of several countries particularly in North Africa. Naazer (2018, December) argues that Islam does not negate existence of nations or prohibits nationalism. Islam does not recognize castes, creeds, races, or colour of the people as a matter of distinction or superiority over others. At the same time, it also does not negate their existence. Rather it recognizes them as symbols of identity of the people. As such nationalism that does not preach hate against others, seeks love, unity and brotherhood among co-members and makes people loyal to their land has no conflict with Islam. Thus, states can be created based on ethnicity or territorial nationalism.

Roy (2003) asserts that there is a conflict between Islamism and nationalism. Islamic ideology is internationalist but the growth of the Islamic movements in nation-states has shaped the latter to be nationalist or nationalized. These movements have contributed to consolidate their respective nation-states and they seem more like secular nationalists, as opposed to militant Islamic organizations who have detached themselves from linking with any state. Zubaida (2004) noted that there existed three kinds of nationalism in the contemporary world: 1) Pan-Arab nationalism; Islamic nationalism, and 3) the nation-state or country nationalism. The first of them breathes only for rhetoric and sentiments and as a “political project it is long dead.” Islamic nationalism also subsists as “sets of sentiments and rhetoric” mainly asserted to seek religious solidarity against the West or Israel. Territorial (national states) or country nationalism is “the only concrete political reality.” The colonial powers had drawn borders of

many of the Muslim states “in the sand” but the nations established in them have now “taken root, as a nation and state.” Both the state and people living in these states are jealous to guard their national borders.

### **3. Methods and Material**

The research is qualitative that employs historical and descriptive methods. It relies on secondary sources mainly books and articles related to the topic. The available literature either in printed or electronic form such as books and research articles by Muslim and Western scholars on the subject has been used to augment the arguments. There has been a conscious effort to provide a counter-narrative to the conventional or orthodox Muslim thoughts prevalent among religious leaders, ulema, and adherents of extremist and militant organizations that totally reject nationalism and challenge the authority of nation-states in the Muslim world. The content analysis method has been used to interpret and analyse the data. The paper has been divided into five sections, the first being introduction. After a brief review of the literature in the second section and presentation of the method and material used in the third section, the fourth section carries a detailed appraisal of the subject under discussion. The fifth section bears the conclusion.

### **4. Discussion and Findings**

The existing literature on the subject generally attributes rise of nationalism and ultimately disintegration and abandonment of Ottoman caliphate to the alleged Western conspiracies aimed at undermining the power of Muslims in the world. The role of foreign powers in the entire process is undeniable. However, existence of domestic factors conducive to the growth of foreign influence and ideas including rise of nationalism does not found adequate attention by the scholars. It is the main point of discussion in this section. It also surveys the role played by the religious elements in the revolt against the Ottoman Empire. Domestic socio-economic settings and political condition of the Ottoman Empire provided prospects for growth of nationalism as well as centrifugal forces. An interesting aspect of the rule of the Ottomans is depicted by the Tibi (1997, pp. 76-81), which is a glimpse of the socio-economic conditions of the state they formed, and which ultimately led to the revolt against them. The warrior Ottomans, who were also agriculturalists, showed no interest in “using and developing the productive forces indigenous to the areas they conquered.” The Muslim population was largely taken in the army while the non-Muslim minority was left out to do trade and commerce along with European traders in the Ottoman Empire. He describes the structure of the Ottoman Empire in the following words:

“In general, the Ottoman Empire was a feudal state organised along the lines of military bureaucracy. The state was the sole feudal proprietor, owning all the land and leasing it in the form of fiefs to sipahis (knights) on whom the Ottoman army was originally based. In return, the sipahis had to supply feudal troops for the military undertakings of the Empire. ... The Turkish upper classes – the leaders of the army, the military bureaucracy and the ‘ulama’ – tended to reproduce themselves through ground-rents and eventually by forcible expropriation. ... The Ottomans fief-holders were not autonomous rulers, but only functioned in the exploitation of the peasantry as representatives of the authority of the state. ... The landowner [who was residing in cities and towns,

made no attempt to assist peasants who were under the huge burden of taxes and debts]. ... was only concerned with squeezing as much as possible out of them” (Tibi, 1997).

