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**RELIGION AND NATIONALISM:
THE GREEK-TURKISH AND ETHIO-SOMALI CONFLICTS**

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INTRODUCTION

Both capitalism and socialism have failed to surpass nationalism in its power to move masses is a strong motivation for investigating the nature and functioning of nationalism(s). In particular, the cultural aspect of nationalism has been little investigated. Religion plays an important, if not the most important, role in this respect.

Both religion and nationalism, each in and of themselves, is a powerful ideological weapon. Together they can bring about the escalation and eruption of disputes. The nature and intricacies of this marriage of motivating factors are little understood, but are of great importance both for understanding the evolution of and for mediating current disputes, and well as for preventing future conflicts.

The intention of this paper is thus twofold: to discuss the great potential of nationalism as an ideology and why it has such widespread appeal as a political project, particularly in the connection of conflicts between states. And secondly, it is to address the role that religion plays in the functioning of nationalism.

It will be argued here that nationalism, being a more recent historical phenomenon, functions within the framework of previously existing ideologies, one of the most important of which is religion - in one form or another as old as the human race itself. More specifically, it will be argued that nationalism treats religion in various ways depending upon its usefulness to the nationalist project. In cases in which existing religious ideologies appear to be counter to the goals of the nationalist project, nationalism attempts to neutralize if not combat religion's influence. In other cases nationalism uses religion to its own ends to consolidate political uniformity within a given state, and perhaps also to expand its influence, if not its geographical borders.

The borderline between Islam and Christianity is the focal point of this paper. In this context, the relationship between nationalism and religion in the particular contexts of the Greek-Turkish and the Ethio-Somali conflicts will be investigated.

Religion, ethnic identity and modern states

Religious beliefs originated partly as a result of human beings' fears about life, and particularly about death. Over time, and especially with the emergence of Christianity and Islam, many religions have developed into complex systems that have served multifarious purposes such as: legitimization of authority which in many instances meant legitimization of the power of the church apparatus itself; initiation into existing socioeconomic codes of behaviour; introduction to and development of moral and/or ethical perceptions about life and 'after life'; legitimization of hierarchical structures whose functions excluded (and in many cases still exclude in practice, if not formally) large segments of the population.

While all of these aspects of religion are important and worthy of closer investigation, this paper does not deal with the metaphysical aspects of religion. Rather, it deals solely with the role that religion plays in cultivating peoples' political and cultural identities, especially those of national or ethnic groups.

One can divide the criteria which identify ethnic groups into objective and subjective ones (Stavenhagen 1991). Religion is one of the subjective criteria. The interwovenness of religion with ethnic identity plays an important role in our attempt to understand religion's 'services' to nationalism.

Religion has historically been an important marker of the ethnic identity of a people.... The

more the religious factor is interwoven with other elements of social life, the more important does religion become as a determining factor of ethnicity (Stavenhagen 1991:5-6).

Religion provides an emotional context for nationalism via signs and symbols - a social fabric necessary for the construction of any movement. Further, as religion predates nationalism's appearance, religion also often plays the role of combining past with contemporary national feelings.

In this context, religious hierarchical structures and their interests in particular historical moments - or the absence thereof - have and continue to play a decisive role in helping or hindering nationalist movements: in some cases religion 'stops' or slows down nationalism by projecting super-national social concerns, in other cases religion can speed nationalism on its way.

Religion in the eve of the birth of nationalist movements in Europe, and elsewhere afterwards, had to decide upon the role it would play:

Institutionalized religious authority usually has come under pressure to accommodate itself to the existing political regime as in a state church or union of throne and altar. Thus it may become part and parcel of the official patriotism or, more likely, an object of hatred of minority or rival nationalisms (Merckl 1983:5).

As we will see in greater detail below, this political role of religion is demonstrated both in cases where religion played a leading role in the creation of official nationalism, such as in the cases of Greece, imperial Ethiopia, and Somalia, as well as in cases where it was perceived as an obstacle to nation-building, e.g. Turkey.

Nationalism

The controversial and illusive nature of nationalism has provoked many scholars to attempt to examine and explain it - Anderson 1983, Gellner 1983 and 1987, Hobsbawm 1983 and 1990, Kedourie 1960, Munck 1986, Nairn 1975, Stavenhagen 1991 to name but a few.

Social scientists have yet to reach an agreement as to one explanation of the roots and stages of development of the phenomenon nationalism. Although differing - and in many cases controversial - approaches are espoused, most scholars on the subject would agree with Anthony Birch, that 'for all its limitations and problems, nationalism has proved to be the most successful political doctrine ever promoted' (Birch, 1989:25).

Munck and others have argued that a nation is 'a community which is also defined historically and by its action in the political field' (1986:7). This contribution is valuable for its inclusion of the historical element, as history is not a given list of events and their causes, but rather explanations by people who have different principles and different motives. As history is subject to people's projections of their conceptualisation of life, so too can nationality and nationalism be subject to construction, invention and manipulation.

For the first time in contemporary history, during the French revolution the notion of 'nation' was put on the agendas of social and mainly political interests. It is the introduction of this concept at that time which accelerated waves of revolutionary processes and wars that led to a continuous reshaping of the contemporary world, with existing or potential nation-states as the main actors.

In agreement with Hobsbawm, in this paper nationalism will be understood to be a political programme which holds that groups defined as 'nations' have the right to, and therefore ought to, form territorial states of the kind that have been standard since the French Revolution' (1992:23), and that nationalism has become the substitute for social cohesion through a national church, a royal family or other cohesive traditions, or collective group self-presentations - in fact that it has become a new secular religion (1983:303).

It is argued here that nationalism encompasses basic elements of psychological make-up and behavioural patterns such as the need for an extended community - a new 'super family' of sorts. This newer form of extended family, as well as the desire for well-distinguished political units with clearly-defined principles and political priorities, are both attempts to meet a sensed need for security and stability.

In this context, nationalism provides the sense of common identity for people whose rights, whether material or cultural, are denied or endangered. In the cases discussed in this paper, cases of well-distinguished groups of people with common historical, territorial, linguistic, traditional, religious and cultural backgrounds, nationalism provides the feeling of continuity, and ultimately, security.

Religion and nationalism: a 'blind date'

The blind date, that is the meeting of religion with nationalism, has political implications, especially for the strength and dynamism of nationalist projects. The nature of this marriage and the chances of its survival are reflected in the composition of the cultural makeup of the nation - or the nation to be.

This meeting of religion and nationalism is inevitable: the bearers of the 'ancient ideology' and the ideology itself - the hierarchical structure of the church and the religious doctrine - are confronted with the new ideology of nationalism. The potential for conflicting interests, in particular the fact that religious constituencies can often remain stubbornly attached to their beliefs, can create a dynamic confrontation that will be examined in the cases of the Greek-Turkish and the Ethio-Somali Conflicts.

It is admittedly difficult to isolate religion's functions within inward-looking and outward-looking nationalist projects: in the former case nationalism which can be used to consolidate territorial integrity, state power and nation-building; in the latter nationalism aims at territorial expansion of the state. This difficulty notwithstanding, the focus of this research is on inter-state disputes and the use of religion by official nationalism for intra-state purposes by projecting religious disputes as an external threat. In such cases the dispute is presented as the agent of the other state's interests.

Neither religion nor nationalism are fixed entities. Nationalism in particular has gone through various phases. As mentioned above, the 'borderline' between Christianity and Islam is the focal point of this research. The evolutionary phases of the relationship between nationalism and religion as exemplified in the Greek-Turkish and the Ethio-Somali conflicts are particularly useful in investigating how official nationalism uses religion in states' disputes to consolidate political power within the state and to mobilize citizens in case of external threat or expansion.

The Greece-Turkey and Ethiopia-Somalia 'couples' are not identical, but rather represent nationalisms originating in different historical contexts with religion as a major component. There are many similarities and differences in the two conflicts: Ethiopia and Turkey are multi-ethnic entities. Turkey was created on the remains of the Ottoman empire; Ethiopia's centrifugal tensions show a similar tendency. Greece combines nationalism with Orthodox Christianity. Ethiopia is traditionally conceived as a Christian nation among the areas where Islam ceased its unique spread during and after the Prophet's lifetime. Turkey and Somalia are both countries in which the vast majority of the population is Muslim. Islam, the more recent of the two religions, threatened the Christian regions by surrounding them when they started expanding their rule. In the case of the Ottoman Turks it was the Christian Byzantine Empire and later on Vienna. In the case of Somalis and other Muslim peoples it was the Christian Abyssinian Empire.

