

THE DEVELOPMENT OF ISLAMIC ESURGENT MOVEMENTS IN EGYPT

by

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**DEDICATED TO:**

**ALL THOSE WHO HAVE SUPPORTED ME BY BELIEVING IN ME, BUT  
ABOVE ALL, THIS THESIS WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN POSSIBLE WITHOUT  
THE ENCOURAGEMENT OF  
MY DAUGHTER, CARA – THE LIGHT OF MY LIFE**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>ABSTRACT</b>	7
<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	9
<b>1. INTRODUCTION</b>	9
<b>2. BACKGROUND</b>	10
2.1. Manifestation of Islamic Resurgence	14
2.2. Phases of Islamic Resurgence	16
<b>3. DISCUSSION OF TERMINOLOGY USED</b>	19
<b>4. PURPOSE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF RESEARCH</b>	22
<b>5. RANGE OF RESEARCH</b>	24
<b>6. RESEARCH PROBLEM</b>	28
<b>7. METHOD OF RESEARCH</b>	28
<b>8. HYPOTHESES</b>	30
<b>9. LITERATURE SURVEY</b>	31
<b>10. RESEARCH PROCEDURE</b>	36
<b>CHAPTER ONE – ISLAMIC RESURGENCE FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE 20<sup>th</sup> CENTURY UNTIL 1952</b>	37
<b>1. INTRODUCTION</b>	37
<b>2. HISTORICAL OVERVIEW</b>	37
2.1. Overview of Islamism	38
2.2. Political dispensation in Egypt prior to the 20 <sup>th</sup> century	43
2.3. Egypt since the beginning of the 20 <sup>th</sup> century	45
<b>3. MOTIVATION FOR ISLAMIC RESURGENCE MOVEMENTS</b>	52
3.1. Internal conditions	53
3.1.1. Lack of political participation	53
3.1.2. Drive towards nationalism	54
3.1.3. The influence of Hasan al-Banna	55
3.2. External involvement	57
3.2.1. The creation of Israel in 1947	57
3.2.2. New political ideologies after the Second World War	58
<b>4. OBJECTIVES OF ISLAMIC RESURGENT MOVEMENTS</b>	58
4.1. Obtaining independence from colonial powers	59
4.2. Establishing an Islamically orientated society	60
<b>5. MODUS OPERANDI OF ISLAMIC RESURGENT MOVEMENTS</b>	63
<b>6. CONCLUSIONS</b>	67
6.1. Socio-economic and political factors	67
6.2. Hasan al-Banna’s political views	69
6.3. Independence and the upliftment of the Muslim community	71
<b>7. SUMMARY</b>	71
<b>CHAPTER TWO- ISLAMIC RESURGENT MOVEMENTS DURING THE REIGN OF PRESIDENT NASSER: 1952 TO 1970</b>	73

<b>1. INTRODUCTION</b>	73
<b>2. HISTORICAL OVERVIEW</b>	74
<b>3. MOTIVATION FOR ISLAMIC RESURGENT MOVEMENTS</b>	82
3.1. Internal conditions	82
3.1.1. An autocratic Nasser government	82
3.1.2. The influence of Sayyid Qutb	85
3.2. External factors	93
3.2.1. The Six-Day War	93
3.2.2. Popularity of new ideologies	95
3.2.3. The impact of Mawlana Mawdudi	97
<b>4. OBJECTIVES OF ISLAMIC RESURGENT MOVEMENTS</b>	100
4.1. Creating a Muslim nation	100
4.2. Establishing an Islamic political dispensation	100
4.3. Achieving spiritual transformation	102
4.4. Deriving legislation from the sharia	102
4.5. Legitimising the ruler	103
4.6. Implementing <i>Shura</i> or consultation	103
<b>5. MODUS OPERANDI OF ISLAMIC RESURGENT MOVEMENTS</b>	104
5.1. Establishing an Islamic community	104
5.2. Reconceptualising <i>jahiliyya</i>	106
5.3. Waging <i>jihad</i> against <i>jahiliyya</i>	107
5.4. Forming an Islamic vanguard	109
5.5. Establishing relief organisations	110
<b>6. CONCLUSIONS</b>	111
6.1. Criticism of the government did not lead to change	112
6.2. The initial message of the Islamists was non-violent	113
6.3. Al-Banna's position was filled by Sayed Qutb	114
6.4. Al Mawdudi's ideas played a fundamental role	115
6.5. Islamists attempted to develop an alternative to Western concepts not compatible with Islam	116
6.6. A gradual transformation	117
6.7. Insufficient knowledge by the West of Islamic resurgence	118
6.8. Islamic political thought is fundamentally different from Western concepts of politics	119
6.9. <i>Jihad</i> is more than just a war	120
6.10. The deeper meaning of <i>jahiliyya</i>	121
6.11. The perceptions of persecution by the west	122
<b>7. SUMMARY</b>	124
<b>CHAPTER THREE – ISLAMIC RESURGENT MOVEMENTS DURING THE REGIME OF PRESIDENT SADAT: 1970 UNTIL 1982</b>	126
<b>1. INTRODUCTION</b>	126
<b>2. HISTORICAL OVERVIEW</b>	128

2.1. The legacy of the Nasser government	129
2. 2. President Sadat's strategies	132
3. MOTIVATION FOR ISLAMIC RESURGENT MOVEMENTS	137
3.1. Internal conditions	137
3.1.1. The legacy of policies followed by the Nasser government	137
3.1.2. Rise of a new generation	138
3.1.3. The strategies followed by the Sadat government	144
3.1.4. Corruption	148
3.2. External factors	148
4. OBJECTIVES OF ISLAMIC RESURGENT MOVEMENTS	149
4.1. Objectives of the Muslim Brotherhood	151
4.2. Objectives of <i>Al-Takfir wa al-Hijra</i>	152
4.3. Objectives of <i>Al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya</i>	153
4.4. Objectives of <i>Al-Jihad</i>	155
4.5. Objectives of various other groups	161
5. MODUS OPERANDI OF ISLAMIC RESURGENT MOVEMENTS	162
5.1. Modus operandi of resurgent movements in general	162
5.2. Modus operandi of Muslim Brotherhood	166
5.3. Modus operandi of <i>Al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya</i>	168
5.4. Modus operandi of <i>Al-Takfir wa al-Hijra</i>	170
5.5. Modus operandi of <i>Jihadists</i>	171
6. CONCLUSIONS	172
6.1. The political ideas have not evolved	172
6.2. Islamic resurgent groups were not representative of the whole society	173
6.3. Assassination did not fulfil the objectives of the Islamists	175
6.4. No new ideas were presented	176
7. SUMMARY	177
CHAPTER FOUR – RESURGENT MOVEMENTS DURING THE REIGN OF PRESIDENT MUBARAK: 1982 UNTIL JULY 2005	179
1. INTRODUCTION	179
2. HISTORICAL OVERVIEW	180
2.1. The legacy of the Sadat government	181
2.2. Economic problems	182
2.3. The succession issue	183
2.4. Strategies against Islamic resurgent movements	183
2.5. Elections under President Mubarak	190
3. OBJECTIVES OF ISLAMIC RESURGENT MOVEMENTS	194
3.1. Internal factors	194
3.1.1. A Divided Society	195
3.1.1.1. The South	196
3.1.1.2. The North	198
3.1.2. A new generation of Islamists	198

3.1.3. Role and functions in civil society	205
3.1.4. The continuation of the state of emergency	209
3.2. External factors	210
<b>4. OBJECTIVES OF MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD</b>	212
4.1. Objectives of the Muslim Brotherhood	213
4.2. Objectives of other Islamic resurgent movements	216
<b>5. MODUS OPERANDI OF ISLAMIC RESURGENT MOVEMENTS</b>	217
5.1. Modus operandi of the Muslim Brotherhood	218
5.2. Modus operandi of other Islamic resurgent movements	227
5.3. New strategies	229
<b>6. CONCLUSIONS</b>	230
6.1. New political paradigms are needed	230
6.2. Failed strategies do not eradicate motivating factors	233
6.3. Islamic resurgent movements have never been a united front	235
6.4. Islamic resurgent movements see Islam as political ideology	237
6.5. Role of civil society	240
6.6. Liberals see Islam as evolving over time and place	240
<b>7. SUMMARY</b>	243
 <b>CHAPTER FIVE – CONCLUSIONS</b>	 243
 <b>1. SUMMARY</b>	 244
<b>2. THEMATIC OVERVIEW</b>	248
2.1. Positive and negative factors inducing growth	249
2.2. Foreign involvement	252
2.3. Islamic order	254
2.4. Personalities	256
2.5. Ideology versus religion	262
2.6. Process of acculturation will continue	263
2.7. Modernity versus Westernisation	264
 <b>2.8 PREDICTIONS</b>	 267
 <b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	 270

## ABSTRACT

Islamic resurgent movements have striven to accomplish an Islamic way of life off their own version of an Islamic state, struggling against the socio-economic and political objectives of governments. While autocratic governments have used religion to ensure their legitimacy, Islamic resurgence has professed to have as its objective the establishment of an Islamic dispensation. Resurgent movements aspire towards a greater unity of religion and politics, domains that cannot be separated. Religion provides them with a framework for the transformation. However, factors responsible for the anger and alienation of the Islamic resurgence are still disputed. Their modus operandi is often frowned upon, overshadowing their driving forces. Therefore the purpose of this study is to determine the true motivations, objectives and modus operandi of Islamic resurgence in Egypt. The role of Islam in their motivation, aim and modus operandi is scrutinised together with other crucial factors which need to be investigated. While ideology determines the broad political and socio-economic paradigm, religion serves as the guiding principle for their implementation. The application of religious principles, in turn, is determined by personalities and circumstances. While Islam has a set of generally agreed upon specifications, interpretations have different deviations in every historical context. As a matter of fact, the unique factors pertaining to time and place are experienced during each political period in the history of Egypt influenced resurgence. This study contends that the motivational factors for the development of Islamic resurgent movements during the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century may be said to be a response to Westernisation brought about by external sources, government and civil society or the West itself. On the other hand, animosity towards a foreign culture seems to be more a reaction against the manner in which the foreign culture has been imposed and not to be directed in the first place against those that represent the foreign culture. Thus, it is not so much aimed against the Western world as against the manner in which the political and socio-economic conditions in the Muslim world have been allowed to develop, albeit with Western help. Even though some argue that the objectives of resurgent movements of an Islamic dispensation are

idealistic, not attainable and a threat to the West, this manner of arguing misses the point. The thesis maintains that, in the absence of an inclusive and acceptable political and socio-economic system, an external system has been adopted, and this has added to alienation. As a result both the government and the system have been rejected. Positively stated, the objectives of Islamic resurgent movements seem to have been to achieve an inclusive political system within the frame of reference of the Islamic religion. The aim was not so much to achieve an Islamic state, as a dispensation in which the stipulations of Islam were central aspects. For resurgent movements, Islam had to be more than tokenism providing legitimacy to leaders. In achieving their objectives a variety of *modi operandi* have been applied, ranging from moderate measures to calling for *total-Jihad*. A multifaceted society has also determined the differences in *modus operandi* and objectives of the Islamic resurgent movements. The approaches of Islamic resurgent movements are diverse and they do not have a common agenda or *modus operandi*. To analyse the objectives of Islamic resurgent movements according to their violent manifestations only is to misunderstand their arguments. These movements are usually seeking a system inclusive of Islam simply because it is their way of life, their culture. Radical and moderate reactions have been determined by convictions based on different diagnoses of the problems at hand as well as different diagnoses of how to deal with the problems within the appropriate spheres of politics, religion and socio-economics. Because Islam provides unity to man, resurgent movements will always seek their objectives of getting rid of political and socio-economic exclusion and replacing it with a system inclusive of all. However, Muslims will have to find a way of achieving their aims and objectives in a modern world. In this process, the outside world can facilitate, but not dictate. Unless future governmental changes in Egypt provide a political and socially integrated society and have promised goods and services delivered, resurgence will continue to appear in various formats. At the same time, generating a workable system would have to take place in relative isolation without coercion from the West for political gain or political dominance.



## INTRODUCTION

***“The initial voices for an Islamic Renaissance clearly show that the notion of Islamic revival is deeply entrenched in Egypt and has continued to express itself in one form or another under different Islamic movements until the present.” (Faksh, 1997: 42)***

***“We must try to understand this story from within, from the standpoint of a believing Muslim, and not only from without.” (Kung 1993:19)***

### 1. INTRODUCTION

In his book *Why Muslims Rebel* Hafez (2003) states that “Muslims become violently militant when they encounter exclusionary states that deny them meaningful access to political institutions and employ indiscriminate repressive policies against their citizens” (Hafez, 2003: xv). This view is shared by John Entelis (2005: 541), who quotes Michael Hudson’s observation of 1977 that the central problem of governments in the Arab world was the absence of political legitimacy while governmental dispensations were volatile and autocratic. The development of Islamic resurgent movements in Egypt has been characterised by similar sentiments while they have been seeking an Islamic alternative. They aim to influence society and to effect a change in its power base. However, Egypt’s unique historical evolution has given rise to divisions in society as a result of pluralism and diversity. Therefore no single group or movement in Egypt represents the entire society. Various Islamic resurgent movements have followed different methods in opposing the government, while consecutive Egyptian governments have followed strategies to include, exclude or contain opposition. Resurgent movements in Egypt refer specifically to those groups that have come to the fore in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, have espoused increased activity or interest in aspects of society and have mostly been politically

motivated.

Although important changes in the outlook of Egyptian Islamic activism in recent years have opened up possibilities for progressive political development, these possibilities have gone unexploited because of the rigidity of Egyptian government policies. Since 1997, the absence of violent action perpetrated by the Islamists has suggested that the strategy of an armed struggle (*jihad*) against the state has not only failed but has effectively been abandoned. However, the recurrence of violence in July 2005 indicates otherwise. It seems that despite the ideology of non-violent Islamic activism that has developed since 1997, which supports democratic principles and elements of a modernist outlook; the Egyptian government is still encountering a radical onslaught. Unless the government changes its approach and opens up the political field, violent activism may continue.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

Apart from explaining the selection of an African Muslim country for this study, this background survey will also describe the development of the political dispensation in Egypt. The latter issue will also provide insight into the evolution of opposition movements as well as internal conditions that have added to the development of resurgent movements. In addition, this background survey will describe the developmental stages of Islamic resurgence.

Even though Egypt is located geographically in Africa it is religiously part of the Islamic Middle East; a study of Islamic resurgence in Egypt is thus very relevant from an African and South African point of view. Most of the factors, such as colonialism, that have had an impact on Egypt during the 20<sup>th</sup> century have also had an impact on most African countries. Events in Egypt therefore did not take place in isolation but should be seen against the broader background of time, place and events that were taking place in the rest of the developing world.

African countries including Egypt strove for independence from colonial powers

after World War I. Simultaneously there was an upsurge in nationalism, encompassing tribally, ethnically or religiously defined goals. Therefore, in most cases the governments that came into power had a tribal, ethnic or religious power base and wanted to ensure their supremacy. The cycle of externally imposed political systems and economic support to Egypt strengthened authoritarian government systems. These political systems imposed from the top down did not provide for any natural grassroots-level development. This situation entrenched the relatively small Westernised ruling class and excluded the rest of the population. In most cases, the pattern of autocracy was perpetuated with very little internally generated political development of countries' own political philosophies. The imposed Western development models proved to be an unsuitable political expression of the internal ethnic, tribal or religious dynamics of the countries.

The ruling classes in most cases ensured the supremacy of their own ethnic, tribal or religious groups as well as enjoying the support of the specific countries whose doctrines they were following (even though only superficially). Ideologies that were imposed range from socialism and communism to capitalism and democracy. None of these political dogmas has been applied successfully. Leaders of developing countries have adopted these foreign political models to maintain their privileged positions.

In most cases new governments differed very little from the former colonial powers and autocratic dispensations were introduced. Societies evolved in which the newly independent governments supported Western concepts because of the financial and political gains they derived in doing so. Although governments that came into power were mostly very autocratic, their exertion of power nevertheless enjoyed the sanction of Western countries. In most countries autocratic regimes do not allow free elections or tolerate opposition. No opposition was allowed and the security forces were used to strengthen the hands of the governments. The subsequent industrialisation that took place led to

more modernisation and urbanisation. Urbanisation led to the development of a middle class, but it did not provide the socio-economic needs of all those who had been displaced or affected by urbanisation. This situation, together with the continuation of autocratic forms of government and an absence of free and fair elections, exacerbated the general sense of exclusion among deprived people, giving rise to most opposition movements in developing countries.

Increasingly, opposition forces came to the fore in these countries, driven by the objective of effecting political change. These forces experienced frustration and intolerance because they had been excluded economically and politically. Opposition movements were also driven by a desire to rectify wrongs resulting from demographic or social changes, and to acquire wealth from which they felt they had been excluded. In some cases their objectives were also prompted by feelings of vengeance. Alternatively, they were resolved to deter governments from taking certain steps, for example, rigging elections or curtailing freedom of speech. In addition, the opposition movements had the goal of terminating Western support to their governments. In most cases Western forces' backing was seen as enforcing and supporting the autocratic regimes (UNITAR, 2002:94).

Opposition manifested itself in many different forms, such as acts of terror or occasionally the seizing of power in developing countries. In resisting the governments the opposition movements targeted government policymakers, commercial enterprises, law-enforcement officials and criminal justice systems, private individuals and rival social groups. Opposition actions and reactions differed from group to group as their targets differed. Some groups were more radical than others and engaged in killing or injuring government and private sector employees as well as randomly selected victims. Destruction of state-owned buildings, resources or other assets also took place. The more moderate opposition movements took action through political processes as far as they were allowed to do so (UNITAR, 2002: 95).

These cycles of action and counteraction have continued unabated in most developing countries, most probably because autocratic governments and imposed political systems have not provided for any natural and internally generated political developments. Therefore, the overthrowing of governments by either coups d'etat or elections has seldom ensured peaceful development because the next regime in most cases simply continued in the same manner as the previous one.

Egypt and most North African countries predominantly comprise Muslims. However, in most of these Muslim countries governments pursued Western-orientated and increasingly popular secular paradigms, while religion was restricted to personal life or regulated by the state (Esposito 1997:2). Opposition movements in Egypt, as in most Muslim countries, were geared towards achieving Islamic-orientated principles.

The only manner in which the newly independent governments could exercise control was by means of an authoritarian policy, while the economic and development policies they had pursued usually did not yield the desired effects or alleviate the poor socio-economic conditions. These factors contributed to the emergence, throughout the Muslim world, of a new form of militancy that opposed the government. It progressively grew through three distinct developmental stages<sup>1</sup> in the Muslim world and in Egypt in particular.

Both the government and the opposition strove to derive their legitimacy from Islam. The governmental systems were unacceptable to the opposition movements and the Islamic resurgent movements reverted to the concept of an Islamic state, with Islam being an all-encompassing system with few borders between politics, religion and society. A quest for a higher degree of participation was expressed as a confrontation between the opposition and the state.

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<sup>1</sup> These developmental stages will be discussed in the relevant chapters during the historical development in Egypt.

Islamic resurgent movements provided a vanguard of resistance to foreign occupation, but also became the battle cry in fighting corruption and disempowered groups (El-Awaisi, 1998:47).

## **2.1. Manifestation of Islamic Resurgence**

The most prominent changes that Islamic civilisation has been subjected to since its founding were those experienced during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Modernising forces and colonial powers had the most dramatic impact during this era. Even though these powers were not instrumental in Islamic resurgence, their impact exacerbated the latent feelings of discontent that the Muslims in Egypt had been experiencing regarding the incompatibility of religious stipulations and the demands of governing.

When most colonial powers lost control over the regions and countries that had been under their rule after World War I, Muslim countries obtained their independence. Newly independent governments saw modernisation as a cure for all social and economic ills of the past. Governments imposed most of the strategies for modernisation on societies. Little, if any, natural processes of development or acculturation from within were provided for.

Traditional societies were soon in conflict with the newly independent movements. The new governments did not always introduce the changes that society wanted. In addition in Egypt, as in most Muslim countries, very few modern Islamic systems had been developed that could be used and that were compatible with modern demands. The ruling elite also secured political and economic power within their own ranks, as was the case in Egypt. In most cases, the traditionalists saw modernisation and the associated policies of 'development' as an onslaught on their history, lifestyle and worldview, while modernists saw Westernisation as the primary means of survival for Muslim countries. As a result

a rift developed between those who supported modernisation and Westernisation and those who were concerned about preserving the traditional culture, lifestyle and outlook of Muslim societies.

Thus, Islamic resurgent movements have been more than a response to Westernisation brought about by external sources, government and civil society or the “long-held fear of being swallowed up by the West” (Baker in Esposito, 1997: 120). There has been a combination of internal and external factors that together led to the evolution of Islamic resurgence. Lack of comprehension about Islamic resurgent movements has continued and in many instances served to exacerbate hostilities and animosity.

This lack of understanding from both the West and Muslim governments was discussed at a conference that was held in the latter half of 2002 in Spain, titled “Dialogues: Islam versus the West.” Views expressed at this conference indicated what Islamic resurgent movements have been saying all along (*Al Ahrām*: 7-13 November, 2002:7), even though the main focal point of the arguments was whether Islamic resurgence has come to an end in its present format. While Giles Kepel argued that the materialisation of radical Islam and political Islam has come to an end in its present format, he emphasised that only the manner in which Islamic resurgent movements have conducted their campaign up to the present has ended. This is because their objectives have not been met yet. Muhammad Arkoun also stressed this point. He stated the need to seek the answer to the origin and justification for the manifestation of radical or political Islam in the Islamic world’s past. He explained that in the past Islam provided hegemony together with a system of thought and culture to the West. However, in modern times these roles have been reversed because the West has been transferring science, technology and information to the Muslim world (*Al Ahrām*, 7-13 November 2002:7).

It is not so much the content of what has been transferred to the Muslim world but the manner in which it has been done and experienced by Muslims that is

important. As Muslims still have not been able to facilitate this process of acculturation<sup>2</sup> successfully without losing their identity or developing their own systems, the objectives of Islamic resurgence have not been met.

## **2.2. Phases of Islamic resurgence**

Various terms have been used to describe the process through which the Muslim world has tried to adapt or adopt both external influences as well as internal conditions that have had an impact on it. In reality, the Muslim world had to find a way of adapting to the evolution of world civilisation's development socially, economically and politically. The impact of Western civilisation on the Muslim world has led to a process of acculturation. The term acculturation is referred to as the assimilation of a different culture (*South African Concise Oxford Dictionary*, 2002: 7). At the interface where Muslim culture met with Western culture, the process of acculturation has been especially apparent in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries.

Segments of society have sought the introduction of alternative socio-economic and political dispensations from those imposed or followed by their governments. The alternative models were based on and motivated by reference to past ways of interpretations that were revived. The modus operandi followed ranged from moderate to extreme or radical. While the broad spectrum of Egypt's multifaceted society has experienced the process of acculturation, the methods used by resurgent movements to express their resentment at Western culture in particular do not represent the actions and reactions followed by the entire society, even though those followed by the resurgent movements are the most visible.

The modus operandi of Islamic resurgence has differed in relation to time and

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<sup>2</sup> Throughout this study the process through which the Muslim world tried to assimilate the cultural, political and socio-economic impact from the West will be referred to as acculturation.



place and this has led to several developmental phases. Both the government and the resurgent movements have perpetuated systems followed in the past. Currently the Mubarak government still adheres to governmental processes followed by past dispensations, albeit in a new format. Because Egypt consists of a multilayered society, the phases of development have been experienced differently by each societal group. Therefore, some segments of society can still express the sentiments of a more conservative and past era. Different stages of development have thus existed simultaneously in Egyptian society. This factor has added to the multi-dimensional problem of analysing Islamic resurgence, as this study will point out.

In *Political Islam, Religion and Politics in the Arab World* Ayubi (1982) referred to the initial period of acculturation between the West and the Muslim world as a period of revivalism that took place during the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. In her article in the *Middle East Journal* Yvonne Haddad (1983) referred to these developments as a process of accumulation between the Western world and the Muslim world. In an article in the *Middle East Journal* Bassan Tibi refers to the essay of Ibrahim Abu-Lughod (Tibi, 1983: 3-14), where the historical relationship between the Muslim world and the European culture of the Western world is described in terms of phases. Ibrahim Abu-Lughod argues that the first phase of the Islamic renaissance or revivalism has been indicative of the different patterns of response to a culture that has influenced the Muslim world (Tibi, 1983: 3-14). However, after the end of the Ottoman Empire the Muslim world was divided into independent political units. This division was based on concepts such as nationality or geographical factors, but not on Islamic factors. These circumstances exacerbated the negative attitude towards acculturation.

During this period the inferiority of the Muslim world vis-à-vis the West was evident in science and technology. The only way in which the Muslim world could compete or be restored to its former glory was to modernise the Muslim world through the development of science and technology. This meant that the process of acculturation centred on the selective adoption of a modern culture. This

selectiveness refers to the fact that only certain aspects of modern culture – especially those related to the external manifestation of technology – were adopted and only by certain elite segments of society. This aspect will be discussed in Chapter I.

With the gradual political and cultural encroachment by the West of the Muslim world that followed the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, the process of acculturation manifested itself in a reformist movement (Ayubi, 1982: 67) early in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This phase was an urban movement during which Islam served as an ideological structure in the national liberation movements that emerged in Egypt (Tibi, 1983: 3-14). It was led by state officials as well as by the civil Muslim community whose members were opposed to the traditional interpretation of Islam and compared the degeneration of Islam unfavourably with perceived European superiority, especially after the abolition of the caliphate in 1924. Secular nationalism that developed after World War II and secular Arab socialism were seen as the source of political legitimacy for governments in the Middle East, and in Egypt in particular. This process led to the Westernisation of the elite or upper class, resulting in values and norms that were no longer primarily Islamic. “Islam was considered as a religion and as an essential part of the Arab cultural heritage. But Islam was no longer a political issue, although Islamic symbols were employed as ideological formulae” (Tibi, 1983: 3-14).

After independence autocratic governments replaced former colonial rule and introduced repressive measures to curtail opposition to their power. These strategies of governments, especially in Egypt, led to the adoption of a more radical modus operandi by opposition groups than had been followed by previous generations. This phase of radicalism has continued to the present and will be discussed in this study.

### 3. DISCUSSION OF TERMINOLOGY USED

Varied explanations and labels exist that refer to the current phenomenon of Islamic resurgent movements. The great impact that Islamic resurgence has had on the West, especially on those who view militant Islam and fundamentalism as a threat to Western interests, was described in Professor Samuel Huntington's article, "The Clash of Civilisations". This article, published in the 1993 issue of *Foreign Affairs* (1993:13), spoke of a cultural conflict between Western and Islamic civilisations along the fault line that has been there for the last 1 300 years, starting with the Arab and Moorish advances to the west and north, culminating in 732 AD.

The above article, together with many others written in the aftermath of the September 2001 attacks on the USA, has added to the perception that Muslims and fundamentalism equal radicalism or terrorism without taking cognisance of what is in actual fact taking place in the Islamic world. Nothing during the 21<sup>st</sup> century has brought the Islamic world and the West<sup>3</sup> under the auspices of the USA so close together (although rather negatively) as the events of 11 September 2001. The subsequent US-led war on terrorism that has been conducted globally has had several effects on Muslims in the Muslim world and on the Muslim minorities throughout the world.

In order to facilitate the use of the multitude of terms clarity is needed on those that will be used in this study. Various terms have been used to describe Islamic resurgence. "Fundamentalism" (or fundamentalists), which is frequently used, is associated with Christian notions that were subsequently superimposed on the Muslim world. Its original meaning is assumed to be a certain intellectual stance that claims to derive political principles from a timeless divine text (Choueri 1989: 9). However, what has been taking place has instead been a resurgence of a

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<sup>3</sup> The term "West" refers to the geographical region to the west of the Muslim world and not to a specific country.

conscious, determined choice of Islamic doctrine, or even a pious practising of one (Ayubi, 1982: 67-69).

In this context “resurgent” (adjective) refers to the act of increasing or reviving that takes place after a period of little activity, “or the popularity of an occurrence, or rise again in Latin” (*South African Concise Oxford Dictionary*, 2002: 997). The *Cambridge International Dictionary of English* defines “resurgent” as a new increase of activity or interest in a particular subject or idea, which had been forgotten for some time. “Resurgent” is referred to as an increase in popularity (*Cambridge International Dictionary of English*, 1995: 1214). Therefore, the diverse processes of a renewed increase in Islamic opposition that have taken place in Egypt since the 20<sup>th</sup> century will be referred to as resurgent movements. As will be indicated, opposition prior to the 20<sup>th</sup> century was based mainly on the ideology of a single person, and did not develop into large-scale movements like those that were active in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

This study will show that the initial process of “acculturation” within the Islamic context often entails Westernisation or the imposing of Western concepts. Both Mawdudi and Qutb were of the opinion that Islam is engaged in a *Kulturkampf* with Western imperialism, the ultimate aim of which was to complete the material and cultural colonisation of the Muslim world (Binder, 1988: 175). Ideologies have been developed since the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries to inspire an increasing number of movements that actively resist acculturation. These movements have in turn inspired subsequent movements in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries.

In this process of combating Western cultural influence Islamic resurgence has emphasised the role of religion in achieving political changes. Political Islam (*al-Islam al-siyasi*) refers to the political dimension of Islam or engagement in direct anti-state activities. Within the Muslim world the term “Islamists” (*al-Islamiyyun*) is usually applied to *salafis* (i.e. *salafiyyun*, those who espouse the traditions of pious ancestors), fundamentalists and neo-fundamentalists and implies a conscious and determined choice of the use of an Islamic doctrine, or even the

adoption of a pious practising of Islamic doctrine (Ayubi, 1982: 67-69). A notable exception is the French scholar Olivier Roy, who distinguishes between what he calls political Islam or Islamism and neo-fundamentalism or *Salafism* in his work *L'échec de l'Islam politique* (Paris, 1992), published in English as *The Failure of Political Islam* (London, 1994), and as *L'Islam mondialisé* (Paris, 2002).

The International Crisis Group (ICG) refers to Islamism as a political rather than religious phenomenon: "Islamist movements are those with Islamic ideological references pursuing primarily political objectives, and 'Islamist' and 'Islamic political' are essentially synonymous. Islamic is a more general expression: usually referring to Islam in religious rather than political mode but capable, depending on the context, of embracing both" (ICG Report 37, 2005: 1). Therefore in this study the term Islamists will be used to refer to the group of Muslims who have collectively made a conscious decision to use Islamic doctrine to obtain their objectives. When the specific groups are discussed the term Islamic resurgent or resurgent will be used. The use of these two terms (Islamist and Islamic resurgence) will facilitate an analysis of the development of Islamic resurgence. The term "Islamists" depicts the actions of those who espouse the traditions of pious ancestors irrespective of the modus operandi they followed. "Resurgent movements", in turn, refer specifically to those groups that have come to the fore in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries and have espoused increased activity or interest in a particular subject or idea regarding the implementation of desired political paradigms.

The tendency in Western analysis in particular has been to classify all Islamic activism as violent, associating it with the term terrorism. One should, however, differentiate global terrorism from internal struggle by paying careful attention to the respective objectives. Religious radicals may be politically moderate or conservative, and political radicals may be moderate or conservative in religious matters. Islam is a religion of law and inclusive of all dimensions of life – including politics. While non-violent actions of resurgent have continued, time and place

factors, as will be pointed out, have led to the adoption of violent methods over time. In order to understand the way in which resurgent movements have developed, this study will analyse the factors that have motivated them as well as their objectives and goals. "Motivation" is defined as the factors that induce a person to act in a particular way in order to produce a physical or a mechanical motion (*South African Concise Oxford Dictionary*, 2002: 759). When it is stated that resurgent movements have used a specific "modus operandi", the term refers to the way or manner of doing something (*South African Concise Oxford Dictionary*, 2002: 748), to achieve set objectives, goals or aims (*South African Concise Oxford Dictionary*, 2002: 801). Motivations for resurgence include feelings of intolerance, hatred and frustration, as well as unrealistic political and religious convictions. The set "objectives" have been the effecting of political and religious change, while the current resurgent movements often have vengeance as an objective. The modus operandi followed has ranged from violent to more moderate measures.

#### **4. PURPOSE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF RESEARCH**

***"These are the lenses through which the Orient is experienced, and they shape the language, perceptions, and form the encounter between the East and the West." (Said, 1995:58)***

J. B. Alterman states in a book review in the *Middle East Journal* that while the books reviewed show growing Islamism in Egypt, "none of them have fully explored its effects on Egyptian political life" (Alterman, 2003: 322). Neither have the underlying issues in Egypt or the ability of the Islamic leaders to utilise them disappeared. Instead, the view in Egypt is that "Islamic fundamentalism is a fact of life." Moussalli (1992) quotes Qutb as saying that in his research he had used literature that could be read by all and was available to all (Moussalli, 1992: 122).

Despite all that has been said about Islamic resurgent movements, the factors responsible for their anger and alienation are still not clear because their modus operandi has overshadowed what they have been trying to say.<sup>3</sup> The purpose of this study is to determine the true rationale for Islamic resurgence in Egypt specifically, as the ideology and the driving force of many of these movements elsewhere emanated from Egypt. The ideological justification of persons such as Osama bin Laden and the Al Qa'ida movement and the events of 11 September 2001 can illustrate this. Although much has been written about Islamic resurgence in general, the thesis will study the motivational factors, aims and modus operandi of resurgent movements in Egypt. Furthermore, the study will provide a specific perspective on the sources used and the views of the present author.

Most of the sources used will be those written in the West, either by Westerners such as Esposito and Binder, or by Muslims residing in the West such as Ayubi and Choueiri. By using sources reflecting a sample of Western views on Islam, an indication of the understanding of the Muslim world will be obtained, from both non-Muslims and Muslims living in the West. These sources are a segment of the worldview on Islamic resurgence. This study will, however, add value to these sources by also referring to the current situation in Egypt as depicted in the media.

The focus of this study is "Islamic resurgent" movements. The norm for categorising them is not only "resurgence" but also "Islam". Furthermore, the role "Islam" plays in their motivation, aim and modus operandi is scrutinised. This does not mean, however, that other factors playing a role in this resurgence are ignored. Despite the fact that Western sources will be used, this study will be done within the discipline of Islamic studies. This is because Egypt is a Muslim country and Islam is central to Egyptian society. Islamic resurgence is rooted in

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<sup>3</sup> International media reported on the refusal of Muslim girls to remove their head scarves during 2004 and 2005 is indicative of resistance to imposed acculturation. The Hofstadt group of young militants in the Netherlands is also an example of a new generation of Islamic resurgents.

the religion of Islam. Therefore, Islamic resurgence in this study will be looked at from an Islamic framework and not by using Western paradigms. This study will also explain the role of both internal and external role-players and events that have had an impact on the development of Islamic resurgence in Egypt.

This thesis provides insights into Islamic resurgence at the start of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Because events should be seen from a historical perspective, reflecting time and place factors, this study will be significant in that it will provide an understanding of the unique manner in which Islamic resurgence has evolved. A longitudinal study will be undertaken. Continuation of factors, repetitions and changes will be indicated. The conclusive arguments will provide insight into the manner in which past events of Islamic resurgence in Egypt has contributed to the current situation. At the same time it will provide insight into understanding Islamic resurgence in future based on current events.

## **5. RANGE OF RESEARCH**

In his study, *Authority in Islam: From Muhammad to Khomeini*, Mehdi Mozaffari states that secularisation in Islam is not a recent phenomenon in Muslim society but has been part of Islamic history since its first period (Mozaffari, 1987: 92). This study will focus on the appearance of Islamic resurgent movements at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century until the middle of 2005, since the changes that the Islamic civilisation went through during the 20<sup>th</sup> century have been the most prominent. The most dramatic impact during this era was experienced when modernising forces replaced colonial powers. Most Muslim countries obtained their independence and subsequently modernisation was seen as a cure for all social and economic ills.

Strategies for modernisation have been in conflict with the values of traditional



societies that they were attempting to change, and a rift developed between those who supported modernisation and Westernisation and those who were concerned about preserving the traditional culture, lifestyle and outlook of Muslim societies. In most cases, the traditionalists saw modernisation and the associated policies of “development” as an onslaught on their history, lifestyle and worldview, while modernists saw Westernisation as the primary means of survival for Muslim countries.

This study analyses the historical development of Islamic resurgence in its various stages in order to determine what has motivated it over time as well as what its objectives have been. Ibn Khaldun declared that the state of the world and of nations, their customs, and their beliefs do not keep the same form forever. Just as persons, periods, cities and countries pass through a succession of stages, Islamic resurgence also varies with time (Mozaffari, 1987: 14).

Therefore, even though this study ranges from the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century until the present, it will be clear that Islamic resurgence has built on that what has been done or said in its past. Within each successive generation of Islamic resurgent movements some segments of the past will be found, and this of course also refers to their specific interpretation of the Qur’an. While it is argued in the West that Islamic resurgent movements are seeking an Islamic state, Mozaffari says that since the time of the Prophet Muhammad opposition to power and struggles for power have taken place. In Egypt these struggles were responsible for the evolution of resurgence beginning with the Muslim Brotherhood.

Obviously the resurgence in Egypt did not take place in isolation and was influenced by the history of Islam. The ideologues found inspiration in the political approaches of early Muslim rulers. Even the ideas of Al Ghazali and Ibn Khaldun have played an important role. The ideological and theological evolution within the Muslim world is indicative of the manner in which Islam attempted to adjust to forces influencing it.

From a historical perspective, the emergence of the *Kharijites* or (*Khawarij*), (Mozaffari, 1987: 14) can be considered as the beginning of political opposition ideologies. Ibn Taimiyya, Aghani, Abdu and Rida were the next generation of ideologues who in their programme of revival focused on socio-economic and political conditions. Subsequently in Egypt prominent personalities such as Hasan al-Banna and Sayyid Qutb came to the fore. Though described as modernists, their ideas were derived from the past. In this manner the ideas of previous ideologues were perpetuated and formed the basis of resurgent movements in Egypt and at large.

In terms of developmental factors the following characterisation of resurgent movements may be suggested.

- The basis of Islamic resurgence, namely the Qur'an, has remained the same. However, various movements have dealt differently with the process of acculturation, depending on political and religious circumstances and the demands of time and place factors. Therefore, while the Qur'an has remained the same, diffusion has occurred in the manner in which these movements have attempted to obtain their objectives.
- Islamic resurgent movements have adopted divergent historical positions and methodologies because every Islamic resurgent movement has interpreted its idea as the ultimate true and faithful model "to the extent that they contain and reflect bits and pieces of the Islamic truth" (Mozaffari, 1987: 13).
- Developmental stages in society had their effect on resurgent movements, leading to a gradual transition from one phase to the next. Previous stages did not disappear, however: remnants

continued to be present in various segments of Egypt's multi-layered society as well as in resurgent movements.

- Islamic resurgent movements subdivided depending upon members' response to motivational factors; for example the more radical elements that had become disillusioned with the Muslim Brotherhood formed new movements. This trend continues.
- The diffusion of groups into splinter groups, each following its own modus operandi, has not provided for an Islamic alternative to political problems. Even though it has been relatively easy over the centuries to identify their major objective, all have found it equally difficult to translate these ideals into "the political domain" (Mozaffari, 1987: 16). Instead, varied interpretations by Muslims of what they want from a political dispensation in general, and the political dispensation in Egypt specifically, have emanated.

Chapter one will demonstrate that prior to the 20<sup>th</sup> century the process of Westernisation was challenged by several ideologues. However, it was only after the 20<sup>th</sup> century that resurgent movements came to the fore. In Chapter Two the conditions for the founding of the Muslim Brotherhood in 1928 will be discussed. The Muslim Brotherhood not only became the most prominent resurgent movement in Egypt but also formed the basis of subsequent movements. Because the government was concerned with retaining power and ignored socio-economic development, resurgent movements developed sub-structures to provide for these needs and filled a vacuum created in civil society. The Nasser government reacted with harsh measures against growing criticism from the Muslim Brotherhood led by Hasan al-Banna. This was the stance under Hasan al-Banna's successor, Sayyid Qutb. Chapter Three will explain how President Sadat's policy of accommodation of the resurgent movements created expectations that were not met. His foreign policy and willingness to negotiate

with Israel in the Camp David Accord enraged the resurgent movements in Egypt and resulted in his assassination. Chapter Four will cover the range from the presidency of President Mubarak to the middle of 2005. Under President Mubarak the activities of the radical resurgent movements intensified, as did the governments' measures to curtail them. The clampdown on their activities caused them to move their bases to foreign countries such as Afghanistan from where they continued their activities, but also gave these a more international focus.

## 6. RESEARCH PROBLEM

The aim of this study is to provide an understanding of the motivation, objectives, and modus operandi of Islamic resurgence in Egypt. This study will focus on Egypt specifically because the ideology and the driving force of many of these movements elsewhere have emanated from Egypt. Also, events in Egypt are of geo-political and strategic importance to the Middle East, Africa and Europe, as well as other regions internationally. The development of Islamic resurgent movements since the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century will be discussed under each subsequent government because, as this study will indicate, they showed different characteristics under different political dispensations.

## 7. METHOD OF RESEARCH

***“History ... Western personality prevent it from dealing properly with Islamic history; hence there is reason to doubt the value of Western historical studies of Islamic life – Islamic history has to be written by Muslims who can look at it from within.” (Sayyid Qutb, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ma%27alim\\_fi-I-Tariq](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ma%27alim_fi-I-Tariq))***

History provides a discourse (Stanford, 1994: 250) from which knowledge can be derived. A study of the development of Islamic resurgence will provide an insight into what has motivated resurgent movements and what their original objectives have been. The focus of the Western world has been on the actions of Islamic resurgence, and the driving force behind this resurgence has been less clearly understood. Resurgent movements demonstrated a method of dealing with the process of acculturation. Islamic resurgent movements emerged within the framework of Islam.

Any attempt to understand the true nature of political thought in the Muslim world has to take cognisance of Islam as an all-encompassing system, a total civilisation regarding human life as an organic whole. Therefore, the manner in which politics is viewed in the West does not facilitate an understanding of the role of politics in Islam. Neither do methodologies used in Western political debate, which have been based on the power of natural science, provide answers. Instead, reason and revelation as the twin sources of knowledge have to be referred to and the “universality of Islamic values grants a universal status to the discipline of political science which is subservient to the Islamic intellectual framework” (Moten, 1996: xiii).

Since Western models would not be appropriate, and “Islam accords full freedom to experience and experiment and to rational and intellectual inquiry within the confines of the revealed knowledge” (Moten, 1996: xiii), this study will follow a method that is constantly aware of the religious perspective in order to facilitate an understanding of resurgent movements’ objectives and goals. The study will attempt to prove that these aims have been Islamically based and focused, despite the movements’ deviations from the Qur’an or their creative interpretations of the text.

Firstly, to place the resurgent movements in the correct frame of reference as regards time and place, this study will give a historical overview of each political period that has been experienced in Egypt since the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup>

century. The use of political periods is a logical method of dividing historical development. Each political period has been characterised by two aspects, namely by the movements' perpetuation of the policies of the previous dispensation and the manner in which resurgence has been dealt with by authorities. The unique time and place factors experienced during each political period influenced resurgence in specific manners and these aspects will be discussed.

These historical circumstances have been responsible for Islamic resurgence which, owing to numerous factors, has impacted on each generation of Islamists. These motivational factors will be deduced from the historical discourse on each political period. Both internal and external forces that have motivated resurgent will be dealt with. Secondly, the objectives of the resurgent movements will be deduced. It will be pointed out in what manner these objectives are similar to or different from those of previous generations and how these objectives conform to the ideals of Islam. The *modus operandi* of the resurgent movements will be discussed and the manner in which their strategies have evolved into the current trend of *jihad* will be indicated. At the end of each section or political period, a conclusion will be formulated.