The state income was dependent on the new conquests and when the process was stopped in Europe because of “bourgeois revolutions,” the Ottoman Empire was left with no option but to recourse to the taxes from the masses. Nonetheless, it proved to be counterproductive and stimulated the disintegration of society instead of stability (Tibi, 1997, p. 78). These factors created discontent and ultimately sowed the seeds of revolt in parts of the country including the Arab world that later played key role in disintegration of the Ottoman Empire. Such condition also helped give rise to Arab nationalism. It is undeniable fact the nationalism in modern sense is a western idea, which was exported to the Arab world to use it against the Ottoman Empire. But such exported ideas and “foreign influences can only take effect when conditions for their reception and subsequent transformation exist.” The roots of Arab nationalism can be traced back to early nineteenth century when it developed under the influence of Europe in the Ottoman Empire.

In fact, the Arab world, in socio-economic and cultural terms, became stagnant under the Ottoman Empire and Egypt, which was reduced to a province, was particularly pillaged by the Ottomans and Mamelukes as a result of their constant hostilities and continued fighting therein. It was the turning point in the history of Arabs when Napoleon landed in Egypt in 1798. He declared to not only “abolish the corrupt rule of the Mamelukes and Ottomans but also to revive Islam.” Though his aim was to block Britain’s naval route to India, but he skilfully used ideas from Islamic theology and sowed the seeds of secularism and French liberalism in the heart of the Islamic world (Tibi, 1997, pp. 75-88). Thus, Aziz noted, it was Napoleon who “kindled” the nationalistic feelings” among Arabs and thus gave the “first important impetus to Arab awakening” after centuries of Turk rule (Aziz, 2009, p. 59). It was the beginning of the absorption of ideas of French revolution and principles of liberty and equality by the Muslims population. There emerged the first signs of national movement in the Middle East which was supported by the western educated Arab intellectuals with the intention to get rid of “foreign rule” (Tibi, 1997, pp. 75-88). Though several domestic factors including political, socio-cultural, and economic conditions, caused rise of nationalism in Ottoman Empire but the military feebleness was more significant than others. The Ottomans gradually become weaker militarily, suffering many defeats in the hands of Europeans.

In the eighteenth century, the Ottomans or the “protectors of the faith” were forced to concede its territories and subjugate resident Muslim population to Russian control in exchange of recognition of former’s “spiritual authority” on them. The Ottoman-Russian Treaty of Kucuk Kaynarca signed in 1774, is the best example of such trade off. Likewise, the treaties of Carlowitz (1699) and Passrowitz (1718) were to represent formal recognition and expression of Ottomans defeats (Landau, 1990, pp. 10-11). Such weaknesses urged the Turk rulers to undergo reforms in the traditional military organizations and training. This led Turks to send students and army officers for education and training purposes to Europe. The western educated intellectuals and army officers were, in fact, the foremost and the most influential carrier of western ideas and main forces behind reform movements in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. These reform movements were actually the nationalist movements. Tibi noted that the “Paralleling Christian Arabs, Muslim Arab officer of the Ottoman Army with Western training, were establishing the first secret societies and organizations, so marking the politicization of early Arab cultural nationalism” (1997, p. 16). They also formed the ranks of Young Turks who

brought revolution in 1909 as well as the Kemalists who dissolved Ottoman Empire in 1924 (Tibi, 1997, p. 106).

#### **4.1. Arab Nationalism: Genesis, Forms and Manifestations**

Arab nationalism is generally understood in ethnic and secular terms and its other facets are mainly ignored. It is worth mentioned that nationalism took many forms and manifestations in the Arab world. Hence, the Arab nationalist movement can be explained in the religious, cultural, and political terms. Long before the emergence of modern nationalism in the Arab World inspired by the western ideas, the religious movement to return to puritan Islam, led by Muhammad bin Abd al-Wahab (1703-1791) was regarded as “potentially Arab nationalist aspirations directed against Ottomans and alien rule.” The Movement was aimed to bring an end to deviations in Islam and to “lead Muslims back to true orthodoxy.” He termed the Ottoman sultans as modernists – deviators, who had no links with the community. Therefore, opposition to the Ottoman Caliph was declared a legitimate act. For him, the Ottomans were not the “rightful representatives of Islam and the Caliphate.” Though he did not challenge the despotic rule of the Ottomans, but he opposed the corruption and decadence in which they have been involved.