Both conflicts illustrate the links between state, nationalism and religion. In some ways, the Greek revolution in 1821 against the Ottoman Turks and the subsequent irredentist movement of the new Greek state resembles the Somali case. Independent Somalia after 1960 included in the state agenda the incorporation/liberation of Ogaden, an Ethiopian province inhabited by ethnic Somalis (together with other regions in the Horn of Africa inhabited by Somalis).

In all four countries religion played and still continues to play a significant role in the states' disputes. Religion defines in the best way identities and constituencies which are used in the overall attempt of the

nationalist projects to make the borders of the state coincide with those of the nation. State/official nationalism manipulates religious feelings whenever it suits the state's political goals or undermines them whenever they might create ambiguities in the state's official policy.

In a schematic way we could identify these forms of official nationalism as follows:

Greece (Christianity)
post French revolution
irridentist

Turkey (Islam)
post-Empire
nation building

Ethiopia (Christianity)
Empire
consolidation

Somalia (Islam)
post-colonial state
irredentist

THE GREEK-TURKISH CONFLICT

Hellenism and Orthodoxy

Though I am a Hellene by speech, yet I would never say that I was a Hellene, for I do not believe as the Hellenes believed. I should like to take my name from my Faith, and if anyone asked me what I am answer "Christian" (The Patriarch of Constantinople Gennadius (d.1468) as quoted in Kedourie, 1960:77).

Historical evidence indicates that Greeks in the ancient times were conscious of their shared common identity, though not always transforming it into a political unity. Greeks were sharing a common past, their dialects belonged to the same linguistic family; they had common sacred places, religion, myths and traditions.

As the quotation at the beginning of this chapter points out, there is - or better saying there was - a distinction between Hellenism, that is the Greek identity as such, and the religious faith of the people who were identified with Hellenism through language. The identity of the bearers of the glorious past of Greece came to a turning point during the times of the Byzantine Empire when Christianity spread across the Mediterranean. This new element was incompatible with the previously practised religions in the region.

One should note that the introductory quote was made at a much later date, in fact just 18 years after the fall of Constantinople to the hands of the Ottoman Turks in 1453. The Ottoman Turks followed the dictates of Islam. The basic distinction between believers and non-believers would characterize the relations between the Muslim rulers and the conquered infidels. "The status, the rights and the duties of the dhimmi (dhimmi is a non-Muslim subject of a Muslim ruler) therefore derive exclusively from his membership of a protected community" (Vatikiotis, 1987:87).

Under the new rulers, the Patriarch was assigned the position of the spiritual leader of all Christians within the new empire and was expected to act as such. Whether the hierarchy of the Orthodox church was in favour of the new establishment and its order or not is an issue that this paper does not address. What is important to note in this connection is the fact that through this new relationship, the church became the middleman between the Muslim Turks and the conquered Christian population. This population was by no means all Greek in origin, but it was certainly Orthodox.

Orthodox Christians were considered a special group or nation and the Patriarch the leader or 'ethnarch' (millet basi). Orthodox Christians had in a way an autonomy in their own affairs not only in the religious but also in family, social and educational affairs. The Patriarch was considered responsible toward the state. The state was also passing bills for religious matters (Makris, 1992:6-7).

This development was a crucial one since it contributed a great deal to the construction of modern Greek nationalism. "But today, with the spread of nationalist doctrine, this opposition between Hellenism and orthodoxy is itself rejected. Orthodoxy and Hellenism are thought to go together and imply one another..." (Kedourie, 1960:77).

In order to understand this transformation it is imperative to keep in mind that during the time of the Turkish rule (15th-19th centuries a.D.) there was no other legal institution to represent the oppressed Christian

peoples of the empire.

It was the Byzantine Church which transmitted, not only the literature and culture, but even the idea of Greece, frozen under Turkish rule. Turkish-speaking, Vlach-speaking, Albanian-speaking Orthodox subjects of Turkey, even when they were settled in Anatolia, were loyal, or sympathetic, to Greek independence; while Bulgarian-speaking Muslim Pomaks, and Greek-speaking Cretan Muslims supported Turkey...Throughout the Balkans, Islamisation meant eventually Turkification. Yet this equation only became apparent when nationalism had already emerged; for before 1900 nobody thought in terms of 'Turkification' only of 'Ottomanisation' (Arnakis in Smith, 1971:56).

"Orthodoxy may well have 'preserved' intact the sense of community as fertile ground for nationalism, when and if it arose. But its role ends there. It was the Enlightenment that acted as a catalyst for the nationalist movement" (ibid). In the case of Greece, religion became the fertile ground for nationalism. Despite the fact that the official church as such in many instances 'delayed' the revolution in an attempt to preserve its own power that could be endangered, there are many cases of religious leaders who fought before, during, and after the revolution against the Ottoman Turks. Most important of all it gave its blessings for the revolution in 1821.

Greek Nationalism, Religion and Political Mobilisation

Our capital is Constantinople. Our national temple is Hagia Sophia, for 900 years the glory of Christendom. The Patriarch of Constantinople is our spiritual leader (a woman from Thessalonica as quoted in Severy, 1983:760).

In order to analyze the contribution to and function of the Orthodox church within modern Greek nationalism we must address first and foremost the latter aspect. Greek and Armenian nationalism arose among populations which were generally more prosperous and better able to understand the wealth-generating economies of modern Europe than their Ottoman Muslim overlords (Kedourie in Gellner, 1983:108). During the Ottoman domination, Greeks were in key positions in commerce, administration and diplomacy. At the same time large and prosperous Greek communities of scholars and merchants were created in many European cities. These social groups together with the clergy, the landlords and the peasants constituted the structure of the Greek society.

The Hellenes initially thought not so much in terms of secession from the Ottoman Empire, as of inverting the hierarchy within it and taking it over, thereby reviving Byzantium. The first Greek rising took place not in Greece, but in what is now Rumania, where the Greeks were a minority, and moreover one doing rather well out of the Ottoman system. The use of what is now southern Greece as a territorial basis only came later (Gellner, 1983:106).

This fabrication of an imaginary past was a prominent feature of that original 'progressive' national-liberation struggle, the Greek War of Independence of the 1820s (Nairn, 1975:18). The reconstruction of the Byzantine Empire, the liberation of all lands that were inhabited by Greeks in 'a Greece of two continents and five seas' became the main motto of the newly independent state in the Balkans. This led to many wars that created piece by piece what is now known as Greece since World War II. In this tremendous effort that for all practical purposes ended in 1922, the church mainly provided the moral justification and the necessary 'package of symbols' with which to motivate the people.

The formation and structure of the Orthodox church, at least as far as the Greek Orthodox church is concerned, is different by far from that of the Vatican. In contradiction with the Catholic church, which has on top of the religious a 'cosmic' character as well, Orthodoxy does not have such a system, that means it does not have a centralised system of organisation (Makris, 1992:3). This is very important in order to understand that despite the power that derives from the theological affiliation of the possible believers, the traditional links with the society and the economic dependency on the people and partly on the state, the Orthodox church never had the form of a state such as the Vatican. This does not mean that it never opposed the state and its policies, but that rather was under its domain, enjoying the status of a very privileged institution.

Having played a crucial role during the Turkish occupation and being traditionally under the auspices of the state, the Orthodox church served as the ideologue of the state's nationalist project. The position of the Patriarchate in Constantinople/Istanbul, the most important city of the enemy, the church's symbols - the two eagles with the crown - which were the signs of the Byzantine Empire is enough evidence to assist us in understanding its role in contemporary Greek nationalism.

Nowadays, despite the fact that Greece is a secular state, the Orthodox church is a powerful institution both in economic terms as well as an influential pillar of the society. The Ministry of National Education and Religions is a stronghold of Orthodoxy. According to the Greek constitution, religious faith and its exercise is free. Nevertheless, according to the Orthodox tradition, all children of Orthodox parents are baptised when they are very young (until they are 3 years old). Religion as a class in all public and private schools in Greece is an obligatory course for Orthodox children. The books for the course are practically approved by the church, though the latter does not have an official veto vis-a-vis their context. In general, primary and secondary education is based on what is called in Greek 'Hellenic-Orthodox tradition'.