## **8. HYPOTHESES**

The thesis assumes and sets out to prove the following:

- The term resurgence (adjective resurgent) can be used for multiple political-ideological, often anti-governmental, movements in Egypt.
- The characterisation "Islamic" pertains to resurgent movements in Egypt.
- There is a discernible development in Islamic resurgent movements.
- The beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century is a logical starting point for resurgent movements characterised as Islamic.

- At the interface of Muslim culture and Western culture Islamic resurgence represents a segment of the Muslim population's attempts to deal with the process of acculturation.
- Muslim governments that have imposed autocratic regimes have been as much a target of Islamic resurgence as foreign influences.
- Islamic resurgence will continue in Egypt if the motivational factors of political and economic exclusion are not addressed.
- Islamic resurgence is based and centred on Islam.
- The attention paid by resurgent Islam to socio-economic problems has led to the creation of a socio-economic sub-structure in society.

## **9. LITERATURE SURVEY**

The decision on which sources to use was determined by the fact that this thesis has been written by a Westerner for the West. In his book review in the *Middle East Journal* (2002) Ali Akbar Mahdi expressed the opinion that a non-Muslim can conduct a survey of the Muslim world either by referring to a so-called Western expert or alternatively to use Arabic sources. In addition, translated original works can be used, provided the researcher's knowledge has not been influenced by non-Islamic ideologies and biases. In this thesis the "Western expert" approach has usually been followed, focusing particularly on those sources readily available in the West.

As a whole sources that were consulted for the purpose of this thesis include broad, all-encompassing academic studies dealing with the Islamic religion and politics; studies and research dealing specifically with Egypt as a country, as well

its religious structures and political dispensation; articles dealing with political and Islamic issues; and articles reflecting the opinions of academics, journalists and researchers in general.

In deciding on a methodology that would facilitate the analytical process the work of M. Landau, *Political Theory and Political Science* (1972), and *Political Science: An Islamic Perspective* (1996), by A.R. Moten, were useful. Both explained the differences in analytical processes followed in the West in comparison to that done from the perspective of Islam. The arguments of Moten, in particular, conclusively influenced the decision not to adhere to a strict Western methodology, but to follow the analytical method used in this study.

Leonard Binder argued in his work, *Islamic Liberalism: A Critique of Development Ideologies* (1988) that insight into an understanding of resurgence has been available, but has had little impact in the West. Binder questions whether any dialogue of significance has taken place between the West and current Islamic movements. He argues that Western intellectuals read very little of what Muslim intellectuals write (Binder, 1988: 9). This study has confirmed his view. Events internationally show a lack of insight into the arguments of resurgent movements in general, and specifically those of Egypt. Since Binder's work was written, events such as the 11 September 2001 attacks on the USA as well as the subsequent US-led war on terrorism and the US invasion of Iraq have taken place. The effects of the actions of Islamic resurgence have had a severe impact on the West and have been widely debated and discussed since then. Events such as the Madrid train bombings in March 2004 – to name but important one event – have increased animosity in the West towards Muslims in general and it seems as if little progress has been made in understanding Islamic resurgent movements. Despite the fact that so much has been written about Islamism in English, it appears as if very little insight has been gained into the causes of Islamic resurgence. The use of media reports about the current situation in Egypt will provide evidence to support the hypothesis. The concluding arguments will



provide insight into future developments.

This study has made use of Western sources or those written by Muslims residing in the West. This includes Muslim sources that have been translated into English. The reason for this choice is twofold. Firstly, the anger of Islamic resurgence has been directed not only at their own governments, but also at the West. Despite the fact that so much has been written about Islamism, the West as well as Muslim governments have failed to provide an answer to resurgence and to deal with it effectively. Secondly, by predominantly using Western sources the aspects misunderstood by the West in its analysis of Islamic resurgence can be clearly shown. Mousalli (1992) states that students of contemporary Islam have found substantial output by Westerners on modernist reformers such as Jamal al-Din al-Afghani and Muhammad 'Abdu. There have been fewer theoretical discussions on Islamists such as Hasan al-Banna and Abu al A'la al-Mawdudi. However, the least discussed and understood has been Sayyid Qutb, whose output cannot be matched by any other contemporary Muslim writer. Of his 41 published books and 30 unpublished works and hundreds of articles in newspapers and journals, only two books had been translated into English by Westerners and two others by Muslim organisations (Mousalli, 1992:14). Therefore the work of *Radical Islamic Fundamentalism: The Ideological and Political Discourse of Sayyid Qutb* by A.S.Moussalli (1992) was very useful.

The most accurate and detailed source on the early origins and history of resurgence in Egypt has been R. Mitchell's *Society of Muslim Brotherhood* (1969). The work of Mitchell has been unsurpassed regarding detail and insight into the early development of not only the Muslim Brotherhood, but also the socio-political background and historical factors influencing society. However, Mitchell's work focuses on events up to 1969. No other source provides a comparably detailed description of events after 1969. It therefore was interesting to compare his insights with those found in later sources in order to determine which aspects eventually faded away or were interpreted in a different perspective. Mitchell has provided valuable information on reasons for the early

formation of the Muslim Brotherhood as well as its true objectives, namely the independence from British rule. He argued that the aim of the Brotherhood was not necessarily the overthrow of all governments, as is the popular current opinion. The work has, however, not provided insight into the stipulations of Islam that provided the frame of reference on which resurgents based their arguments. But then, the latter objective was not the point of Mitchell's work, nor the purpose of referring to it in this thesis. The work has served as an ideal frame of reference from which deductions on the motivations, objectives and modus operandi of the initial formation of Islamic resurgent movements could be made.

To understand the later generation of Muslim resurgent movements, political and historical background sources such as those of Robert Springborg, a well-known scholar on Egyptian politics, were used. In *State Politics and Islam* (1987) Robert Springborg explains, from a purely political and Western point of view, the various methods that Egyptian governments have used to include exclude or contain opposition. His arguments were helpful in providing a frame of reference and to facilitate deductions regarding the religious motive of resurgent movements. Similarly, sources that were consulted are *Modern Politics and Government* by A.R. Ball (1988), *The Transformation of Egypt* by M.N. Cooper (1982) and *The Middle East and Problems of Democracy* by H. Deegan (1994).

To provide a better understanding of resurgent movements reference is made in the thesis to sources that have focused on arguments and reasoning behind these movements. These sources were useful in ascertaining the motivation of the movements. The works of Esposito, including *Voices of Resurgent Islam* (1983), *The Islamic Threat – Myth or Reality?* (1992), *Islam and Politics* (1992) and *Islam: The Straight Path* (1991), gave the Islamic and religious side of the resurgence and were written in an attempt to try to understand as well as analyse resurgent movements. In this thesis sources were compared with other sources. Therefore, sources such as Esposito's were supplemented by sources such as *Muslim Extremism in Egypt* (1993) by G. Kepel. In his work *Jihad: The Trail of*

*Political Islam* (2002), Kepel argues that resurgent movements have ended and that they have failed. Islamism, therefore, in Kepel's view, is "an idea whose time came and went." He argues that as Muslim societies emerge from an Islamist era, openness to the world and to democracy will construct their futures as there is no real alternative. This thesis will argue to the contrary. *The Failure of Political Islam* (1994) by O. Roy is in a similar vein to Kepel's work, using sound arguments to show that Islamism has failed. Both of these sources contain useful information, but stop short of providing the necessary insight. This thesis will attempt to prove the contrary, namely that resurgent movements are more about socio-economic problems and political exclusion than anything else. The failure or lack of progress by present resurgent movements can be ascribed to a lack of creative new leadership. Furthermore, the staying power of the Egyptian centralised government has also been underestimated.

In order to get to the root of the factors influencing resurgent movements the most valuable sources were that of Ayubi, *Political Islam, Religion, and Politics in the Arab World* (1982), as well as Youssef Choueiri's *Islamic Fundamentalism* (1989). These sources, and especially the latter, have made it possible for the author of this thesis to understand the development in the history of Islam specifically that which led to political and socio-economic systems that could have been conducive to the formation of resurgent movements. J.J.G. Jansen's *The Neglected Duty, The Creed of Sadat's Assassins and Islamic Resurgent in the Middle East* (1986), and Moussalli's *Radical Islam Fundamentalism: The Ideological and Political Discourse of Sayyid Qutb*, provided more clarity on the objectives and strategies that were espoused by Qutb, as well as those inspired by him.

The work of Sullivan and Sana Abed-Kotob was very valuable in providing specific information on the manner in which Egyptian Islamists have struggled to attain power and transform society and state with the objective of extending "the Islamic domain until it encompasses the state itself" (Sullivan and Sana Abed-

Kotob, 1999: 4). In their book, *Islam in Contemporary Egypt: Civil Society versus the State*, the socio-economic alternative structure provided by the resurgent movements was set out clearly.

Magazines and academic articles in sources such as the *Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies*, *Middle East Journal* and *Islamic Affairs Analyst* added value because of their analytical approach to specific topics. Information regarding current events was derived from newspapers – for example, *Al Ahram* and the *Arab Press Review*. These sources have been a window on history in the making, particularly with regard to Egypt.

## **10. RESEARCH PROCEDURE**

This thesis utilises the literature mentioned above, providing a synchronic and thematic overview and understanding. Political and religious aspects are borne in mind, because Islam is a complete way of life. George Balandier (1983: 3-14) states that “religion can be an instrument of power, a guarantee of its legitimacy ... but religion can be an instrument to challenge the existing order, when in times of crisis, prophetic and messianic movements question the existing order and come to constitute competitive powers.”

## CHAPTER ONE

### ISLAMIC RESURGENCE FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE 20<sup>th</sup> CENTURY UNTIL 1952

*“In order to understand the sources and inspiration of the contemporary resurgence, some appreciation of the relationship of religion to politics to society in Islam is essential.” (Esposito, 1983:3)*

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

An understanding of resurgence can only be reached by establishing the relationship of religion to politics and society in Islam. The study of resurgence in Egypt is done within the domain of the Islamic religion and investigates the relationship of politics to society within the realm of the Islamic religion. This chapter will deal with Islamic resurgence as it has evolved in the 20<sup>th</sup> century until 1952 when the Nasser government took power. The focus will be on the 20<sup>th</sup> century, as, prior to this era, ideologists addressed problematic issues in society and their influence did not lead to movements similar to those of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

#### 2. HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

In order to put the situation in Egypt during the 20<sup>th</sup> century into perspective, a short overview of the historical development of Islamism prior to the 20<sup>th</sup> century will be given.

## 2.1. Overview of Islamism<sup>4</sup>

The original Islamic sources, namely the Qur'an and Hadith, had very little to say on matters of government and the state. Therefore guidance regarding the original political dispensations in the Muslim world were derived from linguistic explanation (*bayan*) and reasoning by analogy (*qiyas*) provided by the juridical elite who had written on political subjects. In this manner jurisprudence and a formal theory of the caliphate became institutionalised (Ayubi, 1982: 3-6). With the expansion of Islam to non-Islamic regions, the institutionalisation of Islam and state met with opposition from groups that had been subjected and were not of the same religion and culture. These groups usually came from minor or peripheral Arabian tribes, which formed the first religious-political opposition movement against the State (Ayubi, 1982: 3-6).

The lack of a central political system in the Islamic world also led to the rise of opposition movements, the Kharijites, under the fourth Caliph Ali who opposed the caliphate and also inspired later movements. The Kharijites came to the fore when tribal differences were particularly prominent. During this time the system of financial payments was based on tribal lineage. In order to receive compensation the Arab fighters established elaborate systems for the verification and control of tribal lineage. The exclusion from financial compensation to those who were not part of selective tribes led to animosity and opposition to the caliphate. Those that could not compete for compensation early enough in the system eventually left the group of Arab fighters. Groups left out in this manner formed the opposition movements, of which the Kharijites was one (Ayubi, 1982: 3-6). The Kharijites refused to establish leadership on any ethnic, class or even educational (theological) basis (Mozaffari, 1987: 92) and instead of the Khariji who justified their actions based on the concepts of God's absolute sovereignty and rulership (*al-ḥakimiyya li Allah*). They judged the infidel and espoused

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<sup>4</sup> See Introduction, section 3 for an explanation of terminology.

excommunication (*takfir*) as well as the assassination of not just those who had blasphemed, but also those who had simply sinned. The comparison of present-day Islamists to the Kharijites can therefore be seen in the sense of exclusion that had inspired the Kharijites. Similarly, the sense of exclusion has been seen as the driving force of present-day Islamists. The historical period of the Kharijites can therefore not be ignored.

After the classical period, from the 12<sup>th</sup> century, defending the domain of Islam against foreign invaders, namely the Mongols and Crusaders, became the main source of legitimacy of the rulers. This new type of legitimacy of the current government was justified as long as it was necessary to protect the realm from invaders. However, under the threat from the Mongols and the Crusaders, ideologists of that period, such as Ibn Taimiya (1263-1328), limited their arguments and actions in order not to destabilise the state of siege (Sivan, 1985: 100). Also, the civil Muslim community of Ibn Taymiyya's time "could not imagine their rulers deviating from the way set by Allah in the systematic and comprehensive manner we witness today. Nor was it conceivable to the Muslim community that rulers would dispense with the sharia altogether, conspire against Islam, maltreat Muslims, and form alliances with the enemies of God, as happens quite often today" (Sivan, 1985: 100). Therefore, the message of Ibn Taymiyya was more moderate than that of present-day Islamists, even if they claim that they have derived their justification from the theories of Ibn Taymiyya.

The deterioration of the caliphate as an institution under the Abbasid dynasty led to the appearance of more than one caliph in different Muslim cities. When the Islamic dynasties disintegrated and separate dynasties ruled over the various Muslim communities, the legitimacy of both the government and the state was questioned. The state increasingly came to be seen as based on the realities that the umma were living under, but not allowed to address (Mozaffari, 1987: 13; Ayubi, 1982: 21). This implies that no governmental form such as the caliphate or the imamate was necessarily prescriptive. Instead, socio-economic conditions

and external factors influenced the format of the state. As a result the main ideologist of this era, Ibn Khaldun (734-808/ 1332-1406), placed the focus on the state as a human phenomenon (Mozaffari, 1987: 13; Ayubi, 1982: 20). From this era onwards the focus was more strongly on the leader and the community. Even the earlier Abbasids translated a proclaimed religious authority into a purely political authority. The original religious concept of tawhid or oneness or unification gradually came to justify the unique, supreme and absolute power of the ruler. In this manner the glorification of the political leadership has remained a characteristic feature of Islamic political thought (Ayubi, 1982: 16). However, this aspect would later be questioned by Qutb. He instead stated that the qualities of the leader, and not the person, are the most relevant aspect.

During the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries ideologists attributed the causes of decadence and deterioration to the Mamluk and Ottoman empires and kingdoms. They also denied the existence of any religious clergy in Islam, and believed that the foundation of political power was civil and derived from the state. Even though they did not establish a theoretical or intellectual framework for reform, they emphasised that Islam was open to and receptive of modern civilisation (Thabet, 2001: 2). During this time Jamal al-Din al-Afghani (1839-97) became prominent in Egypt. Jama al-Din al-Afghani (1838-1897) was a major catalyst and reformer and professed that the causes of the Muslims' decline vis-à-vis the West were Muslim societies' blind imitation (*taqlid*) of Westernism. Instead, Islam should be seen as a rational religion, capable of rational interpretation (*ijtihad*), rather than blind imitation (*taqlid*). This idealistic view was seen as the best instrument to counter the onslaught of the West and would be revived by later generations in Egypt. Reviving the spirit of the Qur'an meant a return to the origin of the religion as well as a rejection of distortions brought about through traditions. Through rational interpretation (*ijtihad*) it would be possible to use the Qur'an to extract the abstract principles of the faith (Keddie and Pakdaman, 2001: 2) and adapt the stipulations of the religion to their own modern ideas. Already at this stage Jamal al-Din al-Afghani warned against political authoritarianism, as he regarded it as one of the main reasons for the decline in the Islamic world. His views that



“science and philosophy had been stifled by our ... fanaticism and tyranny, by religion and despotism” (Black, 2001: 2) would be highlighted during the later history of Egypt, as this thesis will point out. In addition, Jamal al-Din al-Afghani emphasised that nationalism, the desire to protect nationality and the wish to defend religion and national aspirations would inspire political activism. These thoughts would also be seen in the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt.

Muhammad ‘Abduh (1845-1905) was al-Afghani’s most effective follower. He focused on expanding the scope of *ijtihad* and argued that political organisation was not determined by Islamic doctrine but determined according to circumstances of time and place together with consultation within the Muslim community. He also promoted the *Salafiyya* movement that would have an impact on Egypt. Under Abduh (1845-1905), the *Salafiyya* was an essentially modernist movement explicitly opposed to the principal forces of conservatism in the Muslim world. It sought to promote a renewal of Islamic civilisation on the basis of a selective adoption of Western science and European political ideas, including constitutional government and democracy, while simultaneously modernising Islamic law. The reformers wanted to overcome the divisions in the Muslim world between Sunni and Shiite and also to transcend the distinctions within Sunni Islam between the four legal schools or rites, namely Hanafi, Hanbali, Maliki and Shafi’i, in order to modernise Islamic law in general. At the same time, they identified the leaders of official Islam, the doctors of law or the civil Muslim community as a main force of conservatism. The reformers' insistence on the need for interpretative reasoning or *ijtihad* in law threatened the civil Muslim community’s traditional authority in that domain. The movement's reference to the venerable ancestors (*al-salaf al-ṣalih*) thus emphasised the era of Islam before the differentiation into rites or schools had occurred and the Sufi orders had been founded, in order to surpass the conservative religious establishment without incurring the charge of profanation (ICG, 2004: 7). The *Salafiyya* influenced Hasan al-Banna and was a reaction from within Islam against internal social and moral decline.

Rashid Rida, who came from the same era as Muhammad ‘Abduh, saw the true Islamic movement as based on consultation, while the civil Muslim community had to fulfil the role of guardian interpreters of Islamic law. Under Rida the development of a modern Islamic legal system was a fundamental priority. He also perpetuated ‘Abduh’s idea of the Maliki law school’s principle of public welfare. Rida relied on the rigid law of Hanbali and adopted the view of exercising *ijtihad* in social affairs from Ibn Taimiya. Rida regarded the civil Muslim community as backward and ill-equipped and believed that it had to be replaced by a progressive group of thinkers. He also supported the restoration of the caliph and pan-Islamic unity and viewed the caliphate as a practical alternative to nationalism. This was because Islamic rule was seen as superior, being derived from divine inspiration (Sagiv, 1995: 23).

The value of Rida for Egypt was his inspiration to *tanzimat* and *Salafiyya* movements in Africa and the Middle East. While the *tanzimat* was present in the Ottoman Empire, the reformists or *Salafiyya* and secular movements were present in Egypt. The *Salafiyya*<sup>5</sup> (*salaf* or ancestor) movements referred to a return to the ancestors in order to address the backwardness of Muslims. *Salafists* were not of clerical origin and remained traditional; the *Salafiyya* reform or *islah* did not entail adopting modernity, but emphasised returning to the tradition of the Prophet. *Salafiyya* rejected common law and the tradition of the civil Muslim community of *tafsir* or textual commentary. The traditional civil Muslim community’s monopoly of the religious corpus was targeted, as it represented part of “the dead and deadening systems.” *Salafism* ... “demanded the right to individual interpretation or *ijtihad* of the founding text (Qur’an and the Sunna) without regard to previous commentaries” (Roy, 1992: 33). In this manner they would have been able to develop a new political and cultural activism, where the only role of the government was to implement the sharia and restore the caliphate.

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<sup>5</sup> See Introduction, section 3.

However, by the 1930s it appeared as if these attempts at religious reform stemming from Muhammad Abduh, as well as other attempts, had failed. In addition the *Salafiyya* teachings of Rashid Rida at this stage reflected more of the influence of Ibn Taimiyya and Muhammad Abd al-Wahhab. These movements influenced Hasan al-Banna and the Muslim Brotherhood with whom they shared the goal to end British rule in Egypt. Al-Banna had as goal the establishment of an Islamic government and a return to the sharia to counter colonialism. The national character of the Egyptian society was also prominent in all subsequent groups and irrespective of their stance, resurgent movements focused their efforts on problematic issues of Egypt's nation-state that had already been justified by earlier ideologists.

## **2.2. Political dispensation in Egypt prior to the 20<sup>th</sup> century**

External influences in modern Egypt initially came from the French, specifically from Napoleon who saw himself as Egypt's great liberator. He disguised the policies that would be followed in modernising Egypt as Islamic by introducing an administration for the Islamic religion in 1798. In this manner the way was prepared for the subsequent introduction of Muhammad Ali's modernity in Egypt. Muhammad Ali (1805-1849) became governor of this Ottoman Empire after the British and French evacuations (Lewis, 1988:201). Muhammad Ali borrowed Western concepts such as military technology but made no attempt to modernise society in general. Even though Faksh (1997: 56) and Lewis (1988:201) were of the opinion that the continuing expansion of government functions and the centralisation of authority, as well as the disruptive nature of socio-economic change and the spread of Western political concepts among the new political elite, increased modernisation, it is more than likely that these processes served to exacerbate resurgence in future generations. The reason for this is that modernisation created a new generation of bourgeois that formed a future elite class that became the basis for autocratic governments. In addition, these elite

groups would form an exclusive political and socio-economic class from which the rest of society was excluded, which would lead to increased alienation and joining of resurgent movements. Muhammad Ali introduced a history of autocracy into Egyptian politics in a manner that was set to continue in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries.

As Muhammad Ali Pasha increased government control over the religious structures, he refused to accept the advice of the civil Muslim community, thus perpetuating the divide between the government and the Muslim community. In addition, the military also distanced itself from the civil Muslim community, as it regarded the role and influence of the latter as responsible for the government's military weakness. Therefore Muhammad Ali Pasha believed that modernisation would be achieved by a modern defence force, gave preference to military powers and engaged additional French and Italian officers at new military academies. Efforts to enlist Egyptian peasants into Egypt's defence force failed. Those who did enlist and became junior officers managed to achieve an elevated social status above their humble rural origins. As existing religious educational institutes were found to be inadequate for modern education, a parallel Western educational system was established. This system, however, created animosity, as it was perceived as foreign (Esposito, 1983: 59- 60).

Muhammad Ali caused further animosity by seizing all land on which taxes were in arrears or that belonged to opponents of the state. Further land distribution and the system for making profit left peasants with little profit, while the government controlled all resources. Industrialisation to free Egypt from prolonged dependence on European arms and suppliers was introduced, together with large-scale economic development programmes. However, Muhammad Ali's efforts to emulate the West failed because few Egyptians were able to comprehend industrialisation fully. His administrative programmes were more successful and aided the country's development. From the turn of the nineteenth century and during the first two decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century

Muhammad Ali created the landed bourgeoisie that became the dominant ruling class, adopted Western norms, such as private ownership, and contributed to the dissemination of science (Esposito, 1983: 59-60).

At this stage in the history of Egypt the country had not begun to develop a distinctive Egyptian national character and consciousness. This aspect was very relevant to the identity of the government under Nasser and also added to a desire for independence. Between 1840 and Muhammad Ali's death in 1849, his son Ibrahim and his grandson Abbas succeeded him. However, Egypt's economy and social life declined into a state of bankruptcy and corruption. As a result, international economic control and British occupation of Egypt took place in 1882. In 1879 these foreign interferences, together with economic and political decline, led to the emergence of four political groups, namely small wealthy landowners that were favourable to foreign intervention for the protection of their interests, Islamic modernists opposed to foreigners and led by Muhammad Abduh (disciple of Jamal al-Din al-Afghani), wealthy landowners seeking independence and an army clique of anti-foreign junior officers supporting nationalism and led by Colonel Arabi (Esposito, 1983: 59- 60). These societal divisions would lead not only to the 1952 rebellion by these officers but also to nationalist movements in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### **2.3. Egypt since the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century**

At this stage in the history of Egypt two events took place that would have a significant impact on the future development of resurgent movements in Egypt. The first event was the impact of British rule in Egypt from 1882 to 1922. This period of British rule led to a struggle for independence and feelings of anti-Westernism. The disappearance of the last remnants of the Ottoman Empire led to the creation of the British protectorate in 1914. However, this event served to arouse anti-British sentiments. The British protectorate was terminated in March 1922 and Egypt became a monarchy under Sultan Ahmed Fuad. However, the

nationalists saw this movement as disguised British occupation (Faksh, 1997: 42). With the abolishment of the caliphate in 1924 the internal political climate in Egypt consisted of those who favoured the West, those who were more supportive of religion, a more conservative group that was anti-Western supporting a return to Islam, as well as a pan-Arab nationalist current (Sagiv, 1995: 27). These currents were to survive in Egypt's political development and become entrenched in both Islamic resurgent and formal politics. As a result of the newly acquired benefits of industrialisation a new social class developed. This class was characterised by its incoherence, conflict of interests and contradictory economic and political orientation. During these earlier periods Islam was divorced from state politics and the sharia was confined to regulation of personal status and social matters (Esposito, 1983: 59-60). Inherent weaknesses as well as a lack of historic roots prevented strong political parties with well-defined political aims from developing under the 1952 government.

The second aspect that had an impact on Egypt during this period was Hasan al-Banna's founding of the Muslim Brotherhood in 1928. Initially the Muslim Brotherhood grew from within the lower-middle classes that had recently been urbanised (Faksh, 1997: 42). The Muslim Brotherhood became the first resurgent movement of the modern era and also formed the basis for subsequent movements. Prior to the formation of the Muslim Brotherhood, apart from the *Salafiyya* movements, the most important and active organisation in Egypt was the Young Men's Muslim Association (YMMA) that was founded by Abdul Hamid Sa'id in 1927. Together with the Society for Islamic Preaching and Propaganda the YMMA embarked on an extensive programme of countering Christian missionary activities by means of evening classes and public lectures. While these organisations were involved in the political struggle between the King and the Wafd and between the different political parties, they were contenders for power with Islamic orientation as their goal (Springboard, 1989: 327). This was also the goal of the Muslim Brotherhood, formed in 1928 as the first resurgent movement of the modern era. The manner in which al-Banna developed the

structures of the movement entrenched it in broader society, especially as regards socio-economic needs. The focus on Islamic education also provided for an alternative to modernism and moral upliftment. The early influence of Sufism on the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood, Hasan al-Banna, resulted in al-Banna becoming an ardent member of the *dhikr* circle and a disciple of a leading *shaykh*. The first *dhikr* was the mystic circle of the Order of the *Hasafiyya* Brotherhood. This order became the Hasaliyya Society for Charity and had as its aim the preservation of Islamic morality as well as resisting Christian missionary work. As its secretary al-Banna became acquainted with Ahmed al-Sukkari, his friend in the Hasafiyah Sufi order. As this group was the forerunner of the Muslim Brotherhood, many of its objectives became visible in the Muslim Brotherhood. It can thus be argued that the formation of educational groups, rover cells and family groups<sup>6</sup> that emanated from the Muslim Brotherhood were based on al-Banna's Sufi background and determined its impact and popularity in the face of alienation from modernisation.

Another group of this era was the Association of Young Egypt, formed in 1933, that demonstrated against the manifestation of adopted European civilisation, together with the paramilitary movement, the Green Shirts. In 1939 the Association of Young Egypt<sup>7</sup> became a political party and focused especially on the youth. It also had a social agenda and emphasised the importance of religious belief and morality. Throughout the 1930s the Association of Young Egypt, the *Salafiyya* and the Muslim Brotherhood agitated against foreign schools and the activities of Christian missionaries and acted against the work of European orientalists (Springborg, 1989: 330).

During this period the Muslim Brotherhood enjoyed little recognition and acceptance, and establishing organisational structures was also problematic. The organisation kept a low profile, and only emphasised its purely religious reformist

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<sup>6</sup> See Chapter One, section 2.

<sup>7</sup> This movement is also referred to as Muhammad's Youth by Mona el-Ghobashy in an article in the *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 37, 2005: 376).

orientation. It was only after 1938 that it started getting involved in politics. A weekly magazine, *al Nadhir*, was first published in May 1938. In it the Muslim Brotherhood set out its national action or political struggle. It had three aims, namely supporting the Palestinians, acting against Britain and gaining Egypt's independence. These ideals led to open clashes with the British. These aims, especially the sensitivity regarding the Palestinians and the biased attitude of the West towards Israel, would remain a motivational factor of subsequent resurgent movements. These aims also contradict the impression that has been created in the West of al-Banna and the Muslim Brotherhood being anti-establishment and anti-West.

The prominence of the Palestinian question in 1936 gave impetus to religious reaction against Europe. The original focus was on supporting the Palestinians, acting against Britain and gaining Egypt's independence. Both the Association of Young Egypt and the Muslim Brotherhood called for closer cooperation among Arabs against Israel as well as Christians. Because of propaganda by the Association of Young Egypt many followers and members of the Young Egypt and the Muslim Brotherhood were later found in the radical ranks of the Egyptian army. They were motivated by the goals of Egyptian independence and extending Egypt's influence in the Arab Middle East and Africa (Springborg, 1989: 330).

The Muslim Brotherhood became involved with those elements in the army with whom it shared the objective of an independent Egypt. At this stage al-Banna formed a close friendship with the commander-in-chief of the armed forces because groups from the army, the Muslim Brotherhood and police all shared aspirations for independence (Mitchell, 1969: 25). In addition, another officer, 'Abd al-Munim 'Abd al-Ra'uf, became a member of the Muslim Brotherhood and subsequently assumed a leading role both within the Muslim Brotherhood and the army, which had become dissatisfied with the political situation (Mitchell, 1969: 26).



The Muslim Brotherhood trained its battalions at universities with the help of army officers in public camps as well as privately by officers, some of whom had connections with those in the army calling themselves the Free Officers. These officers also provided the Muslim Brotherhood with arms that were used to harass British personnel and positions (Mitchell, 1969: 25). These clashes with the British resulted in the banning of meetings as well as any references to the Muslim Brotherhood in 1941 (Mitchell, 1969:23). This event was seen by the Muslim Brotherhood as the “first *miḥna*” (persecution) (Mitchell, 1969:23) and since then no subsequent government has avoided confrontation with the Muslim Brotherhood.

This prominence of the Muslim Brotherhood was also indicative of the wider scope and influence that it was developing compared to the other movements. The Association of Young Egypt emphasised the importance of Egypt as a nation in terms of King and country, focusing on a purification campaign directed at foreign economic and political influence. However, the Muslim Brotherhood had an Islamic agenda and a wider scope as well in the form of the following that had developed outside Egypt in Arab and Islamic countries such as Syria and Jordan (Springborg, 1989: 330). The increased influence of these movements on larger sectors of the population drew especially the urban lower and middle classes and students into politics. In this manner the movements developed a power base that would ensure their influence in years to come. In addition, their actions against the government made further claims on the government for attention, an aspect that also continued as a trend.

Initially the conduct of these movements did not take the form of acts of terror or violence against the authorities, but were indicative of the original motive of the movements, namely of independence that they shared with those who would become the new rulers of Egypt as well as a large segment of society. The Muslim Brotherhood’s initial aim of opposing the British and achieving

independence was shared with the Free Officers, and this aim negates the arguments of various authors such as Springborg that they were anti-establishment.

In order to facilitate the spreading of the aims of the Muslim Brotherhood in broader society al-Banna established rover groups to provide instruction in small groups on their aims, and to be an instrument for the defence of Islam and the Muslim Brotherhood (Mitchell, 1969: 32). He formed the battalion or *Katiba* “to generate a total physical, mental, and spiritual absorption in and dedication to the Society” (Mitchell, 1969: 196). In 1937 the Battalions of the Supporters of God (*Kata'ib Anṣar Allah*) were launched, with three groups of 40 each for workers, students and civil servants. The aim was to make the ideas and goals of the Muslim Brotherhood known by forming an effective organisation that embodied the ideas and put them into effect. This system was a failure and in 1943 the family system was established. Up to this point membership consisted of assistants, related and active members as well as strugglers. The subsequent system of families (*usar*) provided organisation to the Muslim Brotherhood and added to the development and establishment of cells consisting of five members within co-operative families. The primary function of these cells was indoctrination of members into the Muslim Brotherhood. The family system was in fact the real basis of the power of the Society of the Muslim Brotherhood – permitting, as it did, authority to express itself through a well-recognised, clearly defined, and tightly knit chain of command (Mitchell, 1969: 198). Al-Banna referred to the system used within the families as the pillars: familiarity, understanding and responsibility. Familiarity referred to strengthening the Brotherhood, understanding concerned the truth about Islam, and being responsible became the essence of the Brotherhood and the meaning of the Prophet’s words. While this system initially had an external role, ensuring the unity and the preservation of order within the Muslim Brotherhood, it became an active instrument for welfare and social services in society. This aspect resulted in entrenching the role and function of the Muslim Brotherhood in society.

Subsequent resurgent movements would follow the same *modus operandi*. This aspect, more than anything else, has served to determine the relevancy of resurgent movements in society (Mitchell, 1969: 198).

In the run-up to the coup d'état social consequences of the political and economic changes that had taken place in Egypt in the years between World War I and II had taken their toll on the establishment. Aspects such as the rapid growth of the population together with large-scale urbanisation, unemployment and rising inflation put social strain on society, and this had an impact on Egypt's political stability (Springborg, 1989: 333). In addition, new radical movements came to the fore that focused on political action, especially after 1945. These were movements such as the Workers' Committee for National Liberation and the National Committee of Students, as well as cultural and intellectual clubs, associations and publishing houses. These new groups combined programmes for national liberation, which entailed the evacuation of the British, with the liberation of the exploited masses from the capitalist minority. As a result of the influence of these new groups the existing groups, such as the Wafd party and the Muslim Brotherhood, adopted more radical social and economic reform platforms in their political programmes. The Muslim Brotherhood adopted vast social welfare schemes such as insurance for workers and health care into its programmes. In the ensuing battle for the hearts and minds of the people the Muslim Brotherhood's approach together with its religiously based goals, was more relevant to society than that of other groups such as the leftists, which was based on foreign ideologies and often led by foreigners (Springborg, 1989: 360).

Thus, the time leading up to 1952 was marked by disorder, destruction and violence, indicating a breakdown of parliamentary life and the rule of law in Egypt as a whole. Resistance to pro-British sentiments became very prominent (Warburg, 1998: 145–146). In 1948 the Palestinian war led to the Muslim Brotherhood calling for a complete revision of the established system of government. A series of terrorist attacks took place, while the Chief of Police in

Cairo was killed on 4 December 1948. When the Muslim Brotherhood was outlawed and Hasan al-Banna was killed on 12 February 1949, it kept a low profile until the 1952 revolution (Warburg, 1998: 145–146). The new General Guide of the Muslim Brotherhood, Hasan al-Hudaybi, could not fill the vacuum left by al-Banna. He claimed allegiance to al-Banna's doctrinal legacy, but interpreted it differently (Kepel 1984, 36). After al-Banna many members of the Muslim Brotherhood would become disillusioned with lack of activity and the failure of their leaders to take a firm stance and would distance themselves from the group to form their own groups.

Increased nationalistic violence escalated on 25 and 26 January 1952 with "massive rejection of the British, the West, the foreigner, the wealthy and the ruler – King and Pasha alike" (Mitchell, 1969: 93). Mitchell states that while the Muslim Brotherhood supported the revolution as most Egyptians did, little if any evidence indicates that its members were involved in the coup. It is stated that an agreement was reached with the Muslim Brotherhood to protect foreigners, minorities and strategic centres of communications on the day of the revolution. The Muslim Brotherhood would ensure popular acceptance of the coup and dispatch its rovers to assist in maintaining order. It would assist in the escape of Free Officers if the coup should fail, and obstruct the British forces (Mitchell, 1969: 104). After the coup the Muslim Brotherhood recalled its role in maintaining law and order but the subsequent disassociation of the government from the Brotherhood led to growing hostility between them.

### **3. MOTIVATION FOR ISLAMIC RESURGENCE MOVEMENTS**

From the internal political as well as socio-economic conditions in Egypt during this time several motivational factors that had led to the formation of resurgent movements can be derived.

### **3.1. Internal conditions**

#### **3.1.1. Lack of political participation**

The political system that was in place under the Ottoman Empire was not inclusive. In addition, political power stayed in the hands of those elite groups in Egypt that shared privileges with the colonial rulers while the rest of the population at this stage had no direct impact on relations with the political power. When the Ottoman Empire came to an end in 1924 it was replaced by an authoritative colonial government in which ideology, law and institutions were based on Western models and not legitimised by Islam. However, very little political development took place with regard to power – sharing and political patterns were indicative of the superimposition of new forms of government on the traditional social structures.

Political parties emerged gradually after the end of the autocratic Muhammad Ali period. However, as the new ruling elite were made up of senior government officials, landowners, religious leaders and the emerging middle class, the political parties were also led by people who fitted into the autocratic frame – such as Saad Zaghlul, who led the Wafd party as an autocrat (Esposito, 1992: 144). However, these parties were indicative of the transitional phase and represented semi-autocratic governments that were still constrained by a minimum of rules as well as the demands of foreign powers. In these initial stages the political parties had no real political grass-roots and the patron-client relationship was based on kinship, tribal-sectarian or other personal considerations. At the same time the government was highly centralised and its functions and policies were far removed from the realities of the poor rural and recently urbanised segments of the population. However, modernising autocrats as well as the colonial forces failed to introduce or develop methods for political

integration. More authoritative political systems were introduced by modernising rulers who introduced military, administrative and other reforms and changes that were not part of or based on Islamic sources of authority, or integrated with Islamic sources of authority (Choueiri 1989: 31).

### 3.1.2. Drive towards nationalism

The most important aspect emanating from this stage was the clarity with regard to Egypt's nation-state within the frame of reference of Islam. However, this idea of nationalism was seen not in its Western sense but was rather a concept of sacredness in that it meant an unqualified commitment to defend the nation, not as Egypt but as a Muslim country, against imperialism. To distinguish between nation and nationalism al-Banna used the concepts of *waṭaniyya*, or devotion to one's country, as well as *qawmiyya*, or devotion to one's people. Islam teaches *waṭaniyya* (Mitchell, 1969: 267). This also meant that Egypt should be "recreated in its image after God has granted her the teachings of Islam" (Mitchell, 1969: 266). Arabism was seen as part of *qawmiyya* in that it represented a unified nation in one language. From these motivational factors stemmed the drive for independence, and it also formed part of Nasser's concept of pan-Arabism.

The national character of Egyptian society was revealed in all subsequent groups that, irrespective of their stance, focused their efforts on problematic issues of Egypt's nation-state. Islam had to serve as a unifying factor within an alien new world by its symbols, mosques, ideology and communication. The central theme of al-Banna's approach was that state and religion had to remain inseparable. He argued that "Egypt should not import foreign political ideals because the Islamic state is more complete, more pure, loftier, and more exalted than anything that can be found in the utterance of westerners and books of Europeans" (Sullivan and Sana Abed-Kotob, 1999: 41-42).

### 3.1.3. The influence of Hasan al-Banna

The unique personality of Hasan al-Banna, who was present in Egypt at this time, served to facilitate the motivational factors within society that led to the formation of the first major resurgent movement of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Hasan al Banna filled the vacuum for Muslims in Egyptian society between the distant government and the day to day needs of society by bringing religion and prominent local community leaders together in a structured manner. Hasan al-Banna's motive was to fulfil the spiritual as well as physical needs of society around him. From his position as teacher in Isma'iliyya Hasan al-Banna actively participated in community life. At this stage he identified the sources of power in the community as the civil Muslim community, *shaykhs* of the Sufi orders, leading members of the families and groupings as well as social and religious clubs. In most cases these sources of power represented the true people of society versus those in power that were removed physically and politically from the rest. Therefore, the emphasis was on teaching and providing religious education. The members of the Muslim Brotherhood were largely drawn from the lower middle class. As no religious group in Cairo at that time adequately provided for bringing faith and teachings together, Hasan al-Banna also organised a group of students from the Al Azhar University willing to train for the task of preaching and guidance (Mitchell, 1969: 5). In his quest to assist the youth to adopt an Islamic way of life, he studied the teachings of Muhammad 'Abduh, Rashid Rida, Farid Wajdi and Ahmad Taymir Pasha. He regarded them as partisans of the Islamic cause, while the official body of religion in Egypt, the Al Azhar University, was accused of being ineffective (Mitchell, 1969: 5).

In essence, then, the Muslim Brotherhood was an Egyptian movement with a strong Arab dimension (Choueiri, 1989: 49) as set out by al-Banna. It called for the independence of Egypt and the Sudan and their merger on the basis of the geographical and national unity of the Nile Valley. This was postulated as the first

step towards creating a unified Arab world with common historical, linguistic, geographical, religious and cultural characteristics. Islamic unity figured in this scheme as a crowning achievement, composed of sovereign and independent states. Political parties were deemed divisive elements, hindering the realisation of national unity and the operation of a government based on the teachings of the Qur'an. Economic exploitation became an issue with ethical implications (Choueiri, 1989: 48). Therefore, Hasan al-Banna represented the culminating phase of Islamic reform and *Salafism*.<sup>8</sup> His speeches, pamphlets, and political attitude reveal a constant endeavour to reconcile Islam with the modern world. He was perhaps the first Islamic reformist to stress the importance of creating a modern political party and the necessity of formulating a comprehensive programme of action, although his actual accomplishments fell short of his diverse ambitions.

Al-Banna in his description of the future of Islam did refer to the institution of the caliphate as a future goal. He generalised about it "within the terms of the Islamic system (*al-nizam al-Islami*) without much specification as to what this meant in terms of government theory and practice" (Mitchell, 1969: 40). It is thus possible that he was at this stage still loyal to the Egyptian king but adverse to foreign, British, occupation. While the relationship between the authorities and the Muslim Brotherhood was mutually convenient, the national movement was the focus of the struggle.

At the time of Hasan al-Banna's death the Muslim Brotherhood had acquired a hierarchical structure and developed a general programme. However, it never specified the method by means of which it aspired to implement its ideals. Hasan al-Banna did not venture beyond dividing his strategy into three phases: the phase of propaganda, acquiring followers and establishing their mobilisation, and finally, the phase of implementation, work, and creative activity. This open-ended

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<sup>8</sup> See Introduction, section 2.



and vague strategy prevented the Muslim Brotherhood from developing into a more integrated political movement at that stage (Choueiri, 1989: 51).

### **3.2. External involvement**

#### **3.2.1. The creation of Israel in 1947**

The most important external event that had an impacted on the evolvement of Islamic resurgence was the partition of Palestine in November 1947. In the run-up to the partition the Palestinian question was kept alive in Egypt by means of the press, speeches and demonstrations. Even though the Muslim Brotherhood was dissolved in 1948, Al-Banna had ordered preparation for a *jihad* to support the Palestinians. After the Muslim Brotherhood was dissolved, members who were taking part in the *jihad* chose to stay in Palestine instead of returning to Egypt. Increased resistance to pro-British sentiments became very prominent. In addition, arms-gathering as well as the mobilisation for the “Arab war” created a confusing picture at this time because mobilisation by the Muslim Brotherhood against the Egyptian government was more than likely seen as preparation for the Palestinian cause. Despite this, the government seized the property of those involved in the Palestinian war as well as arms found at a house in Isma’liyya. Riots at the Cairo University added to the subsequent dissolution of the Muslim Brotherhood on 6 December 1949. The Muslim Brotherhood was labelled a terrorist organisation that intended to overthrow the political order by means of trained military rover units (Mitchell 1969: 66).

The creation of the state of Israel in 1948 intensified anti-British feeling and since then has been one of the central issues of all subsequent Islamic resurgent movements. In addition, the Western world was seen to have decided on the creation of Israel at the same time as the Egyptian cause was presented to the

UN. The inaction of the UN Security Council (UNSC) on the Egyptian cause not only increased the nationalist cause but “accentuate[d] the international isolation of Egypt and reinforce[d] the already deep mistrust of the Western countries” (Mitchell, 1969: 51).