Al-Wahab was of the view that only the Arabs could bring Islam back to its original pristine purity and he wanted to mobilise the Muslims to achieve this goal. To him, the true Islam was that of the era of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W), and that only the Arabs were the bearers of the true Islamic traditions. Based on these lines, he could challenge the authority as well as legitimacy of the Ottoman Caliphs. Having these ideas incorporated in it, the Wahabi movement continued to grow after his death and his followers were able to bring substantial parts of the Arabian Peninsula (presently Saudi Arabia) under their control (Tibi, 1997, pp. 88-90). Sharif Hussain of Makkah, later, revolted against the Ottomans on the same ground (Tibi, 1997, pp. 106-115). Aziz (2009, p. 1) noted that the supporters of Wahabi movement deprecated and challenged the authority of the Ottoman caliph on religious ground. After the French withdrawal from Egypt, the Ottoman’s governor Mehmed Ali along with his son Ibrahim started a campaign against the Wahabi movement during which they noted the “pulse” of Arab people and thus, started dreaming of an Arab empire or caliphate. Interestingly, they were not Arab themselves.

The Western inspired Arab nationalism at the initial stages was apolitical and emerged as an expression of Arabic culture and modernisation of the Arabic language (Tibi, 1997, pp. 95-102). It was concerned with Arab awareness of their cultural and literary identities. Hasan Attar, an Islamic scholar, was a member of Napoleon entourage. Later, he became Rector of the al-Azhar university, and he sent students to France for higher studies. One of the teachers sent with the students was Rifa‘a Rafi‘al-Tahtawi, a pupil of Attar, who had become the first Arab national thinker. He introduced the use of the word ‘nation’ in the secular sense. He made distinction between the religious and national form of commitment and argued that the social factor took precedence over the religious. For him, love of the country was one of the prime virtues of the civilisation. In fact, Tahtawi was the founder of the modern Arab literature of patriotism. He introduced literary renaissance in the Arab world which contained elements of both Islamic Modernism and nationalism (Tibi, 1997, pp. 75-88).

The Arab nationalists, coming out of the western missionary schools, also attempted to revitalise the Arabic language, literature and culture by creating an awareness of new cultural

and national identity, replacing the religious one, among the Arabs. This weakened loyalty of Arabs towards Ottoman Empire (Tibi, 1997, pp. 95-102). Arab nationalists who led the movement also had political objectives. They translated the word nation or la nation (French) as Ummah in giving it a new meaning, while including non-Muslim Arabs as a part of their nation – Ummah – but excluding their co-religionists non-Arab Muslims. In fact, prime advocates of early Arab nationalism were Christians, and they used the concept of *al-Ummah al-Arabiya* (the Arab Nation) because they did not want to remain as Dhimmi (protected minority or second-class citizen) in an Islamic society. The concept of secular Ummah (Arab nation) could provide them the status of full citizen which was restricted to Muslims only (Tibi, 1997, pp. 13-18, & 106). The Arab awakening, noted Aziz (2009, p. 1), was thus, embedded in robust cultural linkages. The Arabs possessed a rich culture of the Arabic language which was associated with strong religious bond, and shared historic mores that generated among them the feelings of unity and oneness. It naturally culminated into a desire for the independence and political unity.

#### **4.2. Reforms Movement Turns into Revolt**

Generally, it is misunderstood that the Arab nationalism or the nationalists alone were responsible for the revolt for the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire/caliphate during the First World War. In fact, the religious elements in the Arab world played as much significant role as the Arab nationalists in the process. Besides, the Turks themselves compelled the Arabs to revolt against the Ottoman Empire. The efforts by the Turks to crush Arab nationalists forced the later to revolt and provided foreign powers to intervene or support the rebels. The early Arab nationalism reached its peak in 1913 when Arab nationalists held their congress in Paris. The Arab nationalists were still Ottomanists because they did not demand separation at that time and only wanted their local political and cultural autonomy within the Ottoman Empire. Earlier they had brought a revolution having an alliance with the Young Turks in 1909. In fact, the Turks themselves had become nationalists and had started thinking in terms of their Turkanian origin, leading to “Turkicising the non-Turkish parts of the Empire,” and crushing the Arab nationalists.