This does not in any case mean that the church is controlling the educational system, but rather that there is a consensus regarding the role it has played in the Greek history. Since Orthodoxy is combined with the successful preservation of Hellenism, she is believed to be capable of continuing this task. Crises on issues such as civil marriage, free abortions or the debate on land that the church still owns have occurred but have not brought serious doubts about the fundamental importance of the church and its ex officio privileges. Even recent discussions on constitutional changes and a possible separation between the state and the church does not address the issue that, to all extents and purposes, priests are state employees.

The church seldom takes initiatives on issues that would create hostility with the state and its policies. In the post-Cold War era and the developments that followed the collapse of the communist regimes in Eastern and Central Europe, the church was caught by surprise. It is mobilizing its constituencies in order not to be marginalised. Old, and in a way forgotten, problems with the Catholic church are reemerging to disturb the relations of the two religious bodies as they both compete for the peoples of Eastern and Central Europe in regions such as Russia, Bulgaria, Rumania and the Ukraine that have been predominantly Orthodox.

The Greek-Orthodox church is most sensitive on national issues. In his Easter message, the Archbishop of Greece Seraphim, speaking about the problems of the country said that "almost half of Cyprus is still suffering under foreign occupation. Our brothers, the Northern-Epirotes [in Albania] are desperately struggling for their rights. Audacious and anti-historical neighbours, in the midst of their expansionist hysteria, dare to offend the hellenic character of our Macedonia for which character centuries advocate" (Seraphim, 1992:7).

Such messages and many more articles as well as campaigns have recently started appearing in most

Greek newspapers and the media in general since nationalistic tensions have multiplied. The church once again is following its historically defined role of 'the mother of the nation'. Whether there could be an alternative approach from the part of the church is an open question. Today most of the players in the international scene are following old patterns, reestablishing traditional links in their attempt to realise old dreams that have not been forgotten.

Turkey and Islam

God Almighty, I have an army which I have named the Turks. Whenever I am wroth with a people, I unleash the Turks upon them (according to Arabic tradition put into the mouth of the Prophet, quoted in Lewis, 1955:18).

According to Lewis, the earliest home of the Turks was somewhere between the Tien Shan Mountains and the Aral Sea (Lewis, 1955:17). Moving westward since the 6th century a.D. they came in touch with different kinds of peoples and civilizations. Soon they abandoned their ancestral religion, "an animistic worship of the sky, earth and water" (ibid), to adopt Islam.

Turks came to Asia Minor and Europe in waves, as Hindoeuropeans did some 3000 years before them. The first ones to come and establish a state were the Seljuk Turks, named after Seljuk an ancestor of the ruling family. In 1071 they beat the Byzantine forces in Manzikert and were installed in Nicaea. Later on another Turkish tribe under the leadership of Osman became the most powerful one. These years were of great importance for the Turks; for the first time they settled down and organised themselves as well as prepared further attacks in order to expand their rule.

At the time the Byzantine Empire is in decline. The Ottoman Turks took advantage of it and, except when interrupted by attacks from the Mongols, kept attempting to siege and capture its capital. In 1453 under the leadership of Muhammad, they finally took Constantinople and practically dismantled the Byzantine Empire.

One of the most important features of the Ottoman Empire concerning its Muslim character is that of the Caliphate. The word caliph comes from arabic and means successor. The term was used since Abu Bakr succeeded the Prophet after his death as political and military chief. The Caliphate came to an end in 1258, when the Mongols under Hulagu sacked Baghdad, the seat of the Abbasid dynasty of Caliphs. Later, the Mamlukes revived the tradition in order to legitimize their own power in Egypt. When the Turks conquered Egypt the Ottoman Sultans started regarding themselves as Caliphs (1517). Lewis is of the opinion that none of the Sultans made much play with the title until Abdul-hamid II, and as such declared himself spiritual leader of all Islamic peoples (Lewis, 1955: 21).

During the Ottoman period, which lasted until the beginning of the present century, Turks identified themselves with Islam. Living in and ruling a multiethnic state which distinguished the conquered peoples along religious lines (Greek-Orthodox, Armenian-Orthodox and Jewish), they legitimized their authority via Islam. This very principal explains in a way the approach of the Turks later on toward the other ethnic communities in Turkey which were Islamic, such as the Kurdish and the Arabic. This identification with their religious faith made them lose contact with their pre-Islamic past, in contradiction with the Arabs and the Persians. This strong attachment to Islam started becoming problematic when the empire declined. The spread of nationalism in the Balkans and the creation of nation-states (Greece in 1830, Serbia in 1878, Montenegro in 1878, Rumania in 1878 and Bulgaria in 1908) brought frustration to the Ottoman elite. During the reign of Abdul-hamid II, "Ottomanism was replaced with a somewhat manipulative though emotionally potent Pan-Islamism" (Ross,

1981:323-327). In a world shaken by the strength and perspective of nationalism, the Turks were late. "Nationalism came to them in a way that was very late, somewhat artificial, and extremely problematic" (ibid).

The Turkish Secular State, Official Nationalism and Religion

Whilst I was looking for the Beloved up in heaven, I did not find Him there but on earth, in Turan (Gokalp, Z. as quoted in Heyd, 1950:84).

The main goal of Turkey, when entering the E.E.C., will be the Islamization of Christianity (Mr. Sirt, Turkish Minister of the President, 9/11/1989 (as quoted in Christodoulos, 1992:10).

In the previous section we discussed the way Islam became a decisive factor in Turkish history and identity. Since the decline of the Ottoman Empire - middle of the 19th century - the case of its future started bothering the Great Powers of the time. This problem gave the Empire the name of 'the sick Man of Europe'. The period of the reign of Abdul-hamid (1878-1908), called "the era of absolutism" (Lewis, 1955:37-42) is marked by the acceptance of the Pan-Islamic ideal by the Sultan in his efforts to accomodate himself to the changed environment, the strengthening of relations between the Ottomans and the Germans which in turn solidified Ottoman powerhold, and finally the establishment of a secret organisation in 1889, named 'the Ottoman Society for Union and Progress'. The constitution that was accepted by the Sultan in 1908 made possible in part due to the influence of the Society. The constitution was meant to usher in a period in which three main political doctrines would strive for domination, namely Ottomanism, Pan-Islamism and Pan-Turkism.

He saw his dream of finding an ideology to pull the empire together collapsing. Finally Pan-Turkism, the newest of all, aimed to uniting all Turks in Asia in one state. Ziya Gokalp is believed to be the founder of Turkish Nationalism. He was a distinguished intellectual and politician, a leading figure of the 'Society for Union and Progress'. Having passed through a period of supporting the Ottomanist doctrine, he ended up being the champion of Pan-Turkism and Pan-Turanism, with the latter emphasising the union of all Turkic peoples from the Aegean Sea and the former Soviet Muslim Republics to the Western Provinces of China.

As far as religion is concerned he wanted to separate religion and State, that is, to put an end to the domination of Islam over the political and social life of the Turkish nation, and to separate religion and Oriental civilization and thus make possible the maintenance of the fundamental values of Islam side by side with European civilization and Turkish national culture (Heyd, 1950:88). He returned to the pre-Islamic period of the Turks to praise their achievements. He proposed a language reform that would clear the language spoken at his time from all arabic and persian influences. His main slogan became 'we belong to the Turkish nation, the Muslim religious community and the European civilization' (ibid:149). With his intellectual and political activity he became the ideologue of a new era for the Turks.

The events that followed World War I, the de facto partition of the Ottoman Empire and especially the Greek presence and subsequent territorial expansion led to the revolution of the Young Turks (1918-1920), led by Mustafa Kemal. The great personality of the leader of the movement dominated the political scene of Turkey until his death in 1938. His principles still form the base of the Turkish Republic. Ataturk (father of the Turks) initiated radical reforms that aimed at changing social behaviours, norms and beliefs that were dominant for hundreds of years.

The defeat of the Greeks in Asia Minor led to the consolidation of the nationalistic forces in power.

"Nationalism became the ideology of the new Turkish Republic. Republicanism, populism, secularism, statism and reformism - officially proclaimed as additional principles in 1931 and incorporated in the constitution of 1937 - were merely corollaries of nationalism. Nationalism aimed at creating an integrated Turkish national state or a modern political system that superseded all religious, regional, and group identities and loyalties" (Karpaz, 1982:366).