### **3.2.2. New political ideologies after the Second World War**

World War II was a watershed in the history of the Third World, as it heralded the decline of colonial powers and the growth of new role-players in the form of the USA and the former USSR. Arab nationalists discredited the politics of the liberal governments that allowed social nationalism and communism to become two rival but dominant ideologies in the Islamic world in which the relevance of Islam as a political and economic system was decreasing.

The moulding of the history of Egypt as a result of World War II therefore had an impact on the Muslim Brotherhood and during this time it developed into a force willing and able to play a decisive part in post-war Egypt. The fact that the period up to 1952 was marked by disorder, destruction and violence was indicative of a breakdown of parliamentary life and the rule of law in Egypt as a whole (Mitchell, 1969: 98).

## **4. OBJECTIVES OF ISLAMIC RESURGENT MOVEMENTS**

The original reasons for the formation of the Muslim Brotherhood were the enlistment of the Muslim community (umma) and providing Islamic religious guidance. The Brotherhood was also under the impression that after independence the new government would meet its aims to establish a dispensation in which the sharia would be introduced.

#### **4.1. Obtaining independence from colonial powers**

At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the main objective of the Islamic opposition groups was to gain independence from colonial powers. Within Egypt resentment towards continued European political, military and economic hegemony fuelled nationalist fervour and providing a common goal for Islamic opposition movements otherwise divided by clan, region, tribe or degree of religious commitment (Esposito, 1983: 61). Especially after the World War II the aim of creating an independent modern state with a religious ideology and legitimacy supporting its socio-political order brought the national character of Egyptian society to the fore in all subsequent groups and, irrespective of their stance, they focused their efforts on problematic issues in Egypt's nation-state (Esposito, 1992: 67). At this stage the concept of nationalism was seen together with Islam and the idea was that, in creating a nation-state, Islam would be secured. Al-Banna clearly specified that "every millimetre of land on which the flag of Islam waves is the homeland to every Muslim and must be defended. All Muslims are one nation, and the Islamic homeland is one homeland" (Sagiv, 1995: 31).

Therefore, Egyptian nationalism also impacted on those who supported Islamic modernism. For this reason, secular nationalism was reinterpreted in such a manner that the relationship between Islam and the state and society restricted Islam to personal life. This idea was also put forward by Ahmad Lutfi al-Sayyid (1872-1963), who saw that the traditional Islamic community had no relevance for the political realities of the modern Muslim world. He stated that "the traditional Islamic formula has no *raison d'être* because it fits neither the present state of affairs in Islamic nations nor their aspirations. One option remains, i.e. to replace this formula by the only doctrine that is in accord with every eastern nation, which possessed a clearly defined sense of fatherland namely nationalism" (Esposito, 1992: 67). However, this was not a new development but simply a continuation of the conditions experienced under the Ottoman Empire when the new secular system existed alongside the traditional one eventually creating a dual system. To combine Islam with modernism, Islamic reformers

such as Jamal al-Din al-Afghani and Muhammad Abdu had already called for a revitalisation of Islamic thought, institutions and society by adopting modern science and education. As these scholars were well versed in Islamic learning and had been exposed to European culture, they sought to adopt progressive methods and institutions in Muslim society. These reformers thought that a synthesis of Islam and modernity would enable society to advance within the Islamic context by means of the restoration of *ijtihad* (personal reasoning of doctrine) to assimilate Western ideas and derive the nearest equivalent of the principle. The role of religion became delegated to Islamic institutions such as the *Kuttab* (mosque), *madrassa* (religious school) and *Sufi* orders as the sole disseminators of education and culture.

#### **4.2. Establishing an Islamically orientated society**

Even though Binder stated that this use of Islam had nothing to do with real Islam but everything to do with political development, the Muslim Brotherhood's ultimate goal was the creation of an Islamic order (*al-Nizām al-Islami*) and not a Muslim state. The Islamic order referred to legal principles that were regarded as fundamental to a Muslim society, irrespective of the form of political order. The sharia was the determining factor. The call was for "a return to the Islamic principles and not a literal return to the seventh century" (Mitchell, 1969: 234), thus the call was for a return to the system of Islam and not its historical beginnings. This application of Islam was not a new Islam but it did differ from "incorrect historical interpretations given it by Muslims" (Mitchell, 1969: 232).

The immediate concerns of the Muslim Brotherhood were the nature and destiny of Muslim society in the 20<sup>th</sup> century as well as the relevancy of the Islamic order and the sharia and the related question of the separation of church and state (Mitchell, 1969: 236), which was seen as a Western concept. The Muslim Brotherhood's solution to decay, corruption, and humiliation could only be the restoration of Islam in Egypt. Insistence on the sharia was rather to prevent

Islamic society from imitating the West as well as to adhere to theological and social imperatives of the Islamic way of life. Thus, it seems that insistence on the sharia had more to do with retaining Muslims' cultural identity in the face of Western domination and pressure to imitate the West.

If Islam was to keep abreast of the times and be true to its nature of renewal (*tajdid*), not imitation (*taqlid*), the sharia was to be freed from tradition to allow interpretation. The first principles of action that the Muslim Brotherhood supported were the opening of the door of *ijtihad* to facilitate interpretation. Secondly, the principles of analogy (*qiyas*) and consensus (*ijma*) had to be followed to bring Islam abreast of modern times. Qutb added that wider powers had to be given to the heads of state to legislate for the general welfare, “the public interest (*al-maṣlaḥa al-mursala*), the blocking of means (*sadd al-dhara`*)” (Mitchell, 1969: 239). Both these concepts referred to ensuring the welfare of society. These concepts referred to measures with no specific detailed authority supporting them being legislated. Muhammad Ghazali suggested that Islam gave the ruler power to interfere in behaviour permitted in the Qur'an – in a sense to promote behaviour for general welfare (Mitchell, 1969: 232).

What separated the Muslim Brotherhood from the other movements were its objectives. Principles and stipulations regarding political organisations had to focus on the Qur'an as fundamental constitution while the role of consultation (Shura) bound the ruler to the teaching of Islam and the will of the people.. These principles were seen as essential to an effective government and were consistent with the traditions of society to secure its general welfare. The Muslim Brotherhood envisaged a total reform of political, economic and social life and the creation of a milieu conducive to Islamic life. The most important political reform was the reform of the constitution. It was assumed that the introduction of the sharia would automatically provide the necessary reform. Therefore the Egyptian constitution was deemed unacceptable and political parties saw it as a “device, which has given legality to the appetites of the rulers and the tyrannies

of authority” (Mitchell, 1969: 261). Political parties were seen as unnecessary for freedom.

The Muslim Brotherhood wanted to unify Egypt and defend it as well as the Qur’anic principles. Islamic resurgents also believed that the formulated law had been infiltrated by un-Islamic expansion; therefore they rejected blind following of the traditional law and stated that they had the right to return to the original source. This was set out at the fifth conference of the Muslim Brotherhood in 1938. Hasan al-Banna stated: “We must draw the rules of Islam from their original sources and understand Islam as it had been understood by the followers of the Prophet and their disciples from the generation of the good forefathers” (Sagiv, 1995: 31). Renewal of the influence of Egypt and its economic growth and enhancement of the standard of living were sought. The Muslim Brotherhood also rejected Western economic and social policies because these, it believed, were based on imperialist exploitation. Regarding economic and technical systems, the Muslim Brotherhood regarded industrialisation as a fundamental process for the development of Muslim society (Sagiv, 1995: 31).

The realisation of social justice and the guarantee of equal opportunities in the struggle against ignorance was another objective, together with patriotism and the liberation of Egypt. The more violent posture in the 1940s of the Muslim Brotherhood was due to the fact that “militancy and martyrdom had been elevated to central virtues in the Society’s ethos” (Mitchell, 1969: 206). Members were told that they were “the army of liberation” (Mitchell, 1969: 207). The concept of *jihad* was seen as an obligation and “he who dies and has not fought [*ghaza*; literally raided] and who was not resolved to fight, has died a *jahiliyya* death” (Mitchell, 1969: 207). Militant *jihad* and the concept of the art of death placed emphasis on it as being “the shortest and easiest step from this life to the life hereafter” (Mitchell, 1969: 208). This very same concept is still used to justify acts of *jihad* presently.

Due to the fact that little guidance had been given on practical politics in the Qur'an, or was formulated during al-Banna's life, it became necessary to formulate the characteristics of an Islamic state after his death. Therefore, generalities were used because "history had not bequeathed to Muslims an immediate discernible theoretical legacy" (Mitchell, 1969: 245). Qutb recognised this and stated that "when we come to discuss political and economic theory from the practical point of view of the state, we find that the course of history shows an exemplary failure in the life of Islam" (Mitchell, 1969: 245). The orthodox caliphate was the only known and acceptable example; thus what transpired was emphasis on the "principles that would guide an Islamic state; the specifics would be left to the time, place and the needs of people" (Mitchell, 1969: 245). Therefore, al-Banna focused on establishing a religiously based government where education, legislation and belief in Arab and Islamic unity were considered. The existing undesirable system had to be replaced with a system in accordance with the *al-salaf al-ṣāliḥ* (early pious ancestors of the seventh century). The spirit of the Qur'an had to be revived together with an Islamic government in which the inseparable character of religion and politics was emphasised. However, Sagiv stated that al-Banna declared that the form of government was of less importance than the fact that it had to be based on Islamic concepts (Sagiv, 1995: 31). This view of al-Banna would be interpreted incorrectly by future generations.

## **5. MODUS OPERANDI OF ISLAMIC RESURGENT MOVEMENTS**

The modus operandi followed by the resurgent movements at this stage in the history of Egypt is indicative of the fact that they were focused on achieving independence, opposing the British and assisting the Palestinians. Therefore, their modus operandi fitted their aims.

During al-Banna's youth, political, religious and moral activities influenced his religious rationale for political and social reform as espoused by the Muslim

Brotherhood. Political disunity, profound socio-economic disparities, social dislocation, and growing indifference to religion in Egypt also influenced al-Banna. So, what the Muslim Brotherhood offered was “the tasks of moral reform (*iṣlah al-nufus*) and of agreeing on an Islamic approach and modus operandi (*minhaj Islami*)” (Ayubi, 1982: 131). Therefore, al-Banna’s approach was focused on meeting the needs of society. He began teaching and writing to stress the importance of the stipulations of Islam as an alternative to the negativity experienced as a result of Western influences.

The establishment of the Muslim Brotherhood in 1928 was mostly seen as an attempt to meet these needs. Therefore, activities that were undertaken centred on building neighbourhood mosques, creating small educational institutes that offered courses in religion and literacy, establishing small hospitals and dispensaries for the public, small industrial and commercial enterprises that could provide employment and social clubs and organisations (Said and Wenner, 1982: 336-339). During the first three years of the Muslim Brotherhood’s life, its primary goal was the enlargement of membership in the Isma’iliyya area. Direct communication at the mosque and regular meeting places at homes gave the Society’s message legitimacy and sincerity. The second conference in 1933 dealt with advertising and instructional propaganda as well as a press. The press was used for printing texts that were supplied by al-Banna that reproduced or summarised the Muslim Brotherhood’s communications to the government about society and reform. The Muslim Brotherhood also began giving weekly lectures.

Al-Banna’s ideas were developed over time and put forward in stages over 20 years. He was concerned with the preservation and the growth of the movement itself and stressed the gradualist nature of the movement. In 1938 the movement had reached a high level of maturity and support but al-Banna still adhered to his gradualist approach. Peaceful propagation had to be directed at the widest possible target and the first stage of mobilisation of the selected units represented the hard-core paramilitary group. Then a militant stage was



envisaged characterised by a struggle amounting to holy war that had to persist until the goal had been achieved. The aim would be to establish a state in which Islam had become a belief and worship, a homeland and a nationality, a religion, a state, holy book and a sword (Luciani, 1990: 259). Al-Banna addressed the problem of violence and opposed terrorist action similar to what had taken place in 1938. Neither did al-Banna support the manner in which the government reacted to the movements. He stated that even though the appropriate conditions were there for a revolutionary change, the Muslim Brotherhood would only use force if all other means had failed.

Towards World War II the Muslim Brotherhood developed into a force willing and able to play a decisive role in post-war Egypt together with groups from the army and police. They also used political avenues; however, friction with the government led to the establishment of a special section in 1942 or 1943 that consisted of assistants, related and active members as well as strugglers. Events during 1947 exerted not only external pressure on the Muslim Brotherhood but internal pressure as well. From this time on the secret apparatus grew in size, including recruits from the army who later took part in the 1952 revolution.

The partition of Palestine in November 1947 came after an era in which the Palestinian question was kept alive in Egypt by means of the press, speeches and demonstrations. Al-Banna ordered preparation for a *jihad*. The outcome was that the Muslim Brotherhood was labelled as planning a rebellion; its military and spiritual training was seen as indoctrination and violence. The violence that was part of the struggle was justified in that it was “resistance to the betrayal by the secular leaders of Egypt” (Mitchell, 1969: 318). Therefore, paramilitary operations were seen as a means of defence of the Muslim Brotherhood’s organisation and its ideas, hence the concept of *jihad*. The Muslim Brotherhood also contributed to violence during the period before 1952 that ended Egypt’s parliamentary life. Its prominence during the World War II period in particular confirmed the fact that the organised and recognised political groups in the country were no longer

capable of serving the political and other needs of many sectors of the community and the spirit of revolution was at large in the country (Mitchell, 1969: 313). After the war its adjustment to political frustration mirrored that of the majority of society in that it reflected frustration with the undemocratic development of the parliamentary process in Egypt.

The Muslim Brotherhood developed beyond the bounds of merely a resurgent movement because it also focused on the plight of the masses. The large-scale social, educational, religious and charity projects among the lower and middle classes were aspects that had been neglected thus far by either the ruling government of the day or the elitist intellectual movements. In this manner the Muslim Brotherhood managed to institutionalise itself within civil society. Its role and function that developed in this manner served as an example for later resurgent movements. It developed an infrastructure within civil society that co-existed with the government. These structures of the resurgent movements represented society's struggle against the failures of government to rectify corruption, mismanagement, inefficiency, authoritarianism and political exclusion (Sullivan and Sana Abed-Kotob, 1999:25). The Muslim Brotherhood also alienated the official religious authorities of the traditional Al Azhar institute because it accused the official civil Muslim community of irrelevance and being politically subservient to the government.

In conclusion, then, the strategies of the Muslim Brotherhood under al-Banna can be summarised as avoiding theological disputes and domination by notables as well as troublesome political parties. The gradual transitional stages of development were important, as these would facilitate establishing a power base needed to realise its goals. In establishing a government the inclusiveness of the total Islamic system would *inter alia* mean that aspects such as education and legislation were inseparable from each other. The caliphate would be seen as a symbol of Islamic unity.

## **6. CONCLUSIONS**

While the previous generations of Islamic ideologists focused on ideologies pertaining to the impact of acculturation on socio-economic and political spheres within the Muslim community, the Muslim Brotherhood managed to entrench them in society and formed a movement.

In conclusion, the following aspects may be stressed:

### **6.1. Socio-economic and political factors**

Binder argues that to associate Islamic culture in the Middle East with resurgence is misleading because Islam on its own “accounts for little” (Binder, 1988: 80-81). He goes on to state that Islamic symbols were used by those in power. This use of Islam had nothing to do with real Islam but everything to do with political development as it was used to justify their legitimacy. However, to view the developments in Egypt simply as political developments is to have a very simplistic view of the intricacies of the Islamic way of life, where all aspects of life take place within the parameters of Islam.

The manner in which the Islamic ideals of the Muslim Brotherhood were developed resulted in the growth and prominence of this movement in comparison to other movements. The renewed focus of Islam in the 20<sup>th</sup> century on the political as well as religious need of society without minimising the ideological aspects was especially apparent in the Muslim Brotherhood. Al-Banna formulated ideologies that provided answers to the aspects that were also seen as problematic to other movements. Therefore this legacy was perpetuated into future generations of resurgence.

The Muslim Brotherhood was the first mass-supported and organised urban-orientated movement to address the plight of the Muslim community in the

modern world. It drew members from civil servants, students, urban labourers and peasants. The ideological foundation of the Muslim Brotherhood was influenced by the environment prevalent in Egypt at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. When Al-Banna came into contact with the more cosmopolitan influences in Cairo he also encountered the intellectual, political and social problems and conflicts that were part of Western influence. Therefore, Al-Banna's approach was focused on meeting the needs of society.

Clarity on Egypt's stature as a nation-state developed at this stage. The national character of Egyptian society was prominent in all subsequent groups, irrespective of their stance. Al-Banna sought release from colonial power by requesting king Faruq to apply Islamic jurisprudence and foster the Islamic military spirit. Islam had to serve as a unifying factor within an alien new world by its symbols, mosques, ideology and communication. He argued that authority in Islam was the state but its role was the protection of the teaching of Islam. The central theme of his approach was that state and religion had to remain inseparable.

Hasan al-Banna's initial aim and that of the Muslim Brotherhood was the independence of Egypt and ridding it of the occupying force specifically, rather than the removal of the government. Thus independence from foreign forces was the overriding impetus, not so much anti-Westernism. The government lost the support of the Muslim Brotherhood when it realised that the government was more supportive of the British than of the ideals of the Muslim community. It is argued that Hasan al-Banna's thoughts should rightly be seen in the context of the prevailing climate in Egypt at that time, against the background of warring parties as well as British occupation and increasing Westernisation. It was said that the first task of the Muslim Brotherhood was obtaining Egypt's political freedom, after which the rebuilding of the society should take place in order for Egypt to assume an advanced position alongside other nations.

The Muslim Brotherhood's goals as set out during its tenth anniversary were

indicative of its evolution into a movement that insisted on Islam as a total system based on the Qur'an and the Sunna that should be applicable to all times and all places (Mitchell, 1969: 14). At this stage al-Banna did not refer to the institution of the caliphate with the firm conviction that it should be a future goal; he also generalised "within the terms the Islamic system (*al-nizam al-islami*) without much specification as to what this meant in terms of government theory and practice" (Mitchell, 1969: 40). The relationship between the authorities and the Muslim Brotherhood was mutually convenient and the national movement was the focus of the struggle. It was only after 1952, when the Nasser government failed to fulfil its promise of installing the sharia that the focus changed. So, even though the Muslim Brotherhood had a political focus, it was rooted in Islam.

## **6.2. Hasan al-Banna's political views**

The personality and character of the leading persons involved in the Islamic resurgent movements have played a central role, and will continue to do so. The persona of Hasan al-Banna as well as his unique characteristics, such as his Sufi background, became part of the ideology that has developed among the Islamic resurgent movements. His non-violent stance has been based on his Sufi and *Salafiyya* background and is part of the Muslim Brotherhood ideology. The mere fact that the society went into decline after his death also proves his importance.

Even though many of Hasan al-Banna's thoughts were left open-ended, they still provide a primary source understanding of large segments of Egyptian society and the Muslim Brotherhood. Very few new contributions have been made to Hasan al-Banna's ideas, however: "the novelty encountered in an intellectual belonging to the Brotherhood such as Sayyid Qutb reflects a practical radicalism related to the application of principles more than to innovations in theoretical concepts" (Luciana, 1990: 255). Mitchell states that al-Banna in his description of the future of Islam did not refer to the institution of the true caliphate. It was not so much about finding a ruler supporting the Qur'an, as finding a ruler that uses

Islam as a normative system and defensive weapon to stop decline. While al-Banna could have been loyal to the Egyptian King, he was averse to foreign and British occupation.

Al-Banna saw Islam as an all-encompassing system capable of rebuilding the nation. He declared that the parliamentary system did not contradict the Islamic system of governance. The application of the principles of Islam was the responsibility of the government even if the ruler was not Islamic. The Qur'an had to remain the guiding principle. An Islamic government would have three characteristics, namely the use of Islamic law, the government of *Shura* and the caliphate as the representative of the entire community. The Qur'an limits the power of the caliphate and the way it carries out tasks. It is further argued that Muslims did not put the Islamic system into effect after the death of the Prophet except during the era of the orthodox caliphs, after which individuals transformed the system into a reign that obstructed the application of Islamic rule. The *Shura* system of consultation forms the central pillar of the faith as well as of Islamic rule. Islam had to be interpreted as a comprehensive way of life encompassing worship, law, government and society. Al-Banna emphasised that the strength and survival of the Muslim community depended on an Islamic identity. The door of *ijtihad* had to open to facilitate a reinterpretation of the new Islamic responses to make Islam relevant to life (Mitchell, 1969: 40).

Hasan al-Banna strove to build a comprehensive political-religious advocacy but disregarded the idea of an intellectual and methodological framework. He did not adopt an absolutely closed ideological position toward the West, especially toward Western social sciences. He was not very concerned with the Western epistemological and philosophical frame of reference because he already had his own vision and definition of Islam. The intellectual platform proclaimed in the third session of the Majlis al *Shura* Consultative Council of 1935 stressed that the Brotherhood's doctrine is that of the *Jama`a* (the community). In other words, "all matters are in God's hands, Prophet Muhammed (God's Peace and Blessings Be on Him) is the last messenger to humankind, and the Qur'an is God's Holy Book"

(Mitchell, 1969: 40). It is a holistic and extensive code of law that encompasses worldly and eternal systems. Members of the group should abide by the Sunna and the role of the Muslims is to revive the glory of Islam by rallying nations and redrafting legislation.

### **6.3. Independence and the upliftment of the Muslim community**

The modus operandi that al-Banna followed was firstly indicative of his Sufi background,<sup>9</sup> which influenced him to form support groups within society. He opposed violence and terrorism and saw opposition as a manner of obtaining independence. This aim the Muslim Brotherhood shared with the Free Officers as well as the segments of society that supported their aims, thus it cannot be seen as overthrowing a government or anti-establishment actions. The Muslim Brotherhood together with the Free Officers supported similar societal aims. These aims focused on nationalistic issues as well as important external causes, specifically the Palestinian cause. These aims aided the Muslim Brotherhood's increased in popularity in society. The Muslim Brotherhood even grew while its members were in prison.

## **7. SUMMARY**

Hasan Al-Banna regarded the conditions that were experienced in Egypt at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century as enough justification for the formation of the Muslim Brotherhood. The introduction of an Islamic-orientated government was regarded as the answer that would alleviate the situation. However, the manner in which the Egyptian political scene evolved under the subsequent Nasser government complicated matters to such an extent that Islamic opposition movements intensified and grew in structure.

The Muslim Brotherhood was the dominant movement before independence, and

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<sup>9</sup> See Chapter One, section 5.

its struggle had different goals from those of the British and Nasser governments. While the Muslim Brotherhood sought an Islamic dispensation according to the sharia, the government that came into power after 1952 was more concerned with retaining power, albeit with external aid.



## CHAPTER TWO

### ISLAMIC RESURGENT MOVEMENTS DURING THE REGIME OF PRESIDENT NASSER: 1952 TO 1970

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

While the Muslim Brotherhood, the dominant Islamic resurgent movement under the newly independent Nasser government, anticipated the long-awaited introduction of Islam into the government, the opposite took place. The Nasser government did not honour its agreement with the Muslim Brotherhood by introducing a more Islamically-based government. Instead it introduced radical political, economic and social changes and introduced effective control measures against any possible opposition it might experience. The weaknesses in the political system that the new revolutionary government had inherited made it easy for it to appear as the saviour of Egypt. The absence of a clearly dominant and unifying middle-class ideology allowed the Free Officers to monopolise power. The new government was thus able to steer the political process in a radically new direction without much concern about opposition.

As the new revolutionary government under the Free Officers was characterised by factional and ideological conflicts among them, the military ensured the security of the new government and gradually assumed all positions of authority. There was also a lack of political orientation and of administrative and executive experience. Therefore, the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC) put its men into cabinet posts. In addition, the president declared that Egypt's not being ready for democracy was justification for his autocratic approach (Mitchell, 1969: 117). Then, encountering little opposition, President Nasser introduced governmental programmes and measures to institute radical political, economic

and social changes. This involved economic strategies of land confiscation from large landowners and nationalisation of domestic and foreign enterprises in 1956. These measures would have a far-reaching impact on Islamic resurgence.

The exclusion of the Muslim Brotherhood from the government, as well as its disillusionment, led to the deterioration of the relationship between the government and the Muslim Brotherhood. When the government adopted harsh methods to curb acts of opposition in general, this had an impact on the Muslim Brotherhood and exacerbated hostilities between the two. This method of dealing with opposition has continued up to the present.

## 2. HISTORIC OVERVIEW

***“Muslim Brotherhood still identified with the names and thoughts of Jamal al-din al-Afghani, Muhammad Abduh, Rashid Rida. The view of each of these reformers depicts their role in general in that Afghani was referred to as the caller or announcer (mu’addin sarkha), Rida as the archivist or historian and Banna as the builder (bani) or founder of a nation, thus a practical extension of previous ideas.”***  
***(Mitchell, 1969: 321)***

The time and spatial factors under President Nasser facilitated the acculturation process. When he took over the government of Egypt most of the developing world, as well as regions that had been under colonial rule, experienced aspirations of nationalism as well as democracy in the aftermath of the World War II. In addition, the former Soviet Union had risen to prominence and played a leading role in Egypt at the time, hence the prominence of socialism. Another factor that would influence the Nasser regime was its defeat in the 1967 war against Israel. At the same time the conservative and anti-Western evolution<sup>10</sup> of

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<sup>10</sup> These events include the disintegration of the Ottoman empire followed by the abolition of the caliphate in 1924; as well as the 1916 Sykes-Picot agreement to establish British and French

the *Salafiyya* movement after World War I was apparent when Hasan al-Banna (1906-1949) formed the Society of the Muslim Brotherhood in 1928.

Against this background President Nasser envisaged a role for his ideas in the broader Islamic world and stated that nations had to undergo two revolutions – namely, emancipation from foreign rule and a social revolution – to ensure social impartiality. His view was that a representative form of government would be the natural outcome once internal unrest has been suppressed and real independence achieved. However, in the aftermath of the 1952 revolution, the Free Officers under Nasser found that the Egyptian masses did not show particular enthusiasm for the revolution or display much cohesion. What neither the Nasser government nor those that he had replaced understood then, and possibly do not understand even now, was the manner in which the political consciousness of the Egyptian people had been formed over the last two centuries, but especially since 1919. Neither the Nasser government nor any subsequent government has managed to bridge the divide between the rulers and the rest of the Egyptian people (Binder, 1988: 277). This trend has continued up to the present.

The result of the Nasser government's attempts to prevent all political opposition led to an increased role of the armed forces as the vanguard and base of the revolution. Afterwards the armed forces formed the major source of his active support. The defence force was Western in orientation because it had received Western training and equipment and was used together with the administrative apparatus to exercise control rather than represent the people. Cooper refers to the type of government that evolved in Egypt as a "military institution as a new political elite" (Cooper, 1982: 186). The military became an elitist group but its members' varied social and economic backgrounds and origin prevented this

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protectorates over Syria, Palestine and Iraq, the consequent failure of the Arab revolt sponsored by the British to realise the hopes for a unified Arab state; and the Balfour Declaration in 1917 proclaiming a Jewish National Home in Palestine and British sponsorship of Jewish settlement in the area.

group from assuming a more prominent ruling position.<sup>11</sup> Throughout the process of transformation in Egypt, Nasser ensured that the military protected the government.

Even though Cooper stated that the Egyptian army had “expertise in the disciplined use of violence [that] is more developed, permitting a greater sense of professionalism among officers” (Cooper, 1982: 186), their exclusiveness and violent methods under President Nasser in particular added to the radicalisation of resurgent movements to a level never experienced before. In addition, the exclusive power structures under him were formed by the military and constituted a “pyramid of power” (Springborg, 1989: 279). The president was supported by a second level of power constituted by vice-presidents, prime ministers and speakers of the People’s Assembly – all of whom were active or former military officers. This new elitist group also benefited from the suppression of religious and other communal social units, as well as other associations and organised groups and the disbanding of both secular and religious political associations since 1953. These events accelerated the total control of the new military elite over society but also exacerbated the motivational causes of Islamic resurgence.

This new elite increasingly consolidated its power under President Nasser and manipulated access to basic consumer goods, ensuring that the government became the focal point of interest of the new upper class by giving it direct control over most economic activity. The government also managed to attract the attention of the state-centred middle class by placing it on the pay-roll of the state (Cooper, 1982: 19). This financial and political exclusion, together with the control the government exerted in its authoritarianism and military control, served to radicalise large segments of the population, especially those that had not benefited from the new and independent government, which was beneficial to a small elite.

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<sup>11</sup> Of the 18 cabinets between 1952 and 1970 only the first was headed by a civilian and lasted for less than two months. The rest was headed by a combination of civilians and military (36.6% to 64.4%) (Springborg, 1989: 278).

The educational changes that President Nasser introduced, such as the abolition of school fees, educational planning and the nationalisation of foreign schools, were criticised because these methods failed to provide universal primary education. Initially the students, like the Muslim Brotherhood, supported the RCC, but they then opted for an anti-government stance after 1952. The students called for a struggle against military dictatorship, especially since academic freedom was severely restricted. Teachers and students were put under surveillance by security agents (Cooper, 1982:19). Therefore the students joined the increasingly urbanised and disillusioned new generation in Egypt that would try to find salvation in Islamic resurgence. While the Brotherhood was disillusioned because its support to the Free Officers did not ensure its goals of an independent state with the Qur'an as the constitution, the students joined other segments of society that found the increase in authoritarian governmental measures unacceptable.

The government introduced stricter control over the Muslim Brotherhood's activities to the extent that on 13 January 1952 it decided to dissolve the movement. This resulted in the Communist Party seeking the co-operation of the Muslim Brotherhood against the government. In 1953 all political parties were dissolved, even though the Muslim Brotherhood was initially exempted from this process and still represented the "largest organised popular force in the country" (Kepel, 1984: 26). Therefore, it was initially allowed to function in order not to alienate a large segment of society in these early stages of the new government. The government used a press campaign in which the Muslim Brotherhood was criticised as having deviated from Islamic qualities. In contrast, semi-official publications such as the *al-Jumhuriyya* carried articles written by Anwar al-Sadat on the true and liberal Islam (Mitchell, 1969: 138). Despite these measures the Muslim Brotherhood became the main rival to the Egyptian nationalist movement that Saad Zaghlul (1857-1927) launched immediately after World War I by founding the Wafd. While the Wafd had drawn wide popular support in the 1920s and

increasingly identified with the Westernised middle classes, the Muslim Brotherhood resisted Western cultural influence rather than adapting to it. It still followed al-Banna's approach of wanting to Islamise modernity and focused on organising explicitly Islamic frameworks such as charities and mutual-aid and educational associations for the purpose of socialising the lower classes in Egypt's cities while projecting Islam as an all-inclusive and self-sufficient system of *din wa dawla* (religion and state) or even *din, dunya, dawla* (religion, world, state).

Relations between the government and the Muslim Brotherhood deteriorated even further when the Muslim Brotherhood reacted negatively to the announcement that the government had accepted a treaty settling the Egyptian-British dispute in July 1954 (Mitchell, 1969: 138) on behalf on all interested parties, including the Muslim Brotherhood. The Muslim Brotherhood resented this step by the government, even though a segment of its members led by al-Banna supported the treaty with the British. However, the new General Guide, Hudaybi, opposed it while Humayda, the deputy, remained neutral.

While this event is indicative of later divisions in the Muslim Brotherhood, it also came at a time when the political situation in Egypt was still undecided and characterised by confusion while alliances were being established. Therefore, when it appeared as if the Muslim Brotherhood was distancing itself from the government, especially as regards negotiations with the British, the government interpreted this as if the British were favouring the Muslim Brotherhood. The government made use of the termination of the Anglo-Egyptian Agreement, which ended British sovereignty over the Suez base and stipulated the evacuation of British troops within two years, to marginalise the Muslim Brotherhood. It created the National Guard to ensure protection during negotiations with the British over the Suez issue as a counter-weight to the Muslim Brotherhood (Mitchell, 1969: 116). These assumptions of seeing the Muslim Brotherhood as the enemy increased tension between the government and the Muslim Brotherhood still further. These hostilities even resulted in

allegations that a Muslim Brotherhood member had attempted to assassinate President Nasser on 26 October 1954. Subsequently 1 000 Muslim Brotherhood members were arrested, of whom 15 were hanged.

At this stage Sayyid Qutb, the future ideologue of Islamic radicalism, came to prominence as the head of the Muslim Brotherhood propaganda department. He insisted on an exclusive Islamic party based on the constitution and teachings of the Muslim Brotherhood. However, the government resisted the request for an Islamic constitution and “employed a twofold method of attack” (Mitchell, 1969: 138), including new strategies such as imprisonment and concentration camps to suppress opposition. These measures, as well as the violence experienced in the prisons and concentration camps, served to radicalise those who were imprisoned and subsequently provided Sayyid Qutb with ideological justification for opposing the government.

While in “1954 the Muslim Brotherhood had been unable to analyse the Nasser regime or to understand why confrontation was inevitable ... in 1965, after Sayyid Qutb’s *Signposts*,<sup>12</sup> they had a theoretical tool that provided them with an analysis of the state they were opposing” (Kepel 1984, 35). The development and prominence of this theoretical tool would be the most significant aspect emerging from the Nasser era that would be inherited by subsequent generations. Both Qutb, and subsequently, the Islamists, justified their level of violence and retaliation by referring to the treatment they had received at the hands of the government. Qutb’s treatment in prison formed the basis of an important deviation from the path espoused by al-Banna. While al-Banna recommended reform of Egyptian legal and political systems by the implementation of the sharia, Qutb declared the government as *jahiliyya* (barbarously ignorant).

This historical period was marked by a series of events that would add fuel to the fire of the resurgence. The Muslim Brotherhood saw President Nasser’s visit to

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<sup>12</sup> See paragraph 3.1.1 and 3.1.2.

Russia in 1965 as symbolic of the deviation of the government, as Moscow was seen as the “capital of atheism” (Kepel, 1984: 33). Subsequently the Muslim Brotherhood was accused of plotting against the government when President Nasser was facing serious problems in foreign and domestic policies, especially during the Yemen expeditions in its civil war. The Muslim Brotherhood was suppressed in the village of Kardasa, a Muslim Brotherhood stronghold. The answer to the problems of the resurgence was provided in *Signposts on the Road*, which represented a radicalisation of the Brotherhood's outlook and opposition to the Egyptian state.

The death of Qutb by hanging in August 1966 after he had been released from prison in late 1964 but rearrested on charges of leading a fresh conspiracy against the regime in September 1965 (ICG, 2004: 9) would ensure his legacy. Not only was he made a martyr but he has symbolised the cause of the resurgence up to the present.

Therefore, after Qutb's death in 1966 the Islamists in the Muslim Brotherhood who interpreted Qutb's ideas as justifying radical action became the dominant force and professed a clean break with the established order (Mitchell, 1969: 175). Qutb's death also led to divisions within the Islamic resurgent movement. While some supported martyrdom others did not and this resulted in division based on adherence to *Signposts*. Some espoused withdrawal from society while others supported political collaboration with the government to Islamise it in this manner. A third group saw the only way out in forcibly seizing power (Cooper, 1982: 19). Qutb's death together with the conditions under which the Islamists were imprisoned caused the Islamists to adopt the concept of takfir, or judging somebody as being infidel (or excommunicated) (Mitchell, 1969: 175).

After Qutb's death another historical event took place that would radicalise resurgence in Egypt further. This was the 1967 defeat of Egypt at the hands of Israel. The Israeli victory caused a legitimacy crisis for other Middle Eastern



governments. It was argued that their political systems had led to political crisis instead of growing to political maturity, as had taken place in Israel. Therefore a return to Islam as an indigenous cultural heritage and political framework was seen as the answer. The November 1968 student uprising after the 1967 defeat of Egypt by Israel resulted in the emergence of a more militant student movement in the years that followed. After 1968, anti-government violence became a common occurrence (Cooper, 1982: 13) and can be seen as a form of communication process, conveying dissatisfaction with repressive measures. While most demonstrations were held by students and workers, the middle classes also took part. This situation continued till after the death of President Nasser.

In the wake of the military defeat of 1967, the government used the time-honoured Islamic privilege of rulers seeking refuge in religious ceremonies such as delivering the *khutba* or Friday sermon. This strategy provided an opportunity to the Egyptian government to acquire a certain degree of religious legitimacy as well as to buy time until greater structural legitimacy could be developed. During the intense struggle with the Muslim Brotherhood in 1953 and 1954, President Nasser undertook a pilgrimage to Mecca that could also have been a symbolic gesture. Therefore, after the 1967 defeat the leaders of the government attended a mosque service and President Nasser used a religious message to take some of the blame off himself, arguing that Allah was trying to teach Egypt a lesson and that the nation had to accept this testing as its destiny (*Arab Studies Quarterly* no 18, (1996), pp. 1-22). Nevertheless the 1967 defeat, as well as the mindset of those like 'Abd al-Salam Faraj that were imprisoned and influenced by Qutb, were responsible for assassinating President Sadat. 'Abd al-Salam Faraj stated that the "fight against the enemy nearest to you has precedence over the fight against the enemy farther away ... as ... in all Muslim countries the enemy has the reins of power. The enemy is the present rulers" (Sivan, 1985: 20).

### **3. MOTIVATION FOR ISLAMIC RESURGENT MOVEMENTS**

Under the Nasser government Islamic resurgence, and especially the Muslim Brotherhood, went through stages of conciliation between 1952 and 1954. However, 1954 to 1970 was a period of tension characterised by repression and imprisonment. These conditions motivated resurgence.

#### **3.1. Internal conditions**

##### **3.1.1. An autocratic Nasser government**

In order to ensure its hold on power after independence the Nasser government developed a very autocratic dispensation. This was done by dealing harshly with the opposition and not allowing it to participate in elections and governmental processes. The plural or multi-party system was not seen as an alternative. The government controlled all governmental and political processes and instituted radical political, economic and social changes, but simultaneously became more controlled by the military. As part of exercising authoritative control, all attempts to reform political parties or to amend the 1923 constitution were abandoned. A three-year transitional period was proclaimed after which President Nasser presented his new constitution. While this new constitution aimed at abolishing imperialism and feudalism it led to the establishment of an autocratic government that did not provide more freedom than the previous governments. Furthermore, control was ensured by establishing a strong army. Despite these measures the constitution did not limit the power of the president (Cooper, 1986: 30).

In order to establish control over society the Nasser government sought the support and participation of the rural areas while avoiding the risk of mobilising urban political elements into new struggles. Therefore, those members of the

urban segments most favoured by the government originated from rural areas, where they had been elected as rural representatives by their prominent families. The proximity of rural areas to Cairo also allowed candidates native to villages but residing in Cairo to run for elections in local villages. The Delta was more modernised than Upper Egypt, with the result that areas that were excluded from development formed the next generation of Islamic resurgence (Binder, 1978: 336).<sup>13</sup>

While resurgent movements, especially the Muslim Brotherhood, under the Nasser government posed no serious and united threat owing to internal division, as well as being contained by the government, harsh treatment of the opposition continued. Incidents such as the 1957 massacre that took place in the Liman Tara prison were particularly severe and convinced Qutb that the Egyptian government was *jahiliyya* (Kepel, 1984: 34). The introduction of Western governmental systems such as democracy, socialism and Marxism was also denounced as *jahiliyya*. The Muslim world was seen as equivalent to *jahiliyya* or ignorance and barbarism, which had prevailed in Arabia before Prophet Muhammad's Revelation. *Jahiliyya* denoted a polity legitimised by man-made criteria such as the sovereignty of the people rather than divine grace, as well as a man-centred system of values and social morals. During Qutb's police interrogation he stated that the blame for *fitna* should be put before the door of those who had pushed "Muslims to underground action" (Sivan, 1985:92). Sivan states that the genius of Qutb's argument on *fitna* is grounded in the thought of Ibn Tamiyya, namely a creative interpretation. Ibn Taymiyya's ideas are derived from his encounter with the Mamluk sultanate. He criticised the Mamluk and supported a return to the pristine purity of the first Rightly Guided Caliphs (622-61). He wanted to rid Islam from theological innovations and distorted perceptions.

Qutb explained that *jahiliyya* or barbarity signified the domination of man over

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<sup>13</sup> See Chapter Three section 2.1.2. and Chapter Four section 3.2.1.

man (*hakimiyya*) or the subservience to man rather than to Allah. Binder states that this concept of *jahiliyya* has often been translated as ignorance. However, it is a specialised term referring to the cultural and intellectual state of the Arabs before the Islamic revelation. Thus *jahiliyya* was seen as more than a specific historical period and was deemed a state of affairs existing in the past, present and future. It was argued that the choice of Islam or *jahiliyya* in modern industrialised societies remained essentially the same as it had been in pagan times. Two manifestations of contemporary *jahiliyya* have been highlighted – the harmful influences from the West and rule by governments not basing their legislation on the sharia. Thus the term *jahiliyya* has been transferred from reference to the pre-Islamic period to reference to modern Western society and culture, emphasising its corrupting influence, and negating the widespread ethnographic belief that it is impossible to compartmentalise cultural and ideological matters in a way that allows for selective cultural diffusion” (Binder, 1988:178). Therefore, the only manner in which man could be rid of *jahiliyya* was if society underwent a radical change from obedience to man to obedience to Allah.

This concept of Qutb provided for a new dimension in that Islam was seen as practical and realistic: concerned with life but also dynamic, and capable of change. All speculative idealism and deductive intellectual systems not derived from immediate religious experiences were deemed contemporary *jahiliyya*. Thus Western philosophies, medieval philosophies and much of Islamic legal reasoning were rejected. Binder quotes Qutb as saying that “everything about us is *jahiliyya*: the ideas of mankind and their beliefs, customs and traditions ... much of what we consider to be Islamic cultural and Islamic sources and Islamic philosophy and Islamic thought is nevertheless the product of that *jahiliyya*” (Binder, 1988:179).

This was the starting point for subsequent generations of militants who believed *jahiliyya* was the proper instrument for propagation. Qutb’s declaration of society

as *jahiliyya* was also a departure from al-Banna's ideas in that the totalitarian state represented *jahiliyya*. Instrumental to Qutb's ideals was the relationship between God and man – namely, worship (*al-'ubudiyya*) and sovereignty (*al-hakimiyya*). Thus, a regime could only exercise sovereignty by applying the prescriptions of the revelation in addition to the sharia. What subsequent movements derived from this period were the justification of suffering and the absolute truth of Islamist discourse.

Qutb's reasoning also led to two main conclusions for the new generation of Islamic radicals. Firstly, Islamists should not waste their energies on criticising the details of certain administrative regulations, while the entire constitution of a state was based on non-Islamic premises. Secondly, as long as the powers confined religion to the spiritual sphere, thus denying its validity as socio-economic and political system, all their acts and policies ought to be considered grave violations of God's divine order (Ayubi, 1982: 108). This concept has been perpetuated ever since by new generations of Islamic resurgence. Political and ideological discourse from the era was used by later generations of radicals such as the *al-Takfir al-Hijra* and *al-Jihad* movements.

### **3.1.2. The influence of Sayyid Qutb**

Despite al-Banna's prominence and organisational skill, his writings and speeches have not acquired the prominence of Qutb's. Qutb, despite being misunderstood and quoted out of context, provided a contribution focused on a fundamentalist orientation to “unleash great social energy in the form of a popular movement that is neither vulnerable to state control nor subservient to traditional and parochial elites” (Binder, 1988: 171). His early demise made it difficult to determine the precise nature of the strategies and tactics that Qutb and his followers had agreed upon. In most cases his followers have relied upon their own conclusions drawn from his work.

The factors pertaining to time and place that would motivate Sayyid Qutb (1906 - 1966) to become involved in resurgence in Egypt may be ascribed to conditions that were part of his livelihood and similar to those of his peers. He was born in 1906 in Musha, located in the Asyut province in the Delta. His education took place in Cairo at the Dar al-`Ulum School, after which he was employed as a teacher in Cairo. Thereafter he accepted a post as inspector of elementary schools.

