limits and constraints on evolving an order to match the precedent of the *pax islamica* in history. The repercussions of this discrepancy are practical. The fragility of the political set-up in the Middle East, the acuteness of the problem of legitimacy in most regimes, the pervasiveness of the elements of coercion and repression embedded in the precarious stability, and general volatility throughout the region are merely some poignant reflections of this aspect. How this state of affairs came about, what it has given rise to, and where it may be leading, provides us with a turning point away from the structural premises to the evolutionary dynamic in reconstructing the political parameters of the region. In short, the focus will shift from Islam as the founding and organizing principle of a historical order in the region, to the colonial episode as the watershed and the catalyst to events and consequences that have become symptomatic of the contemporary order.

5. The Colonial Episode: A Historical Rupture
The Implosion of a Prism

The colonial experience essentially represents a fissure in the temporal continuum of the socio-cultural entity. The latter part of the 18th century witnessed the unfolding of the practical consequences of a fateful event a century earlier. In retrospect, the abortion of the second siege of Vienna in 1683, and the retreat of the Ottomans, had signaled an epochal reversal in the balance of power to the disadvantage of Muslim political history. Henceforth, the Muslims would come to experience the weight of the encounter with the modern West in an immediate and fateful manner. Their history would become mediated, second hand, history modulated to a pace and tune conducted by the Other.

From then on Muslim societies were beset with a complex of tensions arising from a dissonant encounter between two sets of realities reacting upon one another in a colliding trajectory. One reality runs a course-track that is truncated, without being fully exhausted, nor being adequately supplanted or supplantable. The other reality is superimposed

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Indiana University Press, 1988), pp. 39-56; Michael Hudson, "The Islamic Factor in Syrian and Iraqi Politics," in J. P. Piscatori, ed., *Islam in the Political Process* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1983); Henry Munson, *Islam and Revolution in the Middle East* (New Haven and London: Yale Univ. Press, 1988). In contrast to the secular sociological perspectives of a detached academia inside accounts are few: Umar Abdullah, *The Islamic Struggle in Syria* (Berkeley, Calif.: Mizan Press, 1983).

at points, juxtaposed at others, but whatever its condition, its roots are neither properly implanted, nor are they capable of being so ingrained in the host culture. The consequences of this double discomfiture of historical constraint and structural encumbrance and incompatibility, proved onerous and they still continue to exert their pernicious effect upon the evolutionary potential in the region today. A cursory look at some of these consequences will illustrate their all-pervasive nature and explain the resulting insidiousness.

First. *The autonomous polity as the medium of governance of the Muslim community was absorbed and annexed into the colonial reality. Society lost hold of its self-direction and its general political will. What is at issue here is not the regime-type, nor the quality of the means of governance in question, but the very principle of continuity of polity and society.*

Second. *The basic institutions of society were undermined. They may have continued to survive in a mixed environment where old institutions were at a disadvantage partly in virtue of the powers in command, and partly on account of the push of the forces of 'modernity'. While such is the universal fate of institutions in all places and times, the colonial situation constituted an aberration which prevented the free play of the forces of change and adaptation from running their normal course. In other words, the indigenous institutions of Muslim society were denied the opportunity of evolving and developing responses to challenges in their own terms along the lines of institutional dynamics in societies which have not undergone the truncating effects associated with the kind of hegemony contingent on the colonial situation. Indeed, it may be contended with reason that in the colonial situation, institutions, like those of the traditional system of education for example, are not just truncated, but that they are derailed and deformed as they come to acquire or develop certain pathological features in order to accommodate to the anomalies of what is after all a pathological setting. But clearly this belongs to another more properly sociological inquiry and cannot be investigated at any length here.*