The Arab nationalists convened a conference in Paris and demanded “introduction of reforms, the recognition of Arab people and their proportionate representation in the central administration, decentralization of powers in the provinces, and “recognition of Arabic as an official language with equal status to Turkish, at the very least in Parliament and in the Arab Provinces.” The Young Turks accepted their demands after negotiations and reached to an agreement with Arab nationalists. But, when the provisions of the agreement were to be implemented, the Young Turks turned back and tried to crush Arab nationalists. In such circumstances, the Arab revolt took place in 1916, and Britain fully supported them to punish an ally of its foe in the war (Tibi, 1997, pp. 106-115). History is replete with such examples when rulers tried to crush the nationalistic sentiments instead of addressing the concerns of minority groups and accommodating their genuine demands for political autonomy, economic equality, and cultural identity. Nonetheless, such moves prove to be counterproductive and oppressed groups when suppressed turn to rebellion. Such circumstances provide opportunistic foreign powers the window of opportunity to intervene and undermine the security and territorial integrity of the states under crises (Naazer, 2018, March). The Ottoman Empire had to face the similar fate.

The western powers tried to exploit the internal divisions of the Ottoman Empire particularly

the widening fissures between Arab nationalists, religious elements, and the Turk rulers. The western powers ventured to garner the support of Arabs against the Turks. Sharif Hussain of Makkah was promised the rule of Arab dynasty. Interestingly, the Arab Nationalists and religiously inspired Sharif Hussain were allied against the Ottomans, though both had different motives. The former wanted to establish Arab national state whereas Hussain wanted to establish a caliphate, a true Islamic state comprising of as much Muslim community as possible. Likewise, the nationalists were justifying their revolt as an Arabian struggle against the Turks whereas Hussain was interpreting it as “an uprising of Islam against the Turkish heretics” (Tibi, 1997, pp. 106-115). Meanwhile, the allied powers were also planning to divide the Arab territories of Ottoman Empire among themselves. They made a secret agreement in this regard which they implemented after the end of the war (Schneer, 2011). At the end of the First World War, the Muslims lands were divided by allied powers. Turkey was “cut to its size” whereas only Saudi Arabia (Hejaz), Iran and Afghanistan were the nominal independent states. The rest of the Muslim world was colonised by British, French, Dutch, or Italians. Russia also occupied some territories in the Europe. Britain occupied Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, Trans-Jordan, Yemen, Palestine whereas France had gotten Morocco, Syria, Tunisia, and Algeria. Britain also had control over Iran and India (Landau, 1990, p. 217).

Hussain kept waiting to be made Caliph by the British but in vain. When the Kemalist revolution dissolved caliphate declaring Turkey a national republic in 1924, Hussain took the opportunity to declare himself as the Caliph of all Muslims. But he was a “One Day Caliph” who was not accepted by Muslims as such and was consequently ousted by Saudis (Tibi, 1997). This shows that foreign powers especially the British used both Arab nationalists and Sharif Hussain of Makkah as proxies to undermine the Ottoman Empire. The former made false and rosy promises to both during the war but deceived them later. Meanwhile, it also entered into a secret agreement with Jews to create the state of Israel. This suggests the extent to which the foreign or great powers make conflicting promises simultaneously with multiple parties having divergent rather competing interests to win over their support temporarily. However, weak parties find themselves incapable of getting such promises fulfilled. Instead, some of the parties are made scapegoat for the sake of others.

### **4.3. Nationalism as a Driving Force against Imperialism**

The imperialist policies pursued by the Allied powers created strong resentment and anti-West feelings that ultimately gave rise to nationalism both in Turkey and the Arab world. Both Turks and Arabs used their respective nationalism as a driving force against the Western imperialism and to get emancipation for their motherlands. Nationalism played significant role in the revival of Turks’ power and prestige. After the First World War, the Allied powers treated the Turkey under the Treaty of Sevres in August 1920 that brought humiliation to Turks at home as elsewhere. The ruthless persecution of the Turks by the hands of allied powers, and hard terms of the treaty of Sevres united the Turks under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal. He formed a Nationalist party that established its own government independent of Sultan and elected Kemal as President. Earlier, Arab, and Persian territories of the Ottoman Empire were divided by the allied powers. Turkey was deprived of its almost all territories in Europe, seceding Kurdistan, Armenia, and some part of Asia Minor, belonging to Turkey itself. The nationalist Kemal was, however, able to regain Turkish parts of the Empire either by war or making treaties with Russia (1920), Italy (1921), France (1921) and Britain (1923). He consolidated the Turkish power against the allied powers and achieved remarkable respect among the people (Landau,

1990) Turkey was declared a republic and later the Grand National Assembly abolished the caliphate in 1924.