During his student years as well as most of his working life he was active in the modernist trend in Egypt that had developed since partial independence in 1919. This modernist trend was characterised by innovation and individual expression as opposed to the traditional thematic and impersonal style of writing. Qutb was exposed to the work of Mahmud al-Aqqad. Apart from an interest in progressive literature he was also interested in social and political issues, especially Egypt's national culture and independence. The anti-British uprising of 1919 was a case in point that inspired him. In addition the general animosity to the British in Egypt, especially during the 1930s, compounded feelings of anti-Westernism and a sense of failure of the ruling establishment to obtain independence. In reaction, Muslim clubs and societies proliferated. These events influenced Qutb to such an extent that the East versus West theme was reflected in his writings (Musallam, 1998: 66). He was of the opinion, however, that in-fighting among Egyptian parliamentarians<sup>14</sup> as well as cultural Westernisation would serve to diminish Egypt's national culture and independence. He was particularly concerned that Westernisation would disrupt the coherence that had traditionally existed among Egypt's constituent social groupings (Calvert, 2000: 4).

In time Qutb became disillusioned with parliamentary-monarchical government because of its failure to achieve independence and its support to the British. He did support the Wafd party briefly but gradually developed his own ideas – free

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<sup>14</sup> See Chapter One, section 2.

from any party affiliation (Calvert, 2000: 9). Calvert raises an important point here, because this period of disenchantment with the political dispensation as well as the realities of political and economic failure aided the formation of his future Islamic ideas. From this one can deduce that Qutb's ideas had developed piecemeal as circumstances changed. World War II and his mother's death, a failed love affair, his poor health and alienation from the status quo and Westernisation, resulted in an increase in his focus on the Qur'an. The defeat of Egypt in the 1948 Palestinian War as well as the defection of many Egyptians to the camps of those who were prepared to challenge the government, namely the Muslim Brotherhood and the Marxists, added to Qutb's feelings of despair at the present order (Sivan, 1985: 20).

Qutb's experiences gradually led to his affiliation with the Muslim Brotherhood. First he contributed to its publications. Then he became an admirer and a friend of the movement, especially after it had opposed the British in the Suez area in 1951. After this he became a full member and, in the aftermath of the 1952 revolt, its main ideologist. This state of mind was reflected in his intellectual activities when Qutb became even more alienated from society. His visit to the USA from 1948 to 1950 had a great impact on him and would substantiate his resolve that Islam and the Islamic way of life was man's only salvation. Islam provided the alternative as a "superior creed and ideology. He furthermore felt that Islamic revival was necessary, that the West entertained a deep hatred of Islam and that Western civilization could not be used as the basis for a moral and political regeneration of Islam" (Moussalli, 1992:30).

Qutb joined the Muslim Brotherhood at this stage because of the manner in which it had welcomed him back home from the USA. Moussalli also states that information received from a British agent had given him the impression that the Muslim Brotherhood was seen as a major threat to the establishment Western civilisation in the Middle East. Qutb's book, *Social Justice in Islam*, was confiscated at this time because his concepts of a Muslim vanguard seemed to be part of an ideology similar to that of the Muslim Brotherhood (Moussalli,

1992:30). Qutb thus found a natural haven in the Muslim Brotherhood, where he was appointed to the Working Committee and Guidance Council and became head of the propaganda section in 1954. Qutb singled out the Muslim Brotherhood as the only group in Egypt that was prepared to carry arms against the British in support of the Islamic spirit. He, however, dissociated himself from the mass movements and the immoral film and radio personalities because he saw real victory as only achievable when the masses were purified under spiritual leadership that could educate them comprehensively. He went so far as to accuse the Wafd government of hampering liberation efforts and demanded that the General Guide of the Muslim Brotherhood, Hasan Hudaybi, should clarify in Islamic terms and programmes the Muslim Brotherhood's official standing with regard to the fighting in the Suez Canal zone. In this manner Qutb's prominence within the Muslim Brotherhood rose (Moussalli, 1992:30).

When he emerged as a respected and progressive Muslim intellectual as well as the head of the propaganda section, from where he organised the society's call including its cadre of callers for speeches, its publications, and administration of spiritual, mental and physical guidance, a change in tone and substance developed. Now the content of what was written became a priority. A more scientific approach to the problems of Islam was followed. Available talents were used and missionaries were trained in theological as well as secular currents of learning (Musallam, 1998: 71). Musallam states that Qutb called for the revision of history books in order to provide the Islamic renaissance, as represented by the Wahhabi movement, with an appropriate place.

Qutb's major works have been considered by partisans to reflect the full maturity and purity of orientation of movements based on Islamic conception. Qutb contributed to the monthly Islamic review, *al-Muslimun*, and wrote a commentary, *Fi Zila al-Qur'an (In the Shade of the Qur'an)*. He also contributed to *al-Da`wah*. On the whole his writings focused on explaining the relevance of particular verses to disseminate the Islamic call and to educate the Muslim community. He



also conveyed his criticism of the conditions that prevailed in Egypt at that stage. In contrast to the prevailing conditions in Egypt, he increasingly found confidence in the Islamic system. An example is the manner in which he adopted a negative attitude to nationalism while he supported the 1919 uprising. He was particularly opposed to the exclusion by the government of the emerging international Islamic bloc. Instead he espoused pan-Islamic unity (Musallam, 1998: 70).

The period of imprisonment under President Nasser served to accentuate and hasten the process of radicalisation. Initially Qutb was in favour of reasoning with the government in 1952 to obtain the release of prisoners and stated that the government had to be fought not with iron and fire but with reasoning (Musallam, 1998: 73). However, his relationship with the government deteriorated and the method of imprisoning opposition in concentration camps was seen as “pharaoh’s despotic regime” (Kepel, 1984: 23). Qutb’s ideology, derived from his experience in concentration camps, symbolised the relationship between society and the state as a whole. The harsh treatment was seen as coming from pagans divorced from God and the true path. When Qutb was imprisoned, his opposition to Nasser’s secular policies grew. He resorted to underground activities and the publication of secret pamphlets. While he was in prison the events of 1957 that resulted in the death of 23 inmates had a profound impact on him. After that the Nasser government came to present all that was un-Islamic and Qutb developed an uncompromising Islamic ideology as seen in his prison writings and his controversial work, *Ma`alim fi al tariq (Signposts Along the Road)* [Qutb,[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ma%27alim\\_fi-I-Tariq](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ma%27alim_fi-I-Tariq)].

In prison Muhammad Yusuf Hawwash was Qutb’s reader and critic of his work and was selected to be his successor as the spiritual leader of the underground apparatus. Both Qutb and Hawwash concluded that they had reached a stage very similar to that in which early Muslims had been as minority believers in Mecca. Thus they concentrated on translating the dogma and convictions into a concrete Islamic way of life (Moussalli, 1992: 30).

Much publicity was also given to Qutb's works between 1959 and 1964 and secret cells were organised both inside and outside prison. The Muslim Brotherhood was accused of being Qutb's forces and conspirators against Islam. More arrests followed and the Muslim Brotherhood was accused of planning to assassinate public figures, including President Nasser. Qutb compared these experiences to that of the Prophet Muhammad and his companions, whom he called "the Qur 'anic generation". This unique generation had carried the burden of spreading the message of Islam and advocated commitment to religion and sharia tenets. Subsequent generations had stopped growing, according to Qutb, and were in a state of "ignorance" (Kepel, 1984: 55). Qutb therefore argued that rulers were selected and installed by man, acceding to man-made concepts, values, laws and systems, and did not abide by Allah's prescriptions. Again, Qutb attributed this state of affairs mainly to Greek, Persian, Jewish, and Christian influences on Islamic society and reflected the perception that Muslims were persecuted. For Qutb, the West seemed to be a monolith, a uniform and homogeneous entity that posed a serious religious and ideological threat to Islam.

Qutb's work was also influenced by Mawlana Mawdudi from Pakistan. Mawlana Mawdudi condemned modernity and saw it as incompatible with Islam – as is reflected in his major works, namely *Jihad in Islam*, *Islam and Jahiliyya*, *The Principles of an Islamic Government*. Sayyid Qutb formulated a comprehensive and exclusive doctrine and Muslims were called to undertake *jihad* against their leaders and those in society living in *jahiliyya*, or a state of ignorance. *Jihad*, or a complete armed rebellion against rule by secular laws, was justified because leadership had replaced God's sharia with man-made laws, which, owing to the "ungodly innovations of secular nation-states" (Choueiri 1989: 68), had made Islam irrelevant. In the use of theoretical principles such as the exclusive sovereignty of God and the characteristics of the *jihad* or holy struggle, Qutb was influenced by al-Mawdudi, who had advocated this concept in India. It was seen as the birth of a new Islamic theory.

Sayyid Qutb regarded external threats as a war waged by various forces against Islamic countries, motivated by one overriding objective, namely the destruction of Islam and its doctrines. Modern Western imperialism was seen as a camouflage concealing the crusading spirit that was an assumption of a continual battle against Islam by similar movements throughout the ages, entailing another constant factor: the ever-recurring conspiracy. The methods used and the individuals involved have varied over time but the objective was always the annihilation of Islam (Moussalli, 1992: 30). Therefore, Qutb states that the state of *jahiliyya* fulfils the conditions for *jihad*. Qutb saw *jihad* as the continuation of God's policies by other means and therefore an obligation that becomes incumbent on believers whenever the tenets and legal rules of Islam are violated or neglected. In this sense, *jihad* is a form of political struggle designed, as Qutb argues, to disarm the enemy so that Islam is allowed to apply its sharia unhindered.

However, Qutb died before he could fully explain the use of these concepts. His work, *Ma'alim*, was written while he was under extreme stress in prison from 1954 to 1964. Therefore, it should be interpreted against this background. He was also not a specialist on religious law. After his death, members of the Islamist movements, especially the then Supreme Guide of the Muslim Brotherhood, declared that because many of his concepts were never fully explained, they had to be put into perspective. Hasan al-Hudaybi tried to put Qutb's reaction to his physical conditions in the concentration camp into perspective and also explained his concepts. He advocated the preaching of Islam within society but denounced the concept of *jahiliyya*. He said that "there are some who base their faith on a term unattested by any passage of the Book or any of the sayings of the Prophet, a word of human fabrication, a word that is not sacrosanct and is therefore the repository of error and illusion" (Kepel 1984: 63). This stance taken by Hudaybi shows the division of the Islamists into the revolutionaries, who believed in the concept of *jahiliyya*, and the reformists or moderates, who advocated preaching. These views were perpetuated by the so-

called neo-Muslims and 'Umar Tilmisani argued that Qutb's ideas were his alone and not those of the Muslim Brotherhood so that in the sixties and the seventies the reformists were "both fascinated and embarrassed by Qutb's work" (Kepel 1984: 63).

Even though the young Islamists supported Qutb's work, this did not reflect the general feeling of the moderate community. The resurgent movements that adhered to Qutb's ideas either applied the concept of *jahiliyya* and takfir in its widest possible interpretation, observing that "impiety was endemic all over the world" (Kepel, 2002: 31) or confined this excommunication only to the leaders. Alternatively, they "suggested an allegorical interpretation of the most controversial passage in Qutb's work; rapture with society (*jahiliyya*) should be understood in a spiritual sense, not a material sense" (Kepel, 2002: 31). Those who supported this view regarded Hasan al-Hudaybi as Qutb's successor.

In an *ICG* interview Abd al-Mun'im Abu 'l-Futuh, a member of the Muslim Brotherhood's leading instance, the Guidance Bureau, in Cairo on 22 October 2003, stated that Qutb's thinking had been misunderstood by later activists. He argued that while Sayyid Qutb was a man of letters and used literary expressions, these were misinterpreted as calling for enmity towards society, and for violence. The notion of *jahili* societies was misinterpreted by extremist organisations. Abu 'l-Futuh also suggested that it was necessary to bear in mind the special conditions in which Qutb was writing, in prison, suffering torture, seeing his friends being killed (*ICG*, 2004: 20). While Qutb might have been influenced by his personal circumstances and have formulated concepts not entirely correctly based on the Qur'an, his generation was radicalised by severe repression. Furthermore, the very same conditions that had influenced Qutb also served to radicalise later generations of imprisoned Islamists. Leading figures in the radical movements of the 1970s had experienced Egyptian jails in the 1960s, just as some leaders of the violent movements of the 1990s had experienced jail in the 1980s. Throughout this period, Qutb's ideas had circulated among imprisoned Muslim Brotherhood and other

Islamists, and harsh treatment had encouraged many of them to accept his judgments and vision. However, one of the most important aspects to emanate from this era is that, with Qutb's death, the government had made him into a martyr, and a symbol of Islamic resurgence.

### **3.2. External factors**

When the Free Officers took over the government in 1952 their most important aim was to eradicate all influences of imperialism. Therefore, their first task was to arrange for the evacuation of all British troops in 1953. However, while these arrangements were under way, Israel was positioning itself in the demilitarised zone between Egypt and Israel. The June 1967 Arab-Israeli war, as well as the impact of new ideologies such as nationalism, socialism and democracy, would influence resurgence.

#### **3.2.1. The Six-Day War**

President Nasser undertook the June 1967 Arab-Israeli war that ended in victory for Israel because he sought relief from the pressure his government was experiencing in international affairs, as well as a solution to domestic problems and weaknesses. These problems were the purchase of arms from Eastern Bloc countries, the financing of the Aswan Dam and the nationalisation of the Suez Canal. The West was demanding major concessions for economic aid and when the war resulted in a defeat for Egypt, the economic problems could no longer be ignored and additional costs added to economic decline (Cooper, 1982: 102). The government was seen to have failed and policy changes showed that there was an escalation of conflict within the elite, a mobilisation of mass and anti-regime violence. In addition, a middle group came forward to state their demands and apply pressure.

Israel was seen as the way through which commercial hegemony had been

established over the Middle East. This victory was seen as cultural imperialism or as a new crusade in the aftermath of World War I. Qutb was reported to have said, upon entering Jerusalem, that the crusades had come to an end, signifying the importance of Jerusalem to all Muslims. So when in 1967 the Israelis defeated the Arab states in the Six-Day War, this was taken as an indication of the total corruption of regimes that had deserted God and so were humiliated by God. This defeat led to the development of two trends in resurgent movements. One group believed that the situation was not yet ripe for a radical change. Instead they opted for action to be taken in stages and called their movement action through understanding (*al-ḥaraka bil mafhum*). Because they had not yet declared their total rejection of society, they decided to separate from the society emotionally, while continuing to interact with it physically. During the intermediate stage they would work for establishing precepts based upon the Meccan verses of the Qur'an (which, historically, had appeared before Islam was completely victorious in Arabia); then, as Islam became more powerful in Egypt, they would proceed gradually to enforce the more strict verses revealed in Madina (when Islam was triumphant in Arabia) (Mitchell, 1969: 197). The other trend espoused a more violent stance and movements such as the *al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya* were formed at this time.

In addition, conservative Arab governments that had based their legitimacy on Islam increasingly turned to Saudi Arabia and not Egypt. These views are indicative of the increasing importance the external world and especially the Muslim world attached to the mindset and development of Islamic resurgence. In response to this attitude Qutb said that crusading was an intellectual enmity prevalent in all Westerners. Qutb warned that spiritual and mental imperialism was the true danger and that a holy war had to be declared against "the source of this deception namely foundations, technical aid, UNESCO and the pens and tongues of the people's democracies" (Mitchell, 1969: 231). The most dangerous of these were the missionaries, followed by the researchers.

### 3.2.2. Popularity of new ideologies

After 1952 the Nasser government sought arms to strengthen its defence force. It was unsuccessful in the West. President Nasser's participation at the Bandung Conference from 18 to 24 April 1955 exposed him to countries that were anti-Western. Therefore he turned first to Czechoslovakia for arms in 1955 and to communist China in 1956 for recognition. However, the withdrawal of promised funds by the British and the USA for the construction of the High Dam at Aswan led to the nationalisation of the Suez Canal by Egypt and the Suez War in October 1956. At this point the Soviet Union warned that it would use force to end hostilities. A cease-fire was declared in 1956 by the UN. All these events marked a turning point in external relations and coincided with Egypt's increased anti-Western stance (Springborg 1989: 391).

Bombarded with several new ideologies coming from outside the Muslim world – namely, nationalism, secularism, socialism, communism, democracy and capitalism – it seems logical that the Muslims regarded these ideologies as one single entity that had developed in the West in direct opposition to the message of original Islam. However, under the Nasser government the concepts that were most prominent were nationalism, socialism and communism. Nationalism had already been instrumental in the independence drive that had led to the revolution in Egypt. Nationalism in Egypt came to the fore after World War I as a result of the break-up of the Ottoman Empire that led to the emergence of modern states. The intensity of political and religious and cultural dominance of European imperialism intensified the struggle for independence (Esposito, 1992:64). Afterwards, however, under the influence of the Soviets socialism and communism became prominent.

In addition, secularism and democracy were seen as usurping God's sovereignty because they charged human agencies with the task of legislation. Islamic

resurgence under Qutb formulated the theory that the practice of democracy is ipso facto a form of polytheism because judgement belongs only to God (al-Qur'an, XII: 40). God is the only legitimate and viable authority. In an Islamic state, Qutb points out, the entire nation participates in the selection of the caliph – Amir or Imam – and endows him with the legitimacy of exercising power according to God's sharia. In other words, people do not possess, nor do they delegate, the right of sovereignty but have to implement what God has legislated in accordance with His exclusive authority. However, legislators are God's agents and His trusted functionaries and laws should not express their free will, or reflect the desires of secular majorities. By devising their own laws without reference to the authority of the Holy Book, deputies and judges were regarded as engaging in blasphemous activities synonymous with the worship of idols or man-made images. In this sense, secular democracy is a deliberate violation of divine laws and a reversion to the days of pagan ignorance (Choueiri, 1989: 106). Therefore Qutb argued that the principle of legislative exclusiveness (*hakimiyya*) of God's law had lost its authority owing to the influence of secularism, nationalism and democracy. He condemned governments that confined religion only to the spiritual sphere while professing false adherence to Islam. In this manner these governments, aided financially and politically by the West, misused Islam to gain legitimacy.

Another idea that Qutb borrowed from Abu 'l-Ala Al-Mawdudi (*ICG*: 2004:11) was that the Egyptian state as reconstituted by the Free Officers' revolution was not Muslim but the agent of the new *jahiliyya* and the enemy of Islam. Its suppression of the Muslim Brotherhood demonstrated the government's hostility while its brutality in repressing opposition testified to its barbarity.<sup>15</sup> Therefore the government had to be denounced as impious and opposed by armed struggle (*jihad*).

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<sup>15</sup> See Chapter Two, section 3.1.1.



### 3.2.3. The impact of Mawlana Mawdudi

Abu 'I-Ala Al-Mawdudi would prove to be one of the most important influences on Islamic resurgence in Egypt, as his ideas influenced Qutb. Abu 'I-Ala Al-Mawdudi was a Pakistani journalist and author. Between 1937 and 1941 he formulated most of his political ideas in reaction to the British occupation of what was to become Pakistan. He was also opposed to the Hindus' prominence in this region. His ideology centred on the fact that most strict orthodox Muslims under British rule were under attack from the infidels. Mawdudi anticipated the possibility of being ruled by pagan Hindus with concern. In these circumstances a siege mentality led Mawdudi to adopt an extremist, ultra-conservative position on practically everything. Mawdudi formed the Jamaat-e Islami in 1941. Even though his ideas were well received, he only found sponsors after the partition of Pakistan. While his ideas on Muslim nationalism were not well received, they had a marked impact on several Islamist groupings all over the Muslim world, and were to become a major source of the doctrine of political Islam (Kepel, 2002: 36) as with Qutb.

Mawdudi focused on ridding Pakistan of colonial rule by introducing Islamisation from "above" by means of a state that exercised authority in the name of God. There had to be no separation between politics and religion, while the five pillars of Islam served as preparation for the *jihad* that entailed a struggle against those who had usurped God's authority. Mawdudi also formulated a political theory based on the break that led to the founding of Islam with the *hijra* or flight to Medina (Kepel, 2002: 36).

Mawdudi saw the whole modern civilisation as based on three principles: secularism, nationalism and democracy. However, secular nationalism was rejected as irrational and dividing humanity into groups based on race and language within one single religious community. Instead, the religious community of Islam had unified mankind irrespective of divisions. Humanity was thus divided

into two nationalisms, namely that of Islam and belief and another of unbelief or misguidance (Choueri, 1989: 98). Therefore, the most deadly enemies of Islam were seen as atheism, polytheism and idolatry, along with national fanaticism.

Because secularism advocated the separation of politics and religion, Mawdudi opposed it; there had to be no separation between faith in God and adherence to His social, political and economic injunctions. The mere recognition of God's existence entails belief in His sovereignty and rulership, with the real position of man being that of God's representative on earth. This vice-regency (*khilafat*) was delegated by God for the sole purpose of executing God's injunctions. This system was regarded as the most perfect democracy and the only political system in which the community as a whole could enjoy the rights and powers of the caliphate of God. Therefore Mawdudi regarded the Islamic state or "theo-democracy" (Choueri, 1989:110) as based on the will of its male and female Muslim citizens. However, the executive authority could only be conferred on a male chief (*Amir*) charged with implementing God's ordinances. A consultative assembly could assist the Amir in his task of supreme leadership and be elected by adult men and women.

Pluralism, multiparty politics and equality of all citizens before the law, irrespective of religious or political beliefs, were regarded as contrary to the essence of Islam. Since the Islamic state is first and foremost an ideological entity, only those who adhere to its doctrinal principles were to be counted as first-class citizens. All others, as long as they remain 'loyal and obedient', were accorded their particular rights as second-class citizens. Therefore in an Islamic state two categories of citizens live side by side, namely the Muslims and the non-Muslims or *dhimmi*s (Choueri, 1989:110).

A particular idea that would influence Qutb was his *Khawarij*-inspired concept that total and absolute sovereignty rested with God (*al-ḥakimiyya*). Also influential was his emphasis of the *Khawarij* concept (shared by Ibn Taimiyya) that being a Muslim is more than the acceptance of the credo but meant an

active involvement of one in a collective endeavour to commanding good and prohibiting evil, and the enforcement of the Islamic moral order on the legislative, political and economic affairs of society (Choueri, 1989:110). The modern rediscovery of Ibn Taymiyya provided for circumstances that could be equated with those that had taken place at the time of Ibn Taymiyya. The analogy of the Mongols and the concept of the pre-Islamic *jahiliyya* were re-interpreted by Mawdudi to suit the state of affairs in India and by Qutb in Egypt. Ibn Taymiyya's ideas supported a return to the pristine purity of Islam of the first four decades as well as wanting to clean Islam from the contamination in theology, ritual as well as legal affairs that it had accumulated during centuries of decline. Ibn Taymiyya argued that even though the Mongols had kept the Islamic credo and performed the five daily prayers, their failure to implement the sharia meant that they were not Muslims (Sivan, 1985:97). So, while Ibn Taymiyya has become a role model for most Islamists ever since, his role in justifying radical actions is less well known. Ibn Taymiyya justified deviancy from this path as those who were living under *jahiliyya* or man-made laws of the Mongol rulers. Sivan quotes from Ibn Taymiyya's treatise, *Public Policy in Islamic Jurisprudence*, where Ibn Taymiyya referred to the declaration in the *Qur'ān* and *Sunna* that those who forsake the law of Islam should be fought. Not only did he refer to those who abided by the pillars of Islam but also to those who had committed forbidden acts and attacked the lives and wealth of Muslims. Such actions were seen as forbidden.

The ideas of Mawdudi inspired Qutb to regard the Muslim community as an Islamic unity instead of being a "worthless conglomeration of tribes, with no national or international standing" (Choueri, 1989: 105). Qutb assigned the leadership of humankind to "the believers in the oneness of God", irrespective of their nationality or geographical location. He derived the concepts of worship (*al-'ubudiyya*) and sovereignty (*al-ḥakimiyya*) from Abu'l-A'la Mawdudi. In borrowing these terms from Mawdudi, Qutb used them as legal concepts giving them greater force, especially since neither *al-'ubudiyya* or *al-ḥakimiyya* is a Qur'anic

term. Qutb also shared Mawdudi's concept of an Islamic regime as one exercising authority in the name of God and deriving legislation from the sharia (Choueri, 1989: 105).

#### **4. OBJECTIVES OF ISLAMIC RESURGENT MOVEMENTS**

The objectives that emanated from the resurgent movements under the Nasser government were dominated by the Muslim Brotherhood, not because it was the only organised movement, but because it was the most visible and organised movement at the time. In addition, the personality of Sayyid Qutb was so overwhelming that what he formulated became the over-riding focus not only of the Nasser era but also of subsequent movements, as will be discussed later.

##### **4.1. Creating a Muslim nation**

Qutb's ultimate goal was to create a Muslim nation based on the principles of Islam, namely social justice and the sharia. Therefore Qutb and the rest of the Muslim Brotherhood rejected Pan-Arabism. The only nationhood the Muslim Brotherhood supported was an Islamic nation fighting against a foreign occupying force and an unacceptable monarch. Qutb was of the opinion that the pervading state of religious ignorance only came into being after the 19<sup>th</sup> century, giving "modern explanations to a modern phenomenon. In addition, the various forces against Islamic countries have always been motivated by one overriding objective – the destruction of Islam and its doctrines (Choueiri, 1989: 140). Therefore, Qutb's objective was to establish an Islamic order, designed to supersede existing ideologies, and offering a new synthesis. In this manner the independence and sovereignty of Egypt would be preserved (Sivan, 1985: 32).

##### **4.2. Establishing an Islamic political dispensation**

Contrary to popular belief, Qutb did not provide a blueprint of an Islamic state but

rather concentrated on Islamic concepts that had to be included in a government. The introduction of the sharia was a prerequisite for an Islamic state; little guidance had been given on this subject. The Muslim Brotherhood had formulated little in this respect during al-Banna's life. Up to that point the orthodox caliphate was the only known and acceptable example. Thus what transpired was an emphasis on the "principles that would guide an Islamic state; the specifics would be left to the time, place and the needs of people" (Mitchell, 1969: 245).

While Qutb did not deny the importance of an Islamic government, he put less emphasis on the organisation of an Islamic government and concentrated more on opposing an un-Islamic state. He argued that the spiritual transformation of the individual prior to the formation of an Islamic state was more important. To Qutb, Islamic citizenship or political identity is based on doctrine and not on a territory (Binder, 1988: 177).

Qutb saw the importance of the Islamic concept *tawḥīd* or the oneness of God as central to Muslims' comprehensive interpretation of existence in totality. It defines man's knowledge of his goal and position in the universe as well as his proper social and political approach. The Islamic concept forms the core of all aspects of Islam – socially, economically, politically and personally. Thus religious laws and worshipping are all one in obeying God. God is the only legislator. Qutb based this concept on Sura XX: 9-14, XXI: 25, XII: 40, ILII: 20, IX: 31, XXXIX: 3-4 and not on any manmade system (Kepel, 1984: 46).

From Mawdudi, Qutb derived the concept of *ḥakimiyya*, or the absolute sovereignty of God. While Mawdudi placed emphasis on the unity of creation, Qutb put more emphasis on the consequences of *ḥakimiyya* for human freedom. Therefore, for Qutb *ḥakimiyya* prevents all human sovereignty and authority which allows Islam to replace it with Islamic authority (Binder, 1988: 176).

### **4.3. Achieving spiritual transformation**

Qutb shared Mawdudi's concept that divine sovereignty and authority are so comprehensive that they preclude all human sovereignty. Therefore, spiritual transformation was seen as more important than establishing an Islamic state and Islamic citizenship or political identity was regarded as doctrinal and not territorial, national or racial (Musallam, 1998: 64).

### **4.4. Deriving legislation from the sharia**

Qutb shared Mawdudi's concept of a regime exercising authority in the name of God and when deriving legislation from the sharia. Qutb saw Islamic law not as a social phenomenon but as an external manifestation of God's will defining the duties and rights of individuals and the state. The sharia is not only meant for ruling life on earth, but also for preparation for the next life or hereafter. Therefore man has to live under the sharia in preparation for the afterlife. If man had to live under man-made laws, this continuous process could not take place, reducing progress hereafter. The most important function of the state is legislation and morality according to God's ordinance, thus God is the only ruler, not man.

The sharia is seen as God's eternal and unchangeable law, while jurisprudence (*fiqh*) is the human understanding of the sharia within a specific period of history. It is therefore a method whereby God's laws have been perpetuated through history. The jurisprudence dealing with worship and rituals has to remain unchanged but that dealing with social organisations and development can be adapted (Moussalli, 1992: 162). Qutb argues that while the political essence and relevance of religion has to be unaltered, Islamic thought has to be free from rigidity. Laws have to reflect the principles, values and ethics of Islam (Moussalli, 1992:160).

#### 4.5. Legitimising the ruler

Qutb advocated the legitimacy of a representative government, or the government of the umma. The legitimate authority of the ruler stems from the election of Muslims and the application of the sharia. Qutb emphasises that the authority of a ruler is vice-regency on behalf of the people, which can be withdrawn when Islamic law is not applied. Qutb rejected the medieval notions of jurisprudence as well as its historical development. He did not regard the requirement for the caliph from the Quraysh tribe as legitimate. Instead, he saw all Muslims as equal despite their ancestry. He also rejected the governmental systems of the Umayyad and Abbasids because there is no hereditary government in Islam. This explains why Qutb acknowledged the first four caliphs and saw the Umayyad as illegitimate because they had forced themselves on the community (Moussalli, 1992:160). Also, adherence to the principles of Islam does not necessarily lead to a theocracy, “because the Islamic system or *nizam* is not realised if men of religion rule because in Islam there are no men of religion or clergy” (Moussalli, 1992: 164). Therefore, an Islamic system can take many forms depending on its agreement with the natural development of societies within the stipulations of the general principles of Islam.

#### 4.6. Implementing *Shura* or consultation

Qutb prescribed *Shura* or consultation because governments had to develop from within the Muslim community and not from without. Qutb saw mutual consultation as one of the most distinguishing features of Islamic society and polity. To him *Shura* did not simply denote a political method devised to conduct state affairs – a view shared by almost all Islamic reformists – but a fundamental tenet of organising the life of the community as a whole. The Qur’anic verse in reads: *It was by some mercy of God that thou wast gentle to them; hadst thou been harsh and hard of heart, they would have scattered from about thee. So pardon them, and pray forgiveness for them, and take counsel with them in the affair; and when thou art resolved put thy trust in God; surely God loves those who put their trust (III:159).*

Therefore Qutb underlined the necessity of consultation in Islam, although the particular methods of its implementation have not been specified. However, the changing nature of political and social conditions that could lead to changes in its implementation was seen as reflecting God's wisdom (Ayubi, 1982:114).

## 5. MODUS OPERANDI OF ISLAMIC RESURGENT MOVEMENTS

Under the Nasser government, Islamic resurgent movements' modus operandi was influenced greatly by the ideas of Sayyid Qutb and deviated increasingly from that of the previous generation under Hasan al-Banna. Islamic resurgent movements became radicalised and their objectives became more diverse and diffused. A *jihad* or a complete armed rebellion against rule by secular laws was justified because Egypt's leadership had replaced God's laws with man-made laws (Choueiri, 1989: 68).

Secondly, ideological and political differences in the modus operandi of Islamic resurgent movements had set them apart from other moderate Islamic groups that existed in society at that stage in the history of Egypt. Even though Islamic resurgent movements shared similar objectives and goals of wanting an Islamically based society, their methods were different.

### 5.1 Establishing an Islamic community

***“We look in vain for the unique ideological elements that will explain the radicalism of those presumably influenced by Sayyid Qutb.” (Binder, 1988: 185)***

Despite the fact that Qutb died before he could explain much of what he had set



out in his works, his ideas were widely used by his own as well as subsequent generations of Islamic resurgence.

Qutb's idea of a *modus operandi* was influenced by Mawdudi and based on the development of an Islamic community inspired by the history of the early Islamic community at Mecca. Therefore, the *modus operandi* followed had to begin with an Islamic movement following a secret and quiet path of proselytization. The organisation of a small co-operative community initially had to make no serious political claims and pursue organisational and propaganda strategies that avoided confrontation. The number of adherents had to be increased, after which they had to assert their authority and show readiness to use military force under favourable circumstances. The foundations of the movement had to be individual conviction. Thus, each individual had to be convinced and devoted (Moussalli, 1992: 48–51).

In order to bring about changed conditions, Qutb advocated raising the consciousnesses of society and instructing Muslims in the meaning of Islam. The commitment of the individuals would lead to the formation of a body of believers that would alert the rest of the Muslims by means of *da`wa* of the dangers posed by the enemies of the Muslims. This commitment would be by submission to God as well as by constant commitment and faithfulness to God. In this manner it would be possible to establish His vice-regency on earth. The selection of the Muslim community and raising their consciousnesses of society was not pre-ordained but depended on accepting and installing the sovereignty of God's will, to guarantee the victory of the believers. Thus, adherence to the vision of God's order provides an integrated umma and leads to a new social order (Tibi, 1983: 406).

However, this victory of the believers could not be achieved automatically, but only by living responsible lives with awareness and accountability for one's actions. Sura 13: 11 and Sura 8: 53 spell out this order. Qutb portrayed Islam as a forward-looking movement in that it promoted a superior value system. These

views referred to “an ethical endeavour, a moral imperative to return to the origins where a fresh start can be initiated without the weight of cumbersome tradition” (Tibi, 1983: 406).

## 5.2. Reconceptualising *jahiliyya*

Qutb’s use of the concept *jahiliyya* can also be seen as a strategy to justify *jihād*. Qutb, as well as Mawdudi, directed *jahiliyya* against Western cultural influences as well as against Muslim governments that were not based on the sharia and were Western-inspired. It is also directed against ignorance and corrupting influences. Because Qutb saw Islam as capable of a worldly orientation in its ideas and especially in its manners (*minhaj*), it was thus capable of dynamic changes and progress. Therefore, those who prevent this process were termed *jahiliyya* (Binder, 1988: 178). Qutb regarded all speculative idealism as well as intellectual systems not derived from religious experiences as *jahiliyya*.

The modus operandi that Qutb derived from this concept of *jahiliyya* focused on the development of social devices similar to those employed by the *jahiliyya* societies. Here Qutb referred to the sources of strength and cohesion in all the societies that had to be employed in opposing specifically the *jahiliyya* society. Qutb stated that “*jahiliyya* is not represented by abstract theory, but is represented in a dynamic concrescence, any attempt to destroy that *jahiliyya* and to restore mankind to God once more ... cannot be represented by pure theory ... Rather it is necessary that such a renewed attempt to destroy the *jahiliyya* be represented on a dynamic social concrescence which is more powerful” (Binder, 1988: 180). Therefore, it can be argued that Qutb’s modus operandi of a spiritual transformation had its origins in these thoughts and this was to be the focus of the transformation of society.

### 5.3. Waging *jihad* against *jahiliyya*

The areas of ideological agreement between Mawdudi and Qutb provided a doctrinal basis sufficient to justify the actions of extremists taken in Egypt. Because ridding society of the state of *jahiliyya* has to take place prior to the vanguard establishing an Islamic society, the spiritual maturity of society had to be achieved by freeing society from *jahiliyya*. Secondly, a *jihad* is undertaken against the *jahiliyya* society. The purpose of *jihad* was to combat *jahiliyya*. However, both Mawdudi and Qutb saw *jihad* as primarily defensive only. They justified the defensive role of *jihad*, especially versus the anti-Islamic dispensation that depicted Islam as barbaric and violent.

*Jihad* was seen as the struggle against *jahiliyya* that had to be overthrown. Qutb and Mawdudi saw as their immediate target the Muslim political authorities that did not rule according to the prescriptions of Allah. Qutb saw *jihad* as more than just a defensive or theoretical mechanism, as Mawdudi did, but thought it a dynamic tool for the struggle against *taghut*. Furthermore, relations with the existing political establishment had to be abandoned. The goal was the achievement of a comprehensive revelation against all *jahiliyya* authority by using two aspects of Islam, namely *bayan* (explanation or preaching) and *ḥaraka* (movement), namely to attack *jahiliyya*'s theoretical, doctrinal, economic, social and cultural basis (Choueiri, 1989: 135).

However, while Islamic political dominance had to be achieved, conversion had to be left to the individual. Therefore *jihad* encompasses a wide spectrum of activities, such as writing an article in a newspaper, making a speech at a street corner, or donating funds and provisions (Choueiri, 1989: 139). It was addressed to all human beings and urged them to join the ranks of the faithful. Hence, the immediate and central aim was to disarm the opponents and transfer power into the hands of the functionaries of God.

Political power, not forcible conversion, was seen as the consummation of *jihad* and its raison d'être. Therefore, both Mawdudi and Qutb rejected modernist Muslims' interpretations of *jihad* and rather proposed that *jihad* had to be employed against governments or rulers that prevented the preaching of Islam. On the practical level *jihad* was seen as necessary to restore Islam and seize political power and entailed internal withdrawal within one's own country as well as adopting a policy of no co-operation. The masses had to take over after political power had been seized.

Qutb also emphasised another feature of *jihad* that excluded the justification for armed force as the only method to rebuild an Islamic community. He argued that the protection of the cradle of God's divine message in Arabia by the tribes did not require *jihad*. Therefore, all Meccan verses were silent about the use of armed force (Choueiri, 1989: 137) – hence the silence of all Meccan verses on the use of armed force and the importance of tribal solidarity as an overriding factor in social relations and protection. Qutb's focus on establishing a vanguard and the use of bayan has to be understood against this background.

The second feature of *jihad* as espoused by Qutb was derived from the Prophet's emigration in 622 CE to Medina and the immediate political consequences that flowed from it. Qutb saw the emergence of the new Muslim state as having taken place without one sword being drawn, or a single Qur'anic verse on *jihad* having been revealed (Choueiri, 1989: 140). Again this supported his argument for the use of bayan. However, authors such as Kepel argued that Qutb saw the *jihad* as being achieved not "through sermons and discourse" (Kepel, 1984: 55) but as a "mode of action [that] had to be adapted to the form of state repression" (Kepel, 1984: 35). However, it is more likely that Qutb initially saw *jihad* in a wider context of education and changes that would be achieved through less violent methods. After his exposure to the violent methods while imprisoned, it is possible that he supported more violent methods. He thought that educational endeavours would enable the militants to prepare better while waiting for the opportune moment to establish political changes. Nevertheless, subsequent

followers of Qutb's ideologies have supported the violent methods of *jihad*. Qutb's death turned him into a martyr and at his trial the then sheikh of the Al Azhar university denounced Qutb's work by saying that Qutb "like all *Kharijites*, employs the concept of *al-ḥakimiyya li-llah* to call upon Muslims to oppose any earthly sovereignty" (Kepel 1984: 60). For the first time Qutb's writings were interpreted as an armed struggle and not only as a spiritual encounter, as al-Banna did.

#### 5.4. Forming an Islamic vanguard

Qutb and Mawdudi agreed that the contradiction between theory and practice was characteristic of contemporary Islam. However, because the two had been reconciled in the past, this could be achieved again by applying the law of Islam and preaching the message of Islam. Therefore, Qutb did not see the establishment of Islamic order as a consequence of violent, radical action but as sustaining bourgeois reformists. The essence of what was conveyed in *Signposts* on the destruction and replacement of the regime representing *jahiliyya* was justified as not being violence. Western governmental systems such as democracy, socialism and Marxism were denounced as *jahiliyya*. The power of the Muslim community in the Islamic resurrection was seen as the answer. A vanguard had to facilitate this resurrection and *Signposts* should provide the necessary direction, hence his book (Binder, 1988:199).

Because the *Jahiliyya* society ignored the existence of God and limited this power, it had to be destroyed by a revolution under the vanguard of umma. The concept of the vanguard was taken from the companions of the Prophet Muhammad. The task of the movement (*al-ḥaraka*) was to remove the material obstacles in the path of the vanguard. Qutb saw the role of the vanguard as destroying the "ungodly state" (Kepel, 2002: 36). Qutb believed that mass

organisations were unsuitable for effectively confronting the state: a body of believers was necessary. This body would be restricted to the chosen elite (Choueiri, 1989: 136), or the vanguard, that had to be apart from the rest of the infidel society as a counter-society. This counter-society had to be capable of being self-enclosed to avoid confrontation and prevent alien influences from penetrating it, but remain sufficiently open to exercising an external influence. It had to pursue the ideal of becoming independent and becoming a model for societies of the future (Choueiri, 1989: 132). The vanguard of believers that had to be established within society would provide and surround the Muslims with a society of believers. The family unit was deemed important. To Qutb the role of the Islamic activist in the acceptance of the oneness of God and its teachings would belong to “a noble lineage, deeply rooted in the recesses of time” (Choueiri, 1989: 132).

Qutb’s interpretation of the *hijra*, or flight, resulted in the formation of clandestine organisations and violent confrontations. This concept was also derived from Mawdudi.<sup>16</sup> Qutb saw the concept of the *hijra* as an instrument and not a goal in that it was spiritual preparedness prior to the onslaught on the infidel government. During this stage the necessary education of the vanguard would take place (Sivan, 1985: 92).

## 5.5. Establishing relief organizations

Under the initial Muslim Brotherhood movement that Hasan al-Banna had started, unofficial aid and relief organisations supporting those who were imprisoned were founded. This modus operandi of resurgent movements is indicative of Islamic movements’ evolution into emancipation through the movement and not through words alone (Kepel 1984, 31). The Muslim

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<sup>16</sup> See Chapter Two, section 3.2.2

Brotherhood became a more cohesive group in rendering aid through unofficial relief organisations to families of those who were imprisoned.

Both the government and those representing civil society have justified their position in society on the basis of Islam. Since Egypt was seen as part of the international Islamic community, societal groups, irrespective of their affiliation and point of view, see it as their moral obligation “to work together to improve it (the nation) and perfect its organisation” (Sullivan and Sana Abed-Kotob, 1999: 7).

Relief organisations have also served as “the link in the secret reconstruction of the organisation that had been formally dissolved in 1954” (Kepel, 1984: 29). After the Muslim Brotherhood was dissolved people such as Mrs Zaynab al-Ghazali supported those affected by family members being imprisoned. Renewed education at homes in all groups and re-organisation rebuilt the Muslim Brotherhood. During the 1950s the Muslim Brotherhood was most active in Alexandria, Damietta, Buhayra and Cairo. This trend has continued up to the present time in the role that Islamic charity organisations still play among the poor and needy in Egypt (Kepel, 1984: 29).

## **6. CONCLUSIONS**

Under President Nasser, Islamic resurgent movements became increasingly radicalised to such an extent that the approach adopted under this dispensation still form part of the justification of radical Islamic resurgence. Despite violent opposition no substantive governmental changes were introduced to alleviate societal needs or to facilitate political inclusion. Instead the government entrenched autocratic rule. As a prominent personality, Sayyid Qutb also played a decisive role in establishing the ideology of resurgent movements. In addition, time and place factors in Egypt regarding socio-economic developments as well

as external factors and role-players were crucial to the manner in which Islamic opposition movements developed.

Individually stated, the following conclusions may be drawn regarding the Nasser period:

### **6.1. Criticism of the government did not lead to change**

Despite opposition, the Nasser government failed to understand the manner in which the political consciousness of the Egyptian people had been formed over the previous two centuries, and especially since 1919. Neither the Nasser government nor any subsequent government has managed to bridge the socio-economic and political divide between the rulers and the rest of the Egyptian people (Binder, 1988: 277). While the 1952 coup was seen as a revolution against an unacceptable political dispensation in order to achieve social, economic and political emancipation, neither the previous governments nor the government of the Free Officers managed to provide for the needs of society. Instead, the increased centralisation that had started under the Nasser government has continued since then so that the Egyptian government has become the largest industrialist, economic and financial entrepreneur and the biggest employer.