Third. *The community as the political expression of the collective entity was steadily subverted. From a symbol of a con-*

sensual and widely accepted public affiliation, it now degenerated into an amorphous residue as it receded to the level of the subconscious of the individual and the collectivity. It was no longer the object of articulate expression of a historical group conscience. Sociologically, this constituted a grave regression in a situation where the integrality of the ummah *to the Muslim consciousness was the measure of the degree of the internalization of the values of the faith itself. Historically, for all the discrepancies between the ideals and the realities of the political community, there was ultimately a fit between the values of the individual Muslim and those of the collectivity represented in its social and political organization. What had now changed was the fact that the continuing processes of internalization and socialization in the conventional values of the community were becoming increasingly difficult to relate to sociological and political reality. In the Islamic historical paradigm, the community is the cornerstone of society and polity alike. On this account we shall single out this point for some elaboration.*

The colonial experience and its aftermath accelerated a process of deformation and transfiguration in public loyalties and perceptions. This affected the relationship between the professed values and ideals of the community and their systemic assimilation within the individual and the collective psyche. Instead of a direct process of internalization between articulated and sensed values, we now encounter an intrinsic process of derailment or an introvert displacement of community values. Values and attitudes which could no longer be openly projected in their natural context and primary domain, were appropriately shifted to another. The latter domain then became a 'subterfuge' and provided the needed outlet to release the tensions of the personal psyche and to fulfill a social need at the group level. This process of value displacement or deflection was reinforced by another whereby values that primarily constituted 'public' or collective and group values came to be appropriated to the personal, or the private domain. This twin process resulted in a double distortion. In the one instance, group loyalty and its public projections, or its 'exteriorization', was deflected from one area to another. In the other, the transmutation of values resulted in a shrinking of public space. Substituting loyalty to a fraternity or to a *ṭarīqah* for loyalty to a wider entity is an example of the one instance, while the restriction of the

sharī'ah to a segmented area of private life is an example of the other.

In Muslim history these processes antedate the colonial episode and, as such, they are not uniquely its by-product. Yet it was in the colonial era that their implications for the development of the socio-cultural entity and for the political history of the region were far more devastating and portentous. Briefly, the colonial experience meant more than social or political disintegration in a fluctuating historical setting where the fundamental parameters of society and polity remained essentially the same. Rather, colonialism by virtue of its intrinsic logic and its very practice constituted a challenge to the fundamental assumptions of society and polity in the Muslim world, and confronted the socio-cultural entity with the real prospects of a breach in its historical continuity. In this event, sociological and psychological processes that may be a normal aspect of the cultural dynamics of the entity assume radically different proportions when they operate in a structurally modified context.

To illustrate this distinction we may compare two traumatic moments in the historical consciousness of Muslims: the one followed in the train of the collapse of the Abbassid Caliphate under the devastating weight of the Moghul invasions, and the other, less dramatic but no less emphatic, was the fall of the region to the domination of the West. In the first instance—for all the apparent destruction and costs in terms of civilization and empire—the disruption was only epiphenomenal. It may have wrought havoc with the prevailing superstructures, but it left the base virtually intact to buttress and support other models of political organization. The Mamelukes continued in Egypt and the nucleus of the Ottoman, Safawid and Moghul empires could be formed. This was in stark contrast with the century encounter with the West in the guise of the European colonial venture. The latter, while historically a comparatively peaceable process and frequently even a surreptitious intrusion, was all pervasive in its effects and struck at the very roots of the socio-cultural foundations in the region. In the first instance, the resulting interiorization of the values of the community and the attendant constriction of the public space led to the popularity of Sufist doctrines and the proliferation of Sufi networks, or *ṭarīqah*(s), the length and breadth of the Muslim historical space. This had mixed repercussions which came to underlie the modern controversy and ambivalent attitudes among mainstream learned Muslim opinion regarding Sufism. Some would attribute all the misfortunes which have overtaken the *ummah* to the quietism, ignorance, and superstitions which thrived in this period. As Shakīb Arslan, the charismatic inter-war Muslim activist put it: the ad-

vocates of this tradition were "nothing but the paralyzed limbs of the body politic of Islam."[38] Others would claim a more positive impact for the preservation of the spiritual identity and continuity of a community threatened with extinction.[39] Clearly, such blanket generalizations can hardly be sustained without empirical evidence. The historical consequences of the spread of the Sufi institutions and ethos in the various parts of the *dār al Islām* were hardly uniform. Notwithstanding the controversy over the specific consequences, there is little doubt that these *ṭarīqah*(s) actually sustained the socio-cultural entity and contributed to its survival through absorbing many of the pressures to which it was exposed.