The Allied powers disappointed Arabs after the war that turned the tide against the West. The disintegration of Ottoman Empire did not give birth to either a national Arab state or caliphate. Rather the Arab territories were colonised by the western imperialism and Arab nationalists had to fight another war, this time against their so called “liberators.” Western imperialism denied the national existence of other people under their colonial rule. This aroused a wave of awareness and consequently generated a movement of resistance and struggle against the alien rule. When people stood up demanding recognition of their national identification and the right of self-determination – attached to it – the process of decolonization in the Arab world started. The Arab nationalism became “an apologetic, reactionary, populist and frequently aggressive ideology under colonial rule.” Hans Kohn rightly said that the western “imperialism acted as the awakener of the nationalism” in the East. The Arab nationalist who conceived the West as a model for them before First World War were shocked to see themselves colonized by the western imperialism. Now, they turned against European powers and used Arab nationalism as a driving force against foreign subjugation and to get freedom for their motherland (Tibbi, 1997, p. 116).

During the interwar period, the principle of right of self-determination paved the way for liberation of modern Arab states from European imperialism. The struggle for independence was mainly won by the spirit of nationalism which was aimed at liberating native land from foreign rule and it put all its energies to achieve this noble cause. There was also a desire to renew Islamic spirit in the Muslim world, but the Muslim thinkers and intellectuals put their weight into political struggle and religious people also supported nationalism to fight against western imperialism and to get national independence. Rosenthal (1965) asserts that political nationalism in the Muslim world is predominantly concerned to achieve the right of self-determination and, once this objective is achieved, to secure national cohesion and national integrity of the new states. Most of the colonized people were divided due to cultural, tribal, and regional conflicts. They had no tradition of cooperation among them. But the colonialism made them united against foreign rule. They taught a lesson to the colonial powers. The western educated people of the colonial areas led the nationalist movements and used the western ideals against the west itself. They fought the colonial powers by using the principles of democracy, freedom, and national self-determination to get rid of the foreign rule (Spanier & Hook, 1995, pp. 103-107).

In the post-World War I era, European powers confronted rising nationalist feelings in Asia and Africa with growing demands to accede independence to colonial areas. During their colonial rule over different areas in Asia and Africa, the European powers, particularly France and Britain and to some extent Germany and Italy, tried to transform local socio-economic and cultural traditions according to colonial needs. For this purpose, they developed ideological, cultural, social, and economic links with the local populations in a drive to westernise them and to retain their respective political and economic interest in the future. They must give independence to Arab territories, after stiff liberation movements in these areas but they did so in such a manner that the idea of a unified Arab state could not come true. In fact, the colonial powers had been liberating different territories at various times, were demarcating boundaries at their own will and thus created the modern sovereign nation-states (Fromkin, 1989; Tibi, 1997, pp. 116-125).

#### 4.4. Patterns of Territorial Nationalism

The forms and dimensions of nationalism in the Muslim world varied from country to country experiencing internal fluctuations in it. It was strongly experienced in the Arab world and then in Turkey. Nationalism as an ideological system is capable of flexibility to a certain extent maintaining its own identity, it has been repeatedly tagged on to other systems. The nationalism was infused with religion in its drive against the Western imperialism. As Rosenthal (1965) noted, the struggle of the Arabs against the western subjugation had also the memories of crusades, Christians' attacks on Islam as well as their missionary activities. Thus, for Arabs, the West was identical with the Christianity. The Arabs not only had a love for freedom and independence of their native land but also had an inspiration of Islam as a religion as well as their own culture and civilization. Arab nationalism was confined to the Arabic speaking parts of Asia, particularly, Syria, Iraq, and Lebanon etc., whereas the Egypt was experiencing a local or Egyptian nationalism. The other parts of North Africa particularly Maghreb (Morocco, Sudan, Tunisia, and Libya) was almost free of such tendencies. Tunisia was, however, an exception (Sehmi, 1983; Tibi, 1997, p. 19).