The power and relative freedom of movement that the armed forces have enjoyed as the vanguard of the revolution developed into a power base for the government. Administrative control, the role of the armed forces and the lack of free and fair elections have become entrenched in society. Instead of developing a political system inclusive of all, events under the Nasser government created socio-economic and political problems that have fuelled resurgence.



## 6.2. The initial message of the Islamists was non-violent

Prior to 1952 the motive for the formation of the first resurgent movement, the Muslim Brotherhood, was to establish an Islamic dispensation within a nation state. The only justification for violence came prior to independence when the rover units were prepared to be used to safeguard the Muslim community from possible British reprisal attacks. They were also prepared to provide protection prior to the 1952 take-over of political power.<sup>17</sup>

However, two events served to radicalise the reaction of the resurgent movements after independence was achieved. Firstly, the disillusionment of the Muslim Brotherhood with the government of the Free Officers when their aspirations were not met caused members to break away from the Brotherhood and decide to take a more radical stance versus the government. Secondly, the repressive manner in which the government dealt with opposition served to radicalise members of the resurgent movement. Because of the Nasser government's use of prison and concentration camps, where brutal methods were used, counter reactions from the Islamists have been similarly brutal. The period of Qutb's release from prison, before his re-arrest in 1964, led to the formulation of his ideological rules of fighting fire with fire.<sup>18</sup> The manner in which Qutb was treated led to his ideas of all human societies as being removed from Islamic ethics and the sharia and having to be re-educated.

While traditionalists accept the founding text and their commentaries adhere to the basic principles of imitation (*taqlid*) instead of innovations (*bid'ah*), the subsequent generation found this approach too restrictive and needed to develop a response to an external threat. This led to the adoption of *Salafist* theology, which preached a return to the Qur'an, Sunna and the sharia while rejecting the

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<sup>17</sup> See Chapter Two, section 2.2.

<sup>18</sup> See Chapter Two, section 2.2.

commentaries that have been a part of the tradition. The *Salafist* support *ijtihad* but take their arguments further by demanding the right to interpretation as opposed to the *'ulama* specialising in *fiqh* or Islamic jurisprudence. However, the prison camps of the 1950s and 1960s caused a new generation to become prominent and react to the violent treatment they had received. Therefore, those who had been imprisoned were inspired and motivated to adopt a more radical ideology than that of the al-Banna and the evolution of the ideological justification of Islamic resurgent movements went from *ijtihad* to *jihad*.

### **6.3. Al-Banna's position was filled by Sayyid Qutb**

The prominence of the Muslim Brotherhood was accomplished by a combination of organisational skill, charismatic leadership under Hasan al-Banna and ideological perceptions. Under Hasan al-Banna the Muslim Brotherhood in particular had strong leadership and was able to control the more extremist elements. However, since the death of Hasan al-Banna the absence of such leadership during the 1970s led to the proliferation of Islamic groups that had become disenchanted with the lack of effective leadership and the timidity of the organisation. It was thus not easy for the governments to control the activities of the various movements. So, while the Muslim Brotherhood initially had independence and non-violence as aims, later generations were motivated by feelings of rejection and frustration when expectations were not met.

Clashes with the government weakened the compact structure of the Muslim Brotherhood. The manipulation of the Muslim Brotherhood under President Nasser also exacerbated internal disagreement. In addition, the treatment discredited many of the pacifist approaches that emanated from the new leadership, resulting in splinter groups espousing a more radical stance on their own.

Qutb thus became prominent at a time in Egypt's history when society was

subjected to an autocratic government in addition to the emphasis on foreign influences and political ideologies such as socialism.

In contrast to al-Banna's views Qutb's work, *Ma`alim fi al-Ṭariq*, spelled out his more militant ideological approach. This work was influenced by the harsh treatment in the prison and relied largely on references to the Qur'an and the *hadith*, while there were no references to the Muslim Brotherhood itself or to al-Banna. Thus the emphasis was on what Qutb had taken from Mawdudi and his focus on the rebirth of Islam.

#### **6.4. Al-Mawdudi's ideas played a fundamental role**

Even though Mawdudi and Qutb shared ideas, Mawdudi was firmly rooted in Pakistan and Qutb in Egypt. What they shared was a system of opposing colonial power engulfing their regions as well as independence from foreign domination over their lives. Qutb used two concepts of Mawdudi, namely sovereignty (*ḥakimiyya*) and adoration (*'ubudiyya*), to distinguish between good and evil and declared that God alone had sovereignty and was worthy of adoration. God was thus the only just ruler.

Mawdudi's focus was on the Islamic alternative to Western systems as espoused by the occupying forces. He emphasised examples from the early Islamic state under the Prophet Muhammad and the caliphs. Qutb denounced Western forces but because the Egyptian elite had become influenced and supported by the West they were targeted specifically. More than anything the influence of Mawdudi on Qutb is demonstrated by Qutb's deviation from the ideas as espoused by al-Afghani and Abduh and marked a sharp break with al-Banna. In turn, Qutb's radicalism provided ideas that would be an immediate source of radicalism for activists elsewhere.

### **6.5. Islamists attempted to develop an alternative to Western concepts not compatible with Islam**

In contrast to al-Banna, who supported a nation-state, the concept of nationalism became unacceptable under Qutb because the generation of Islamists during Nasser saw nationalism as representing a European concept of a nation state. Qutb stated that a Muslim's nationality is his religion (Islam), and he therefore envisioned a Muslim community void of pagan identifications. Therefore, nationalism was seen as *jahiliyya*.

Both Qutb and Mawdudi opposed nationalism and wanted to revive Islam as the sole cultural, political and social standard of behaviour. Nationalism, secularism, socialism, communism, democracy and capitalism constitute one single entity that had developed in the West in direct opposition to the message of original Islam. Therefore, people do not possess, nor do they delegate, the right of sovereignty but have to implement what God has legislated in accordance with His exclusive authority. Secularism and democracy represented the usurpation of God's sovereignty, and charged human agencies with the task of legislation. However, legislators are God's agents and His trusted functionaries and laws should not express their free will, nor reflect the desires of secular majorities. By devising their own laws without reference to the authentic authority of the Holy Book, deputies and judges engage in blasphemous activities synonymous with the worship of idols or man-made images. In this sense, secular democracy is a deliberate violation of divine laws and a reversion to the days of pagan ignorance.

The character of secularism was also problematic because it was seen as indigenous to Western civilisation and not transformable to the Islamic civilization without transforming the civilisation itself. Qutb's views were that the principle legislative exclusiveness (*ḥakimiyya*) of God's law lost its authority due to the

influence of secularism, nationalism and democracy. In the past the sharia provided for a utopian society that was destroyed due to the “arrogance of human science” (Choueiri, 1989: 106). Therefore, the leadership of the Muslim community had to display obedience to God while the rule of the righteous could only be achieved by the assumption of political power that supervises the implementation of social, economic and cultural transformation of society. Qutb saw the secularisation of Ataturk as being responsible for the destruction of the last symbol of Islamic sovereignty, namely the caliphate (Choueiri, 1989: 106). He therefore condemned governments that confined religion only to the spiritual sphere while professing a false adherence to Islam. In this manner these governments, aided financially and politically by the West, misuse Islam to legitimise them. This way of reasoning is still apparent in the arguments of resurgent movements in general and also re-surfaced in the statements made by in the aftermath of the bomb explosions in Egypt in June 2005.

## **6.6. A gradual transformation**

Contrary to the popular Western perception, the central message to Muslims specifically emanating from both al-Banna and Qutb was not activism, but the dissemination of the Islamic message in a free manner to build a vanguard of Muslims that can take charge of the government. Initially Qutb did not advocate the overthrow of the government, but rather a gradual transformation of the whole society. Qutb’s basic concept of power was that the Qur’an that would provide the style and method of conveying the message. He emphasised the need for understanding the discourse of the Qur’an, and believed in the unity of the Islamic message as the only reference and truth. Islam was not seen as merely a theory or a subject for research or academic exercise but a belief (*‘aqida*) and a programme of action. Qutb saw the solution in an Islamic

government that did not necessarily include party representation, but a limited representative electoral system.

### **6.7. Insufficient knowledge by the West of Islamic resurgence**

***“Historical analogies are always potentially misleading, always potentially destructive of the uniqueness which inheres in each discrete historical event.”***  
***(Mitchell, 1969: 321)***

This seems to be the most apt description, especially in view of 21<sup>st</sup> century opinions that so readily blame the Muslim Brotherhood for the culmination of events in Islamic resurgent movements experienced currently. While the Muslim Brotherhood was the first mass-supported and urban-orientated movement organised to address the plight of Islam in the modern world, this organisation still identified with the names and thoughts of Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, Muhammad Abduh and Rashid Rida. Mitchell states that the view of each of these reformers depicts their role in general in that Afghani was referred to as the caller or announcer (*mu’addin, sharikh*), Rida as the archivist or historian and Banna as the builder (*bani*) or founder of a nation, thus a practical extension of previous ideas (Mitchell, 1969: 321).

Westerners have placed less focus on Hasan al-Banna and Mawdudi, while Qutb is seen as the “most contemporary fundamentalist thinker” (Moussalli, 1992:12). The role and prominence of Jamal al-Din al-Afghani (1838-1897), who warned against European intervention and called for national unity to resist it, is mostly ignored by the West. Jamal al-Din al-Afghani blamed the ills of the Muslim world and its political decline on European expansionism, autocratic rule and its religious establishment. Similarly unknown is Muhammad Abduh (1849-1905), who was the developer of the intellectual and social reformist dimensions of

Islamic modernism. Through his *Salafiyya* movement Abduh sought legitimacy through identification of its Islamic modernist reformism with the elders (*salafi*) of the early Muslim communities.

### **6.8. Islamic political thought is fundamentally different from Western concepts of politics**

Roy states that Islamists' political thought cannot be related to Western political thought because Islamists reject political philosophy and the human sciences (Roy, 1994:71). Instead the paradigm for man is the Prophet's society in Medina. Islamism is intellectual as well as political in providing philosophical principles. Islamism is progressive and sees itself as providing a change to governments in offering an alternative to Western political and philosophical principles. It rejects claims by man to be the possessor of truth and the claim that knowledge is relative. It rejects the political notion that authority belongs to the people and strives to establish societies based upon justice, virtue and equality (Roy, 1994:71).

Islamists have used the concept of *tawhid* – God's divine oneness – in relation to society that has provided for a frame of reference according to which a Muslim society cannot be segmented or act without respect for the divine order. The oneness has been transferred to refer to the society's oneness. Only in such a society will God's absolute sovereignty (*hakimiyya*) reign over all aspects of an individual's life. In this manner Islam can be deemed an inclusive order (*nizam*).

The Divine Sovereignty or rule (*hakimiyya*) also implies that rule belongs to God, and that the sharia is supreme. Rulers are just God's representatives on earth and enforcers of sharia. Qutb believes leadership should not enslave people or suppress individual freedom by claiming people's obedience that rightfully

belongs to God. All other forms of human governance were seen as *jahiliyya* or pre-Islamic paganism. Qutb also saw *Shura* as not equivalent to the Western notion of majority rule.

### **6.9. *Jihad* is more than just a war**

Since Qutb, all radical movements have followed the trend that Islam does not need to be re-formulated into a comprehensive and integrated theory, especially under a world order controlled by pagan regimes and traditions. Qutb stated that society had to be changed by means of conversion of the individual. The role of *jihad* here is multidimensional in that it refers to the change within the individual as well as the accompanying change brought about in society. Roy states that “there is no obligation to produce results in a *jihad*; it is an affair between the believer and God and not between the *mujtahid* and his enemy” (Roy, 1994: 66). Since radical resurgent movements emphasised the struggle against their enemies, little attention was paid to “self-criticism and for exploring the real cause behind the Muslim deviation from the right track” (Thabet, 2001:26).

The *jihad* espoused by the resurgent movements specifically aimed to rid Muslim nations of secular rulers. The decisive battle will be the liberation of Israel. Victory is not perceived to be the consequence of a series of human acts but a gift from God – *tawfiq min allah* (success comes from God). *Jihad* had to be reactivated against Islam’s internal and external enemies. *Jihad* had been reintroduced as a form of political struggle against governments to achieve socio-political change in the name of Islam. Mawdudi saw *jihad* as a permanent revolution towards a universal Islamic system, resulting in an International Revolutionary Party, for a *jihad* against evil world systems. People or warriors are members of *Hizb Allah* or the Party of God. Qutb was inspired by these ideas and advocated a timeless and borderless *jihad*. However, he saw *jihad* as “a struggle between dichotomous opposites – pre-Islamic *jahiliyya* society versus



Islamic society – modelled after the historical antecedent of the Prophet’s career in Mecca and Medina” (Faskh; 1997: 13). Qutb viewed the Muslim vanguard or self-appointed legions of divine guidance as struggling against a global *jahiliyya*. In this manner waging a *jihad* against “apostate” rulers had to remove un-Islamic governments.

### 6.10. The deeper meaning of *Jahiliyya*

The implications of Qutb’s work were that all contemporary societies including that of Egypt were *jahili* because they did not submit to the will of God. This concept had far-reaching effects in that it led to a radical interpretation of Qutb’s thoughts and withdrawal from society. Kepel argues that, contrary to the Western belief, the concept of *jahiliyya* did not demonise the government. Islamic authenticity versus *jahiliyya* focused on the restoration of Islamic authenticity in response to Western hegemony. Modernisation and Westernisation were seen as eroding the authenticity of Islam and representing a new *jahiliyya*. This new stage of humanity’s pagan ignorance was deemed to be a repetition of the pre-Prophetic state of affairs, but more pervasive and sinister with its consequences more devastating than initially. In addition, this new *jahiliyya*, resulting in Muslim reformers and rulers being regarded as secularists in Islamic disguise, is more destructive.

Qutb was motivated by the manner in which President Nasser’s political system was conducted to refer to it as *jahiliyya*, because it conferred “sovereignty on the people, it subtracts from God” (Kepel, 1984: 13). The introduction of Western governmental systems such as democracy, socialism and Marxism were also denounced as *jahiliyya*. Therefore, the Muslim world in adopting these measures was not Islamic but the equivalent to *jahiliyya* or ignorance and barbarism, as it had prevailed in Arabia before Prophet Muhammad’s revelation. He explained that *jahiliyya* or barbarity signified the domination of man over man (*ḥakimiyya*) or

the subservience to man rather than to Allah, as well as the rejection of the divinity of God. According to Binder *jahiliyya* is often equated with been ignorance. Mawdudi extended the term to refer to anything un-Islamic. Two manifestations of contemporary *jahiliyya* have been highlighted, namely degrading influences from the West and governments not based on the sharia. “Thus the term *jahiliyya* has been transferred from reference to the pre-Islamic period to reference to modern Western society and culture, emphasising its corrupting influence, and negating the widespread ethnographic belief that it is impossible to compartmentalize cultural and ideological matters in a way that allows for selective cultural diffusion” (Binder, 1988:178).

This was the starting point for subsequent generations of militants who believed *jahiliyya* was the proper instrument for propagation. Qutb’s declaration of society as *jahiliyya* was also a departure from al-Banna’s ideas. Society was now “ruled, structured and corseted by Nasserites’ state” (Kepel, 1984: 46). Whereas the totalitarian state represented *jahiliyya*, Qutb stated, “any society that is not Muslim is *jahiliyya* ... as is any society in which something other than God alone is worshipped” (Kepel, 1984: 47). Instrumental to Qutb’s ideals was the relationship between God and man, namely worship (*al-‘ubudiyya*) and sovereignty (*al-ḥakimiyya*). Thus, a regime could only exercise sovereignty by applying the prescriptions of the revelation in addition to the sharia” (Kepel, 1984: 46-47).

### **6.11. The perceptions of persecution by the West**

Binder states that Qutb’s experiences and his works re-emphasised the concept that had been part of the Islamic world since the crusades, namely that the West is still persecuting Islam. This can be seen in the case of Qutb, who shared the opinion of Ibn Kathir (he lived at the time of the crusades), that the Jews and the Christians would never find Muslims acceptable and that it is was useless to try

pleasing them. Qutb believed that the Jews and the Christians were conspiring against the Muslims and that their true goal was to lead the Muslims from their religion to the religion of the People of the Book. Western education as advocated by the missionary schools was seen as being instrumental in trying to achieve this aim. By the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century most Muslim countries had achieved their independence from colonial rule. However, the dream of restoring an Islamic order was being prevented by the rulers themselves. These rulers were from the Westernised elite or the military and thus sought Western goals and introduced Western methods. These rulers were seen as acting as agents of the West and were destroying the Islamic system. Mawdudi of Pakistan and Qutb were the leading exponents in denouncing such leaders as unbelievers and advocating separation or *hijra* from societies ruled by un-Islamic laws legislated by unbelievers.<sup>19</sup> Believers had to assume political power and restore Islamic societies to the rule of God (Tibi, 1983: 404 – 412).

The Islamic awakening (*al-ṣaḥwa al-Islamiyya*), proposed that internal decay and foreign intervention emanated from the USA to contain the Muslims. In order to oppose these forces, only the revival of a new Islamic potency with which to revitalise the Islamic community was needed and no imitation of the West would be successful. Islamisation was thus seen as a response to the crisis experienced within the faith, as could be seen in the results of the 1967 defeat. In addition, Islamisation was a response to Judaisation that had succeeded in taking away Jerusalem from the Muslims. Islamisation is also a response to perceived Christian and Jewish militancy. In conclusion, the danger facing Islamists is the problem of Israel and its demand for self-determination versus that of the Muslims. The same sentiments have been expressed about the US-led campaign in Iraq and the war on terrorism, as well as support to Israel (Binder, 1988: 241).

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<sup>19</sup> See Chapter Two, section 3.2.3.

## 7. SUMMARY

In the aftermath of the 1952 revolution it can be argued that the revolution did not achieve improved socio-economic conditions or an improvement in the relationship between the ruler and the ruled. What is relevant here is the type of relationship that culminated in this era, as it provided the basis from which future trends would evolve. While the 1952 coup was seen as a revolution against a decadent order on behalf of social, economic and political emancipation, subsequent governments found governing problematic and continued with the centralisation of power as implemented under Nasser. This centralisation ultimately resulted in the Egyptian government still being the greatest industrial, economic and financial entrepreneur and the biggest employer in the country.

At the end of the Nasser government the increased involvement of President Nasser in international affairs in order to relieve the pressure that was building up against his regime had already led to the 1967 war, which would have further ramifications for the Sadat government.

The Nasser era provided for the increased radicalisation of Islamic opposition movements, which evolved even further under the next government. This continuous process has to be understood in order to understand Islamic opposition movements.

This era also entrenched the manner in which the governmental processes in Egypt developed. These structures and modus operandi have been challenged by the Islamic opposition movements. In addition, Islamic opposition movements have developed infrastructure to provide for societal needs. In this manner sub-structures developed in Egyptian society that has created a society within a society that is able to provide for the needs of society more effectively than the government can and has done.

In addition, the ideological justifications of the Islamic opposition movements

have deviated even further from the original source, implying that they would be used by the next generation to remove the head of the state.

## CHAPTER THREE

### ISLAMIC RESURGENT MOVEMENTS DURING THE REGIME OF PRESIDENT SADAT: 1970 UNTIL 1982

*"I am Khalid al-Islambuli, I have killed Pharaoh, and I do not fear death." (Kepel, 1984: 192)*

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

When President Sadat took over after the death of President Nasser he had not only the legacy of the Nasser era to deal with, but also the problems from the previous regimes. The most serious of these problems was defeat in the 1967 war with Israel and the presence of the Soviets in the country. However, replacing the influence of the former USSR with that of the USA created new problems for the Sadat government as well as the subsequent Mubarak government. The marginalisation of the Egyptian left wing would also have an impact on the development of Islamic resurgent movements, as the government would use movements on different sides of the political spectrum to counter one another.

During the government of President Sadat resurgence stemmed from various complex causes. The Muslim world as a whole and especially Egypt had experienced negatively the military defeat of pan-Arabism in 1967 at the hands of Israel. At the same time Saudi Arabia became prominent as a result of the quadrupling of the oil price in 1973, which made it possible for this country to exert a more authoritative role in the Islamic world, in competition with Islamists and

resurgent movements. In addition, resurgent movements were provoked by three almost simultaneous events. These were, firstly, the Camp David Accord between Egypt and Israel in 1979, which delegitimised both the Egyptian state and President Sadat personally in the eyes of Islamists as well as nationalists; secondly, the Iranian Revolution of 1978 to 1979, which encouraged Islamists elsewhere (Sunnis as well as Shiites) to believe they could gain power and prompted the Saudi authorities to promote Sunni Islamic proselytism in the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia (notably Pakistan) to counter Iran's revolutionary Shiism; and, thirdly, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in January 1979 and the ensuing mobilisation for *jihad*, in which thousands of young men from across the Arab world took part alongside the Afghan resistance movements. Subsequently, the demand from the Islamists to introduce an Islamically based government became greater than ever.

In trying to establish his own power base and to eliminate any opposition against him President Sadat undertook to remove the Nasserite elements from the government. In the process, he empowered the Islamists by providing structures that facilitated their funding and administration. However, these strategies had disastrous results, as the empowering of politically active Islamists would pose a considerable threat to the Sadat government. President Sadat also used the officers' corps of the military for his support and dismissed those who disagreed with his authority. Under the Sadat government the arguments of the Islamic opposition movements that justified the removal of an illegitimate leader were taken to the ultimate level with the assassination of President Sadat himself.

## **2. HISTORICAL OVERVIEW**

### **2.1. The legacy of the Nasser government**

While the Nasser government took power by a coup d'état and introduced policies to enforce and retain power, the Sadat government had to formulate its own political identity. Several external factors influenced the Sadat government to such an extent that they facilitated the revival of resurgent movements, especially the Muslim Brotherhood.

President Sadat allowed political groups freer expression by permitting them to speak on political platforms and to constitute full political parties in addition to granting them more autonomy because he personally did not enjoy political legitimacy. In addition, economic difficulties as well as increased defence spending, lack of foreign investment, low productivity and Soviet presence in the country impacted on the Sadat government. Socio-economic problems that were a legacy of the Nasser government's high-powered profiteering and international financial difficulties aggravated socio-economic conditions under the Sadat government. These conditions provided impetus to Islamic opposition movements under the Sadat government (Cooper, 1982: 40).

All these events contributed to the continuous ideological development of Islamic opposition movements. Dependency of the government of the day upon a foreign power was also maintained under the Sadat government. President Sadat's decision to end the Soviet mission to the country on 18 July 1972 led to a rise in his popularity. The Soviets were, however, replaced by the USA, who viewed the Sadat government favourably despite the dominant role of the military and the resultant authoritarian government. In North America it was anticipated that liberal progress would still take place (Cooper, 1982:13). Furthermore, authoritarian rule was regarded as simply a prelude to a more liberal



dispensation in future. Because many military officers were from the rural middle class the USA believed that the government had aspirations for a democracy but that poverty still required imposing authoritarian rule, hence US support for the Egyptian government.

The emergence of a less constrained press and the possibility of independence for the judiciary also created the impression of a more open dispensation. However, these changes were not enough to provide for political growth and development. The fact that the opportunity to explore new political venues was not seized by the government resulted in the perpetuation of an autocratic system inherited from previous dispensations. Another opportunity was thus lost to develop an internally generated political system inclusive of Islamic culture.

When President Sadat assumed power, Egypt still had to confront the fact that it had lost to Israel in the 1967 war. This loss had created the impression that God had “deserted” the Arabs because of their corruption and this was an aspect that the people assumed the new president would rectify. President Sadat had to deal with this situation while also ensuring that he retained power and kept a balance between his own policies and those he had inherited from Nasser. Public opinion displayed during demonstrations served as an incentive for the student movements to adopt a more radical political stance in demanding a firm stand against Israel (Kepel, 1984: 131). Therefore, President Sadat embarked on war with Israel in 1973. Despite the initial military success in crossing the Suez Canal and advancing into Sinai, there were conflicts about the correct strategy that the Egyptian military had to follow. President Sadat also came to realise that Israel had advanced militarily. Nevertheless, the October 1973 war did manage to establish President Sadat’s legitimacy as an Egyptian leader, a process that had already begun when he ended Egypt’s relationship with the Soviets. President Sadat also gave the Egyptian-Israeli war of 1973 an Islamic significance because it was waged during Ramadan and he used the Islamic motto of “*Allahu Akbar!*” as the opening words of the prayer. After the 1973 perceived victory for Egypt, Islamic euphoria led to the adoption of Islamic attire, increased mosque

attendance and a proliferation of religious literature and organisations (Esposito, 1992:10-12). Therefore, when the president assumed the role of peacekeeper with Israel, especially through the Camp David Accord, students as well as the Islamists regarded this as a betrayal.

This betrayal was especially severe since President Sadat had adopted a strategy of reconciliation with the Islamists. He embraced Islamic symbols to legitimise his position and adopted a pious reputation as the Believer-President, beginning all official pronouncements with the traditional religious invocation of “in the name of God, the Merciful and the Compassionate” (Esposito, 1992: 10-12). The sharia was also declared a principal source of legalisation in Egypt in 1971 and Islamic symbols such as the Al Azhar, an Islamic institution of higher learning and jurisprudence, were used to bestow a semblance of Islamic legitimacy on the government. Islamic programmes in schools, media and universities were increased and more mosques were built. President Sadat also cultivated relationships with the religious leaders as well as Sufi orders.

Despite these overtures, both the foreign and economic policies followed by the government fostered Islamic resurgence instead of containing it. An example is President Sadat’s open-door policy or *infitah*. Cooper argues that this policy was aimed at encouraging economic growth because Nasser’s centralised approach towards the economy had not been successful. However, the uneven distribution of wealth and the social disruption caused by the *infitah*, as well as its associations with the West, created fertile ground for Islamist values in the face of an increase in the influx of Western values. The outcome of the open-door policy led to a growth in Western investment as well as the integration of the Islamic world into the systems of multi-nationals. This integration resulted in the introduction of system totally alien to the Muslim world’s concept of interest, insurance and taxation. In addition, investment brought foreign tourists as well as their values and way of life, such as commercialism and individualistic life style,

consumerism and increased industrialisation (Springborg, 1989: 5).

As part of its economic restructuring the government also acted on recommendations from the International Monetary Fund to lower its spending and announced that it would cut subsidies on essential commodities. Immediately, demonstrations and disturbances broke out in Cairo and other cities in what became known as the “bread riots of 1977”. Police forces were incapable of containing the situation and President Sadat had to call on the armed forces to quell the riots and restore order (Cooper in Springborg, 1989: 5). These riots demonstrated President Sadat’s inability to anticipate the consequences of economic reform as well as the animosity of the people at the inequalities created by the inflow of wealth due to the *infitah*. However, in a speech by President Sadat on 30 January 1977, the government deflected the blame away from itself by blaming the Soviet Union, Israel and Libya, as well as the domestic Leftists, for Egypt’s problems (Cooper in Springborg, 1989: 5).

The social character of Egypt under President Sadat also gave impetus to resurgence. Society was composed of an elitist element that was derived from the rural bourgeoisie and notables. A pool of qualified people from the rural notables formed the second stratum of Egypt. The important urban middle class still had ties with family members of the rural middle class; however, this went into decline as the urban middle class increased. While the interests of the urban middle class were largely bureaucratic, their cultural values were still traditional. The rural middle class could afford to educate its sons and dominated village affairs, including political affairs, and was thus politically aware. During the Sadat era, it was from this group that many of the new generation of recruits for Islamic resurgence would come. While many members of the urban population were mobilised in the same manner, they did not have the same political rationale as those in the rural areas. Therefore the Islamic resurgent movements had different compositions in different areas in Egypt (Binder, 1989: 311).

## 2.2. President Sadat's strategies

In using Islam to legitimise his government and to gain credibility, President Sadat deviated from Nasser's strategy by showing tolerance and giving encouragement to young people with Islamist inclinations in particular. He therefore adopted a more liberal attitude towards the Islamic groups, especially the Muslim Brotherhood and the Islamic groups at universities. Members that had been sent into exile by the previous government were permitted to return and the *al-Dawa* publications were allowed to continue. Muslim Brotherhood members were released from prison and the emergence of Islamist student associations was encouraged, particularly to counter leftists and Nasserites, whom Sadat saw as the real opposition. President Sadat encouraged the formation of Islamic student societies. He reduced the restrictive measures on civilian lives and allowed more freedom of expression. In exchange for political survival for the Sadat government, the Islamic groups were allowed considerable cultural and ideological freedom.

Therefore, most resurgent movements could operate publicly and expand their social, educational and religious service networks at a time when the government retreated increasingly from state welfare as a result of its *infitah* economic policy.

President Sadat formed the General Union of Egyptian Students to regulate student movements and to deepen religious values among students. Groups such as the *al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya* managed to establish cells in the Student Union and this resulted in recruiting more members for their cause. They managed to gain control of the information and publishing committees at national level and were thus able to use government funding for pamphlets advocating their cause. The pamphlet called *Şawt al-Haqq* (Voice of Truth) also contained passages from *Signposts* as well as from other Islamist authors. Especially after 1972 the Islamists found the key to success, namely discreet and tactical

collaboration with the government to break the left's domination of the campuses (Kepel, 1984: 133). Their dominance over the leftists would consolidate the president's political power against those who had ties with and supported the USSR. Therefore, a close associate of President Sadat, Muhammad 'Uthman Isma'il, acted as the *al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya* godfather from 1972 to 1982 and encouraged them to fight against the communists.

This process aided the prominence of the *al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya* that emerged among students in 1973, prior to the October War. It organised summer camps and advocated a pure Islamic life as an alternative to the social crisis of unemployment in Egypt. It established an alternative society by offering a private and segregated bus service and encouraged adherence to Islamic dress codes (Kepel 1984: 145). At summer camps in 1973 held at the universities the *al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya* resurrected the practices of the Muslim Brotherhood prior to its 1954 dissolution. These camps served as religious training centers, provided training in self-defence and proposed Islamic solutions to the disappointment experienced in Egyptian society. Their focus was on the epoch of the four rightly guided caliphs and the golden age of Islam.

When the government reacted against the Student Union and camps were cancelled in 1975, the *al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya*'s stature resulted in its enjoying an aura of martyrdom as well as being forced to break out of the university ghetto and spread beyond the world of students. It attracted new recruits in poor neighbourhoods. The *al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya* continued to grow and to transform campus life by focusing on enhancing Islamic principles. It focused on segregated classes for males and females, paid attention to the lack of separate transport for females and propagated a return to wearing the veil. Its control over the Student Union and publication budget provided for the production of cheap study manuals for private lessons. Thus, by 1977, the student elections resulted in an Islamist victory. The *al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya* now aspired to become the driving force for the transformation of *jahiliyya* into a Muslim society. The

relations between the *al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya* and the government deteriorated so badly that the movement was banned by decree 265/1979.

Groups such as the Muslim Brotherhood continued on a peaceful course centred on working within a legal framework and co-operating with other political forces. It established social welfare, economic, educational and medical services and increasingly penetrated university bodies and professional associations. However, the more radical movements, especially those that had been inspired by Qutb and his ideologies, increased in number and prominence. Already in 1974 a group called Muhammad's Youth or the Islamic Liberation Organisation attempted to assassinate President Sadat. The guilty were caught and executed, but the movement went underground and became active together with other groups such as the *Jund Allah* (Soldiers of God) and *Jama`at al-Jihad* (Holy War Society) (Kepel, 1984: 133).

From 1977 onwards, Islamic opposition to President Sadat increased, with most of the power bases established in Islamic student organisations. These organisations increasingly began to exert their independence and condemn President Sadat's opportunistic use of Islam. In response Sadat became more autocratic and after the 1977 food riots in Cairo he clamped down on the leftist groups, for example the *Jama`at al-Muslimin*, also known as the *Takfir wa al-Hijra*.<sup>20</sup> Externally the occupation of the West Bank in Palestine by Israel provided added impetus for Islamists, as it was seen as a sign of political impotence. This event intensified the demand on Muslims to commit themselves to Islam. At the same time new generations of Muslims came to the fore with the previous generation having moderated their voices during the Sadat era. Under President Sadat many members of these younger generations gradually formed secret societies and became prominent in the 1977 riots.

President Sadat's most dramatic foreign policy initiative, namely his visit to Israel

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<sup>20</sup> See Chapter Two, section 3.2.3, which discusses Mawdudi's initial formulation of this concept.

in 1977 that eventually led to the 1978 Camp David Peace Accord and the 1979 Egyptian-Israeli Peace Treaty, led to Egypt's ostracism from the Arab world. When the Camp David Accord was signed in 1979 and President Sadat returned from a visit to the USA, he had hoped to be portrayed as the "peace president". This strategy failed as he met with increased opposition. In his speeches President Sadat attacked "those who sought to cloak their political aims in the mantle of religion" (Kepel, 1984: 149). During subsequent arrests of *al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya* members who had protested against the government, they were accused of receiving foreign funding.

Any measures taken by the Sadat government were too late because the *al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya* had already established solid infrastructures of its own and could still function effectively without the Student Union. Its stance was expressed in a speech by Yusuf al-Qardawi when he stated that "Egypt is Muslim, not pharaohic, it is the land of 'Amr Ibn al-As and not of Ramses ... the youth of *al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya* are the true representatives of Egypt and not the Avenue of the Pyramids" (Kepel, 1984: 150).<sup>21</sup> This was in reference to President Sadat's attention to the preservation of the Ramses II mummy that depicted an un-Islamic past to the resurgent movements. The subsequent steps taken by the government to break Muslim solidarity were directed at the *al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya* as the centrifugal force even though it had been unable to persuade Egyptian masses to fight alongside it for the victory of the umma. Therefore, the *al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya* banned anything unacceptable to its norms from the universities and tried to enforce its ideas on university campuses. Its control was more prominent than that which the government had in the past by means of the General Union of Students. Members of the *al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya* expressed their thoughts in the monthly bulletin it distributed at the University of Alexandria by the *al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya*. The content of their articles centred on the decadence of the lands of Islam, their occupation by infidels and the Islamic awakening (Kepel, 1984: 150). Furthermore, the *al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya* focused

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<sup>21</sup> Currently the magazine *Pharaoh* targets a middle and upper-class secular and Westernised audience.

on the evolution of an Islamic society by emphasising the wearing of the veil, an untrimmed beard, the wearing of a white *gallabiy* and the attendance of Friday prayers.

According to Jansen, these ideas showed an intellectual decline from Qutb's ideas, while later arguments that would be followed by the *al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya* referred to Qutb's *Signposts*. Therefore *al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya* advocated certain concepts, namely God's divinity (*rububiyya*); God's worship (*'ubudiyya*); submission (*ta'a*); God's sovereignty (*ḥakimiyya*); God's right to legislate; and divine unity (*tawḥīd*). Sayyid Qutb's original circle had widened its activities and he proposed the idea of launching a holy war against an infidel ruler after President Sadat had made his historic visit to Jerusalem in 1977 and signed the Camp David agreements in 1978. This led to President Sadat being killed by Khalid Islambuli, a member of *al-Jihad*. *Al-Jihad* was a remnant of the militant Muhammad's Youth. The assassins belonged to an organisation called *al-Jihad al-Islam*, or the Islamic Struggle. Its ideologue, 'Abd al-Salam Faraj, had already circulated an internal document to his cells of activists, setting out the merits and inevitability of taking action against the government. Their members came from a cross-section of society, namely the civilian, military and religious spheres. They also included members of the presidential guard, military intelligence, civil servants and radio and television workers. The assassination of President Sadat by Khalid Islambuli on 6 October 1981 (during a military parade celebrating the anniversary of the 1973 war) brought to the fore the significance of such radical Islamic groups in present-day Egypt.



### 3. MOTIVATION FOR ISLAMIC RESURGENT MOVEMENTS

Under the Sadat government the most important factor that motivated Islamic resurgence was disillusionment with the political and socio-economic conditions in the country. Motivational factors stemmed from both internal and external sources and exacerbated existing conditions in society conducive to radicalisation.

#### 3.1. Internal conditions

##### 3.1.1. The legacy of policies followed by the Nasser government

While the Nasser government followed repressive measures and created a martyr in the form of Qutb, the Islamists were given hope under the Sadat government, especially when he created more structures and freedom of movement. The emergence of a *jihad* current within Egyptian Islamism in the 1970s was connected at the outset with the Palestinian question.<sup>22</sup> The subsequent popularisation of Qutb's thought occurred in conjunction with the radicalisation of the younger generation of Egyptian Islamists in reaction to President Sadat's signing of the Camp David Accord with Israel and his attempts to repress widespread opposition to this. The second wave of extremist violence from 1992 onwards came in the context of the end of the war in Afghanistan and the 1990-1991 war against Iraq. Qutb died before he could specify how true Muslims might legally and effectively oppose the impious state, beyond vague references to the need for a vanguard "movement" (*haraka*). However, the Islamists became disheartened by the political policies implemented by the government. In addition, the small but

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<sup>22</sup> In the same way, the creation by the Muslim Brotherhood of its para-military "Special Apparatus" in 1940 was linked to its involvement in the Palestinian question at that time as well as to its anti-British campaign.

growing middle class became increasingly dissatisfied with political and social conditions. Urban unemployment was increasing and the peasants were becoming poorer.

The Sadat government also had to remove all political competitors and started with the purging of the Arab Socialist Union (ASU) leaders and former Nasser associates in May 1971. The adoption of a new liberal constitution in September 1971 marked the beginning of a new political phase in Egypt, referred to by President Sadat as the Corrective Revolution. Excessive bureaucracy was addressed and restraining economic measures were introduced. However, most of these aspects of the Corrective Revolution were symbolic. President Sadat tried to win the favour of the masses by holding periodic national referenda but also by appeasing the religious segment in society by using religious references to justify new policy directions (Kniele, 1998: 281).<sup>23</sup>

In September 1981 the government conducted the largest internal security operations since the 1952 revolution and arrested over 1 500 suspects. President Sadat tried to stem dissidence by assuming the role of prime minister as well as that of president in May 1980. Despite promises of prosperity, an increasing number of prominent personalities, former cabinet members, journalists and academics expressed opposition to President Sadat (Kepel, 1984: 150). Islamic opposition movements grew in prominence, especially the *Takfir wa al – Hijra* and *al-Jihad*.

### **3.1.2. Rise of a new generation**

Under the Sadat government a new generation was inspired by Islam. The transformation of Egyptian society in the 1970s was from a community with a traditional pattern of values and norms to the present multi-layered society consisting of different levels of socio-economic groups. These diverse groups

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<sup>23</sup> This practice has been followed up to the present.

shared many ideas, such as the acceptance of modernity as an instrument to be used rather than an ideology to be followed. The exception to the rule was the *Takfir wa al-Hijra*, which differed on other accounts as well, such as in the concept of *ijtihad*, and rejected modernity altogether. The main violent movements in Egypt were based on Qutb's ideologies. The innovative elements of Qutb's thought represented a radical reaction to President Nasser's regime. The central feature of this reaction to President Nasser's policies was the practice of *takfir*, the act of denouncing someone or something as an "infidel" or "impious". The state was condemned as "impious" because it was perceived as the origin of irreligious (*jahili*) values. A new generation popularised the concept of *takfir* by assuming authority in matters of interpretation and judgement – something that was previously done by the Muslim `ulama (ICG, 2003, 12).

The experiences of the 1960s, namely persecutions and imprisonment, resulted in a group that had undergone trauma. The leaders of this group hailed from a generation that had experienced both modern education and an early traditional upbringing. They came from villages and towns and had been urbanised recently. To them the evil of colonialism and imperialism was part of the evasive rhetoric of the elite in power (Kepel, 1984: 11). Also, the new generation of Islamists was probably less intellectual than the previous generation. This was due to student overpopulation, a general weakening of standards of education and the replacement of colonial languages with national languages. They hailed from universities and together with the poor young urban from deprived backgrounds were committed to an Islamic state in order to satisfy their social and revolutionary aims (Kepel, 1984: 11)

In the city the new cells that formed part of the new Islamic organisations provided them with a sense of belonging as well as a feeling of being rooted in Islam. The ideologies that were previously used to drive the groups, namely secularism, nationalism and Marxism, had lost momentum. Militant Arab nationalists were being absorbed into state bureaucracies, thus creating a

vacuum filled by the Islamists. In addition, the youth were excluded from politics as a result of archaic political systems within fairly modern societies. Islamists offered disillusioned youths social integration and upward mobility. This loss of prestige of progressive ideologies as well as the failure of the Arab socialist model left room for new ideologies. What Islamists offered was not a “return to the past but the re-adaptation of modernity to a newly rediscovered identity” (Roy, 1994: 52). These organisations provided work, support, study groups and prayer sessions. Community work and the idea of martyrdom were emphasised (Kepel, 1984: 11).

The resurgent movements justified their actions as being a response to “the fabric of everyday political life in contemporary Egypt, over which the institutions of legal political life – whether civil, religious or military – have little control” (Kepel, 1984: 232). The unacceptable situation under the Sadat government led to resistance in the form of emigration (*hijra*) and rebellion. President Sadat’s emphasis on improved education and modernity had to be resisted. While immigration to the Gulf took place, resistance took many forms, such as hiding a guilty party from the government. The justification for *jihad* was to destroy *jahiliyya* – the strategy espoused by Qutb.

Because *al-Jihad* consisted of two branches, one in Cairo and one in Sa’id, recruitment was based on the social milieu of the rural area and the concept of vendetta.<sup>24</sup> The Cairo group acted against oppressors but had no following among the larger Muslim population; thus the assassination of the president did not lead to an uprising. In addition, most defendants involved in the trial after President Sadat’s death were students in the elite faculties of medicine and engineering, and not from military faculties. Thus student representatives could have been a potential source of revolutionary strength (Kepel, 1984: 148).

The socio-economic conditions were as much part of the root causes of Islamic

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<sup>24</sup> See section 2.2 in Chapter Three.

resurgent movements as their political ideals. This can be seen in the physical location in Cairo where they were not absorbed into the economy of the city, education failed to provide them with keys to modernity and they were no longer part of the countryside. Thus they had very few support structures other than those provided by the Islamic resurgent movements. "It is from these circles that the heavy battalions of the Islamist movements are drawn" (Kepel, 1984: 218) and the Islamists movements served as a "sort of nebula of small groups whose ideology hovered between that of a Shukri era Faraj at the one pole and that of al Talmasani at the other" (Kepel, 1984: 204).

*Al-Jihad* leader from Alexandria, Yehia Hashim, who had discovered the teachings of Qutb, incorporated the members who supported him into the organisation. Other *Jihad* leaders at the time, such as Salleh Seriya, a Palestinian and employee of the Arab League who led Shebab Mohammed (Mohammed Youth), and Essam Al Kamary, an officer in the Egyptian army, were unaware of Hashim's group and worked independently of him (Sullivan and Sana Abed-Kotob, 1991: 20). This lack of a strong unity resulted in failure to control the conduct of members. In this manner groups divided into splinter groups that each had its own modus operandi and objectives that did not necessarily reflect those of the larger community or society in Egypt. This trend has continued in Egypt.

The geographical location of resurgent movements in either southern or northern Egypt has contributed to the development of differences among them. The specific responses of government's policies can also be understood against the background of this geographical division. It is argued that the differences between the southern and northern groups are the main reason for Islamic movements in Egypt not having formed a single unit or group. The motivational factors behind each movement provide insight into its uniqueness and differences, as illustrated by the statement of a member of the Islamic group that had attacked the Technical Academy in 1974: "The *sa'ids* calls them *al-Jama'a*

*al-Islamiyya*. This group does not consider those who rule Egypt non-Muslims. This group believes that the Egyptian state can be adjusted to be Islamic. *Jihad* is the group's means to bring about these adjustments. "The Cairo *Jihad*, on the other hand, sees everything in Egypt as un-Islamic" (Fandy, 1994: 609). Symbolism used by the groups is also indicative of northern or southern origins. Both northern and southern groups have abandoned the use of the crescent in favour of the sun and have chosen an open book. The *al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya* members in the south use an open book or hands with a sword in the shape of an obelisk and the rising sun in the background (Fandy, 1994: 609).