Religion was seen as an obstacle for the realisation of the nationalistic project. The abolition of the Caliphate (1924), the abolition of the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Pious Foundations (1924), the dissolution of the dervish orders - religious semi-independent bodies - (1925), the dismantling of Islam as a state religion (1928), and the 'Turkification' of the Islam call to prayer (1932) had as a goal the elimination of the institutional influence of religion in modern Turkish life (Mardin, 1982:179). Together with changes that affected language, the judiciary system and education - especially the one concerning religious schools - 'Ataturkism' as it is known was a breakthrough for the creation of the new 'Turkish identity'.

Mardin, referring to the pre-World War II era, argues that the Republic's new approach toward religion left some gaping holes in the fabric of society. In Ottoman society, the Islamic religion defined for many individuals the means by which they handled their encounters with daily life. It served to crystallize their identities and to regulate psychological tensions...There was an attempt to fill the vacuum for new values through cultivation of certain elements of ancient Turkish, or Central Asian culture, but this new ideology did not 'take' in large popular masses (Mardin, 1982:180-181).

After World War II, a multiparty system opened the door for all voices to be heard. The dualism in modern Turkey - Islam and/or Nationalism - created an ambiguity that transcends even today the Turkish society. In the 1950s the Democratic Party that came into power gave a new emphasis to religion. The new prime minister, Adnan Menderes, stated that Turkey was a Muslim country and would so remain" (Mardin, 1982:183). This led to the intervention of the army which came in power in 1960 to guide the country according to the principles of Ataturk. But it seems that religion has very strong roots in Turkish life despite the efforts of the army. It is important to mention the emergence of the National Salvation Party in the 1970s which favoured the creation of an Islamic state in Turkey, as well the Nationalist Action Party, which never tried to hide its ultra right wing nationalistic approach. The influential role they played, the strengthening of radical leftist-Marxist organisations and the following civil unrest led to another military intervention. The coup d'etat in 1980, led by general Kenan Evren, suspended all political parties and promised to restore order according to the principles of Ataturk once again...

It seems that religion in the case of Turkey has been a serious obstacle to the nationalistic project. According to this project Westernization involves the elimination of Islam's influence in everyday and political life. There seems to exist a tendency in the Turkish society which creates backlashes to the realisation of this project.

It would appear that the initial perspective of Ataturk's nationalism was first and foremost the continuation of Turkey as a political unit that could transform the crumbling remains of the Ottoman rule. In this approach, Islam was seen as an inadequate ideology because i) nationalism had already 'awakened' the Islamic minorities in the country, ii) the Christian ones within Turkey were in one way or another driven to extinction, iii) in a world of nations an Islamic Turkey would seem an old fashioned model, vulnerable to further disintegration. Turkey, through its foreign policy since the establishment of the Republic, has shown that religion was the obstacle for nation-building only in the interior. The 'card' of Islam is used in the most

suitable way as part of its strategic and international orientations.

We still do not know whether the Turkish system is 'working', nor do we know what role religion will play in the long run in Turkish politics. For the moment, and despite the Iranian revolution, religious extremism does not appear to be the central issue. Despite the weakness of the major parties in the pre-1981 period, it appears that they are responsible for the fact that the classic political cleavages between the bourgeois and the nonbourgeois, between the urban and the rural, the industrial and the agricultural, are no longer translated into pro-Islamic and anti-Islamic (Binder, 1988:349).

The Conflict Today: More Scope for Religion?

The problems between Greece and Turkey create continuous tension at the crossroads of the Eastern Mediterranean Plateau. The strategic position of both countries could be summarised in the fact that they 'control' the gateways to the Black Sea and Russia, the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf. Both countries belong to NATO, while Greece enjoys membership in the EEC and Turkey is striving for admission.

The historical background, as described and analyzed in the previous sections, demonstrates the enormous suspiciousness that is involved in the two countries' relations. The conflict between Turkey and Greece involves i) the Cyprus question, ii) the Aegean Sea and the Greek islands (air space, sea shore belt, militarisation etc) where Turkey refuses to accept the new law of the sea, and iii) the minorities; according to the treaty of Lausanne between Greece and Turkey that was meant to deal with 'the minorities problem' by exchanging populations, excluded from the agreement of exchanging populations were the Greeks in Constantinople/Istanbul (103,000), and in the islands of Imvros/Gokceada and Tenedos/Bozcaada (8,200) and the Moslems in Western Thrace (106,000) who remained where they were (Chidioglou, 1992:79).

Cyprus, an island with a strategic position in Eastern Mediterranean, became a British dominion in 1878. Its population is divided between Greeks (80%), Turks (18%), and Maronites and Armenians (2%). Since the Greek war of independence, the Greek-Cypriots have been struggling for unification with Greece. In 1955 the liberation war against the British began. The latter, in order to prevent such a development, involved the Turkish minority and Turkey herself. Greeks wanted unification with Greece, the Turks partition of the island. In 1960 the island became independent but problems came quickly after its liberation from the British. They regarded mainly constitutional changes that the Greeks favoured. Such changes would lessen the extra powers that the Turkish population had.

In 1967 the Greek junta in Athens organised and realised a coup d'etat against the president of Cyprus Makarios - who was also the Archbishop of the Autocephalous Greek-Orthodox Church of the island. Turkey reacted by invading the island. This led to ethnic cleansing and partition of Cyprus. In 1983 the Turkish-occupied North declared its 'independence' by establishing the so called 'Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus' which is only recognised by Turkey. "Cyprus, then, is a locus classicus of destabilization in the age of detente. Its elimination from the scene as a threat to imperial influence involved the systematic manipulation of racial and religious hostilities, the imposition of military despotism in two countries for a total of ten years, the financing of subversion and terror among the civilian population and the risk of a generalised war in the Aegean" (Hitchens, 1975:73). This problem is still the major one in the two countries' relations as Athens sees it as a practice that realised an old Turkish plan. This practice could be easily applied in other conflict cases of the two countries.

A similar interpretation could be applied to the minorities issue. From the number of Greeks in Turkey, today less than 3,000, mainly elderly persons remain in Constantinople (The Guardian, 24.4.1992). The deportation of thousands of Greeks in 1955 and 1963 (crises in Cyprus), the Turkish government's decision on the fact that any Patriarch should have Turkish citizenship, the famous theological School of Chalki which was closed in 1971 and many other pieces fill in the puzzle of the Greek-Turkish context.

Similar accusations come from the Turkish part concerning the Muslims in Western Thrace. They are conceived as Turks by the Turkish authorities. According to the Greek authorities the Muslim minority (110.000 people according to Greek officials) consists of three ethnic origins, Turkish, Pomak (who speak an idiom similar to Bulgarian) and Gypsy. They have been represented in all Greek parliaments through Greek political parties, though lately two independent Muslim MP's have been elected, claiming that they represent the Turks living in Greece. Their activities concerning cooperation with the party that represents the Turkish minority in Bulgaria and Turkish officials as well as statements that they make and doubt about the status of Western Thrace have accelerated tension that hopefully has not - yet? - affected the relations within the local population. In 1993 no Muslim MP was reelected, partly due to a newly-instated three percent lower threshold for any party to elect MPs.

Another incident that describes the manipulation of religion took place in 1991. In the case of the election of the successor of the Patriarch in Constantinople, the Patriarchate was sieged by Turkish demonstrators for days. Their demand was that the mufti (religious leader of Muslims) of Western Thrace should not be appointed by the representative of the Greek state in the region - a normal practice in Turkey for muftis in the country - but rather elected by the people.

The developments after the collapse of the communist regimes in Central and Eastern Europe have changed the scene in the world as well as in the Balkans. Turkey is in the privileged position, but critical as well, of presenting herself as 'the success of a secular Muslim state'. The newly independent countries of Central Asia, many of which have Turkic ethnic populations, ask for Turkey's support and guidance. The West, having in mind Iran as another potential model for these countries, is backing Turkey in her effort to embrace them. Similar changes in the Balkans give Turkey another advantage to expand her interests (the majority of Albanians is Muslim, a future Muslim Bosnia, Turkish minorities in the former Yugoslavia).

Given these perspectives Turkey seems to attain the position of a regional superpower. But what about the internal dimensions of the country? What about the dualism between Islam and Nationalism/secularism? Ahmad has argued that Ozal's policy (the late president of the state) has encouraged the expansion of Koranic schools, which are run by various religious orders patronised by the parties in return for political support. The Motherland Party (Ozal's party) has also supported the growth of state-run schools for chaplains and preachers. In the past decade, the expansion of religious education has been on such a scale that it is said to have overtaken secular education" (Ahmad, 1988:765).