It shows that, Islam and not the Arab Nationalism was the driving force against foreign rule and bringing decolonization in these countries. In the different countries of the North Africa, nationalism was a different thing for each of them. "There was a Moroccan, an Algerian and a Tunisian nationalism, each with its own history" though each of them faced French colonial rule and confronted the similar problems. The national awakening and struggle for independence in North African countries of Tunisia, Morocco, and Algeria was deeply connected with religion. Maghrebi Arab nationalism sought a new link with Islam serving its purity despite fanatic orders of saints. It crushed Maraboutism and built Islam as a new constituent of national character. It raised Muslim's consciousness though it is different from traditional Islam (Rosenthal, 1965; Tibi, 1997, p. 210).

#### 4.5. Territorial Nationalism vs Muslim Nationalism

Iqbal makes that difference between territorial nationalism and Muslim nationalism by his consideration that situation of the Indian Muslims is different from the Muslims of the outside India. The Muslims in Turkey, Iran and Arab world were in dominant position i.e., they were in majority in population. Furthermore, the minorities living there were "the people of the Book" in the language of Quran. The Holy Quran (3: 64) declares, "O people of the Book! Come let us join together on the word (Unity of God) that is common to us all." It means that there are no social barriers between Muslims and "the people of the Book." Iqbal identified nationalist movements, on territorial lines, in Turkey and Iran as Muslim nationalism. On other hand, the situation of Indian Muslims was different because they were in minority and their compatriots were not "the people of the Book." They were confronted with atheist Hindu majority striving to convert Muslims to Hinduism.

Iqbal's acceptance of territorial nationalism based on universal definition of modern nationalism can be observed from his demand for creation of "autonomous states" for the Indian Muslims during his Presidential address at Allahabad. He based his demand on "the unity of language, race, history, religion and identity of economic interests." He affirmed it while pledging that the "Muslims of India can have no objection to purely territorial electorates if provinces are demarcated so as to secure comparatively homogeneous communities possessing linguistic, racial, cultural and religious unity." Iqbal explains further that

Nationalism in the sense of loyalty and love to one's native land and even to die for its honour is a part of the faith of Muslims. He says, Islam accommodates nationalism in Muslim majority countries because there "Islam and nationalism are practically identical." But in Muslim minority countries "it is justified in seeking self-determination as a cultural unit in either case, it is thoroughly consistent with itself" (Fatimi, 1976).

#### **4.6. Islam Replaces Secularism**

During their colonial rule, the western imperial powers discarded existing educational, legal, judicial, and social system and local culture, language, traditions, and customs were humiliated and ultimately replaced with their own. Following the Second World War, when the new states emerged because of decolonization, these were different from their predecessors which were conquered. They were to decide good or bad on the "standard" and ideas given by the West during the colonial rule (Gauhar, 1982, pp. 213-229). Arab nationalism was a challenge to Islamic political order existed in the shape of Ottoman Empire and its de-politicized Islam for many decades, introducing new secular outlook. But the same has been challenged by political Islam, reversing the process, denouncing the so-called achievements of the Arab Nationalism, and drive towards de-secularization of the contemporary political system. Of course, political Islam cannot be a reversal of history because it is irreversible. But there is a "more global Islam in the form of religious fundamentalism (Tibi, 1997, p. x). There has been a renewed emphasis on the political character of Islam in the Middle East. Political Islam took roots in different countries of the region. Islam was never abandoned as a belief system. Instead, the "Islamic symbols" are being used for political and economic demands. Not only the Arab nationalists but even the Marxists shifted choosing Islam as an opposing ideology against the West (Tibi, 1997, p. 229).

The Arab nationalists had to "switch to new-fundamentalism" or to make deliberate efforts to reconcile Arab-nationalism with religion i.e., the "Arabo-centric perception of Islam." It happened mainly due to crises of the Arab nationalism in the wake of their defeats in the wars against Israel in 1970s. Hamid Enayat points out that "in defining its relationship with Islam, Arab Nationalism often ends where it started: with the glorification of Arabism as commanding value in Islam" (Tibi, 1997, pp. 12-19). Some Arab authors try to combine Islam with Arab nationalism contending that the "true Arab nationalism and the genuine Islam cannot go apart and could never be rivals. On the contrary, they go side by side along for paths." Some have also tried to emphasize Arab nationalism focusing on the Arabian face and soul of Islam. They have a conviction that the "non-Arab people who have adopted Islam could never be able to comprehend it, to interpret it, and to apply it in a better way than the Arabs themselves could do (Tibi, 1997, pp. 227-230).