Conversely, the colonial impact may not have tampered conspicuously with the traditional structures. Unlike the invaders from the East, those from the West came with a vision of the "white man's burden". They embodied the virtues of a Christian, enlightened and progressive Europe which they were intent on spreading throughout the world. On a more pragmatic note, they were resolved to reach into the wealth of the globe to sustain their imperial glory. In the encounter with the Muslim Orient, the intent and the resolve were fueled by the historical context of a long-standing rivalry and a feuding lust to settle outstanding accounts. The target was not confined to disrupting or supplanting the structures supporting the contested culture and the societal entities but it was extended to dislodging a contested identity. This comprehensive 'civilizing mission' was no vain boast. It could rely for its implementation on an effec-

38. W. Cleveland, *Islam against the West: Shakib Arslan and the Campaign for Islamic Nationalism* (University of Texas Press, 1985), p. 117; A Lebanese born Druze amir, Arslan represented the last generation of Ottoman-Arabs who, in the words of his biographer, "brought with him to an age of emerging national states the organizing principles of universal Islamic empire." Cleveland's extensively researched and well-written contribution sheds light on an important phase of the politics of the region at a time when the focus was shifting to the emergent secular nationalisms and dimming the significance of a still popular and vital dimension. Arslan's introspection on the causes of the decline of the Muslims, *"Limādhā Ta'akhara al Muslimūn wa Limādhā Taqadama Ghayruhum"* written in the thirties is the precursor for many contemporary reflections on the score. *'AbdulḤamīd Abūsulaymān's* forthcoming publication, *"Azmat al 'Aql al Muslim"* (Crisis of Muslim Thought) similarly condemns among other blights, the fatalism which attended the truimph of a "folk Islam".

39. See Muriel Atkin, "The Survival of Islam in Soviet Tajikstan" in *The Middle East Journal*, Vol. 43, No. 4, Autumn 1989, reinforcing the original authoritative work in this field by the late Alexandre Benningsen and others: *Mystics and Commissars: Sufism in the Soviet Union* by Benningsen and S.E. Wimbush (London and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1985).

tive power matrix to ensure its diffusion and secure the command-posts at the nodular spaces and junctures in the colonized society. There was little chance for any real resistance. The power polity was at first subjected to a steady trickle of incursions that wore away at its societal foundations and its political economy. It would not be long before the contamination would spread to the spiritual and moral foundations of authority itself.

The assessment of the colonial episode varies. Some, like the renaissance Algerian Muslim thinker, Malik Bennabi would contend that colonialism was more of a catalyst to decadence, rather than its generator.[40] The majority however are inclined to credit it with a more positive role. Just as the assessment of the impact of the *ṭarīqah* which continued into the colonial era varies, so too there is room for controversy in assessing the extent of the colonial impact on Muslim history. Here too, notwithstanding the genesis and pathogenesis of the affliction, what can be contended with reasonable certainty is the intensity of this impact as it spread to the structural and spiritual foundations of society. The colonial advance had not gone unresisted. In the Islamic political tradition resistance to foreign incursion runs deep. It also has its distinctive patterns. In the urban setting it is usually the crowd—a popular grass-root phenomenon inspired by its natural leaders, the *'ulamā'* or *imams*.[41]

40. The claim of a "colonisabilite" *al qābilīyah li al isti'mār* was integrated into a thematic analysis of civilization which he developed in his earlier writings on the subject: notably, *Les Conditions de la Renaissance (1949)* and (*La Vocation de L'Islam* (1951). For a brief overview of his life and ideas see, Abdel Wahab el Affendi, "A Voice in the Wilderness: Ben-Nabi Revisited" in *Inquiry*, December, 1987 and published dissertation by As'ad al Samharani, *Malik Bennabi: The Intellectual and the Reformer*, (Arabic)—(Beirut: Dār al Nafā'is, 1984, 1986).