In the south of Egypt, tribal affiliations as well as the functioning of competing Islamic interpretations reflect feelings of superiority of one tribe over another. The most dominant in this region are the *ashraf*, who claim descent from the prophet Muhammad and do not intermarry with either Arabs or *fellahin*, whom they consider as beneath them. The second group in the hierarchy is the Arabs and the third the *fellahin*. The term Arab does not have the same meaning in the south as in the north, because in the south Arabs are simply a specific tribe that can trace their origin to central Arabia. The *fellahin* or non-Arab majority in the south believe themselves to be descendants of the ancient Egyptians (Fandy, 1994: 609).

Within these groups Islam has been used as a criterion for the dominance of certain tribes over other tribes regarded as inferior. The *fellahin* were seen as those accepting Islam only as a result of a threat, as they were thought to be unable to see the superiority of Islam, and were thus regarded as inferior. The dominance of the *ashraf* tribes and the Arab tribes in economic matters led to their dominance in others spheres as well, and consequently they assumed positions of authority (Fandy, 1994: 609).

It is therefore important for an understanding of Islamic resurgence in Egypt to note that the *al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya* hailed from the *fellahin*. The *al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya* movements were formed at the Assiut University during the 1970s.

Their members had to aspire to change the dominance of the *ashraf* and introduce their own version of Islam to restructure the rules of governing southern Egypt. They are composed of clusters of secret organisations with different names that have no ties to mosques or social groups. The top leaders of the group were accused of the assassination of President Sadat. Those involved came from lower ranks and were all southern (Fandy, 1994: 609).

The southern groups that were born after the 1952 revolution benefited from Nasser's land and educational reforms. Education enabled the *fellahin* to read the Qur'an and the Hadith, thus becoming aware of other interpretations of the Qur'an and the Hadith than those presented by Arabs and the *ashraf*. To reconcile the differences between income and status, members of the *al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya* used this newly acquired learning to emphasise an alternative narrative by using as its centre the prophet's saying that all are equal in Islam: there is no difference between Arab and non-Arab except *taqwa* (piety). These aspects, as well as increased economic and educational mobility, exposed them to contradictions between their relatively low tribal status and the improvement in the economic and educational status. These factors motivated them to undermine the *ashraf* and Arab dominance of the south (Fandy, 1994: 609-612).

Egyptian governments have in turn used tribal solidarity in the south to control this area. Therefore, after the Nasser revolution most police officials were recruited from important southern families. In addition the government also relied on the heads of Arab tribes or *ashraf* to control their areas by appointing their elders as governors of southern villages. Modernisation did not affect the traditional power structures and, even though the *fellahin* became educated, the traditional power structures remained, thus enabling the government to exercise control. Therefore, the persistence of the political status quo became a source of tension after 1970 and aided the rise of Islamism in the south (Fandy, 1994: 609-612).

Under the Sadat government the use of local notables to ensure order as well as the use of Islamic symbols initially appealed to minor tribes that had remained hopeful of the prospect of change towards a more equitable society. The *fellaḥin* and other minor tribes lost hope when Sadat introduced his *infitah* or economic liberalisation policies that favoured the south's old feudal families. Sadat also appointed members of the old feudal families to important government positions. The re-establishment of the former aristocracy in Egyptian national politics threatened both the minor Arab tribes and the *fellaḥin*. The *fellaḥin* took refuge in the Islamist movements and resisted Sadat's policies by holding him accountable for his own Islamic rhetoric. Thus resistance to Sadat's de-Nasserisation programmes and the loss of jobs took on an Islamic form.

According to Kepel and Esposito, while the 1968 student movement was a reaction to national defeat, that of 1972 was more of a political movement, acting on behalf of other classes. In the period after 1972 three groupings emerged at universities. The leftist group was a combination of hard-core activists that had links with emerging Marxist organisations as well as a heterogeneous group with general leftist and Marxist learnings. Secondly, there were the Nasserist students who wanted to undermine their Marxist rivals. Thirdly, the right wing adhered to Islamist principles and polarised around the Youth of Islam. Mitchell states that as a socio-political force the student movement acted as an element of pressure on the ruling power to restore the country's self-esteem through the recovery of its lost territories. The student movement also made a crucial contribution to major changes in the political system that became prominent after 1973.

### **3.1.3. The strategies followed by the Sadat government**

President Sadat used Islam to legitimise his regime and emphasised his image of being a pious Muslim leader. He made Islam the official religion and also made the sharia one of the sources of legislation of the constitution in 1971. As a



Believer President he made use of the mass media to cover his prayers in the mosque and also increased Islamic programming in the media. The government increased Islamic courses in schools, built mosques and employed Islamic rhetoric in public statements. However, many activists, moderate as well as radical, rejected his reform of Muslim family law as being too Westernised (Sullivan and Sana Abed-Kotob, 1999: 45). President Sadat's image as being very religious annoyed those who were religiously dedicated so that they did not believe him anymore. Hasan Hanafi wrote sarcastically that "President Sadat has been given the title 'the Believer-President (*al-ra'is al-mu'min*)'. He is always called by his first name, Muhammad. He is shown in the mass media in his white *jallabiya*, going to the mosque or coming out of it, with a rosary in one hand, Moses' stick in the other and with a prayer mark on his forehead. He murmurs in prayer, closes his eyes and shows signs of humility and devotion. He begins his speeches with 'In the name of God', and ends them with Qur'anic verses signifying modesty and asking for forgiveness" (Jansen, 1986: 63). Especially when the resurgent movements became disillusioned with the policies followed by the Sadat government, these symbolic gestures of the president were seen as betrayal and being false.

Therefore, under President Sadat the growing current of political activism developed into fully-fledged movements, especially at universities. Student societies in particular assisted in providing students with a platform for collective activities and discussions. The president's speech on 13 January 1972 in which he explained his failure to keep his promise to make 1971 a decisive year with regard to the Indo-Pakistan war, provoked a student uprising. The students criticised the government's indecision in handling the Israeli-Palestinian issue and demanded democracy and freedom of the press (Sullivan and Sana Abed-Kotob, 1999: 45).

It even became problematic for moderate movements such as the Muslim Brotherhood to support the president. While the Muslim Brotherhood was initially given more freedom than under the Nasser government, it was given no formal

acknowledgment, and it became increasingly difficult for the Brotherhood to continue supporting President Sadat. Therefore, it joined other groups in criticising President Sadat for failing to implement the sharia and opening the country to Western influences, as well as for not supporting the Islamic revolution. His attempts to establish peace with Israel were also criticised.

In response, President Sadat approved making the sharia the main source of legislation in 1980 but the government banned the *al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya* from the university campus and brought 40 000 privately owned mosques under government control. This step required that sermons had to be cleared by the Al Azhar or the ministry of *waqf*. These measures resulted in the opposition movements becoming more polarised. They also formed underground movements such as the *Shabab Muhammad* (Muhammad's Youth), the *Jama`at al-Jihad* (Holy War Society), and the *Jama`at al-Muslimin* Society (Society of Muslims) and *Jund Allah* (Soldiers of God) (Kepel, 1984: 133-135).

The first *jihad* movements in Egypt became prominent at this time. The first contemporary armed *jihad* movement was formed by a Palestinian of Jordanian nationality, Salah Sirriya, an ex-member of the Islamic Liberation Party (*Hizb al-Tahrir al-Islami*), which had been founded in Jerusalem in 1953. Sirriya came to Egypt in 1971; however, in 1974 his followers attempted a coup d'etat by taking over the Military Technical Academy in Heliopolis, Cairo. This was a preliminary to the assassination of the president (ICG, 2003: 4).

Soon after this incident a follower of Sirriya, Salam Al-Rahdal, organised the nucleus of what would become the *al-Jihad* movement in Alexandria. After it was dismantled by the police in 1977, it was led by Egyptians, namely Kamal Habib in Alexandria and, in 1979, Abd al-Salam Farag in Cairo. In 1980, a military intelligence officer, Abbud 'Abd al-Latif Al- Zumur, joined this group and later assumed overall military command. At the same time, the group also established a presence in Upper Egypt when Karam Muhammad Zuhdi, from Assuit, brought

his followers, the *jihadi* Islamic group or the *al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya al-Jihadiya*, into the organisation (ICG, 2003: 4). The *al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya* became more prominent and its opposition to Sadat's secular laws resulted in the withdrawal of government subsidies from its associations. The summer camps were shut down and student associations were banned. This strategy was counter-productive in that student associations dispersed into the cities, villages and poor areas. The *al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya* grew instead of being curtailed and was joined by the *Jama`at al-Muslimin* (Society of Muslims) and the *Jund Allah* (The Soldiers of God).

Therefore, subsequent actions taken by the government to break Muslim solidarity were directed at the *al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya* as the centrifugal force. The deterioration of the relations between the *al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya* and the Sadat government increased and resulted in the Islamists becoming a force to be reckoned with in Egyptian society, so much so that Kepel quotes a French *Le Monde* correspondent as stating in 1979 that "the army is no longer what it had been since the 1952 revolution: the sole nationally organised force in Egypt. The Muslim fundamentalists, despite divisions in their ranks, now undoubtedly constitute another organised force on the Egyptian political scene" (Kepel 1984: 164). The government then had to counteract by destroying their support base, which was done in a very repressive manner that resulted in divided communities and retaliatory attacks but also in the Islamists marginalising themselves in society.

This repression continued till after President Sadat's assassination in 1981 by the *al-Jihad* group. President Sadat's assassination came at the height of his unpopularity. The leader of the group Khalid al-Islambuli stated at his sentencing "I am Khalid al-Islambuli, I have killed Pharaoh, and I do not fear death" (Kepel, 1984: 192). Khalid Islambuli was a member of *al-Jihad* but *al-Jihad* was a remnant of the militant Muhammad's Youth Members that had come from a cross-section of society, namely civilian, military and religious. It also included members of the presidential guard, military intelligence, civil servants, and radio

and television workers. The assassination of President Sadat by Khalid Islambuli on 6 October 1981 during a military parade celebrating the anniversary of the 1973 war brought to the fore the significance of such radical Islamic groups in present-day Egypt. His assassins belonged to an organisation called *al-Jihad al-Islam*, or the Islamic Struggle. Its ideologue, 'Abd al-Salam Faraj, had already circulated an internal document to his cells of activists, setting out the merits and inevitability of armed force against contemporary paganism (Kepel, 1984: 192).

While resurgence was denounced after President Sadat's death, very little attention was paid to conditions conducive to it. President Sadat's policy on *al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya* was also questioned, as were his governments' links with them. Furthermore, the significance of the death of the president was reflected in the brazen bravery and defiance of what Sadat had stood for as a "Pharaoh." Within Islamist circles the act of Khalid al-Islambuli stood in contrast to the failure of the Islamists to seize power and remove the *jahiliyya* elements.

#### **3.1.4. Corruption**

Another aspect that threatened the Sadat government was the escalation of corruption in the country. It is argued that in Egypt there were three types of corruption – namely, from internal and external sources as well as developmental and planned corruption.

#### **3.2. External factors**

Under the Sadat government external factors that had an impact on the Islamic resurgent movements were the aftermath of Egyptian participation in the Yemen war (1962-1967). Because of President Nasser's support for Yemen after its independence in 1962, Egypt became increasingly dependent on Saudi Arabia. The aftermath of the Egyptian defeat against Israel and the role of Saudi Arabia and its relationship with the Muslim Brotherhood also influenced the development

of resurgent movements. During this time religion became a visible force in Middle Eastern politics, as it was seen as a powerful tool through which the Middle East could show its disenchantment with the West. In addition, disillusionment with the pervasive social and political decline also added to a quest for identity and authenticity. The rejection of the West was also apparent in both personal and private spheres of life in that there was an increase in religious observance, dress and publication, programmes in the media, a call for the sharia and Islamic symbols.

The 1973 war with Israel, as well as the 1979 Iranian revolution and the arrival of oil power in the 1970s, served to emphasize the significance of the Islamic world versus the West to Islamic resurgent movements. This was especially important to the Islamists, as they felt that the loss of the 1967 war at the hands of Israel had been avenged. In addition, the success of the Iranian revolution gave the Muslim Brotherhood increased confidence to establish an Islamic society in Egypt as well. President Sadat allowed the members of the Muslim Brotherhood to return to Egypt in 1977 from Saudi Arabia, where they had been in exile since President Nasser sent them there. These individuals had accumulated wealth in Saudi Arabia that rendered them influential to President Sadat. In addition, they were moderate and did not support Qutb's radical ideas (Kepel, 1984: 232).

Saudi Arabia played an important role in that its social and political system was seen as an example of a truly Islamic system in which the sharia was regarded as the only basis for legitimacy. Therefore the Saudis' support for the Islamisation of Egypt was obvious and influenced the Muslim Brotherhood's relationship with the government. Furthermore, President Sadat was dependent on Saudi Arabia for financial assistance, which was to end with the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty. The ending of this country's financial assistance, on the other hand, would provide President Sadat with the opportunity to act against the Muslim Brotherhood without interference from the Saudis. Another factor to be considered is that, while Sadat's government initially had an improved

relationship with Saudi Arabia, the increased wealth of those who dealt directly with the Saudis again led to resentment from the urban poor and urban middle class. Both these groups were affected by high inflation and rising unemployment.

Increased urbanisation without an improvement in socio-economic conditions led to more people from the middle class affiliating with the Muslim Brotherhood. The message of the Muslim Brotherhood also did not require losing or sacrificing traditional beliefs.

#### **4. OBJECTIVES OF ISLAMIC RESURGENT MOVEMENTS**

In this section I will discuss the objectives of each major resurgent movement independently.

During President Sadat's era the new generations were motivated by new challenges while the Muslim Brotherhood came from an anti-colonial struggle. The 1960s were the formative years for the new generation, and the 1967 and 1973 Egyptian–Israeli wars provided impetus to the awareness among these Muslims that Islam was threatened. These events, as well as prison experiences under the Nasser era, shaped their identities. However, there was still continuity between generations as their social origin was urban and their radicalisation stemmed from being dislocated. Radicalism was seen by some as a reaction to modernity. Furthermore, the events of the 1967 war, Sadat's release of the Muslim Brotherhood members from prison and the 1973 war all contributed to heightened religious feeling. However, the increased influence of external forces in Egypt, as well as Sadat's involvement with Israel, led radicals on a warpath with the government.

While resurgent movements justified their actions as being a response to political

life in contemporary Egypt, the unacceptable situation under the Sadat government led to resistance in the form of emigration and rebellion. This in turn greatly influenced the Muslim Brotherhood members, who had broken away from the movement and were demanding more militant confrontation with the government. Therefore under President Sadat the ideological revolution of radicalism of the 1960s had undergone a turning point and during the 1970s and the 1980s it spread to broader strata in society (Roy, 1994: 56). These small militant groups were numerous and largely independent of each other. This made it difficult for the government to determine their individual strength and actions.

#### **4.1. Objectives of the Muslim Brotherhood**

Since 1970 the Muslim Brotherhood has presented a changed strategy, namely accommodation of, not struggle against, the political system. They also had as an objective the reformation of the system. Qutb's calls of *jihad* against the *jahiliyya* had been supplanted by calls for the enactment of political change through co-operation with the ruling regime (Sullivan and Sana Abed-Kotob, 1999: 45). Therefore, under President Sadat the Muslim Brotherhood became an active partner of government and in turn made demands for governmental support. It demanded that Islam be declared the official state religion and the sharia be recognised as the primary source of legislation. The Muslim Brotherhood modified its views regarding the appropriate economic system, the role of Arab unity and the political system. The economic system previously supported by the Muslim Brotherhood focused on economic independence and development while advocating a more socialist solution. The new approach indicated a move towards capitalism, and private ownership was regarded as the origin of *zakat*. This change in its economic programme took place because of the changes in the economic composition of the Egyptian society towards a more urbanised population instead of a rural economic population.

While the Muslim Brotherhood previously supported Arab nationalism, it ceased doing so. The Palestinian issue was now seen as an Islamic issue which deserved its support. Previously the Muslim Brotherhood condemned factionalism of political parties because this could be used by the West to divide the *Ummah*. It now demanded a complete, free and competitive system in which it would be permitted to have an Islamic party (Kepel, 2002: 84). The Muslim Brotherhood called for democracy because it was believed to open minds. It can be argued that these changes were brought about because it wanted to distance itself as far as possible from the Nasser government and wanted to be seen as embracing democracy.

Its new ideas brought it into conflict with the government's policy of not allowing the establishment of an Islamic party in line with the principles advocated by the Muslim Brotherhood. The government's open-door policy, allowing un-Islamic customs, was in opposition to the Muslim Brotherhood's concern with the increase in the use of alcohol, gambling and dancing. Authorities created the impression that President Sadat's economic goals could only be achieved in an immoral society.

#### **4.2. Objectives of *Al –Takfir wa al – Hijra***

Two groups emanated from the Muslim Brotherhood. The first school is associated with those who regarded Qutb's idea of *mufaṣṣala* or *`uzla* (separation) as referring to spiritual detachment and thus practised *takfir* from the *jahiliyya* society secretly. Those who preached *mufaṣṣala kamila* or total separation physically withdrew from the *jahiliyya* society. The second school was founded by Shukri Mustafa (1942-1977) in 1971. This group pushed Qutb's theories to their limits (Kepel, 2002: 84) because it justified the excommunication



of other Muslims. It believed in violent change but argued that this step had to be delayed until the group was strong enough to act.

The concept of *jahiliyya* supported the activity of this group, which Shukri called *Jama'at al-Muslimin* (The Society of the Muslims), but which the government controlled media dubbed *al-Takfir wa al-Hijra*. Extremist in doctrine, the group was apolitical and initially non-violent in behaviour. At first it did not support confrontation with the government, but believed true Muslims should denounce the society as infidel (hence *al-Takfir*) but then withdraw from it as the Prophet withdrew from Mecca (hence *al-Hijra*) and constitute a new community which would enlarge itself by energetic but peaceful proselytising.

Initially the group's activities were directed against the Sadat government's pro-US policies and demanded that a pure Islamic state practising sharia law be established in Egypt. It endorsed the standard Islamic notion that sin and crime were synonymous (Kniele, 1998: 357). This movement had as its objective denouncing Egyptian society and its leadership as infidels and the re-establishment of an Islamic society in three stages. The first stage would be the *tabligh* – that is, the spreading of ideas by preaching or *da'wa*. The second stage is the *hijra*, or process of withdrawal from society, and had to take place simultaneously with the first. The last stage would be the elimination of the infidel stage and the establishment of an Islamic state (Kepel, 2002: 220-221).

*Takfir wa al-Hijra* gradually began to become more aggressive and by 1976 it was estimated that it had about 500 members. This non-violent project of an Islamic “alternative society” developing itself on the margins of, but spiritually in “complete separation” (*mufaṣṣala kamila*) from, the surrounding *jahili* society, came to an end when Shukri was drawn into conflict with a rival group and then with the Egyptian authorities. In 1977 the group assassinated the Minister of Religious Endowments, Sheikh Mohammad Hussein Al-Zahabi. The murder triggered massive retaliation by the Egyptian authorities and the group was

broken, but not eliminated. The violent manner in which the government repressed this group led to a lull in its activities and eventually it reconstituted itself as the *al-Tawaqquf wa al-Tabayy* (Sullivan and Sana Abed-Kotob, 2001: 20). Many former members remained active, while some joined other groups. An example was the *Samawiyya* group, which was named after its founder, Sheikh Abdallah Al-Samawi, who developed the doctrine of *al-takfir* with Shukri while they were in prison from 1965 to 1971. Al-Samawi rejected Shukri's idea of retreating from society or *al-hijra* in favour of a militant activist strategy and developed his own following, based mainly in the districts of al-Fayyoun and Minya as well as in Cairo. A characteristic feature of his group's behaviour was attacks on video shops and clubs, while some churches were also attacked. The Sheikh and some of his followers were arrested and tried for these activities in 1986 (JCG, 2003).

#### **4.3. Objectives of *Al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya***

The *al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya* sought to combine the *da'wa*, which it interpreted as involving not only preaching but the strict adherence to morals, *amr bi 'l-ma'ruf wa nahi `ani 'l-munkar* (commanding that which is proper and repressing that which is reprehensible), together with military opposition to the government. The governor of Assiut appointed by Sadat in January 1973, Mohammed Uthman Ismail, developed such close relations with the local Islamists that he became known as "the Godfather of the *al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya*"; the latter was allowed to organise Islamic summer camps on university campuses and in 1975 the government revised the regulations governing the National Student Union to facilitate its takeover by the Islamists the following year.

When the government cracked down on the group in 1978 by means of organised campaigns to weaken it in the universities and students' union and preventing it from attending the *al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya* camps in Alexandria,

Cairo and Zagazig, a section of the *al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya* became radicalised. Some of the movement's leaders aligned themselves with the Muslim Brotherhood, whose relationship with President Sadat had also broken down over Camp David. Others, especially those based in Upper Egypt, revised their view of the regime along Qutbist lines, embraced the *jihad* outlook and joined Faraj's organisation *al-jihad*. *Al-jihad* and the *al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya* joined forces in the assassination of President Sadat and derived impetus for their ideologies from Ibn Taymiyya, Sayyid Qutb and Al-Mawdudi.

#### 4.4. Objectives of *Al-Jihad*.

The objectives of the *al-Jihad* group were centred in the concept of *jahiliyya* as a tendency rather than a reality, while the government and society at large were immoral. Unlike *Takfir wa al-Hijra*, it did not believe in isolation and tried to work from within society. Throughout the 1960s the group expanded and added several key members such as Ayman Al Zawahari and Hassan Al Halawi. The *al-jihad* originated from Egypt's poor under-classes. Shaykh 'Umar 'Abd al-Rahman was its mufti. He was the group's equivalent of the "Al Azhar" and issued fatwas or religious edicts to justify its actions.

The objectives of the *al-Jihad* were stated by Faraj in a pamphlet entitled *al-Jihad: al-Farida al-Ghaiba (Jihad: the obscured obligation)* (ICG, 2003:4-5). This concept was indicative of Qutb's ideology as well as that of Ibn Taymiyya, who had prescribed the attitude Muslims should take to rulers whose Muslim credentials were suspect or bogus.<sup>25</sup> Despite the fact that President Sadat had cultivated the image of *al-Ra'is al-mu'min* (the believer President), Egypt was not governed by Islamic law. Consequently, President Sadat's professions of faith were hypocritical

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<sup>25</sup> Ibn Taymiyya believed that the Mongols, who had seized power from the Abbassid empire after the sack of Baghdad in 1258, were not true Muslims, because they remained attached to the customary law (*yasa*) of the Mongol people, instead of upholding Islamic law (the Shari'a) exclusively. Since they were not true Muslims, the standard Sunni doctrine that bad Muslim rulers should be endured did not apply and rebellion, far from being illicit sedition (*fitna*), was the licit, indeed obligatory, defence of the Islamic community.

and *jihad* was licit. Therefore its objective of a *jihad* against “the nearer enemy” (the Egyptian regime) took precedence over that against “the more distant enemy” (Israel).<sup>26</sup>

The Cairo group, or *Tanzim al-Jihad* (order of *Jihad*), coordinated its efforts in June 1980. *Jihad-Salafists* members were prepared to wage an offensive to establish an Islamic state. They based their arguments on Muslim traditions and referred to Ibn Taymiyya’s to justify the execution of the “pharaoh” (Kepel, 2002: 221). However, they were not true to being *Salafists* “because their Islamic culture was rudimentary and fragmented” (Kepel, 2002: 220-221).<sup>27</sup> The *Tanzim al-Jihad* had as its goals the replacement of secular laws with Islamic laws as well the killing of current leaders of the Islamic world that had adopted secular ways. Therefore this group denounced any dealings with the government and saw it as its first goal to kill the nearest enemy, namely the government, and then focus attention on the liberation of the Holy Land (Sullivan and Sana Abed-Kotob, 1999: 79).

In 1981 Mohammad Abd al-Salam Faraj united the *jihad* factions into one group simply known as *al-Jihad*. From this group came those responsible for the assassination of Anwar Sadat (Kepel, 1984: 148). Mohammad Abd al-Salam Faraj was the main ideologist of the *al-Jihad*. According to Jansen (1986) in *The Neglected Duty: The Creed of Sadat’s Assassins and Islamic Resurgents in the Middle East*, President Sadat’s assassin, Muhammad Ábd al-Salam Faraj,

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<sup>26</sup> This thesis considers noteworthy the perceptions of many Egyptian activists that, since Camp David, the state had comprehensively defaulted on its obligations in respect of Palestine and that a change of regime was accordingly the precondition of a resumed struggle against Israel.

<sup>27</sup> The Salafi tendency, as this has re-emerged since the 1970s, was increasingly led by younger men oriented primarily to Saudi Arabia and Wahhabi conceptions. It differed from the earlier phases of Salafism in the emphasis it placed on personal behaviour. Whereas Abduh and Rida were concerned with revising Islamic law, Salafi activism in the 1970s was preoccupied with “commanding what is proper and forbidding what is reprehensible” (*‘amr bi ‘l-ma‘ruf wa nahi ani ‘l-munkar*), imposing the distinction between what is licit (*halal*) and what is illicit (*haram*). It denounces misgovernment almost exclusively in terms of corruption, which it lays at the door of the personal failings of those in power, and sees the solution as their replacement by men of virtue, i.e. good Muslims” ( ICG, 2004,11).

referred to the duty of *jihad* against unbelievers. However, Faraj rejected Ibn Taymiyya's view on the emigration (*hijra*) from the abode of disbelief as a personal duty incumbent on a believer (Ayubi, 1982: 153). This disparity by Faraj was indicative of the division in the Islamist movements' attitude towards participation in an "infidel system", as well as its goal of obtaining the ideal of an Islamic state.

Faraj and *al-Jihad* challenged the state and denied that the political establishment had any role as an autonomous category in Muslim society. They viewed the period from *hijra* in 622 to seizure of power by Umayyad caliph Mu`awiya in 660 as a golden age. These movements disregarded all later history and declared the doors of *ijtihad* closed. While most Muslims accepted the history of Muslim societies, these movements denounced it. They also argued that Islam is characterised by *tawhid* or the unity of religious and spiritual spheres of life. The separation between *din* (spiritual) and *dawla* (temporal) was disregarded because the Qur'anic text "contains both the principles regulating relations between man and God" (Kepel, 1984: 228). *Tawhid* thus implies that the ruler must apply Qur'anic principles. Rulers since the time of the rightly guided caliphs have simply claimed to serve Islam in order to obtain legitimacy. In addition, the civil Muslim community has failed to reveal the true state of affairs.

Faraj also justified fighting the internal enemy on the basis of a fabricated saying of the Prophet, a saying that was supposed to have been uttered before his emigration to Medina in 622 (Kepel 1984: 199). These arguments and others professed by Qutb were indicative of a future trend where innovations of this kind were adopted as fact by later followers. These innovations were accepted as factual in the West and might have been responsible for misconceptions about Islamic resurgent movements (Ayubi, 1982: 153). The significance of this group's ideology was its positioning of *jihad* on the same level as the pillars of Islam. This reflected the influence of Qutb and a deviation from Hasan al-Banna's concept of

*jihad* as a struggle in the form of truth and persuasion “to a misguided ruler while struggling to better one’s spiritual and social lot in life” (Sullivan and Sana Abed-Kotob, 1999: 79).

When analysing the ideology of the *al-Jihad* groups, a shift or adaptation of the thoughts of those formulated by Qutb comes to the fore. The pamphlet, *The Hidden Imperative*, formulated by the *al-Jihad*'s main thinker ‘Abd al-Salam Faraj, reflects his views:

- 1) The process of reconciliation undertaken by groups such as the Society of Muslims and *Jama`at* was seen as ignorance of Islam.
- 2) The re-Islamisation undertaken by President Sadat through the construction of mosques and the codification of the sharia was similarly seen as ignorance of Islam.
- 3) Power should be withheld from rulers who were apostates from Islam.
- 4) The strategy of Islamists since Hasan al-Banna, namely seizing power by making *jihad* the priority in justifying revolt and assassination, was seen as highlighting their weakness.
- 5) A programme was needed for establishing an Islamic state.
- 6) Accepting that contemporary rulers had been as guilty of using the name of God as an excuse for their rule as in the time of Ibn Taimiyya. During the time of Ibn Taimiyya his fatwa against Mongol rulers had been justified in the same manner. The similarity of Ibn Taimiyya’s struggle to replace “the regime of social exploitation founded on the rule of a military minority ... with an ideal of communal cooperation for the greater glory of Islam” (Kepel, 1984: 198) is obvious. *Jihad* as the “best voluntary service man can devote to God” (Kepel, 1984: 198) is justified, especially *jihad* within the community as presented by the Qur’an, Sunna and *ijma*.

- 7) Denouncing charitable organisations and associations that functioned under the close surveillance of the Ministry of Social Affairs because they made no contribution to the fight for Islam. He denounced them because of their associations with the state.
- 8) Denouncing the various strategies that had were suggested in order to establish an Islamic state, such as founding organisations, opposing political parties, filling posts of responsibility with academics or through preaching (*da`wa*) alone or *hijra* to another country. Ultimately, the most successful strategy to be followed is *jihad*.
- 9) The view that *jihad* served two purposes, namely the expansion of the territory of Islam, as well as acting in defence when the territory of Islam is attacked. Even though ‘Abd al-Salam Faraj regarded the liberation of Jerusalem as a priority, it was clearly stated that the real reason for the existence of these imperialist centres within the world of Islam was that the very leaders the Faridah wanted to remove were partly responsible for the existence of these imperialist centres. To fight imperialism “is seen as a useless waste of time: We must concentrate on the real problem of Islam, the establishment of God’s law, beginning in our own country” (Jansen, 1986: 18).
- 10) The goal of fighting against the enemy at home. The fight must be under Muslim command; since responsibility for the existence of colonialism lies with an infidel government, the focus should not be on imperialism but on establishing sharia (Kepel, 1984: 198).

Thus, ‘Abd al-Salam Faraj took the argument of Qutb, namely declaring the Egyptian government as a system of *jahiliyya*, a step further and literally removed the unjust ruler. All other strategies that were followed up to that point were seen to be not as vital as the ultimate act of killing the unjust ruler. These arguments not only signified a break with the moderate strategies that had been followed by more moderate groups such as the Muslim Brotherhood, but would in time also

inspire future generations. Whereas the arguments of Hasan al-Banna focused on the removal of the colonial power, Qutb's arguments went one step further and actually put the blame for many of the deviations from the Written Word as much at the door of the Egyptian government as at the door of those in society who supported the government (Sullivan and Sana Abed-Kotob, 1999: 79).

Faraj objected to "the essence of the dilemmas that confront Muslims in the 20<sup>th</sup> century of the Christian era" (Jansen, 1986:9). These objections were raised against benevolent Islamic societies that had failed to bring about the foundations of an Islamic society. Divine laws were the only solution. The formation of a political party was not seen as a solution because political parties had to collaborate with government and thus had to work with the evil that had to be removed. The establishment of an Islamic state, if only a minority was present, had to be achieved by using the mass media to spread the truth about Islam. People had to be persuaded to accept the whole of Islam, including the *jihad*. Al Faraj rejected the concept of a *hijra* or the establishment of a separate state because this method was not effective. While the *jihad* was interpreted as the struggle to obtain knowledge, Faraj said that fighting was prescriptive, hence justifying President Sadat's assassination.

The state of Israel posed a unique problem and Faraj's view was that its complete removal should be the first goal of the *jihad*. In addition, the removal of all imperialistic centres from the Islamic world was seen as a waste of time, as all efforts had to be focused on the ultimate and main goal of Islam, namely the establishment of God's law. This would ensure that Jerusalem would automatically be liberated when Islam was fully implemented (Sullivan and Sana Abed-Kotob, 1999: 23).

Faraj also attacked the Muslim governments that had denied that Islam was spread by the sword. *Jihad* should always be a holy war in defence of Islam. Governments and theologians had manipulated this issue to serve their own purpose and therefore Egypt's rulers were seen as evil and were equated with



pre-Islamic Mecca. He argued that duties prior to Islam remained relevant after Islam, thus *jihad* remained an essential duty even if it was not the case previously. *Jihad* is an individual duty when military confrontations are forced on Muslim armies, when infidels attack the country and when religious leaders call Muslims to fight. Those who refuse to fight for Islam misunderstand Islam. The establishment of an Islamic state is seen as a command from God to create a utopia where all laws are Islamic. The requirement that the leader should descend from the Prophet Muhammad's tribe, the Quraysh, his family or from his two grandsons, is also irrelevant. The focus should be on the person best suited for the appointment, who will be able to establish an Islamic state by means of a *jihad*. Leaders should be obeyed by their followers, as prescribed by Sura 4: 59, where it is stated that God, His messenger and those who have the command should be obeyed (Sullivan and Sana Abed-Kotob, 1999: 23). After the assassination of Sadat, members of this group, the most prominent being Ayman al-Zawahari, relocated to Peshawar in Afghanistan in 1985 and 1986. 'Abd al-Salam Faraj's arguments inspired conduct that would afterwards motivate attacks against tourism in Egypt as well as the attacks on the USA on 11 September 2001.

#### **4.5. Objectives of various other groups**

Apart from these groups, various other militant groups have been part of societal efforts to establish an Islamic Egypt. They include *Jund Allah* (God's Troops), *Jaysh al-Taḥrīr al Islami* (Islamic Liberation Army), and *Jam`iyyat al-Tabligh* (Society of Denunciation or Fulfilling One's Mission). While the *al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya* was the dominant force, most of the other groups lost the ability to constitute a movement that posed a threat (Sullivan and Sana Abed-Kotob, 1999: 20).<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> See Chapter Three, section 2.2.

## 5. MODUS OPERANDI OF ISLAMIC RESURGENT MOVEMENTS

### 5.1 Modus operandi of resurgent movements in general

On the whole, resurgence under the Sadat government followed the plan of action that its adherents had received from Qutb's works. The innovative elements of Qutb's thought represented a radical reaction to the doctrine and practice of President Nasser's regime. The central feature of this reaction was condemning the state as irreligious (*jahili*). Therefore, movements formed a vanguard or "micro society, which constitutes a closed society while maintaining some ties with society as a whole" (Sivan, 1985: 85). The concept of migration (*hijra*), whether physical or spiritual, was seen in this light as a just response to a *jahiliyya* society. Groups formed on this basis attracted the unemployed, as well as individuals who had deserted from the army. An example is the *Takfir* group. The *takfir* regarded *hijra* as a methodology and used education and aggressive recruitment to achieve its aims (Sivan, 1985: 85).

Violence as a modus operandi was also attributed to Qutb. However, while Qutb did not reject violence, he saw it as an alternative or as a last resort (Sivan, 1985: 89). His prison experience, more than anything else, could have supported a more violent approach. However, even in 1964 after his release he still opposed the idea of immediate recourse to violence. The main reason for this view was the violent reprisals from the government. Therefore he first of all supported the need for a long-term educational phase prior to violence as a last resort.

As Islamic opposition groups split away from the Muslim Brotherhood, they increasingly turned to violence, which they saw as justified by the repressive methods used by the government. The targeting of fellow Muslims was based on their own interpretation of Ibn Taimiyya's work. As ideological justification for this modus operandi they referred to Ibn Taymiyya's statement that the Muslim community needed several imams. Shortly before Sadat's assassination Ibn

Taymiyya was labelled as “the most pervasive and deleterious influence in Egypt on youth” (Sivan, 1985: 103). After President Sadat’s assassination Islamic opposition groups at universities in particular supported the ideas of Ibn Taymiyya. This can be seen in the sentiments expressed in ‘Abd al Salam Faraj’s book, *The Absent Precept*. He was the ideological driving force behind Sadat’s assassination.

Even though the government as well as the Al-Azhar scholars emphasised the distortions of Ibn Taymiyya’s work by Islamic opposition groups, people still adhered to a more radical ideology in the aftermath of Sadat’s death. The government reacted to the aggressive stance of the radicals by isolating them and rejecting their claim to be part of the *Sunni* consensus. According to Choueiri the government then used established theologians to refute radical interpretations of works such as those of Ibn Taymiyya. The government also labelled the radicals as *Kharijites* and in this manner the label became stereotyped in the media, even though the Islamic opposition groups never used it themselves. Ibn Taymiyya justified disobedience to authority during the Abbasid dynasty (Ayubi, 1982: 4). His teaching influenced militant movements that sought salvation in traditional concepts. The focus was on adherence to the principle of God’s absolute rulership. Governments could also be accused when they failed to apply the sharia. These contemporary movements in Egypt are also a continuation of much earlier resurgence in the Muslim world against external influences. The Kharijites under the fourth Caliph Ali opposed the caliphate by the rallying of the *Ummah* (Mozaffari, 1987: 92) and inspired later movements. The Khariji justified their actions on the basis of the concepts of God’s absolute sovereignty and rulership (*al-ḥakimiyya li Allah*). They judged the infidel and espoused excommunication (*takfir*) as well as the assassination of not just those who had blasphemed but also those who simply sinned. They refused to establish leadership on any ethnic, class or even educational (theological) basis (Mozaffari, 1987: 92).

Criticism also came from the more moderate within the Muslim Brotherhood. While these different views did not lead to an alternative strategy, the more moderate stream of Islamic opposition, under the guidance of the Supreme Guide, Hasan al-Hudaybi, renounced the radicals' judgement of labelling segments of society *jahiliyya*. He tried to get people back to the Right Path, stressing that coercion should not be used and education should be conducted within the system (Sivan, 1985: 103).

The more radical elements within the Islamic opposition movements followed a more intense method and operated within a tightly-knit counter-society. The Muslim Brotherhood did not meet these conditions. When the Muslim Brotherhood was formed and established as a secret society, its violence was directed at the British and its secret society played a protective role during the 1952 coup. In contrast, *jihad* against the new military state after 1952 was seen as a defensive act of Islam (Sivan, 1985: 103). Thus ideological evolution of radicalism evolved as a prolonged strategy because social changes that took place as a result of major historical transformations affected peer groups in societies. Within these peer groups a nucleus of ideas evolved that were also followed during the preceding decade, providing impetus for the new generations.

The modus operandi of resurgent movements, whereby Islam returned to politics, did not follow a uniform path. Areas of agreement among the movements were the Sharia as the only source of legislation, hostility to Israel and the conviction that the Islamic Caliphate should be re-established. Areas of disagreement centred on methods needed to establish an Islamic state and tolerance of political opposition once an Islamic state had been established. Hardliners believed only *jihad* could deliver the desired objectives, while moderates believed in long-term social and political action. Hardliners also believed that there could only be two parties, namely the party of God and the party of Satan. Moderates were prepared to tolerate political dissent, albeit within Islamic guidelines; however, hardliners saw all modernisation as evil. Moderates did not reject all

contemporary values outright. Other areas of controversy included political education, the role of women and human rights, as well as the treatment of religious and ethnic minorities.

The various groups therefore had a common goal, even though they approached it differently. The Accommodationist reformists were non-violent and co-operative while seeking to achieve their objectives by focusing on both state and society. In contrast, the *jihad* and *al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya* took a militant stance against the government. The *al-Takfir wa al-Hijra* group had as its goal the transformation of society from within in order to gain political power. Even if the movements differed in their approaches, their aims coincided. They traced their ideological roots to the past, but different approaches came to the fore in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Each movement has to be seen against the backdrop of time and place in contemporary history. They succeeded because they operated “at a particular moment in history, in exercising a remarkable power of attraction to an entire section of the dominated layers of society, and in making its discourse the crucible in which all dissidents demands are forged” (Kepel, 1984:232).

The urban youth were the most affected by Egypt’s socio-economic problems and therefore they supported Islamic opposition movements. The open-door policy, lack of effective infrastructure, comparatively affluent Westerner as well as local elite added to these frustrations. Khalid al-Islambuli’s<sup>29</sup> ideas can be derived from the written texts by the main ideologist, ‘Abd al-Salam Faraj. Faraj’s work emphasised the dilemma that has divided Islamist movements in Egypt, namely the justification of participation in an “infidel system” to obtain the ideal of an Islamic state. Although the various groups employed different strategies, governmental control kept them from participation and excluded them. Therefore *jihad* as an armed struggle was justified, more so than al-Banna and Qutb did. Faraj’s strategy entailed the removal of infidel leaders, after which the external enemy had to be targeted and Jerusalem liberated.

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<sup>29</sup> Khalid al-Islambuli was the leader of the *al-Jihad* group responsible for Sadat’s assassination.

Shukri Mustafa interpreted Qutb's concept of *jahiliyya* in a physical sense rather than just a spiritual separation, thus physical flight. In order to imitate the prophet's flight from Mecca, Shukri Mustafa installed his followers in caves and broke all ties with Egyptian society and culture (Kepel, 2002: 84). The *Takfir wa al-Hijra* was encouraged by its leaders to practise isolation and members were banned from holding government jobs, serving in the army and even eating in restaurants. Shukri rationalised withdrawal, denounced science, and declared the four Sunni legal schools null and void. He denounced the role of the civil Muslim community and considered interpreting it as being part of the *jahiliyya* society, confirmed the doors of interpretation were closed, and denounced government-supporting private mosques. Shukri saw the violent removal of the *jahiliyya* government as inevitable and described the Egyptian secret service (*mukhabarat*) as part of the external enemy, together with the West and Israel. Within urbanised society low salaries and unemployment gave rise to many disillusioned youths joining him (Kepel, 2002: 220-221). Abd al Salam Faraj stated in *The Absent Precept* that in 1980 the state of affairs in Egypt was analogous to that under the Mongols and a *jihad* was the only way in which an Islamic state and caliph could be restored.

## **5.2. Modus operandi of Muslim Brotherhood**

Since the 1960s the Muslim Brotherhood had tried to escape from the legacy of Qutb and from the 1970s onwards it increasingly lent its support to the government. Methods included attacking the *takfir* doctrine and visiting radicals in prison in order to discourage them from supporting radical ideologies. The Brotherhood also condemned violence (ICG, 2003: 10). While al-Banna regarded the most effective plan of action as taking place in three stages, namely propagation, education and the action, the Muslim Brotherhood presented a changed strategy by adopting a strategy of not struggling against the political system, but reforming it instead. Qutb's call for *jihad* against the *jahiliyya* was replaced by calls for the enactment of political change through co-operation with

the ruling regime (Sullivan and Sana Abed-Kotob, 1999: 45). However, while the Muslim Brotherhood was able to represent the mainstream Islamists movements under al-Banna, this strategy, as well as the absence of prominent leadership under the Sadat government, did not ensure the continuation of its popularity. Instead members became disenchanted with the timidity of the leadership and splinter groups were formed. The members and groups that operated at the periphery of the Muslim Brotherhood, such as the *Takfir wal Hijra* and the *Jihad*, were still inspired by the thoughts of Sayyid Qutb. They joined other groups or formed more aggressive and radical groups, which, in turn, evolved into various other movements that became very prominent politically (Kepel, 1984: 232).

However, even though its role was initially ineffective and it did not have well-planned political programmes, the Muslim Brotherhood's social and economic programmes were very effective and grew in stature. This approach was particularly effective among the recently urbanised youth, who felt dislocated and alienated in the cities. These programmes provided spiritual comfort, in addition to trying to answer socio-economic needs. This transitional phase from rural to urbanised (and even Westernised) was to a large extent facilitated by the Islamic resurgent movements. When the Muslim Brotherhood found the content of the constitution of the new Sadat government unacceptable it called for Islam to be declared the state religion. It objected to the fact that sharia was not the only form of legislation. The Muslim Brotherhood added a different dimension to its campaign from that espoused by al-Banna previously. It targeted the People's Assembly and also focused on the mass media.