Most pan-Arab nationalists have given up their secular views but did not abandon Arabism. Rather they have tried to legitimize it linking it to the birth of Islam in the Arab World. Tibi (1997) quotes Ahmad Muhammad Jamal, a Saudi Professor, contending that "the Arabs 'familiarity with' asabiya, allegedly an authentic pattern of nationalism, supports the view that the Arabs knew nationalism long before that historical phenomenon related to this ideology took place in Europe." Jamal says that God honoured the Arabs in choosing one of them to be his messenger to humanity for the revelation of Islam. Thus, the Arabs are the guides of the world and the leaders of the people and the successors of the prophet. This virtue of the Arabs and their glory are inexorably related to Islam. Such interpretation of Islam suggests its "Arabo-Centro face," much reconciled with Arab nationalism (Tibi, 1997, p. 6). Not only Islam has

consolidated its position in ideological and political terms in the Muslim world, but a lot of work has been conducted towards Islamisation of the existing institutions of the Muslim world. The religious parties have largely been participating in democratic elections for the parliament in Egypt, Turkey, Indonesia, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sudan, Malaysia and Iran. These countries played their role in Islamisation of the state and society in these countries. Pakistan has a long history of constitutional struggle in the light of Shariah. Iran even faced a revolution which brought an Islamic political system.

One can clearly observe that existence of nation-states possesses no obstacle in the way of the enforcement of Shariah. Rather, they facilitate for it with a lot of choice with the people to adopt a system according to their own needs and local environment (Nasr, 2001; Rosenthal, 1965). In fact, the Muslims are now free, and they can adopt any kind of system which they wish. Since Muslims of different geographical areas adhere to different schools of thoughts of Islam, they can enforce Islamic version of their choice in their areas. Though, there are a lot of political, social, and economic problems in enforcement of Shariah in the Muslim countries but some of them have headed towards this goal. Sometimes, they face setbacks and shocks, but it may not prevent them from achieving this goal. In sum, nationalism and nation-states proved to be blessings for the Muslims. Even severe critics of nationalism concede that rise of nationalism in Asia and Africa “has done a lot of good to the peoples of the two continents. ... Indeed, it can be claimed that all political, economic and cultural achievement in the newly independent countries is to a very great extent due to the acceptance by the people of this doctrine” (Sherwani, 1997, p. 18).

## **5. Conclusion**

The growth of nationalism in the Muslim world was an outcome of the historical circumstances. Though it was implanted by the West but the internal structure of the state such as domestic socio-economic conditions and political situation was quite receptive to it. However, it is wrong to attribute the collapse of Ottoman Empire to the rise of nationalism alone. The religious forces were also responsible for breakup of the Ottoman Empire. More importantly, the authoritarian rule and suppression of the people’s demands for their legitimate rights led to the revolt against Ottoman Empire and eventually to the disintegration of the Empire. Nationalism has been a symbol of anti-colonial drive of the indigenous people against the Western imperialism. The emergence of nation-states in the Muslim world was the direct consequence of this process. Nation-states preserve independence and basic right of self-determination of the people. The modern nation-states are formed based on territorial nationalism along with the associated idea of the right of self-determination of all nations. Nationalism is very instrumental in maintaining independence and the territorial integrity of smaller nations in the context of the universally recognised concept of sovereignty and equality of all the states which is guaranteed by the international law.

There is no conflict between Islam and territorial nationalism in Muslim majority countries particularly where minorities belong to the people of the Book. In such circumstance, in the words of Iqbal, “Islam and nationalism are practically identical.” But in Muslim minority countries especially where majority belongs to non-believers such as in India, territorial nationalism cannot help in protecting Muslims’ religion, culture, politics, and economy. Thus, it is an imperative for them to define their identity in religious terms, i.e., Muslim nationalism instead of territorial nationalism, and seek right of self-determination and separate homeland. Nationalism in its both manifestations, i.e., territorial and religious one, has helped Muslims to

get emancipation from the foreign subjugation. Now they can cooperate and collaborate with fellow Muslim countries to help evolve a true community of Muslim people. Though Muslim states are not united, but they are free to adopt any system which they want keeping in view their own needs, people's beliefs, and local environment. Many of the political, economic, and cultural breakthroughs made by the Muslims largely became possible because the later embraced this idea. To conclude, the nationalism has been proved to be beneficial and a blessing for the Muslims.

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