Over the last decade there has been a visible increase in Islamic sentiment and traditions in Turkey. The political implications of this trend, however, should not be exaggerated. Although religion continues to play an important role in the countryside, and this has recently made some gains in the city, the Turkish elite, especially the military, are strongly committed to keeping Turkey a secular state...Thus whereas Turkey is likely to continue to expand its ties to the Muslim states of the Arab world, there is little real danger of Turkey's becoming a radical Muslim state or turning its back completely on the West (Larrabee, 1990:199-200).

The new dimension of Turkey, as a regional power, has a significant effect on the Greek perceptions about Turkey's position especially as far as the Balkans are concerned. Greek politicians portray this possibility as an expansion of Islam against Christianity. Andrianopoulos, a conservative politician and former spokesman for the Greek government, wrote in 1990 in a monograph concerning Islam and its dangers for Greece: "The support of our national rights should not be for the West a result of a moral choice, but a conscious action for the protection of her own interests on the basis of a Christian solidarity in front of the danger of Islamic expansionism" (Andrianopoulos, 1990:42). Many others, like Archbishop Christodoulos, speak about a Muslim curtain that is being sewn as a part of Turkey's will to reestablish a new empire, and propose the construction of an 'Orthodox front' against Islamic fanaticism and Turkish expansionism (Christodoulos, 1992:10).

The criticism in Greece that comes from religious and political leaders is that the Orthodox church is not ready to act for the sake of Christianity and Hellenism, lost as it is in internal rivalries and fights. Politicians seem to sense a nationalistic revival as a result of the lack of a vision for the future, backed by existing national dangers such as the Turkish expansionism and the continuation of the occupation in Cyprus, the 'Macedonian question' and the situation of the Greek minority in Albania (Marakis, 1992:6).

It is posited here that the role of religion in the conflicting interests between the two countries will grow. Probably not as the decisive element but surely as a factor that defines the ideological arsenal in a conflict that is evolving. It is through religion that Greece consolidates internal unity combining the past with the future. It is Orthodoxy as an ideological formula that distinguishes the nation and defines its cultural allies. It is through religion that Turkey can have access to neighbouring countries and create a new power block. The only difference is that in the case of Turkey, where Islam has served as a force to unite multiethnic entities and give them a less nationalistic character, such a perspective has the danger of giving space to these forces that can possibly alter the very essence of the project.

THE ETHIO-SOMALI CONFLICT

Ethiopia and Christianity

From this moment I will not worship the sun but the creator of the sun, the God of Israel (the Queen of Sheba in *Kebrā Nagast*, chapter 28 as quoted in Ullendorff, 1973:94).

The Aksumite civilisation which was established around 500 b.C. is the evidence of Ethiopia's deep-rooted cultural heritage. This civilisation flourished in the northern plateau of contemporary Ethiopia. It was a mixture of Cushitic and Semitic elements. The latter were introduced to the region through colonizers who crossed the Red Sea from the southern part of the Arabic peninsula. These colonizers also 'brought' the Geez language. Kaplan suggests that we should speak about a "more complex and two-sided interaction" of the two ingredients of the Aksumite era (Kaplan, 1988:148), whereas Markakis speaks of "Semitized Aksumite culture" whose basic elements "underwent major modification, emerging in highly syncretic forms" (Markakis, 1974:27).

During the reign of Ezana, in the early 4th century a.D. Christianity was introduced to the kingdom, probably through Syrian monks who were in favour of the Monophysite doctrine, which was condemned by the Ecumenical synod in Chalcedon in 451 a.D. They translated the Bible into Geez, introduced the Alexandrine liturgy and music, founded monasteries, and built churches (Markakis, 1974:28). Around 900 a.D. Aksum started declining due to the wars with Islamic peoples. The Aksumites moved to the highlands where they could be more easily protected. In this way they preserved their unique, especially in African terms, indigenous Christian culture.

During the 14th century religion for the first time becomes a major 'player' in Abyssinian politics. *Kebrā Nagast* is a significant work which appeared in the 14th century. It refers to an ancient legend of the visit of the Queen of Sheba to King Solomon of Israel. When she came back she gave birth to his son Menelik I, who became the first king of Ethiopia with direct blood relation with King Solomon. During his life, king Menelik visited his father and before leaving he stole the Ark of the Covenant and brought it to Ethiopia. This book was, and still is, very important since in a very clear way states who has the right to claim the throne, that is whoever is deriving from the Solomonic dynasty. The text establishes three key groups (the kings, the nobles, and the priests) as direct descendants of the Israelites and attempts to define the relationship between them: Ethiopia is to be ruled only by male descendants of Menelik, who were later identified with the dynasty established by Yekunno Amlak, the nobles were to give their complete loyalty to the king, depending upon the priests to rebuke him and God to punish him (Kaplan, 1988:153).

Among many important elements that *Kebrā Nagast* incorporated within the official ideology of the Abyssinian state is the fact that it brought back the history of the kingdom many more years. It gave it the necessary divine legitimacy as far as the institutionalised political system is concerned. It reinforced the distinctive peculiarity of Ethiopian Christianity since with the transportation of the Ark and the direct connection with Israel, it transmitted the ideology of 'the chosen people' according to the Bible. It also gave the moral justification for the expansion of the empire that followed.

As far as the Ethiopian Orthodox church is concerned Kaplan believes that we should make a distinction between those in the clergy who accepted the king's position and authority - as a descendant of Solomon he was the leader of the church - and those who challenged it. The fact that the religious leader of the Ethiopian church

- the 'Abuna' - was appointed by the Patriarchate of Alexandria and that he was an Egyptian Copt was making things difficult. He was more or less a captive of his identity since he was a Christian subject of Muslim Egypt and every action of his could have direct effects on his Christian compatriots in Egypt. Speaking another language, and being foreign to the local customs and intrigues he had limited powers. Kaplan refers to "monastic movements which arose during the early Solomonic period representing an attempt by regional groups to oppose the encroachment of the Solomonic kings on traditional rights and privileges" (Kaplan, 1988:159). These movements were also opposing the Abuna appointed by the Patriarchate in Alexandria. The animosity between the rebellious monks and the official church lasted until 1450, when Zar'a Ya'eqob managed to unify the two parties and launch a proselytisation campaign (Kaplan, 1988:158-167).

In general, the Ethiopian church did not show much interest in converting the pagan peoples of the northern plateau. Rather, it appears that it was more the political and military advantages of the Abyssinians that helped their domination than the process of integration through Christianity (Markakis, 1974:31). During the time of schism in the Ethiopian church, the monks who were opposing the Abuna and the king were engaged in converting people more due to the fact that they were appointed or went in exile in bordering regions of the state. These areas had mixed populations of Christians and pagans and these monks were motivated more by their need to create strongholds in order to exercise their 'rule' and continued challenging the establishment than by their possible religious zeal for Christianity.

Nevertheless, the Ethiopian church seems to have succeeded in her mission to legitimize royal authority, and to preserve the continuation of the Abyssinian identity. Her performance gave her the right to claim that she became one of the pillars - together with monarchy and nobility - that constituted this original society. Later on we will examine religion's role in the construction of the Empire state and its character.

The Empire and the Orthodox Church

Ethiopia is the largest Christian state in the Middle East (Haile Selassie addressing the United States Congress in 1954, in Markakis, 1987:73).

After many years of isolation and withdrawal, mainly because of the continuous struggle against Islamic powers (see next section), in the middle of the 19th century successful emperors managed to consolidate their imperial power and to expand the borders of the state to what is today known as Ethiopia. A prominent figure is that of emperor Menelik II (1889-1913). He reigned during the era of the emergence of European colonialism in the Horn of Africa and succeeded in preventing the establishment of colonial rule in his country. The famous battle in Adowa, where the Italian forces were defeated, gave him the privileged position to negotiate as an equal and to consolidate his power. According to the Treaty of 1906 which was signed by France, Italy and Britain, the independence of Ethiopia - except Eritrea which became an Italian colony - was recognised.

The emperor under whose rule the imperial/feudal political system reached its highest level is Haile Selassie. He attained monarchical power in 1916 and was crowned emperor in 1930. His power was interrupted only during World War II, when the Italians invaded Ethiopia in 1936 until the end of the war. Haile Selassie "had neither the strength nor the vision to implement the reforms for which there was so much need" (Halliday and Molyneux, 1981:58). The emperor, even if he wanted to, was unable to change things. The alternative he finally pursued in order to face the powers of the nobility that had been a traditional component of the empire state, was further centralisation, which led to autocracy and absolutism. The old pattern of feudal clientelism in the economic and political spheres was followed religiously.