In the Assembly the Muslim Brotherhood offered a series of legislative proposals such as the imposition of the sharia as punishment for theft, memorising of the Qur'an by all government departments, the imposition of a dress code for women, restricting men from being employed in female hair salons and the prohibition of alcohol. Needless to say the Assembly did not accept these demands and therefore the Muslim Brotherhood turned to the media. So, in

addition to the existing *al-'itisam*, the *al da'wa* or The Call was launched (Kniele, 1998: 349).

### 5.3 Modus operandi of *Al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya*

The *al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya* became prominent through student revolts and street demonstrations that addressed the Israeli issue and demanded more internal reforms towards democracy. Its support increased significantly with the formation of special clubs that were established with the collaboration of the government to counter the left's domination of the campuses. It even had a close Sadat associate, Muhammad 'Uthman Isma'il, as its "godfather".

The niche the *al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya* found on campuses was to address the ineffectiveness of university life and to create an artificially secluded life by introducing segregation and the wearing of the veil. In this manner it "aspired to become the driving force behind the process of transformation of *jahiliyya*. At the time of Sadat's death, the *al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya* directed its actions against moral offences. Actions were physical. The split between those doing and those saying led to the *al-Jihad* group's formation as an outlet for those supporting more action. This was the case particularly in Middle Egypt where the disillusionment of the *al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya*'s hesitancy and lack of national strategy led to *al-Jihad*. Here *al-Jihad* derived support from students, in areas with substandard housing and poverty" (Kepel 1984: 135).

According to Kepel, the *al-Jam`a al-Islamiyya* had many distinct tendencies. On the one hand it supported the philosophy of the Muslim Brotherhood, especially in the universities of Cairo and Alexandria. At the universities in Upper Egypt, on the other hand, it opposed the truce between the Muslim Brotherhood and the government and therefore rejected the Muslim Brotherhood's method of wanting to work within constitutional parameters. A third group at the Alexandria University followed the *Salafiyya* approach. Even though the Sadat government



increased vigilance against all three groups, the subsequent assassination of Sadat was planned by the *Jihad* group as well as *al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya* from Upper Egypt. The armed attack subsequently led to the demise of the tendency supporting the philosophy of the Muslim Brotherhood and a growth of the *jihad* tendency. For the fourth group the establishment of Islam within the soul could only be achieved by worshipping within a *khilafa* dispensation based on the model of the prophethood. A fifth approach highlighted the call for good and eliminating evil, together with *jihad* accomplished through disciplined work under Islamic law. In the latter approach the concept of *jihad* was seen as entailing gentle preaching and replacing bad deeds with good deeds – followed by the use of physical force if this failed. A sixth group referred to sustenance derived from adhering to God's principles, while a seventh added the concept of obedience (Kepel 1984: 135).

The concept of *ijtima* or corporate activity towards the pursuit of one goal within a single belief system was advocated. This concept was elaborated on by Umar 'Abd al-Rahman when he stressed the unacceptability of secular laws. In support of these views the *al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya* opposed foreign investment in Egypt and declared war on tourism. It targeted the tourist sites associated with Egypt's "pagan past" such as the pyramids, as well as foreign tourists. This strategy would continue under the Mubarak government.

#### **5.4. Modus operandi of *Al-Takfir wa al-Hijra***

The *al-Takfir wa-al Hijra* or *Jama`at al-mu'minin* followed a modus operandi of withdrawal but also became involved in the kidnapping and killing of Sheik Dhahabi. It opted for immediate action and open confrontation, using a strategy of retreat (emulating the practice of Prophet Muhammad in emigrating to Madina in AD 622). Its followers had to emigrate somewhere into the deserts or the

mountains of Egypt or Arabia in preparation for a victorious comeback, under absolute and unquestioning allegiance to their imam and following a very strict code of conduct covering all the aspects of life. As an alternative to physical emigration they were to boycott all aspects of the existing order within society – employment, education military service, etc. – as well as the prevailing political and representative organisations and institutions. In their religious belief and practice they would rely completely on the primary sources, the Qur'an and Sunna, since, in their view, wasting effort over something that has no textual support is incorrect itself, and because *taqlid* (scholarly or institutional religious tradition) is blasphemy against the Great Almighty. The group therefore adhered to a strict fundamentalism and strongly supported anti-traditionalism (Kepel, 1984: 155).

Jansen states that *al-Takfir wa al-Hijra* denounced the talks with Israel as shameful. Its leader, Shukri Mustafa, held ideas similar to those of Qutb. However, there were two schools of thought. The first comprised those who saw Qutb's idea of *mufaṣṣala* or *`uzla* as spiritual detachment and thus practised *takfir* from the *jahiliyya* society secretly. Those who preached *mufaṣṣala kamila* or total separation physically withdrew from the *jahiliyya* society. Shukri Mustafa wanted his Society of Muslims to re-enact the pure Muslim life as it was practised in the summer camps of the *al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya*. The Society of Muslims condemned the entire Muslim society and sought withdrawal from *jahiliyya*. Its members challenged the state and denied that the political establishment had any role as an autonomous category in Muslim society. *Al-Takfir wa al-Hijra* believed that the entire contemporary Muslim society was irreligious. In a monograph by Shukri Mustafa, the executed leader of *Takfir*, entitled *The Caliphate*, he diagnosed the problem and prescribed the solution in the following words: "All that is seen before you now on earth of men and women, of money, soldiers, arms and ploys, of constitutions and laws, wars and conciliations ... represents a front for God's enemies, led by evil on earth [al-taghut] ... Within this reality a man will come who, together with the believers who would follow him, will ease this reality, fight the

*infidel entity and establish the Islamic body. Islam is a State... It is a religion of a State, or of a community ruled by a certain authority ... The Islamic call today should not turn its back on this basic pillar of Islam; it may not postpone it or circumvent it ... For it cannot be said that Islam is established unless it takes the form of a State" (Kepel, 1984: 226).*

However, it has been implicated in the new wave of bomb attacks that took place at a tourist bazaar next to the Pyramids of Giza as well as at the Red Sea resort of Sharm el-Sheik, 400 kilometers east of Cairo, on 24 July 2005. The *Tawhid* and *Jihad* Group said it carried out both attacks "in obedience to the leaders of *jihad* in al Qa'ida, Sheikh Osama bin Laden and Sheikh Ayman al-Zawahri" and to avenge the "oppressed Brotherhood in Iraq and Afghanistan". The group said it was waging a war to expel "Zionists and crusaders" from Muslim lands, and told non-Muslims they must seek bin Laden's approval before setting foot in Muslim countries if they wanted to be safe. It also warned Muslims against mixing with Christians and Jews, saying they were legitimate targets if they did so.

### **5.5. Modus operandi of *Jihadists***

The *Jihadists* and other new groups espoused a belief that total sovereignty belonged to God and not to the people or the law. They share a strong rejection of existing social and political realities because these did not live up to that principle either in theory or in practice. Operational differences consequently emerge as well, so that *Al-Takfir* was more inclined to engage in long-term ideological training and socio-organisational preparation, whereas *al-Jihad* was more inclined to engage in direct and immediate activism, with the intention of infiltrating political and military institutions. However, the ideas of the two groups were so similar that it is believed that many *ex-Takfir* members had joined the *Jihad* organisation when the former was being harassed by the Egyptian authorities during the late seventies. The fighting was to be launched in particular

against rulers. However, an Islamic State can only be established through *jihad* against oneself, against the devil, against the infidels and against the hypocrites (Kepel, 2002: 224- 229). The *jihad* group lacked unity. The annihilation of Shukri' Mustafa's Society of Muslims marked the failure of the strategy based on imitation of the prophetic model going through phases of weakness and power as the Prophet Muhammad did when he was weak in Mecca and had power in Medina.

## **6. CONCLUSIONS**

Under the Sadat government, Islamic resurgence was divided even further than in any previous period. The assassination of President Sadat not only seemed like the ultimate *jihad* but also served to divide the Islamic resurgent movements even further into those who espoused a more moderate approach and the radical groups. Despite the assassination of President Sadat this generation of Islamists failed to generate any new ideas and borrowed extensively from the past.

### **6.1. The political ideas have not evolved**

The authoritarian manner in which the Nasser government exercised control meant that an elite group was formed in whose control most economic and political power was centred. The prominence of the military as executors of government policy was also a continuing trend. This political legacy was inherited by the Sadat government. The foreign policies of the government as well as the presidency of Sadat in general engendered feelings of negativity, rejection and discontent in society and among the youth particularly. While President Sadat's greater contact with the West, together with his open-door policy, created rising

expectations, the influx of consumer goods and wealth of a few fuelled the anger of the disadvantaged. In addition, the youth had no spiritual aim and goal to achieve and the Islamists filled the gap. Even though it is argued that President Sadat took a calculated risk in condoning the revival of the Islamists against the leftists, it is more than likely that they would have evolved in any case owing to the numerous causes of disaffection with the Sadat regime.

The Sadat government also perpetuated the pattern of the Nasser government of adopting political policies of the major foreign provider. Under the Sadat government the Soviet role simply made way for USA influence. Socialism was replaced with capitalism. In exchange for the government receiving political and financial support from the USA it was compelled to compromise its own political and economic interests. The most important development was that this adherence to a Western political system prevented the development of any internal political systems that would incorporate the stipulations of Islam. The imported systems continued to exacerbate the process of acculturation, especially with regard to politics.

## **6.2. Islamic resurgent groups were not representative of the whole society**

Under the Sadat government the Islamist movement was not a reaction against the modernisation of Muslim societies, but a product of it (Roy, 1994: 50). Young intellectuals recruited from intellectual, urban milieux had been educated in Western schools. Those in urban areas were uprooted, lived in areas with no proper infrastructure and were unemployed. In addition, cities provided Western cultural models of consumption and leisure but were unaffordable. Owing to student overpopulation, the general weakening of standards of education and the replacement of colonial languages with national languages, Islamists managed to recruit members from university campuses and from recently urbanised masses.

Under the Sadat government Islamic resurgent movements spread as never before. Social differentiation in society came to the fore in the cells that were created at universities and factions, etc. This created a socialisation process that was derailed by the weakening of the traditional solidarity networks (Roy, 1994: 57). While the moderates in society found solace in groups such as the Muslim Brotherhood, Sufi orders and charitable societies and the traditional establishment of the Al Azhar, which was aligned with the government, the radicals in society increasingly formed new groups.

The main differences between the radical movements and the moderate resurgent movements were the methods that were used. These movements also addressed different segments in society, as each movement fed on different motivational factors. The *al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya*, for example, became more prominent as a bulwark against the leftists (Kepel, 1984: 231) at a particular moment in history. They made themselves very attractive to an entire section of the dominated sectors of society by making the ousting of leftists their discourse at a crucial point in history (Kepel, 1984: 232). As a result, the *al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya* constituted the Islamists' only genuine mass organisation and became the dominant force on Egyptian university campuses.

The *jihad* groups supported a radical stance. They condemned the more moderate stance of the Muslim Brotherhood as well as Qutb's interpretation of the Qur'an. They regarded the interpretation of the Qur'an by Qutb as a "collection of personal interpretations on the part of an author who had no training in theology, rather than a canonical commentary" (*tafsir*) with real authority (Kepel, 2002: 221). Whereas Takfir believes in stages of struggle, *Jihad* believes in levels of struggle, which decide the worth of everybody in the eyes of God. Both the *Takfir wa al-Hijra* and the *jihad* organisations adhered to a limited repertoire of key elements from the past. Ideologically, all these groups shared two notions, namely a belief in the non-separation of religion from politics, and the necessity of immediate application of the sharia, by force if necessary.

When people were arrested after the assassination of Sadat, the Islamist society was divided into two groups, namely the older generation adopting a reformist and accommodating attitude to the government and the younger and more radical *takfir* and *jahiliyya*. Some sought recognition, while those who were inspired by Qutb's work opted for withdrawal. On the whole, the groups had no clear tactics in their relations with the government and centred on withdrawal (Kepel 1984: 64).

### **6.3. Assassination did not fulfil the objectives of the Islamists**

Under President Sadat the ideological foundations of the Islamic opposition movements deviated even further from the original concepts espoused by Hasan al-Banna. They called for an Islamic order and condemned the existing society and its rulers for not being purely Islamic, concluding that the only way out was to establish an Islamic state through military struggle. The politicisation of Islam under the Sadat government was regarded as complete with the assassination of the president. While al-Banna called for independence and Qutb for a *jihad*, under President Sadat a *jihad* was justified and executed by his assassination.

The annihilation of Shukri Mustafa's Society of Muslims marked the failure of the strategy based on emulation of the prophetic model going through phases of weakness and power as the Prophet Muhammad did when he was weak in Mecca and had power in Medina. The *al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya* underestimated the manipulative techniques of the secret police. They also overestimated the appeal of their message and believed that the Egyptian masses would support the aims and objectives of the Islamist movement. They also did not realise that most of the population had not broken with the concept of a nation of which Islam is the most important, but not the only, component. It was therefore easier to target specific targets and not the state. However, at the end of the Sadat era the assassination was the fulfilment of the prime objective of the *jihad* of Farah,

namely to “eliminate the Pharaoh”.

#### **6.4. No new ideas were presented**

Despite the assassination of President Sadat and the diffusion of the movements into various other smaller groups, this generation had failed in ideological terms, as very few new texts were generated. Most of the texts that were used dated to the period before 1978. When the ideology of the *al-Jihad* groups is analysed, a shift or adaptation of the thoughts formulated in the time of Qutb can be discerned, but it does not reflect any new thinking. In *The Hidden Imperative*, as formulated by *al-Jihad*'s main thinker 'Abd al-Salam Faraj, the focus was placed on making *jihad* the priority in justifying revolt and assassination. While Qutb had seen *jihad* as an ultimate strategy, 'Abd al-Salam Faraj saw *Jihad* as serving two purposes, namely the expansion of the territory of Islam and offering deterrence when attacked. The situation in Egypt under President Sadat was considered as providing sufficient justification for the use of force (*jihad*). This in itself was no new idea but derived from Ibn Taimiyya's fatwa against Mongols who had conquered Muslim countries. Despite the fact that Ibn Taimiyya had sought the protection of the Muslim community,<sup>30</sup> 'Abd al-Salam Faraj borrowed Qutb's concept of declaring the rulers apostates from Islam. *Jihad* was specifically highlighted in the community by placing the emphasis on the role of the Qur'an, Sunna and *ijma*. 'Abd al-Salam Faraj also denounced the various strategies for establishing an Islamic state like establishing opposing political parties or through preaching (*da'wa*) alone and regarded *jihad* as the most relevant.

Faraj deviated from Mawdudi's view that Islam had not prescribed any definite formation of consulting bodies because “Islam is a universal religion meant for all times and aims” (Roy, 1994: 61). Thus, political Islam could be embodied in a variety of constitutional formulas. The only requirement was that those who ruled

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<sup>30</sup> See Chapter One, section page 2.1.



had to be above reproach, because sovereignty lies with God alone. To change society, people had to change by means of conversion of the individual. *Jihad* was seen as relating to the spiritual dimension of one's life rather than creating an object or an Islamic state. *Jihad* was more of an affair between the believer and God than between the *mujahid* and his enemy (Roy, 1994: 66). Thus, victory is not perceived to be the consequence of a series of human acts but as a gift of success from God.

Ayubi (1982) argued that Islam can be used either to justify the status quo or to change it. There is no single formula that is recommended by all scholars and believers. The Islamists under President Sadat took their convictions to the ultimate level. However, there was no full-scale revolution because the government was organised enough to prevent further violence. In addition, the bulk of society was divided into a multi-faceted society and split further into various Islamic resurgent groups that did share one central conviction. This aspect, more than anything else, explains the lack of support for the radical movements after the assassination. While the radical movements presented a radical modus operandi, they did not necessarily provide an answer to all society's problems. Neither did they offer an alternative or develop a new ideology that could be used. They fed on the sentiments of a small segment of society through violent action, capturing the imagination far more than the actions of the moderate groups. This dimension became prominent especially under the Mubarak government.

## **7. SUMMARY**

Under the Sadat government Islamic opposition movements were under the impression that they had achieved the ultimate aim of removing an unwanted leader. The more accommodating approach followed by the Sadat government

provided opportunities for the Islamic opposition movements to grow and expand. The ideological arguments used by these movements succeeded in justifying even more radical action that could be taken in achieving their aims.

The policies of the Sadat government were built on the legacies of those established by the Nasser government. The institutionalisation of autocratic rule was taken a step further under the Sadat government and provided the foundations for the current Mubarak government.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESURGENT MOVEMENTS DURING THE REGIME OF PRESIDENT MUBARAK: 1982 UNTIL JULY 2005

*“Islamist movements and parties at the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century are striving to reinvent themselves as democratic movements, to denounce the repression they feel they have been victim to. They now invoke the universal rights of man instead of critiquing them with their own substitute version, and they support the previously decried values of the impious West.” (Bill and Calvert, 2002: 416)*

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

The Mubarak government continued the legacy established by the previous two governments. It managed to curtail the actions of Islamic opposition movements by means of exclusion and persecution. However, a new generation emerged that has, together with time and place factors, influenced the development of Islamism. The dispersal of the Islamic opposition movements outside the borders of Egypt to countries such as Afghanistan opened up new safe havens to Islamic opposition movements. This would eventually result in renewed action directed not only against the Egyptian government but also against the West as a whole – and the USA in particular. Violence has recurred in 2005.

## 2. HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

When President Mubarak took over power after the death of President Sadat he had no particular political vision that was uniquely his own. His immediate concern was to contain the crisis in the aftermath of the death of President Sadat. He continued with President Sadat's Camp David accords. This gave an impetus to Islamic activism that would receive further incentives as a result of the ending of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union from 1989 to 1991. The victory of the Afghan *jihad* accompanied by the withdrawal of Soviet forces in 1990 and the US-led war against Iraq in 1990-1991 all added to hostility towards Western policy in the region and had an impact on resurgent movements.

After the 1997 attacks at Luxor the government reacted severely – while being reluctant to make martyrs, as had happened under President Sadat. Therefore, President Mubarak followed a two-tiered approach, namely allowing symbolic Islamisation by using state-controlled Islamic establishments to counter opposing Islamists as well as seeking reconciliation. This strategy was not very successful. As the government had nationalised most mosques and the Al-Azhar did not produce enough imams, the government resorted to counter measures to prevent Islamists from being recruited.

Egypt is currently seen as a relatively liberal polity. Egyptians appear to enjoy many civil and political rights, which ultimately define a liberal polity and a country in transition to democracy. This process has not progressed as anticipated because opportunities for formal representation and participation through elections have been restricted. The presidential election in September 2005, in which President Mubarak stood for a fifth term, is indicative of this.

## 2.1. The legacy of the Sadat government

When President Mubarak succeeded President Sadat he assumed a more low-key and conciliatory tone than his predecessor had done. He released political prisoners and reinvigorated the political liberalisation that was started in 1976 but aborted by President Sadat. He also tried to defuse the crisis in the government. While he continued supporting the Camp David process he emphasised Egypt's Arab, Islamic and African affiliation. The media also enjoyed an improved working relationship with the government and were granted unprecedented freedom of expression. President Mubarak reintroduced a wide range of opposition forces consisting of the Arab Socialist Party (ASP), leftist National Progressive Union Party (NPUP) and rightist Liberal Socialist Party (LSP). This was a departure from President Sadat's policy of control through the ASU. President Mubarak reviewed this system but anticipated resistance from those who had formed President Sadat's power base, namely the entrepreneurial bourgeoisie that had flourished under his economic policy of exposing the economy to freemarket forces (Sid-Ahmed, 1987: 22-27).

Under President Mubarak the *infitaḥ* bourgeoisie managed to secure veto power in some areas of decision-making and had widespread influence. This power structure enabled them to resist the adoption of new economic innovations. The military also played a role in the fragmentation of political authority. The military had acquired substantial economic resources that enhanced its organisational resources as well as its power. This formed an "almost entirely autonomous enclave of middle-class modernity in an increasingly impoverished and marginalised Third World economy" (Springborg, 1989: 107). Its influence expanded into areas of manufacturing weapons, agriculture and land reclamation as well as construction and service industries. The military has had an elevated standing in society that provided it with access to housing, educational, health, consumer and recreational facilities. The military is also provided with subsidised

electricity and petroleum, while branching out into other areas of industry.

Resentment from the Ministry of Interior towards the military has resulted in the granting of special privileges to outdo each another, but in effect this antagonism has been counter-productive to securing internal stability (Springborg, 1989: 107). The influence of the military has been enhanced by its use to contain domestic dissent, a campaign undertaken together with the Ministry of the Interior. However, military intelligence has encroached on the civilian security and intelligence service. Therefore, the role of the military is indicative of the manner in which the government exerts power.

## **2.2. Economic problems**

President Mubarak increased economic measures while decreasing political control. Unions have not been transformed from corporatist to pluralist structures and agricultural cooperatives, especially those whose members are exclusively small peasants, have been stripped of functions. Thus the regime's party has been colonised by the bourgeoisie and closed off to those of the lower strata (Springborg, 1989: 107). This strategy of economic rationalisation by President Mubarak has affected the poor more adversely than the rich. While the bourgeoisie have been granted ample political liberties, the working class, peasants and the rural and urban lower middle classes continue to confront serious obstacles to political transformation and economic inclusion.

Under President Mubarak the government has been restructured to develop a more transparent economy. However, Egypt is still confronted with economic problems and the World Bank's indication on 10 June 2004 that Egypt needed to take urgent steps toward structural reform of its economy is indicative of the continuation of this problem. Even though its current macro situation is acceptable, in the longer term issues such as unemployment, privatisation and the exchange rate could hamper it. The privatisation programme has also not

been run effectively. Even though the short-term economic outlook is positive, in the long term the government will have to focus on the structural changes required to generate jobs and attract foreign investment (Sapa-AP, 06/10/04), aspects that contribute to the dissatisfaction of the people and the resurgent movements' anti-government drives. The government has also been accused of widespread corruption, which it is currently attempting to stamp out.

### **2.3. The succession issue**

President Mubarak has dominated Egyptian politics since 1982, but his failure to nominate a vice-president or designated successor has led to uncertainty. He appointed his son, Gamal, to a senior post in the ruling National Democratic Party – he named him the party's political secretary (Sapa-AP, 06/10/04) – as he highlighted the importance of a “smooth handover” of power at the party's first congress in a decade during 2004. In an attempt to appease rumours of wanting to have his son succeed him, President Mubarak announced that he did not plan to extend his 21-year rule for life and wanted to open up politics for a new generation of Egyptians. Despite this, he stood for elections and won the September 2005 presidential elections.

### **2.4. Strategies against Islamic resurgent movements**

So far, socio-economic development has focused on Cairo and has not benefited the rest of the country. This concentration of governmental power and money in the Cairo area has resulted in Cairo's domination over the south in Egypt's existing political structure. Therefore the south has little effective political power over its own affairs as well as no independent media outlet such as newspapers or radio and television broadcasts. It is claimed that the north views the southerners as “stupid, stubborn, incapable of cultural accommodation and resistant to change” (Fandy, 1994: 620). The government's strategy of controlling the periphery of its sphere of influence in the north and south of the country has

depended heavily on the intermediary role of the *kibar al-ayan* or the wealthy local notables or rural middle class. In the south the intermediary class is based on tribal bonds in addition to wealth and land ownership.

Changes experienced led to the emergence of *al-Jama* in southern Egypt. Violence that had broken out under the government of presidents Nasser and Sadat continued under President Mubarak and several government officials and security officers have been killed. Tourists have become targets. The Islamists have established strongholds in poor Cairo neighbourhoods such as Ein Shams, Inbaba, Umraniyya, as well as in Upper Egypt. They imposed their own social and moral code, ran their own mosque with their own preachers, provided social services, settled disputes and applied the Quranic *hudud* (penal code) or sanction. Stricter governmental measures were met with fierce counteractions. Governmental measures included mass arrests, entire neighbourhoods being put under siege, a systematic campaign to decapitate the *al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya* by means of military courts and the imposition of the death penalty (Fandy, 1994: 609-612).

While President Sadat gave political freedom to the Islamists, President Mubarak facilitated the process of political expression by encouraging political debate and authorising opposition parties and press freedom. By giving more freedom of expression to the Islamists in general, the Mubarak government deprived the radical Islamists of acting as the surrogate for civil society versus the government. This method has been followed to isolate the extreme from the moderate section and was an attempt to depoliticise the Islamists.

President Mubarak aided the split between the resurgent movements by including the opposition parties that had been excluded under President Sadat in parliament. After the 1984 elections President Mubarak adopted a different approach from that of President Sadat in that he allowed outspoken Islamic opposition members such as Shaikh Muhammad Mitwali Al-Shaarawi and Shaikh



al-Hamid Kishk to appear on television regularly, while the Muslim Brotherhood was still denied the right to form a political party. Up to that time the Muslim Brotherhood had operated by means of having its own candidates run as independents. This created a sense of control by the government over resurgent movements and the radical resurgent movements assumed a low profile until 1987 (Kepel, 1984: 247).

The strategy of allowing more freedom to religious groups resulted in the participation of Islamists in parliamentary elections, and in the media. The government also sponsored television debates between Islamic militants and representatives from Al-Azhar. Moderate Islamists were granted freedom to preach “the re-Islamisation of social life, morals and customs” (Kepel 1984: 247).

Throughout the 1990s, the regime faced strong domestic challenges, which undoubtedly led it to pursue more repressive policies at the level of both legislation and political practice. The government increasingly applied stricter measures, including mass arrests, while entire neighbourhoods were put under siege. Thus a systematic campaign was launched to decapitate the resurgent movements. Military courts were used to convict and sentence the accused by applying the death penalty. The government also extended its campaign to the external front, and attempted to curtail Islamist activities by discrediting countries such as Iran and Sudan for supporting radical Islamism. This prompted the modification of the law relating to the contribution of foreign funds to political parties. The Mubarak government also tried to cut off finances from rich Gulf States as well as to enlist the civil Muslim community’s support (Faskh; 1997: 52).

In the course of its confrontation with the authorities from 1992 onwards the *al-Jama`at al-Islamiyya* damaged Egypt’s tourist trade badly and affected the economy as a whole. Repression, however, could not prevent the further increase of political violence in the country. The victims of Islamic resurgent movements were mostly members of the security apparatus, but an increasing

number were Copts and tourists as well. Attacks against Copts undermined national unity, while those against tourists threatened one of the country's major sources of revenue (Springborg, 1989: 229).

As the conflict between the regime and armed Islamist groups such as the *al-Jama`at al-Islamiyya* turned increasingly violent between 1991 and 1992, the government decided to categorise all Islamist opposition forces as terrorists. However, the 1992 amendments to the penal code followed an unprecedented increase in political violence in the country. Sporadic incidents between security forces and armed Islamist groups, in the early months of 1992, rapidly led to major clashes in and around Dayrut, Asyut and Bani Swayf in Upper Egypt, as well as in Cairo. The assassination of the secular intellectual Faraj Fuda, in June 1992, was incentive enough for the government to modify terrorism legislation (Sapa-AP/nd, 10/12/2003). The climax came in late September 1997, with the bombing of a tourist bus in Cairo's Al-Tahrir Square, in which nine Germans and the Egyptian bus driver were killed, and the massacre at the Hatshepsut Temple in Luxor mentioned above.

The rising numbers of political detainees, of civilians referred to military courts, of death sentences, and of other human rights abuses were by and large linked to the increasingly violent conflict between the regime and groups among the Islamist opposition. Harsher penalties, such as the replacement of prison terms with forced labour, replacing temporary sentences with life sentences and life sentences with the death penalty, were introduced. In addition, all crimes against the security of the state and public resorted under the jurisdiction of the Supreme State Security Council. Verdicts of this council were not open to appeal except on procedural grounds.

The 1992 Act, which defined terrorism as "any use of force, violence, threats or scare tactics used by the criminal to execute a ... crime that aims to disrupt public order or endanger social security", was introduced. The introduction of Act no 97/1992, section 2, added a new section (86) to the penal code, which defined

terrorism as force or threat of force in disrupting public order, any act that actually or potentially harmed individuals or damaged the environment, financial assets, transport or communication, the physical occupation of sites and places as well as obstruction of the application of the law (Barraclough, 1998: 222). The maximum penalty for establishing a terrorist group was changed from 15 years in prison to the death penalty and the penalty for joining such a group was increased from five to 15 years.

The government decided not only to track down terrorists but also to marginalise and exclude from representation and participation those whom the state could present as the terrorists' allies or sympathisers. This attempt at marginalisation was applied in particular to the Muslim Brotherhood, which was accused of creating a front organisation for armed Islamist groups. It was even applied to human rights organisations, which the regime repeatedly lumped together with "terrorist organisations" (Sid Ahmet, 1987-1988: 22-39). The most far-reaching attempt to restrict negative opinions was the passing, at the end of May 1995, of the so-called press law. The law, which in fact largely consisted of additional repressive amendments to the penal code, imposed heavy sentences on "publication crimes" such as the printing of "mendacious information," "false rumours," or "defamations," in particular if these were directed against the state, its representatives and its economic interests, or if they endangered public order. Whereas in the past such acts were largely punishable with modest fines, they now carried sentences of up to five years' imprisonment and payment of exceedingly high fines (Esposito, 1997: 223).

Since then, Egypt has carried out 35 military trials of Islamic extremists, all charged with using terror to overthrow the government, even though some maintained they used only peaceful tactics, according to the Egyptian Organisation for Human Rights. The military tribunals have tried 1 116 people, imposed 89 death sentences and acquitted 289 of the accused. Some 1 200 people died as a result of Islamic insurrection, mostly militants and police, but the uprising dissipated after a major attack by militants killed 58 foreigners and four

Egyptians at Luxor in 1997 (Sapa-AP/nd, 10/12/2003).

However, the impact of strict governmental security measures resulted in many members relocating abroad in order to evade arrest and hence diverting them from focusing on the group's activities. In addition, the government appointed a new, more efficient security officer, Habib al-Adli. In July 1997, Mohammed Amir Abd al-'Ali, the leading *al-Jama'at al-Islamiyya* defendant in a trial of militants involved in bomb attacks on banks, announced a cease-fire in a court statement, but the government refused to take this seriously. The government released 8 000 Islamist prisoners in 1997 as reward for positive behaviour while *Jihad* members were convicted and put to death. This step showed confidence from the government in its ability to contain the Islamists. After a cease-fire was declared in 1999 a subsequent re-organisation of the *al-Jama'at al-Islamiyya* leadership abroad resulted in the marginalisation of extremist elements and gave more prominence to a new collective *Shura* supporting the ceasefire. The government also succeeded in convincing other governments to hand over people wanted by the Egyptian government.

In addition, the government released Karam Zuhdi from jail on 22 September 2003. On 29 September 2003 it released two other leaders, Fuad Al-Dawalibi and Assam Abd Al-Mageed, and on 30 September, nearly 1 000 other *al-Jama'at al-Islamiyya* activists and another senior figure, Mamduh Al-Yussef. On 6 October 2003 some 2 400 Egyptian prisoners, including 400 members of a militant group that had helped plot the murder of President Sadat, were set free to mark a national holiday. Analysts are of the opinion that Egypt has released more than 5 000 *al-Jama'at al-Islamiyya* leaders since 1981; although human rights groups have estimated that more than 10 000 have remained behind bars (Reuters, 7 October 2003).

The government also abolished the controversial state security courts on 16 June 2003, while outlawing forced labour in the country's prisons. Human rights groups welcomed the reforms by President Mubarak. However, citizens' rights are still

under curtailment by the state of emergency declared in 1981 and extended to 2005 that provides for military courts.<sup>31</sup> The president justified the government's aggressive approach, which it has followed since 1992, in an interview in December 2003 with the state-run daily *Al-Jomhuria* regarding the apprehension of the accused in Egypt after the attacks on the USA on 11 September 2001. He stated that the proposals for military trials in the USA and a law allowing detention without trial in Britain "proves that we were right from the beginning in using all means (in response to) these great crimes that threaten the security of society" (Sapa-AP/nd, 10/12/2003). This, together with the relocation of Islamists abroad, internationalised their targets and led to *al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya* members, as well as other Islamists from Egypt, joining Osama bin Laden.

The government has also remained firm in its stance on the Muslim Brotherhood. The Muslim Brotherhood has been criticized for failing to provide an audit of its administrative and financial agencies in the country and for failing to apply its strict membership criteria to new members. In addition, Brotherhood members were banned from travelling and seeking employment. It is argued that the government is seeking to contain the Muslim Brotherhood and prevent it from expanding. The Brotherhood thus still poses a political threat rather than a security threat (*Arab Press Review* Issue no. 1751, 18/9/2003). However, on 20 January 2004 the new leader of the Muslim Brotherhood, the General Guide Mohamed Mahdi Akef, indicated that he requested unconditional dialogue with the Egyptian government.

Sporadic arrests have still taken place, such as the arrest on 4 June 2003 of twelve Muslim Brotherhood members for an alleged illegal meeting held at Menoufiya. A spate of detentions took place in Cairo, Alexandria and

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<sup>31</sup> Military trials, some conducted within 15 days, are held under tight security at military bases. The military judges, usually a panel of three dressed in their uniforms, remain anonymous. The names of the main state witnesses, mostly police officers, are also withheld for security reasons. The government maintains that military trials are necessary in terrorism cases because civilian trials take too long and civilian judges and their families are vulnerable to terrorist threats.

Damanhour. These events are seen as part of the government's strategy to contain the Muslim Brotherhood (*Al-Ahram*, 12-18 June 2002). According to an article that appeared in the *Al-Arabi* of 14 September 2003, the weekly organ of the Opposition Arab Democratic Nasserite Party, several prominent Muslim Brotherhood members were also arrested.

At the same time, the Mubarak government has supported the growth of the religious infrastructure by increasing religious broadcasts. Civil Muslim leaders or community leaders like Sheik Metwali el-Sharawi and Sheik Muhammad al-Ghazali saw themselves as the "state's ideological rampart against religious extremism" (Kepel, 2002: 281). By portraying itself as the bastion of Islam, the government was able to gain respect.

Since the attacks on the USA on 9 September 2001 Egypt has participated in the US-led war on terrorism, and measures such as the banning of certain sermons are an example of actions taken. According to an article published in the Opposition Arab Democratic Party of 7 September 2003, the 114 religious scholars banned by security orders from preaching in Egyptian mosques can be placed in three categories: (i) preachers who had refused to co-operate directly with security bodies and had attacked the USA; (ii) members affiliated to the ruling National Democratic Party; and (iii) preachers who had refused to deliver sermons prescribed by the Ministry of Waqfs. In addition, orders were given that mosques in which preachers delivered sermons without the necessary permission would be closed. It was also reported that video cameras are used in mosques on Fridays and during major events and ceremonies to monitor the sermons (*Arab Press Review* Issue no. 1749, 11-9-2003).

## **2.5. Elections under President Mubarak**

General elections have been used for anti-government actions because all

governments in Egypt since independence have failed to provide for free and fair elections. An example is the 1990 elections, which were influenced by the decision of most opposition parties to boycott them. The 1990 elections, instead of broadening the spectrum of political forces represented in the Egyptian parliament, resulted in a larger majority for the NDP than the party had had in 1987. Candidates who were members of the NDP obtained 79 percent of the seats in the new parliament, compared to 68 percent in the outgoing one. Opposition parties sought to protest against insufficient guarantees of fairness at the poll. Officially, only *Hizb al-Tajammu* (the *Tajammu* Party) and *Hizb al-Umma* (the Umma Party) participated. However, numerous members of *Hizb al-Wafd* (the Wafd Party), *Hizb al-Amal* (the Labour Party), *Hizb al-Azhar* (the Liberals' Party) and the Muslim Brotherhood did not respect the boycott and ran as independent candidates (Barraclough, 1998: 226).

In terms of scope and violence, however, the 1990 events were only a prelude to the elections in 1995. In 1990 and in 1995, candidates officially belonging to the NDP could ignore the many legal restrictions and harassments to which their competitors were subjected. Instead, they could rely on official support, ranging from the use of public-sector vehicles to the collusion of state officials appointed to run the polling stations. Unlike the opposition candidates, they could put up posters before the official beginning of the election campaign and did not have their campaign furniture removed at night. Regime agencies only intervened against individual NDP candidates where the key opposition candidates had to win in order to guarantee a minimum semblance of pluralism, or where one NDP candidate opposed another NDP candidate (Barraclough, 1998: 226). Electoral registers were frequently rigged in favour of NDP candidates and sometimes even on the latter's initiative. News bulletins on state-controlled television left Egyptians with the impression that the NDP was the only party running. Opposition parties were only granted a few opportunities for campaign statements, unlike the NDP.

The participation of the Muslim Brotherhood was also curtailed when the government referred several of its prominent members to a military court because they were accused of belonging to an illegal organisation. This kind of treatment has become a regular occurrence. It has also served as a warning to the Muslim Brotherhood as well as to the voters that votes cast for Brotherhood candidates would probably be lost votes. Representatives of other opposition candidates were also expelled or turned away from polling stations, where ballot boxes arrived stuffed with voting papers or else disappeared prior to the count (Barraclough, 1998: 227). Partly through direct interference and partly by condoning the activities of NDP candidates, the government managed to get a parliament elected in which its own party obtained 94 percent of the seats. While the opposition parties suffered from numerous weaknesses, ranging from material shortages to leaders and programmes that failed to appeal to voters, their lack of a special relationship with the government has served to curtail them most.

Parliamentary elections in 2000 were marred by violence and reports of harassment. In comparison, the 2003 elections can be used as a barometer of the transparency of the current political dispensation in Egypt. In preparation for the 2003 elections on 25 October seven Islamists were elected to parliament in the first phase of elections, which also saw supporters of Egypt's ruling NDP losing seats. Six of the Islamists were members of the banned Muslim Brotherhood, which had complained of a government campaign of mass arrests ahead of the elections. There were no Brotherhood members in the previous 454-seat parliament, although one Islamist representing the fundamentalist-led Labour Party had been suspended earlier in 2003. The Brotherhood was able to field candidates running as independents (Reuters, 7 October 2003).

The Islamists, along with at least seven other opposition candidates, won seats from a total of 150 that were contested in the first phase of elections, which was launched on 18 October 2003. In the first stage of the elections, the ruling NDP suffered a double setback by winning only just over a third of the 150 seats and



seeing several of its prominent figures among the losers. Results show, however, that this was not an indication that the NDP risked losing its overwhelming majority in parliament. Independent candidates, who ran without any party affiliation, won just under 100 seats, but among them were around 90 dissidents. Among other opposition members winning seats were dissidents from the Arab-socialist Nasserite party, who ran as independent candidates. Three opposition winners ran under the banner of the Marxist Tagamu party and one under that of the liberal *Wafd* party (Reuters, 7 October 2003).

Voting was divided into three stages for the first time to ensure compliance with a law passed in July 2003 that required a member of the judiciary to be present in each of the country's 15 000 or more polling stations. The elections ended on 14 November 2003. In a move similar to what had happened in the 1995 parliamentary elections, 53 candidates who won seats in the runoffs to the elections as independents declared they were joining the NDP of President Mubarak within minutes of the results being declared. The mass defection gave the ruling party 118 of the 150 seats. This election was again indicative of the manner in which President Mubarak's policies are viewed. While he is admired abroad as a Western ally and supporter of the Middle East peace process, he is criticised at home for a lack of progress on economic and human rights reforms. Voting in the runoffs was marred by clashes between security forces and opposition supporters that left one person dead and several injured.

The parliamentary elections that will be held in three stages will start on 9 November 2005. In preparation, ten groups, including liberals, leftists and the *Kefaya* (Enough) protest movement joined forces on 9 October 2005. The new alliance includes most of the significant opposition forces, ranging from leftists such as the Tagammu Party to the traditional liberal *Wafd* Party, Arab nationalists such as the Nasserites, and some moderate Islamists. Talks are under way to bring in the liberal *Ghad* (Tomorrow) Party of Ayman Nour that was the main rival to President Mubarak in presidential elections in September 2005. Even if the alliance greatly expands the opposition presence in parliament, it is

not clear whether any one party would meet the conditions for fielding a candidate in the next presidential elections in or before 2011. To field a candidate, a party must have won at least 23 of the 444 elected seats in parliament at the previous elections. The largest opposition party now is Ghad, with six seats. The Muslim Brotherhood, Egypt's largest opposition group, is part of the electoral alliance but, unlike the nine other groups, its candidates will not stand on a single opposition list. Because the movement cannot officially field candidates its members have previously run as independents and still form the most prominent opposition bloc with 17 of 444 seats. Therefore they joined the new alliance and are expected to include about 150 candidates. The Muslim Brotherhood leader, Mohamed Mahdi Akef, has expressed a wish that the new parliamentary elections should be free and fair and consequently produce an honest parliament that truly expresses the will of the people (Reuters, 00:23 10-13-05). The Muslim Brotherhood expects to treble the number of members it has in parliament in the November 2005 elections. It has been encouraged by greater political freedom in Egypt and it is anticipated that political reforms can be achieved in this manner. Events in the near future will indicate whether this is a viable option.

### **3. OBJECTIVES OF ISLAMIC RESURGENT MOVEMENTS**

#### **3.1. Internal factors**

*“The sa’ids calls them al-Jama’a al-Islamiyya. This group does not consider those who rule Egypt non-Muslims. This group believes that the Egyptian state as is can be adjusted to be Islamic. Jihad is the group’s means to bring about these adjustments. The Cairo Jihad, on the other had, sees everything in Egypt as un-Islamic.” (Fandy, 1994: 609)*

The internal conditions under the presidency of Mubarak that motivated Islamic resurgent movements have stemmed from the multi-faceted society in Egypt as well the government's continual lack of political reforms. These factors, among others, drove the fringe elements of the radical Islamic resurgence to target tourists in order to harm the government. As could be expected, these acts led to severe reprisals from the government to the extent that most of the radicals were either imprisoned or fled the country. Some went to Afghanistan, where they became embroiled in the Al Qa'ida group's activities. Those who have remained behind in Egypt have adopted a more accommodating stance and are seeking active dialogue with the government. As a result the government adopted improved counter-strategies. However, the government is still able to control the religious scene as most mosques have been under the control of the Ministry of the *Waqf* or Endowments. Public relations campaigns have also been used to depict the Islamists as terrorists and a threat to personal freedom and the type of Islam already practised by devout Muslims. However, the government's steps to oppose military force by all means, such as quick military trials as well as imposing the death penalty, have taken place without caution on the government's side in handling those arrested. Therefore the "line between militant Islamists and Islamist sympathisers has become blurred, with the government dealing harshly with non-violent persons who in some way empathise with the militants" (Sullivan and Sana Abed-Kotob, 1999: 89). Since the events of 11 September 2001 the government has responded to the potential actions of any groups by improving and modernising its equipment and training as well as co-opting the help of the US Federal Bureau of Investigation. The Minister of the Interior has been tasked with suppressing the actions of groups as well as individuals.

### 3.1.1. A divided society

The division of society into socio-economic groups has added to pluralism and diversity, while geographical location has also played a major role. Therefore, no

single group or movement in Egypt has represented the entire society. Instead groups have reflected the pluralism of ideologies and strategies that have been introduced to achieve spiritual renewal, political power or economic development within the realm of Islamism (Sullivan and Sana Abed-Kotob, 1999: 4). Differences between the various factions impact on aspirations such as becoming a fully-fledged political party or becoming allied to semi-secular parties for election purposes.

Radical Islamic societies consist largely of marginal elements drawn from the slums around major cities while the Muslim Brotherhood represents the bourgeoisie Islamists. The bourgeoisie consists of those who are owners and managers of Islamic banks and investment companies, as well as secular bourgeoisie that are part of the Islamic banks and investment companies but not part of any formal organisation favoured by a Muslim character. The traditional Islamic bourgeoisie is a group of Islamic businessmen who dominate various sectors of the traditional economy that are staunch followers of the traditions of the Islamic religion (*Arab Press Review* Issue no. 1749, 11-9-2003).