41. See the recent study by Juan Cole, "Of Crowds and Empires: Afro-Asian Riots and European Expansion, 1857-1882" in *Comparative Studies in Society and History (CSSH)*, Vol. 31, No. 1, January 1989, pp. 106-133. Today as in the past, the natural historical leadership in a crisis devolves on a local village *imām*, or *shaykh*, or *'ālim*, This *jihādī*, or 'militant' tradition is not a prerogative of any specific group in Islam. cf. Journalist and writer Robin Wright has done some research on the Shi'ī resistance in Southern Lebanon highlighting the role of *imāms* and *'ulamā'*. *Sacred Rage: The Wrath of Militant Islam* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1985); see also the article in S. Hunter, ed., *The Politics of Islamic Revivalism* (Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1988), pp. 56-70. Other case studies in the volume give a bird's eye view of this role in a situation where the power structure has collapsed or is afflicted by a chronic legitimacy crisis. A related theme is the political influence of the "pulpit of the mosque". Patrick Gaffney, "The Local Preacher and Islamic Resurgence in Upper Egypt" in R. Antoun and M. Hegland, eds., *Religious Resurgence* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1987), pp. 35-63.

There is a tradition of armed resistance which has tended to become muted in modern times.[42] Where the colonial encounter assumed the form of an armed confrontation it provoked a resistance in kind as in the nineteenth century Indian subcontinent, the Sudan, and North Africa. In an earlier epoch in the heartlands the crusades from the West (ca. 1099 AC–1187 AC) and the godless Golden Horde from the East which came in their train had eventually been effectively stopped in their tracks by such resistance–and in the case of the latter by their subsequent assimilation within the "Islamicate" ecumene. The main difference then lay in the emergence of an able leadership–(an Ayyubid, Salahuddin, or a Mamluk, like al Dhahir Baybars)–to mobilize the resources of the polity, to shore up the popular resistance and invoke the support and strength of the community and its spiritual leaders and *'ulamā'*. In the nineteenth century, however, there was no such leadership and organization to back up the sporadic and, on occasion, the heroic resistance in the community.[43] The Muslim state had all but withered away, and the attempted reforms such as those undertaken in the Ottoman State under the impact of the encounter and on the model of the West, were merely accelerating the process of decline. In the context of the times, the valiant efforts of the community to fall back on its own reserves and evolve its reinvigorated polity were doomed. The example in Algeria of the emir Abdel Qadir epitomizes this fate.[44] The force of the colonial episode lay less in its armed superiority however and more in its pervasive and surreptitious infiltration.

On balance, its victory in the Muslim heartlands was less than complete. It produced its dividends in a variety of forms: the fragmentation of the region, the emergence of the state system with its modern paraphernalia of ideas and institutions, a new model of education, of military

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42. Rudolph Peters, *Islam and Colonialism: The Doctrine of Jihad in Modern History* (The Hague: Mouton, 1979).

43. In an essay reviewing the Muslim resistance to the West in the 19th century from North Africa to Central Asia, Kedourie observes that "Even though there was great disproportion between European military and technical resources and those at the disposal of Muslim society, opposition to European encroachments was in many cases remarkably stout-hearted, resourceful and tenacious." *Islam in the Modern World* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1980), p. 3; an account which recalls the more recent legendary resistance of the Afghani is mujahideen to the Soviet invasion (1979-1988). Olivier Roy, *Islam and Resistance in Afghanistan* (Cambridge University Press, 1986).