In the ideological field, there was a concentration on the divine personality of the leader; the official nationalism practically meant Amharization. Amhara, being - together with Tigre - the dominant Christian group were first class citizens, while the rest, and mainly the Muslim peoples of the empire who probably constituted the majority, had to choose between assimilation and marginalisation. In this respect the Ethiopian Orthodox Church played an important role in providing the establishment with the necessary ideological equipment that legitimized its domination.

One of the major changes that Haile Selassie brought about was that he agreed with the Patriarchate of Alexandria in appointing an Ethiopian as Abuna. The autocephalous status that the Ethiopian Church attained, in addition to resolving an old dispute, meant further 'nationalisation' of religion and practically more control of the state over her structures and functions. The church being a part of the feudal system controlled great parts of the land. Traditionally the church has claimed in principle no less than a third of all the land in the kingdom (Markakis, 1974:92). This land was not in the immediate possession of the church, but their users had to pay tribute to the local church. It is quite obvious that in this way the land of the church was integrated in the traditional provincial landholding system that lacked centralised authority. The leadership of the church was provided with income from land in the same manner as the secular officials of the state" (ibid, 96).

An attempt for a more centralised ecclesiastical organisation took place with the reforms of Haile Selassie. This process started during the Occupation, for the Italians first attacked the Church as a centre of national resistance, and then divided it by inducing some of the senior clergy to support them and to excommunicate those who opposed the Italian regime . As a result a central church treasury was established, the church land was defined and became subject to taxation, the church courts were abolished, and finally high ecclesiastical appointments had to be approved by the Emperor (Clapham, 1969:82)).

Nevertheless the clergy in Imperial Ethiopia preserved its privileged position. Though attached to the provincial feudal system, the clergy was the necessary link that could promote unity and stability without challenging the very foundations of a system which was bringing profit to the church as well. Being in the very heart of the 'divine order' that prescribed Ethiopia's future it enjoyed high economic and social status.

Ethiopian Muslims, exempted from access to state power, had also great problems in maintaining their educational system (Markakis, 1974:157). The annexation of Eritrea and the subsequent abolishment of her status as a self-ruled federal state of Ethiopia created even greater problems. In his speech at the time of signing the Federal Act, the emperor said: "Not only will the Eritreans constitute and participate in their local government, but they, Christians and Moslems alike, will receive the fruits of self-determination and freedom through the fullest participation in all branches and levels of the Imperial Ethiopian Government" (Talbot, 1955:480). This verbal tolerance was never transformed to a clear secular, non-Amharic political practice. The events that followed in Eritrea, but also in other regions of the imperial state, demonstrate dissatisfaction rooted in the exclusion. The continuous attempt to assimilate peoples that did not have the credentials of subordination to His Imperial Majesty created the necessary fertile ground for the opposition forces that took in many instances an ethnic character.

At the time that the imperial regime was following the traditional pattern of domination, significant changes were taking place within the Ethiopian society. The politicisation of the students since the time of an attempted military coup against the emperor in 1960 became a radical variable. Having ideological input from the Ethiopian students who were studying abroad they created the most viable oppositional force. The dissatisfaction that was coming from the middle ranks of the military became another decisive factor. The

emergence of a new group of people who were urban and employed in the modern sector constituted the third actor in a process that led to the revolution of 1974 (Halliday and Molyneux, 1981:74-82).

In the ideological field the "church-centred Ethiopian nationalism" was proving to be inadequate. Firstly, the Pan-African orientation of Ethiopian foreign policy did not match with the long standing problems with Islam. Secondly, due to the modernization process that had started in the country; modernization demanded structural changes that affected the dominant political and economic forces. The church was not able to adjust. The need for the emperor to negotiate and even make concessions to the Muslims created a new ground with which the Ethiopian Orthodoxy could not cope (Clapham, 1969:84-86).

The Ethiopian revolution in 1974 and the new regime of the Dergue created no space for religion. The abolition of the imperial system of which the church was a part diminished significantly its role in the Ethiopian society. The adoption of 'Marxism-Leninism a la Mengistu' changed the ideological orientation of the state. "Basically Ethiopia has existed as a nation since prehistoric times. The religions of Christianity and Islam came after Ethiopia and Ethiopianism" (Markakis, 1987:245). Soon after the revolution the Dergue declared that the Ethiopian Orthodox church would no longer have the status of the official church of the state. After consolidating its own power the Dergue moved against it. In 1977 the Abuna Theophilos was removed from office and arrested. Later on other religious leaders were arrested or assassinated (Schwab, 1985:92-95).

By depriving the church of access to land and state funding, the new regime aimed at breaking the links with the imperial past that was based upon economic and cultural oppression. The initial promises about equality among the various nationalities of Ethiopia and their respective religious affiliations were covered by a centralist model of administration and control. Mengistu's regime practically managed to multiply ethnic conflict. The socialist rhetoric about the class struggle that all Ethiopians were involved in seemed inadequate to unify Ethiopians.

When the ancien regime fell, the empire state survived. The ideology changed, the ownership of the productive forces changed but its essential characteristics remained if not reinforced. Ethiopia is a unique creation of expansion and domination. During the imperial history there was a continuous demand for decentralisation. The various oppressed ethnic groups that struggled - and still do - for self-rule did not see an alternative under Mengistu's dictatorship. The autocratic and tyrannic Haile Selassie, his nobles and the clergy were replaced by the autocratic and tyrannic Mengistu Haile Mariam and the party. The recent developments in this legendary country of Africa show that the possibility of a dismantling of Ethiopia as a state is *ante portas*. As long as the true core of the problem is not faced - that is autocracy, ethnic tolerance and centralisation - the problem will remain the same if not explode with unexpected consequences.

Islam and the Horn of Africa

For the sake of Christianity and civilization, these Christians in Africa have to be helped. To help them is to destroy Islam and strengthen Christianity (Christian missionaries, mid. 19th century as quoted in Greenfield and Hassan, 1980:7).

The British, the Ethiopians, and the Italians are squabbling, The country is snatched and divided by whosoever is stronger, The country is sold piece by piece without our knowledge, And for me, all this is the Teeth of the Last Days! (Somali poem, end of 19th century as quoted in Samatar, 1982:92).

Since the emergence of Islam in the 7th century a.D. in the Arab peninsula the history of the Horn of Africa took a new dimension. Despite the fact that the first contact of Abyssinia with Islam, through the exiled Arabs who were followers of Muhammad, was peaceful, what came after is a continuous conflict. It would be an oversimplification to speak about Christianity versus Islam or *vice versa*. The geography of the region, the distinction between agriculturalists and pastoralists, as well as a history of migrations of new peoples who push the already existing ones are real causes, whereas religion is the picture the conflict takes in the ideological field.

As soon as Islam triumphed in the Arabic peninsula it was a matter of time for the two worlds to meet. "The period between the tenth and the twelfth centuries when the Abyssinian kingdom was weak and confined and continually at war with the Agao was the first period of systematic expansion into north-east Africa" (Trimingham, 1952:60). The expansion of slave trade and the development of coastal trading centres built by colonizers and traders from the Arabic peninsula also played a role. The subsequent confrontation since Islam converted pagan and Christian populations penetrating the region. It is not by chance the fact that during the 14th century we observe an institutionalisation of Christianity. This process that was realised through the Solomonic dynasty and the emergence of Kebra Nagast came as an answer to the establishment of several Muslim kingdoms in the area. "Islamic pressure, however, evoked in the Abyssinians a dogged nationalism which was to prove more than a match for Ethiopian Islam" (ibid, 70).

The 16th century is marked by the introduction of two new players in the region. The Portuguese and the Ottoman Turks in their search for expansion reached the Horn in an attempt to control the sea-routes. It was a time of reemergence of Muslim power. The failed attack of Afar and Somali hordes and the Oromo migration brought the Amharas into severe crisis. The era is marked by Imam Ahmad ibn Ibrahim al-Ghazi (1506-43). He "was the leader who was destined to reconstitute Muslim political power in south-eastern Ethiopia and embark on a conquest which brought three-quarters of Abyssinia into his power" (Trimingham, 1952:85).