44. For recent documentation on the struggle see R. Danzieger, *Abdel Qadir and the Algerians* (New York, publisher, 1977) and F. Colonna, "Cultural Resistance and Religious Legitimacy in Colonial Algeria", *Economy and Society*, Vol. 3, (1974): 233-252.

organization, of the economy, and a 'new middle class' of professionals, technocrats and intellectuals who would man the regimes of the post-independence era. These were the visible consequences of the encounter. However, the balance sheet also indicated the limitations and the frustrations of the encounter, even though they might have been typically the less visible of the consequences.[45] For deep as its incursions were, it could not cut deep enough to reach into the inner recesses of the historical consciousness of the community, a domain which remained the guardian and nexus of its residual identity. Given the fact that the colonial assault was aimed at that particular dimension of its historical opponent, any half successes there were tantamount to an irredemptive failure. The colonialist had indeed succeeded far enough in confusing and confounding that identity.[46] The Muslim consciousness was exposed to a transmutation as the idea of the historical community receded to the domain of the potential away from the real and effective. Society regressed into a state of anomie that was the effect as much as the cause of an emergent confused and amorphous culture. This too was a legacy of the colonial encounter. But the impact had not gone far enough to eradicate the muted ideal of community: the limitations on its success were the measure and testing ground of the enduring resilience of the historical Muslim core in the region.

The community tended to become internally deflected and "privatised" at the level of the individual and at the level of the collective subconscious it was muted. Defenseless, its visibility impaired and its historicity undermined, it further accelerated the decline and debilitation of Muslim society. Significantly, in its low profile, dissociated from

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45. In *Unfinished Agenda: The Dynamics of Modernization in Developing Nations* (Boulder and London: Westview, 1984) Manning Nash writes: "The psychic and symbolic costs of colonialism are harder to enumerate, or to weigh, but on the testimony of the peoples of Asia and Africa . . . they were sometimes severe." What comes to mind here are such classic testimonies as Franz Fanon's, *The Wretched of the Earth* (London: cambridge 1967) and the less well-known addressed on the subject by Ali Shari'ati which have produced an even greater impact on account of a deft manipulation of popular idiom as with an analysis of alienation wrought by the colonizer which he compares to the state of a psychic derangement analogous to being possessed by a *jinn*. "Civilisation et Modernisation" in *Courrier de L'Islam/al-multaqa* (Vol. 2, No. 2, Autumn 1985): 25-54; (An English translation is published in London by the Islamic Students Association).

46. D. O. Mannoni, *Prospero and Caliban: The Psychology of Colonization* (New York: Praeger, 1956). Cf. Shari'ati's lectures on the philosophy of history in Hamid Algar's translation, *On the Sociology of Islam* (Berkeley: Mizan Press, 1979).

the symbols of power, reclusive and invisible though it might have become, the community or Ummah remained a powerful symbol and a reserve for a collective sense of identity among Muslims ready to be tapped and invoked particularly, but not exclusively, in moments of crisis. The mass appeal of the Islamic Revolution in Iran at its inception and the nervous official reactions it provoked throughout the region illustrate this point.

To sum up: it might be helpful at the close of this cursory reading of a significant episode in Muslim history to draw the threads together and recapitulate the main points. The colonial experience which provides the backdrop for the modern politics of the region essentially represents a fissure in the socio-historical entity of Muslim societies and cultures. The Muslim historical dimension of these societies and cultures is just as real as is the colonial experience to which they were exposed. In view of a tendency to confound issues, it should be pointed out that no amount of skepticism cast at the fictional dimensions of Orientalism can denigrate the reality of the subject it sought as a body of scholarship to represent—or mis-represent. Two colliding realities emerged, reacting and interacting, exploding and imploding in a dialectic coefficient to generate a sequel of constraints and incompatibilities in the political and societal evolution in the region. Significantly, the ideal of the community was too deeply embedded to be effectively eradicated.

6. Faith and Community: *The Symbiosis of a Culture*

While the state, or the formal system of governance collapsed, the ideal and the reality and promise of a Muslim polity merely lapsed; and while traditional society was subject to the forces of disintegration and new institutions were courting a precarious existence, the Faith, as *īmān* and as *'aqīdah*, continued to inspire individual Muslims at all levels of society and not exclusively at the popular level where it was most in evidence. Moreover, that sense of community, reinforced by the pillars of piety, never really lapsed from the Muslim's social awareness. By sense of community here we mean to identify a sense of belonging and affini-