The survival of Abyssinian Christianity thanks to military help provided by the Portuguese brought the kingdom into a new crisis since Catholicism attempted to conquest the Abyssinians in religious grounds. This gave plenty of space to a further expansion of Islam, this time though with peaceful means. The period that followed has been called "the Triumph of Regionalism" (Trimingham, 1952:104). The Abyssinian kingdom was too weak to face Islam having surrendered to its own rivalries after the actual collapse of monarchy. This scene remained until the 19th century when Menelik's expansionist policy was realised.

It remains an irony of history that the Semitic transplantation in the Horn from Arabia, first in Abyssinia and secondly through Islam, gave birth to a conflict quite persistent in time. Ethiopian Christianity became an ideological component as soon as it faced 'the other': this 'other' was Islam but also Catholicism. This counter-positioning created an official ideology which served inwardly to consolidate the Amharic political system, and outwardly to provide the necessary 'flag' against the invaders. On the other hand the Islamization of several, predominantly nomadic, pagan and Christian peoples of the region shows the appeal of that religion to non-settled communities. The reasons for its strength can also be found in the existence of the Abyssinian domain which was settled, sophisticated and self-proclaimed as 'superior'. In this sense Christianity and Islam in the Horn provided a wonderful battleground for 'military power games'.

Somali Nationalism and Religion

Somalis arise from sleep! Catastrophe has fallen on the land! The Unbelievers have deceived you Since you have failed to continue the Jihad!... (Sayyid Maxammad Cabdille Xasan, 1920 as quoted in Samatar, 1988:7).

Scientists do not agree on when Somalis came to the Horn or how they evolved as a distinct people at that initial stage. Touval mentions two possibilities, that either they are a Hamitic people that came after the Galla/Oromo or that they are Semitized Galla (Touval, 1963:10). Samatar referring to Somali mythology talks about a communion between Bantu peoples and visitors from the Arabian peninsula (Samatar, 1988:9). Somalis form an ethnic group based mainly on two elements; first, because of the kinship relations they share and secondly, because of their common religion, Islam. Together with pastoralism, which was the basic mode of production for the Somali people, these are three important factors that constituted the early Somali identity. "Kinship...is a social institution with a double-edged sword serving both as a tool of divisiveness and fragmentation as well as buttressing a move to the opposite direction - i.e., a centripetal force. Moreover, where kinship is basically ascriptive, Islam imports a universalistic criterion for identification" (Samatar, 1988:12).

Somalis were among the peoples who took part in the wars against Abyssinia in the 15th and the 16th centuries a.D. Two protagonists in these wars, Imam Ahmad ibn Ibrahim al-Ghazi (1506-1543) and Mullah Mohamed ibn Abdullah Hassan (1870-1920), are considered heroes of Somali nationalism. Despite the fact that both have ambivalent characteristics, Imam Ahmad's origin, Mullah's avoidance of the use of the word Somali etc. They symbolize and inspire the national struggle of Somalis against the Christian Amhara and the infidel foreigners in general (Touval, 1963:49-60). It is important to keep in mind that these struggles against Amharas were fought on a religious ground (Muslim brotherhoods and dervish orders). Islam was a factor that promoted unity against the other that was religiously different.

What Samatar calls "the politicization of religion" (Samatar, 1988:24-26) is the transformation of faith into a political ideology that can mobilize constituencies. In fact during Menelik's time the lands that were inhabited by Somalis were partitioned among British, French, Italians and Ethiopians. There are at least three reasons for the development of Somali nationalism: the resentment against their governments that changed their sense of authority that so far was exercised by the elders and the shir which was the assembly of the male members of the clan, the religious antagonism, and finally the deliberate encouragement of Somali national feelings by various governments from time to time (Touval, 1963:61-62).

The aftermath of World War II triggered the inspirations of the colonised peoples for independence. Somalia gained hers in 1960 as the outcome of the unification of the British and Italian Somalilands. In 1963 Somalia joined the Organisation of African Unity. In 1974 she joined the Arab League though not an Arabic state in an obvious attempt to promote her links with the Islamic states and profit economically and politically. Among the inherited problems the new state had to face were the differences between the two regions as a result of two separate administrations for many years, the clan system that could aggravate instability in the interior and the Somalis that remained under foreign rule, namely the ones in French Somaliland/Djibouti, in Kenya and in Ethiopia. The last one became the most important of all, perhaps since it could help in avoiding and probably diminishing the rest.

For Somalis the problem remains that of building a State on the full basis of their nationhood, while for other African countries the problem is to create nations out of states (Lewis, 1963b:174). In fact the unification of all territories inhabited by Somalis, Pan-Somalism, became the backbone of all Somali

governments. In these first years of African independence Somali irridenta was against the principal of respect of colonial borders that the O.A.U. had accepted as a step towards unity and stability. Somalia's interests that were justified by economic and cultural reasons are clearly demonstrated in the following passage of a speech delivered by the then prime minister of the state in 1963, Dr. Abdirashid Ali Shirmarke:

Our neighbours are our Somali kinsmen whose citizenship has been falsified by indiscriminate boundary 'arrangements'. They have to move across artificial frontiers to their pasturelands. They occupy the same terrain and pursue the same pastoral economy as ourselves. We speak the same language. We share the same creed, the same culture and the same traditions. How can we regard our brothers as foreigners?... Of course, we all have a strong and very natural desire to be united. The first step was taken in 1960 when the Somaliland Pretectorate was united with Somalia. This act was not an act of 'colonialism' or 'expansionism' or annexation'. It was a positive contribution to peace and unity in Africa and was made possible by the application of the principle of the right to self-determination (Lewis, 1963a:151).

It is obvious that a policy along these lines would meet the dissatisfaction of the neighbouring states. The events that took place on the borderline between Ethiopia and Somalia in 1964 concerning the Ethiopian Somalis of the Ogaden region which constitutes almost one-third of the entire Ethiopian territory came as a result of the Pan-Somalist vision for a Greater Somalia. In 1969 a military coup d'etat led by Mahammad Siyaad Barre proclaimed Somalia a socialist country. Barre's regime adopted a centralist model in order to undermine clanism and modernize the pastoralist economy of the country. Nevertheless it followed the nationalist inspirations of his predecessors. Not surprisingly, the events that were to mark the reign of the radical military regime were dictated by the categorical imperative of Somali nationalism, that is, the pursuit of national unification (Markakis, 1986:26).

The Ogaden War (1977-1978) was another attempt by Somalia to liberate her fellow country people. It seemed the best time for the Somalis, for Ethiopia was in a problematic situation due to the 1974 revolution. The amazing 'shift of patrons' between Ethiopia and Somalia, that is U.S.S.R. stopped supporting Somalia and shifted to Ethiopia and the U.S.A. did exactly the opposite, changed the balance in favour of the Ethiopian Forces at the most crucial point. This war showed the institutional instability in the Horn of Africa where "Somali irridentism tended to conceal the equally powerful force of Ethiopian expansionism" (Lewis, 1980:247). On top of that the war humiliated Barre's regime (Laitin in Samatar, 1988:137), destabilised the Somali government (Samatar, ibid), and strengthened Mengistu's power in Ethiopia.

The defeat of the Somali forces opened Pandora's box. The passionate dream of unification of Ogaden with Somalia became a nightmare. An expansionist nationalism as an official ideology needed either substitution with another ideology or undermining. The new environment that came out of the unrealised expectations started giving ground to the escalation of interior problems.

Religion and Nationalism in the Horn: Divorce or Revival?

The latest developments in the Horn of Africa show in the most bitter way the inability of the post-colonial states to provide viable and long-term solutions for their respective peoples. The almost simultaneous overthrow of Barre's and Mengistu's regimes were not followed by the necessary steps that could promote stability and development. The political setting in Ethiopia, where E.P.R.D.F. is in power is far from stable. The initial promises about the creation of a multinational democratic Ethiopian state gave place to clashes between political groups who fight along ethnic lines (E.P.R.D.F. is dominated by Tigray, O.L.F. by Oromo

etc.). The independence of Eritrea, besides creating a bad feeling among many Ethiopians who feel now that their country practically subsidizes the new state, was recently followed by tension with its northern neighbour the Sudan, thus another conflict in the making.

In Somalia the devastating clan war can be traced back in the inherited contradictions between the northern region, where the traditional pastoralist mode of production persists, and the more populous and agriculturally rich south, which]were reflected in intense clan rivalry between the Ishaq who are dominant in the north and the Darod who predominate in the south (Markakis, 1989:17). The de facto partition of the country along the pre-unification borders which is run by heavily armed clan warriors is not providing any space for a peaceful settlement at least so far. The failure of the UN peacekeeping force to recreate the Somali state is another proof of the complexity of the case.

At first sight it appears that religion has fulfilled her historical role in the conflict as a major component of official nationalism. It provided Imperial Ethiopia with an expansionist ideology which legalised Amhara supremacy. It provided Somalia with a unifying and mobilizing doctrine. Today we are facing the demolition of an empire and a fanatic civil war that cuts a state in two. The conflict seems to have disappeared since no power in Ethiopia feels as the successor of the imperial borders and at the same time there is no irridentist Somalia - moreover there is no Somalia - that could possibly demand the incorporation of Ogaden.

CONCLUSIONS

Religion: The Cause of Conflict or the Resource for Legitimacy and Official Nationalism?

In a world marked by seismic changes, confusion, desperation and disappointment encourage simplistic approaches to global issues. The war in the Gulf where the 'evil' was personified is an example of such populist and at the same time effective methods that have as an ultimate goal the continuation of domination in world politics. In the same way people and especially politicians tend to condemn 'the other' using manipulative terms and descriptions. The ways in which Islam is portrayed in the West or the 'infidel' West in Islamic countries have the sole purpose of taking attention away from the underlying factors of injustice in an attempt to seek for power and to dominate.

With this utilization of religion in mind in this paper two 'couplets', that of Greece and Turkey and of Ethiopia and Somalia, in which religion is a strong marker of peoples' identities were investigated. The Christian and Muslim parallels are not necessarily chosen solely for similarities along religious lines, but more importantly along historical and socio-political ones.

The case of Turkey - the result of the revolution of the Young Turks in the declining Ottoman Empire - resembles that of the Ethiopian Empire, although similar developments in the latter have not taken place at least in the scale of those in the case of Turkey, with the exception of Eritrea. In both cases religion as an official component of the state ideology became inadequate to provide stability and the continuation of the established order. As a consequence Turkey adopted secularism and Western orientation while Ethiopia chose a 'Marxist-Leninist' path. In both cases official nationalism was a top-down policy aiming at creating stable states. In the case of Turkey nation-building was an immediate need and, in a similar way to that of Ethiopia, this was realised through exclusion of 'the other' (ethnic minorities in both countries were - and in the case of Turkey still are - severely suppressed).

Particularly in the case of Turkey, it appears that religion was the obstacle to a political programme and orientation that involved a project of homogenisation which required a break with the links to the Ottoman past and to the institution of the caliphate. Westernisation through statism and secularism seemed antithetical to Islam. Nevertheless, in the long run, the latter maintained its leading role in domestic affairs and especially as a part of the foreign orientation of the state (relations with other Muslim countries, Muslim minorities of Turkic descent in neighbouring countries etc.). This is also demonstrated by the fact that the minorities that suffered mostly in 'secular' Turkey were Christian and in economic terms the more advanced (Armenian and Greek). For others, mainly Kurdish and Arabic, the Turkification process was easier given the common ground of Islam.

On the other hand, in the cases of Greek and Somali nationalisms, religion became the reservoir for liberation, unity and irredenta. Being a major component of historical continuation for the Greek and the Somali nations, religion provided the framework for a popular nationalism. In the Greek case Orthodox Christianity, although providing a different ideological setting from that of antiquity, was seen as the transitional and connective cord between that era and contemporary times. In the Somali case, Islam provided the unifying force in a society structured along kinship lines which were problematic in promoting lasting unity. Islam simultaneously provided Somalis with allies which were the millions of fellow Muslims around the world, and particularly in the region.

The conclusion to be reached from this investigation as to whether religion is the cause of the conflicts can only be negative. Religion, having the privilege as a doctrine of combining in a magnificent way the metaphysical element of the existence of God with worship practices and everyday behavioral patterns and beliefs, is too powerful as a factor to be ignored by any ideology. In this sense nationalism dismisses or uses religion according to its specificities as a political project in a particular time.

Accordingly, it is possible to see a reemergence of religious orientations especially if there is space for a country to benefit from such an ideological alliance. In Turkey it is quite likely that a strengthening of Islam will take place. A possible rejection by the West, due to economic as well as political reasons, or an overemphasis on Turkey's role in the Balkans and in Central Asia, may reinforce the universalistic element of Islam that might counterbalance secularism. The recent invasion of Turkish military forces in Iraqi Kurdistan in order to chase PKK guerillas, and the unrest between Alawites and Sunni Muslims, clearly demonstrate the fragile nature of the Turkish state as well as the precarious character of Turkish politics.

For the moment, and as far as the Greek-Turkish conflict is concerned, Turkey's self-projection as the protector of all Muslims in the Balkans inflames the country's relations with Greece. Turkey was among the first states to recognise the so-called "Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia". Turkey is openly supporting the Bosnian Muslims, considering them not only as fellow Muslims but moreover as a 'by-product' of the Ottoman Empire. Albania, in her attempt to incorporate the "Former Autonomous Yugoslav Republic of Kosovo" and at the same time to undermine the Greek minority in its south, is promoting her relations with Turkey. In Bulgaria, the support of the party which represents the Turkish minority in the country to the Bulgarian government has initiated a new chapter in the two countries' relations, which were in a severe crisis during the last years of the communist rule. All these realities which demonstrate Turkey's interests in becoming a regional superpower might escalate the conflict. Again, in this case as in many, religion is used for political purposes.

In the case of Somalia, Islam remains perhaps the only factor that could promote reconciliation, compromise, and possibly unity. In the case of Greece the open space created after the collapse of the Eastern Block in predominantly Orthodox countries and at the same time the conflict with Turkey can give religion a new chance to gain momentum. Greece at this particular moment is perhaps the only country in the Western alliance which is politically in a less stable position after the changes in Eastern and Central Europe. Religion can provide the fertile ground for future political alliances with fellow Orthodox peoples, such as the Bulgarians, the Serbs or the Rumanians, especially given the fact that Western European countries seem unwilling or unable to understand the dynamics of the region and in many instances refuse to take into consideration Greek fears and worries.

In Ethiopia, a country facing a dramatic transition, the coexistence of Christianity and Islam make it impossible for one of the two to play an exclusive role. In this respect it is very difficult, if not impossible, for religion to be part of official nationalism if Ethiopia is to be united. In this sense, in the absence of a successful unifying ideology for the state, religion can further reinforce disintegration. In such a scenario religion can be an ideological component of centrifugal movements, given that such religious movements - Islamic ones - already exist in the country.

Cultural, Ethnic and National Identities: Conflict and Development

In this paper the relationships between religion and nationalism were investigated in an effort to identify the criteria under which religion 'helps', 'guides' or 'sabotages' nationalism. The fact that today we experience a strengthening of various kinds of nationalisms makes it imperative for all citizens of the earth to work toward identifying the alternatives that could possibly counterbalance these developments. It is myopic to blame a political ideology which flames the hearts and minds of millions, if not billions, of people especially if the only alternative we provide is to suppress it.

The desintegration of states and the subsequent consequences for development, cooperation and stability is an everyday phenomenon that demands rapid and adequate action. In this context, two remarks can be made as to how to potentially deal with nationalism: Firstly, there is a need for protecting 'cultures' whose bearers fear they might disappear in the homogenisation process that modern states pursue. And secondly, an alternative system of international representation is required whereby autonomous regions could become institutional safeguards of ethnic groups' existence.

The universal appeal of nationalism demands a universal approach on the matter. Instead of focusing on condemnations and anathemas, emphasis should be placed on creating the necessary space in the international arena that will guarantee the protection and continuation of any cultural, ethnic and national groups.

It is obvious that such an alternative will endanger the domination of the state. The latter is the stronger player in the international scene and at the same time the promoter of official nationalism. Nevertheless it is becoming increasingly clear that there is an immediate need for a different context for the classical nation-state whenever we refer to multi-ethnic political units, otherwise its break-up is *ante portas*.

The notion of national sovereignty, which in many instances means domination of certain ethnic or political groups who exercise their power over majorities, needs reinterpretation. At the same time we should not forget that such a mechanism, if exercised by the dominant forces in the world's political scene, could turn out to be an institutionalised political structure for selective intervention. Events like those in the Persian Gulf, the former Yugoslavia, Somalia, Rwanda and Turkish Kurdistan, to mention but a few, suggest that international law is there, but that it is used in selected cases and particularly when the interests of the dominant forces are at stake. This issue demands extensive interdisciplinary research and work. Failure here means failure to create the fertile ground for development and progress.



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