#### 3.1.1.1. The South

President Mubarak has continued to implement the Sadat policies on the south. The social and economic dislocation of the minor Arab tribes and the *fellahin* of the *Sa'id* were the main cause for the rise of the *al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya*. The *fellahin* made the best use of the free education but were still unemployed. "As a result they again took refuge in Islamism" (Fandy, 1994: 609-612). The Gulf oil boom also contributed to resurgence in southern Egypt, as it provided new socio-economic opportunities, especially for the *fellahin*. They returned home with more wealth, which was invested in new projects that resulted in unsettling the village politics associated with social prestige and power. However, the newly rich still lacked the prerequisite for social prestige, namely honourable lineage, in that they were neither Arabs nor *ashraf*. Thus their educated sons sought an answer

to their exclusion in Islam. Their money allowed them to build new village mosques where they preached a different Islamic message from that of their traditional predecessors. These messages undermined the traditional tribal hierarchy. In addition, their money was used to fund new social services such as community clinics and local markets, where prices were more affordable for the poor. These social services attracted the poorer Arab tribes as well and resulted in social recognition for the *fellaḥin*. The *fellaḥin* sponsored the recruitment of poor Arabs to go to the Gulf States and also received support for these efforts from the Saudi Arabian and Kuwaiti governments. In this manner people joined the *al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya* not only to gain redemption but also to obtain wealth (Fandy, 1994: 609-612).

The Islamists' reform and revolt in the south were inspired by the *fellaḥin*'s desire to adapt the rules of southern social structures and centre-periphery relations. The *Al-Ahram* newspaper of 1 June 1993 states that the south has been away from the centre of culture and civilisation by choice of the rebels themselves and that they thus developed a rigid character affected by the harshness of the desert. The Bedouin character has also been deemed to be incompatible with authority and power.

The Islamists also challenged the religious credentials of the Arabs and the *ashraf* as well as redefining the scope of Islam. Religion in the south has always been the domain of the *fellaḥin*, who adhered to a ritualistic and non-activist Islam. The *ashraf* also believed that they were descendants of the prophet and regarded this as sufficient credentials. Therefore they did not visit mosques very often. Both the Arabs and the *ashraf* demonstrated their religiosity by means of extravagant Islamic rituals. The *fellaḥin* were the only Islamic group whose religious conviction was in no doubt. Most of them were poor and could not afford extravagant rituals and therefore visited the mosques often while also preaching at local guesthouses (Fandy, 1994: 609-612).

Because the southerners have no modern medium for response, they have used the mosques as a platform to voice their opposition against the domination by the government. This has resulted in their arguments being based on what is Islamically permissible or *Halal*, and *Haram*, Islamically forbidden. Thus, what is Islamic in the south has been infused with what is acceptable traditionally versus what is *bid'a* (innovation) – new or non-traditional. To the southerners, then, Islam is more than a religion; it also protects them from Cairo's modern cultural onslaught. Thus, in spite of the fragmentation of the south along tribal lines, a common desire exists to preserve southern customs and unify the *sa'ids*. The south's distrust of the north is also evident in their literature, as in the phrase, "cursed be Mina", which refers to the ancient southern king that united the north and the south (Fandy, 1994: 609-612).

#### 3.1.1.2. The North

The Islamists in the north have built their popularity on their service to the poor urbanised in the north as well as those marginalised by the government in the south. Their role has indicated that the Egyptian government has not fully comprehended the multifaceted phenomenon of Islamic militancy, which reflects a profound social crisis compounded by simultaneous crises in the polity, economy and culture (Sullivan and Sana Abed-Kotob, 1999: 93). The power of the Islamists in Upper Egypt rivals that of the government and other social organisations and emerged as an alternative to old structures in mediating local disputes. While the *al-Jam`a al-Islamiyya* has been more concerned with local *sa'idi* issues, the *Jihad* wants to establish an Islamic state. Thus they have different agendas and different causes.

Within Egypt, stereotyping about the *Sa'id* and *sa'ids* not only comes from the West, but also from Northern social scientists. Instead of using the analysis of

contributing factors to *al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya's* violence as preventative measures, Northern social scientists have attributed violence to the *Sa'id* culture. In an article in the *Middle East Journal* (Vol 48, No 4, 1994: 621), Fandy refers to work done by Hala Mustafa for the Al-Ahram's Centre for Political and Strategic Studies, who attributes the violence in the south to the *Sa'ids'* violent customs and authoritarian traditions. The spread of violence from the south to the north is ascribed to the *al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya* social services. The opinion is expressed that the south is not worth studying except as a "contaminating influence on the north" (Fandy, 1994: 621).

### 3.1.2. A new generation of Islamists

Under the Mubarak government a new generation emerged that can be divided into two sections. The first section comprises those who hailed from the Sadat era, while the second section has become prominent after the 1997 Luxor attacks, and is in turn divided into a faction led by Lieutenant Abboud al-Zomor and Ayman al-Zawahiri who formed *al-Jihad*. These two believed that the *jihad* would only succeed if they were able to destroy the nerve-centre of the "impious regime" that even controlled preaching by violence (Kepel, 2002: 282).

After the hanging of Farag, Khaled Al-Islambuli (President Sadat's assassin) and the imprisonment of others, the organisation survived, only to split over an internal dispute when the Upper Egyptian wing, Zuhdi's *Jihadi* Islamic Group, seceded in 1984.<sup>32</sup> Thereafter, *al-Jihad* proved unable to maintain an effective campaign and local *Jihadi* groups developed outside its control. Its remaining

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<sup>32</sup> At issue was the succession of Farag as the *amir* (overall leader). The Upper Egyptian wing wanted the blind preacher Umar Abd al-Rahman (subsequently notorious for his role in the 1993 attack on the World Trade Center) as *amir*, whereas members of the founding nucleus of *al-Jihad* in Cairo considered that his blindness made him unsuitable and proposed Al-Zumur (ICG interview with Islamist lawyer and former activist Montasser Al-Zayyat, Cairo, 5 October 2003). The members of the *Jihadi* Islamic Group rejected the leadership of a prisoner and seceded (ICG, 2003).

members occasionally attempted to assassinate leaders in 1990 and 1993. The speaker of the People's Assembly, Rif'at Al-Mahgoub, was assassinated in October 1990, by *al-Jihad* according to some sources (Sullivan and Abed-Kotob, 2002: 82), but not everybody believes this. Other sources suggest that independent local *Jihad* groups were responsible. In 1993, unsuccessful attempts were made to assassinate the Information Minister, Safwat Al-Sharif, in April, the Interior Minister, Atef Sidqi, in August and the Prime Minister in November (ICG, 2003). These groups were increasingly drawn into international activities through their connection from 1989 onwards with Osama Bin Laden's al-Qa'ida network, with which they formally merged in 1998. This re-orientation of *al-Jihad* to the external and international sphere has been largely associated with Ayman al-Zawahiri, who since 11 September 2001 has attained international notoriety as bin Laden's principal lieutenant.

An important element of Al-Zawahiri's outlook is ascribed by some Egyptian Islamists to his experience in prison. Independent Islamist commentator Fahmi Howaidi told the *International Crisis Group (ICG)* that Al-Zawahiri left Egypt because he had been tortured and humiliated. Therefore the conclusion is that Al-Zawahiri was a product of a repressive system. Al-Zawahiri visited Afghanistan in 1980 and Peshawar in 1981, was arrested in the clamp-down on the *al-Jihad* after Sadat's assassination in October 1981 but released in 1984. Thereafter he took over the leadership of *al-Jihad* from the imprisoned Al-Zumur. He visited the USA in 1989 and again in 1993, when, disappointed by the failure of his fundraising efforts, he reportedly decided to throw in his lot with bin Laden completely. Al-Zawahiri, while he had been based, like bin Laden, in Khartoum, reportedly master-minded the unsuccessful attempt to assassinate President Mubarak in Ethiopia on 26 June 1995 and the bomb attack on the Egyptian embassy in Islamabad on 19 November 1995, which killed sixteen and wounded 60. After he was forced to leave the Sudan in May 1996, Al-Zawahiri considered the possibility of establishing a base for *al-Jihad* in Chechnya but was arrested and briefly detained in neighbouring Dagestan in early 1997. In February 1998, he formally sealed his alliance with al-Qa'ida, signing a



document proclaiming the formation of the “World Islamic Front for *Jihad* against the Jews and Crusaders” (ICG, 2003).

Meanwhile, what was left of al jiahd inside Egypt had been largely dismantled. Over 300 suspected members had been put on trial following the arrest of the organisation’s membership director, Ismaïl Nassir, in early 1993; a further 280 were arrested and six sentenced to death after the assassination attempt on the prime minister in Cairo the following November. Following the capture by American intelligence agents of senior *al-Jihad* figures in Baku and Tirana in 1998, over 100 members went on trial in Cairo and Al-Zawahiri and his brother Mohamed were sentenced to death in absentia. By then, *al-Jihad* had long since been eclipsed inside the country by *al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya*. When the latter decided to end its campaign in 1999, most *al-Jihad* members still in Egypt accepted its cease-fire and abandoned their *jihad* activities.

The faction under the leadership of the *al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya* believed that the *jihad* should be fought by means of preaching within the society itself. It supported open and widespread recruitment together with control of society in comparison to the secular establishments that were unacceptable. It also had juridical views as well as political and military ideology. The juridical aspect pertained to levelling a tax on the Copts for being non-Muslims and the political and military ideology pertained to the fact that state officials should be physically attacked on sight (Kepel, 2002: 282).

The *al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya* increasingly became more violent up to 1992. In reaction the government employed two strategies, namely the use of heavy police pressure together with extensive media coverage as well as engaging in discreet dialogue with some of the extremist elements. The religious dignitaries who had ties with the *salafist* faction of the Muslim Brotherhood mediated these dialogues. However, the Muslim Brotherhood had little influence over the radical Islamist movements. In 1992 the so-called five-year war between the government

and the *al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya* took place. The *al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya* and to a lesser extent *al-Jihad* succeeded in building an independent power base in Asyut and Minia in Middle Egypt in the second half of the 1980s (Kepel, 2002: 282). Both the presence of the Copts and the dire socio-economic conditions aided the expansion of the *al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya*. They assassinated Farag Fodo on 8 June 1992 because he was seen as a symbol of secularist intellectualism; as an opponent of the war against Islamism he supported more stringent anti-terrorist laws and advocated the normalisation of relations with Israel. All this was seen as reason enough for the *al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya* to assassinate him. During the trial of Sheikh Muhammad al-Ghazali, a witness for the defence declared, "Anyone born a Muslim who militated against the sharia of apostasy, for which the punishment was death" (Kepel, 2002: 287). Thus, their act was justified. The impact of this reasoning resulted in the Muslim Brotherhood's role as mediator with the radical Islamists being terminated.

The *al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya* also managed to broaden its power base by bringing together the Islamic intellectuals, the graduates who had returned from the Gulf in the 1970s, the students from the universities and the local or traditional godfathers of gangs. This mix of Islamists and violent criminals created conditions conducive to violence. In these areas the Islamists organised sports, schools and militias. Thus the *al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya* managed to replace traditional institutions in settling disputes, mediating in vendettas and establishing charity organisations to take care of the needy (Kepel, 2002: 289).

*Al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya* also disrupted the traditional hierarchy in these societies because members of *al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya* assumed positions of authority in society reserved for elder leaders (Kepel, 2002: 289). Reaction from *al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya* in particular was less effective in that it failed to mobilise the urban masses and to gain enough ground. However, by 1996 it was beginning to show signs of fatigue and could not always replace those killed or arrested. In addition, the closure of the borders and the clampdown on Islamists internationally restricted its movements and prevented it from recruiting new members.

The imprisonment of Sheikh Omar Abdel Rahman in the USA in 1996 and the disappearance of the European co-ordinator of the *al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya* disrupted the international support networks responsible for supplies. Money transfers stopped and the *al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya* had to resort to crime. The government managed to cause internal division and in 1996 the *al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya* called for a cease-fire. This did not prevent attacks on tourists. Their attacks on tourists in 1992, 1993 and 1997 were conducted with the minimum expense, but were very effective in reducing much-needed revenue for the government, derived from tourism. It also served to show the government's ineffectiveness in dealing with the situation. In addition, it alienated the more moderate segment of society from the cause of the Islamists, especially those whose livelihood depended on tourism (Kepel, 2002: 282).

Since then a new generation has come forward that is focused on working within the system and that is thoroughly modernised, although not Westernised. Non-authoritarian guidance provided by religious intellectuals is indicative of the new generation in Egypt. These new Islamists have gained prominence as the most critical intellectual force. This group has managed to establish itself intellectually and culturally by means of organisational innovations such as a school and a library, and the issuing of statements on national and international issues. It does not want an overthrow of existing institutions and laws, but merely demands changes where necessary within a climate of dialogue and democracy. It has the intellectual and moral authority to contain militancy because its members have been victims of militants' aggression and have been curtailed by the government. The fact that this generation has opted to work from within the system by adopting social and democratic approaches has been seen by authors such as Roy (1994) as an indication that Islamists have adopted new strategies.

However, there is still an element in Egypt that resorts to violence and in 2002, 51 members of a group called *Al-Wa'd* (The Pledge) were sentenced (six *in absentia*) to prison terms of up to 15 years with hard labour on charges of "conspiring to stage a coup d'état in Egypt" and "plotting to assassinate President Mubarak and other

prominent officials”; 43 other defendants were acquitted (*Cairo Times*, 12-18 September 2002). On 20 October 2002 the trial of 23 Egyptians and three British nationals accused of reconstituting *Hizb al-Taḥrīr al-Islāmī* (The Islamic Liberation Party) began in the State Security Court in Cairo. On 25 March 2004, twelve defendants, including the three Britons, were sentenced to five years in jail (*Al-Aḥram Weekly*, 31 October-6 November 2002). Also in October 2002, 43 people were arrested on charges of belonging to *Al-Jihad*, charges denied by their lawyer, Montasser Al-Zayyat, but reaffirmed by the pro-government daily *Al-Aḥram* when they eventually went on trial before a military court in November 2003 (*Cairo Times*, 9-15 January 2003). On 5 April 2003, 16 members of a group called *Al-Qutbiyyūn* (The Qutbists) were arrested in Cairo. In September 2003, 25 people, including six foreign students at Al-Azhar University, were arrested on charges of establishing a clandestine group allegedly named “The *Jihad* Group for Supporting Muslims at Home and Abroad” (*Cairo Times*, 13-19 November 2003).

The absence of violence in 2004 and 2005 does not indicate an end to their desired objectives. On the contrary, the events of 2004 and 2005 have shown that the impulse to engage in activism is still present in Egyptian society. On 24 July 2005 bombs exploded in a tourist bazaar next to the Pyramids of Giza as well as at the Red Sea resort of Sharm el-Sheik, 400 kilometers east of Cairo. An Islamist group claimed responsibility for the Sharm al-Sheikh bombings, which killed at least 63 people. The statement, posted on an Islamist site which is not widely known, said a group calling itself “the Mujahideen of Egypt” was behind the attacks at Sharm al-Sheikh. In addition, another group claiming links to al Qa’ida said within hours that the bombings had been in revenge for “crimes committed against Muslims”, in a statement posted on the same site. Neither statement appeared on major al Qa’ida websites nor was it possible to authenticate the claims. A third Islamist group claimed responsibility for the bomb attacks on 26 July 2005. The *Tawḥīd* and *Jihad* Group in Egypt also said it was

responsible for bomb attacks at Taba in October 2004. It claimed responsibility for the attacks in obedience to the leaders of *jihad* in al Qa'ida, namely Osama bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahri, and to avenge the oppressed Brotherhood in Iraq and Afghanistan.

### **3.1.3. Role and functions in civil society**

The role and function of resurgent movements in civil society have also motivated their development. Within Egypt the development of Islamist social, economic and political activities took place independently from the state and within civil society. A sphere outside the government developed that was endowed with a legally mandated autonomy, involving legal rights and protections backed by the government. In Raymond Baker's words, "at the centre of the world-wide Islamic awakening is a moderate and humane vision that defies both the ravages of an imitative modernisation linked to the violence of the world-wide revolution of Westernisation and the even more destructive reactionary Islamic foundationalism that has co-evolved with it" (Esposito, 1997: 116). This moderate and humane vision has transpired in the Muslim world as "an Islamic centre that is positioned between two forces" (Esposito, 1997: 116). In the process it has also established a civil society separate from and coexistent with the secular state.

Therefore, because of the government's failure to attend effectively to the needs of civil society, Egyptian society has developed its own mechanisms for dealing with societal problems. The Islamic resurgent movements have been greatly motivated in this manner. These non-governmental organisations (NGOs), which were created by resurgent groups, have been seen to do more than merely provide necessary social services. They have also been viewed as providing places of refuge during times of repression. In addition, they provide a mechanism whereby the "hearts and minds" (*Survival*, 1999: 113-125) of society, especially the younger generation, can be influenced.

While the radical resurgent movements have weakened, the success of the Islamists in voluntary associations has increased. Therefore the new generation that has become prominent especially during the late 1990s has become broad-based and institutionalised rather than small and functioning as clandestine groups on the periphery of society. This prominence is more an indication of the apathy and lack of ability of the government to fulfil this role rather than an indication of the strength of the Islamist movements. However, the government has been able to contain the radical elements effectively. Violence and extremism led to these movements' increased isolation from society. In an article in *The Washington Quarterly* in 1998 Max Rodenbeck emphasised the demise of the violent movements because of their isolation from the realities of society. The effective repressive measures taken by the government have also contributed to their demise. Even though the government has not dealt with the central issue addressed by these movements, namely a more representative government, the resurgent movements are finding it increasingly difficult to justify their actions by referring to religious morality.

In contrast, Islamic resurgent movements have been motivated by providing an Islamic answer at a time when none of the political parties had a comprehensive social programme, causing Islamic opposition movements to become more prominent at the university and among the urban classes (*Arab Press Review*, Issue no. 1749, 11-9-2003). The strength of the Islamic opposition groups can now be discerned in the broader society, ranging across political, religious and socio-economic spectrums, and they have become a significant part of mainstream Muslim life and society. Their contributions to reconstruction of civil society in the form of clinics, adult education classes and charities have increased. What is very relevant, however, in forming a future prognosis of resurgent movements is that all of this has taken place without any parallel change in the apparatus of government. The resurgence has been stimulated by Egypt's socio-economic problems and unemployment. In addition, the average Egyptian finds the government services too expensive and inadequate. These

NGOs have provided an alternative institutional infrastructure. Their activities include educational facilities concentrated around mosques, psychiatric and dental services, drug rehabilitation, nurseries, legal aid societies, subsidised housing, food distribution, banking and investment housing. Most of the socio-economic institutions were grass-roots orientated (Sivan, 1999: 113-125).

The Islamic financial sector, which consists of banks and investment companies as well as those who collect *zakat*, have contributed financially to the Islamic social sector, which includes facilities for the provision of health, educational and welfare services. Currently the proliferation of organisations that provide social services is extremely extensive. The Islamic Medical Society provides fairly efficient health services virtually free of charge because of the financial support received from wealthy Muslim contributors as well as from their *zakat* funds. Together with private mosques, social, health and educational facilities also developed in the 1980s as well as early 1990s (Sivan, 1999: 113-125).

The most important aspect, however, of these alternative health and educational facilities is the challenge that they pose to the state structure as well as its legitimacy and credibility. One example is of the manner in which young Islamists cleaned up poor neighbourhoods. They were organised, efficient, well dressed and working under the supervision of monitors. In comparison, the police force appeared much less professional. The fact that radical elements can be found in almost all parts of the country is also indicative of the widespread support that they have. They remain dominant at universities and have supporters from a diverse range of faculties at the universities. During the 1980s the pattern of violence was indicative of this. Violence occurred in Upper Egypt, Fayuum, and Beni Suef, the poorer areas of Giza and Cairo, Alexandria, in the Delta and Canal provinces and the Minufiya province (Sivan, 1999: 113-125).

The Muslim Brotherhood remained prominent under President Mubarak and increasingly multiplied its economic and social welfare organisations, operated its

own publishing houses and newspapers, participated in elections by means of unions and professional associations and won control of major associations of lawyers, physicians, pharmacists and engineers. It also runs schools, hospitals, day-care programmes, job training centres, tutoring programmes and Qur'anic instruction programmes. Members are also involved in capitalist enterprises.

The Muslim Brotherhood's grassroots network of social services, including private hospitals and schools, is recognised as one of the factors that has helped establish the group as Egypt's largest opposition force, which analysts have at times described as a "state within a state". Articles in the Egyptian press refer to doctors and pharmacists who have joined forces to provide the services, since government healthcare is considered inadequate. It is alleged that doctors who are members of the Muslim Brotherhood offer their time and resources out of community and religious spirit. New and continued discourse states that Islamic discourse with opposing forces should adopt a new "vision", focusing on human behaviour and thus self-evaluation (*Arab Press Review* 23/10/2003).

Sivan refers to the support emanating from the segment of society that benefits from these NGOs as ensuring a counter-society orientated towards Islamisation. He refers to the reaction coming from this segment of society as a response to the *da'wa*, which he translates as "an Islamic term, which denotes a combination of propaganda, education, and medical and welfare action" (*Survival*, 1999: 113-125). The government and Western powers have referred to these facilities as the cradle of violence while ignoring the fact that these NGOs provide necessary services not supplied by the government. The prominence of these NGOs is indicative of the need in society of the services they provide as well as the fact that the government has not provided essential services.

Islamic resurgent movements have been popular because of their service to the poor urbanised in the north and those marginalised by the government in the south. It is said "the Egyptian government has not fully comprehended the multifaceted phenomenon of Islamic militancy, which reflects a profound social



crisis compounded by simultaneous crises in the polity, economy and the culture” (Sullivan and Sana Abed-Kotob, 1999: 93).

#### **3.1.4. The continuation of the state of emergency**

Advocacy groups such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch have repeatedly condemned Egypt's use of emergency laws to contain the government's political opponents. Independent lawmaker Mohammed Morsi, who belongs to the Muslim Brotherhood, says his group “vehemently opposes” the extension of the laws. He says that it is totally unjustified, especially considering that the government has repeatedly declared that there is no terrorism in Egypt. He believes that the ruling party has been using this law to curb its political opponents (Sapa-AP, 2003). The government has routinely used the laws to arrest and refer Muslim Brotherhood members to military courts, whose verdicts can only be overturned by President Mubarak. Instead it is anticipated by supporters of the government that it “will not use this law to undermine freedoms ... but that it will be used only to ensure and protect the nation and to abort sabotage attempts” (Sapa-AP, 2003). Emergency laws have been routinely renewed every three years because the government is of the opinion that the laws are needed to fight Islamic extremists.

The Egyptian parliament did, however, abolish the controversial state security courts, while outlawing forced labour in the country's prisons. Human rights groups welcomed the reforms by President Mubarak. The state security courts, among other institutions, were responsible for trying suspected extremists, terrorists and human rights activists. The parliament had already decided on the establishment of a human rights council, to be controlled by the second chamber of parliament (Sapa-DPA /jb 06/16/03 17-232D).

The government is, however, frequently accused of clamping down on the

Muslim Brotherhood, especially prior to an election or before the resumption of an academic year at the university. To cite an example, *Al Arabi* (Sapa-AFP 6/06/04) of 14 September 2003, the weekly organ of the opposition Arab Democratic Nasserite Party, reported the arrest of a number of prominent Muslim Brotherhood members. In addition, Muslim Brotherhood members were banned from travelling and seeking employment. It is argued that the government is seeking to contain the Muslim Brotherhood.

While the Muslim Brotherhood sees these measures as victimisation, the government terms them as preventative only. Diyaa Rashwan, a specialist in Islamist affairs at the Centre of Political and Strategic Studies, told the press that the arrests were preventive operations, which took place yearly when students return to class. Egyptian universities resume the new academic year in September. It was stated that the rate of arrests had increased only marginally since the anti-US attacks of 11 September 2001 (Sapa-AFP 6/06/04).

The events of 11 September 2001 fuelled anti-US sentiments in the Middle East, as did the attacks on Iraq in April 2003. Some of the people responsible for the events of 11 September 2001 have come from Egypt and have been shown to have possessed advanced techniques in acts of terror. They came from wealthy homes, were well trained and were prepared to mask their Islamic origin to perform their tasks. They were also prepared to operate in isolation away from the support of the mosques or the vanguard as espoused by Qutb. They assimilated with Western communities and showed an extraordinary amount of self-discipline.

### **3.2. External factors**

Under President Mubarak the USA has established increasingly closer relationships with Egypt. This has resulted in the USA demanding that Egypt

implement developmental processes subscribed to by the political and academic elite in the USA as well as in Egypt. Egypt is currently the Third World's leading beneficiary of Western aid. However, it has been less eager to adopt and adapt to new developments. This reluctance comes despite the fact that Egypt was a leader in the post-World War II period in adopting US-endorsed reform programmes, and was regarded as the leading Arab country internationally. In addition the economic and political liberalisation that was started under President Sadat and that survived in a modified form under the Mubarak government has been indicative of potential to change. Reasons for Egypt's reluctance to change can be sought in the continuity of the country's bureaucratic political culture and in the composition of its elite that has made transformation improbable. Privatisation is still used as a political tactic for sustaining authoritarian regimes rather than a set of reforms for stimulating free enterprise or markets (Springborg, 1989: 10). However, economic reform, if it is to be accomplished, will have to be preceded by political liberalisation so that a system through which reform that is generated from within and includes the opposition can be developed. This has been unachievable to date and the USA does not follow a policy towards Egypt that is conducive to internally generated changes. It concentrates instead on the present government submitting to external pressure to adopt USA parameters.

The liberation of Afghanistan also influenced resurgent movements in Egypt. While many left to join in the struggle, those who returned home were well trained and radicalised and joined the ranks of the radical resurgent movements at home. However, they were forced out of the country again after the Luxor attacks in 1997. Many returned to Afghanistan where they had networks. From these roots sprang those who were responsible for the attacks on the USA on 11 September 2001 (Kepel, 2002:375). These historical events have demonstrated the determination of a group of people motivated by anti-Western and more specifically anti-US sentiments in the Middle East, but especially Egypt.

Finally, the increase in development of information technology provides for more

choices and an open society. In addition, demographic growth has resulted in a new young generation born after many revolutions, which does not necessarily share the modus operandi advocated by the Islamists, even if it displays hostility to the USA and the West after events such as the US invasion of Iraq.

#### **4. OBJECTIVES OF ISLAMIC RESURGENT MOVEMENTS**

All Islamist movements in Egypt have been focused on political as well as socio-cultural aims. Even in their original stage Islamist movements were both a response to the fall of the Caliphate in 1924 as well as a symbol of Muslim sovereignty. These movements also had a cultural focus on preventing the subjection of the Arab world to non-Islamic rule or influences and concomitant losses. The subjection of the ruling governments to foreign influences justified action taken against them because “the adaptation of either Western capitalist or communist ideologies leads to the abandonment of Islamic culture and inevitable failure of these models” (*Islamic Affairs Analyst*, 1998: 4).

The four major Islamist movements in Egypt, namely the Muslim Brotherhood and the Labour Party, espousing a reformist stance, and the al-jama'a al-Islamiyya and the Islamic *Jihad*, espousing a more radical stance, have agreed upon the following aspects as set out in the *Islamic Affairs Analyst* (*Islamic Affairs Analyst*, 1998: 4): they regard the sharia as the only source of legislation, hostility to Israel as imperative and the establishment of Islamic caliphate as mandatory.

#### 4.1. Objectives of the Muslim Brotherhood

The Muslim Brotherhood's objectives have shown very little change since the time of Al-Banna. Currently the Muslim Brotherhood is of the opinion that "Sayyid Qutb is an Islamic thinker whom we respect, but neither an ideological nor an operational reference for us. There is a huge gap between the thought of Hassan al-Banna and that of Qutb. Our ideological references are the writings of Al-Banna and all documents produced by the Society since then" (ICG, 2004, 10). This changed view has been as a result of the official recognition of the sharia as the foundation of legislation as well as the economic and political opening under President Sadat from which the Muslim Brotherhood have benefited (Sullivan and Abed-Kotob, 1999, 51). Therefore, the general climate was conducive to following a line opposite to that taken Qutb, and regard Egypt as a Muslim country and the state as Islamic. However, while the government is acknowledged as an Islamic government, it does not apply Islamic principles in totality. The Muslim Brotherhood continues to advocate the establishment of an Islamic state that would function according to the sovereignty of God's laws as derived from the Qur'an and the Sunna.

This is in keeping with the advice of the former ruler of the Muslim Brotherhood, 'Umar al-Tilmisani. Most importantly, the question of rule is addressed, and 'Umar al-Tilmisani is quoted approvingly: "The first level of power is the creed and belief. The second is the power of unity and belonging. Thirdly, the power of weapons and strength, if the power of creed and belief is lost and there is no unity, reliance upon weapons results in destruction. The Brethren do not consider revolution, nor do they depend upon it, nor do they believe in its utility or its outcome. As for rule, the Brethren do not request it for themselves. If they find among the nation one who can handle this burdensome responsibility ... who can rule following Islamic and Quranic mores... [The Brethren will be] his soldiers, his supporters, and his assistants. If they do not find such a leader, then they will follow the Brotherhood's program" (Abed-Kotob, 1995:327). This view is echoed

by Sheikh Muhammad ‘Abdallah al-Katib, who declares that the Muslim Brotherhood is not concerned with who rules because it does not seek worldly status; its members are missionaries for the good. It is known that the Muslim missionary does not think of fame, nor does he work to gain power. The Muslim Brotherhood uses neither legal nor illegal methods to gain power, because its foremost concern is the system of rule and not the ruler. This implies that the focus is not on the individual, but on the nature of government according to Islamic principles. This objective also ties in with the broader aims of the Muslim Brotherhood, hence since al-Banna’s time its actions have been focused on reforming society and not seizing power.

Even though the technicalities of an Islamic state have not been specified, the Muslim Brotherhood has referred to concepts such as democracy because it is of the opinion that some semblance of democracy can be applied in an Islamic dispensation. However, it is critical of attempts by the Mubarak government to broaden democracy’s implementation in Egypt. It has been stated that “if Mubarak opens the doors and windows to listen to thinkers and leaders of Islam and their struggles and views on the Islamic renaissance, his picture of the Islamic solutions would change” (Abed-Kotob, 1995: 326).

Therefore, the emphasis on the nature of governance, as opposed to the person that governs, is still in agreement with the philosophy of al-Banna. He stressed that the goal of the Muslim Brotherhood is to build Islamic individuals who in turn will build an Islamic state. The Muslim Brotherhood was therefore committed to broad-based social reform under a leadership fostering governance with a rulership that governs in accordance with Islamic principles. Despite the fact that it has not specified what type of democracy it is seeking, its call for inclusiveness in a political dispensation is of more importance. The Brotherhood does not seek to dominate the political scene but merely to be part of it. It can be stated that the technicalities of the type of government are not as relevant as providing for an inclusive political system to start with.

Despite the fact that the Muslim Brotherhood has been criticised for not having a detailed socio-economic reform programme, it does have Islamic requirements for economic development. These are focused on down-scaling the government's bureaucracy and public sector as well as official adherence to standards of high productivity. Instead the private sector should become the backbone of the economy. A non-interest-bearing banking system should be introduced, while the focus should be on *zakat* and independence from foreign economic interventions (Abed-Kotob, 1995: 327). So far the Muslim Brotherhood has exploited areas of socio-political interests that were still open to it. For example, in September 1992 it won control of the Egyptian bar, enabling it to consolidate its hold on the professions. During the October 1992 earthquake it played a leading role in the emergency and supplanted the efforts of the government (Kepel, 2002: 289).

The Muslim Brotherhood has pursued a non-violent strategy of expanding social and political presence by trying to achieve socio-economic justice for all. It can be described as both a religious movement practising the Islamic *da'wa* as well as a social movement with a network of charitable, educational and sport associations, with aspirations of becoming a political party. The practical pursuit of this strategy has involved the Muslim Brotherhood in organising satellite institutions (such as Islamic charities and educational and sports associations) in the social and cultural sphere. However, its lack of legal status as a political party has handicapped it in the formal political sphere (the national Parliament, municipal councils), but not wholly disqualified it. In other institutions, notably the professional associations or "syndicates", which are major actors in Egyptian public life, it has had appreciable success.

In sum, the Muslim Brotherhood sees Egypt as an Islamic country with an Islamic government that does not apply all Islamic principles, especially freedom (*ḥuriyya*) and justice (*'adala*). Its objectives are therefore to attain democracy, which will ensure the freedom that has been taken away by an autocratic

government that has been kept in place by the influence of Western governments. In addition, the absence of justice, both internally and externally, has been attributed to the influences of the West (ICG, 2004: 11).

#### **4.2. Objectives of other Islamic resurgent movements**

After the assassination of President Sadat the Islamists had to compete with other political currents that questioned their legitimacy while also defending the Islamists' claim to be an intellectual force within Egyptian society. Even though the Islamist movements have remained active, they could not mobilise a large-scale following in society and also could not act as a mouthpiece for civil society as a whole in its confrontation with the state. Therefore the Islamists' objective has become less clear owing to the variety of discourses being deployed by dissident groups. In addition, numerous charitable, devotional, or congregational Muslim groups compete with them in the area of social change, while political parties of the opposition now offer credible alternatives for the project of transforming the social order (Kepel, 1984: 242).

Therefore the objectives of *al-Jihad* changed when it entered the external and international sphere. This development has been largely associated with Ayman al-Zawahiri, who since 11 September 2001 has attained international fame as bin Laden's principal lieutenant. The *al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya* had different objectives from that of *al-Jihad*. *Al-Jihad's* leaders had opted for a narrowly conspiratorial, elitist and militarist strategy, relying on targeted assassinations of senior regime figures and terrorist bombings and explicitly rejecting religious proselytising – the *da'wa* – and political agitation in general as impossible, given Egyptian conditions. In contrast, the *Jama'a* sought to achieve the *da'wa*, which it interpreted as involving not only preaching but also the re-Islamising of society, with militant opposition to the state (ICG, 2003). Since the 1997 attacks at Luxor the movement has denounced its former actions and engaged in the publication in early 2002 of four volumes written by imprisoned *al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya* leaders in which they renounced



their previous ideas. The “ideological revision” has had four main elements, namely renouncing the use of violence, renouncing the resort to *jihad* against a ruler who does not apply the Sharia, accepting that the practice of *amr bi 'l-ma`ruf wa nahy `ani 'l-munkar* (commanding what is proper and prohibiting what is reprehensible) should be left to the legal authorities, and abandoning the doctrinaire opposition to party politics and voting (ICG, 2003).

At the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Islamist movements started to change their objectives in order to win recognition as “democrats” by denouncing repression. Therefore the future of Islamism depends on the compatibility of its objectives with democracy and in the manner in which Islam will be revived. Also, the direction taken by militants in the name of democracy and human rights has found common ground with the secular middle class and their ideals that “celebrate the democratic essence of Islam” (Kepel, 2002: 368). They no longer seek to substitute the political dispensation with their own system. However, movements such as the *Hizb ut Tahrir* and the remnants of the Al Qa’ida have different views in this regard. On the whole, however, it seems as if Islamic opposition movements lack political vision in that they focus on the future but are still rooted in the past. Therefore the more moderate sections of the Islamic opposition movements distanced themselves from the more radical segment’s envisaged political future (Kepel, 2002: 368).

## 5. MODUS OPERANDI OF ISLAMIC RESURGENT MOVEMENTS

***The Sunni Islamist community is characterised by “politicised organisations that have borrowed the themes, symbols and organisational model of the Muslim Brotherhood”.***

***(Roy, 1994: 109)***

Each generation of the Islamist movement has been focused on achieving its aim by means of a definite field of activity and addressing a different perspective on Egyptian society. The modus operandi that was followed by moderates, who believe in long-term social and political action to establish an Islamic state and the tolerance of political opposition once an Islamic state has been established, differed from that of hardliners, who believe that only *jihad* can deliver the desired objectives. Hardliners believed that there can only be two parties, namely the party of God or the party of Satan, while the moderates were prepared to tolerate political dissent, albeit within Islamic guidelines. Hardliners saw all modernisation as evil, while moderates did not reject all contemporary values outright (*Islamic Affairs Analyst*, 1998: 4).

### **5.1. Modus operandi of Muslim Brotherhood**

Ever since its rapprochement with the Sadat regime, the Muslim Brotherhood has pursued a non-violent strategy of expanding its social and political presence. This strategy is similar to that espoused by Hasan Al-Banna – of societal upliftment, education and development. The Muslim Brotherhood has also adopted democracy as a means of change and as an objective. Therefore the Muslim Brotherhood has been involved in organising satellite institutions (such as Islamic charities and educational and sports associations) in the social and cultural sphere, where the authorities have tended to have a *laissez-faire* attitude, and in seeking influence in other, pre-existing and more general institutions by participating in elections. In other institutions, notably the professional associations or syndicates that play an important role in Egyptian public life, it has had appreciable success.

Under the Mubarak government the Muslim Brotherhood had a noticeable impact as a result of the policies followed by the government. While the radical movements were curtailed, the more moderate movements were given more

social space that resulted in the increased prominence of syndicates, university campus organisations and charitable and voluntary organisations. The modus operandi that the Muslim Brotherhood followed within these organisations has determined its success and added to its legitimacy in society.

The Muslim Brotherhood also competed successfully in student associations and university clubs. In addition to the religious appeal of the Muslim Brotherhood, it addressed the basic concerns of the students in providing affordable textbooks, study aid materials and free revision classes. While this approach was not new, the difference was in the improved quality that the Muslim Brotherhood offered. It had determined the needs of the students beforehand by means of questionnaires that were distributed on campuses. It also offered new services to the students by means of the Faculty of Medicine that offered treatment free of charge (Al-Awadi, 2005: 62-65).

The Muslim Brotherhood focused on three problematic areas for teachers, namely low salaries, lack of decent accommodation and lack of health care. In order to improve salaries the Muslim Brotherhood held meetings with the Vice-president of the Cairo University, Fathi Sorour (now the leader of the Egyptian National Assembly), in 1986 with a view to introducing new allowances for teachers. Health care was dealt with after the Muslim Brotherhood gained control of the Cairo University Teachers' Club and introduced a special medical card that entitled all teaching staff to free treatment (Al-Awadi, 2005: 66-67).

The Muslim Brotherhood was also successful in decentralising its system of management. The decision-making process was improved in Egypt's 28 provinces by giving a degree of autonomy to the regional branches. New internal departments were introduced and effective management focused on. While each department was concerned with a specific field ranging from finance, media, politics, religious fatwas, syndicates and students, each existed on two hierarchical levels. Coordination and networking existed between the regional and central departments and regular meetings took place (Al-Awadi, 2005: 68).

In this manner the Muslim Brotherhood developed a network through which it was connected to syndicates, student unions, teachers at university clubs, Islamic banks, schools, charities and voluntary organisations. These networks not only provided services but resulted in the sharing of experiences and expertise. The aid rendered during the 1992 earthquake is an example of the utilisation of these networks (Al-Awadi, 2005: 70).

In reaction to the increased prominence of the Muslim Brotherhood, the government reversed its policies on the movement and began a campaign against it. The government introduced the Syndicate Law in 1993 in terms of which 50% of the syndicate members had to vote for elections to be valid. By changing the election laws in general as well as in syndicates, the government hoped to combat the political ascendancy of the Muslim Brotherhood, which continued to grow despite the government's attempts to prevent this. In addition, the strong presence of the Muslim Brotherhood was also undermining the government's efforts to legitimise its own rule. The success of the Muslim Brotherhood in the lawyers' syndicates in particular was seen as a major threat in 1992. The victory of the Islamic Salvation Front in Algeria in the same year added to the government's fears (Al-Awadi, 2005: 76).

So, even though the Muslim Brotherhood has won representation in the assembly and professional associations, it has still been regarded with suspicion by adversaries within and outside Egypt. The West especially sees the Muslim Brotherhood as using the elections to gain power while preventing the implementation of democracy. Western critics fear that the Muslim Brotherhood might replace the present government and remove democratic institutions; other militant groups in Egypt again view the Muslim Brotherhood's co-operation with the present government as abandoning the principle of *jihad*.

When most of the Islamist groups justified the use of violence in response to the government's own use of violence, the Muslim Brotherhood affirmed non-violence as a measure to pre-empt the growth of radicalism as well as to appeal

to people's sense of justice. Even though Hasan al-Banna had emphasised that *jihad* is an obligation on all Muslims, aggression and offensive attacks are prohibited. Instead, *jihad* prescribes justice towards enemies and requires Muslims to show mercy in this respect (Abed-Kotob, 1995:332).

The importance of this stance on *jihad* by the Muslim Brotherhood is indicative of the change in attitude from the more militant views of Sayyid Qutb to the more moderate views of Hasan al-Banna. Qutb justified *jihad* as an armed rebellion in a society where a situation of *jahiliyya* exists. This concept of *jihad* was seen as more than just a personal struggle for self-improvement and that of society. Instead the practice of *takfir* that charged others with being unbelievers was advocated. Qutb stated that true Muslims were not able to survive in a *jahiliyya* society and Muslims had individual responsibilities within society to survive and adhere to the stipulations of Islam, despite societal conditions. These strategies of the Muslim Brotherhood differ from that of Hasan al-Banna, who "believed that the *da'wa* could be confined to a party aligned with patrons of the ruling authorities" (Sullivan and Sana Abed-Kotob, 1999: 54). Al-Banna saw the *da'wa* as addressing the entire Islamic community.

The Muslim Brotherhood claimed that it had never instructed its followers to resort to violence. However, "The Brethren are given credit for terrorism even if they condemn the act" (Abed-Kotob, 1995:333). It is also acknowledged that, while the Muslim Brotherhood espouses non-violence, there are violent offshoots in all groups as well as individuals who indulge in violent acts, but these do not represent the Muslim Brotherhood's command or views. They could be said to be a manifestation of the psychological and social pressures arising out of the society's dissatisfaction with the state's failure to announce its commitment to change laws that are contradictory to God's laws. In addition, the Muslim Brotherhood professes that it does not have the ability to control all the acts of its followers. Furthermore, it argues that the lack of opportunity for the youth especially to express their opinions by means of meetings and debates has led to disparity and lack of unity in their midst that could have resulted in individual acts

of violence. Thus, violence is due to government restrictions that have left legitimate channels of political action closed to those with Islamic tendencies. Other Muslim Brotherhood members have stated that as long as the Islamists are out of politics in Egypt, violence will continue. Therefore the Muslim Brotherhood will continue to work within the system in order to achieve full entry into the political system. With its strategy of disseminating its message from within the system, the Muslim Brotherhood hopes to use the electoral system to spread the message of Islam being the solution and to accomplish political and economic reform. In addition, the presence of the Muslim Brotherhood members in the Assembly will ensure that the government remains accountable for its position and actions within the realm of Islam. The movement will act as a system of checks and balances. In this manner it will also enhance its position in civil society.

The Muslim Brotherhood is using its non-violent stance to enhance its credibility. This strategy serves a two-fold purpose. Firstly, in an international environment where all Islamists are equated with violence, Brotherhood members endeavour to achieve their aims non-violently, thus enhancing their position in civil society. Secondly, the growth of non-violent groups in civil society could have a moderating influence on the radical elements in society. The Brotherhood sees political violence as the result of the government's refusal to acknowledge the legitimacy of the call for a return to Islam, and it sees its role as accomplishing this mission. This strategy also supports the original message as espoused by Hasan al-Banna, who regarded *jihad* as an important obligation, but also reminded followers of the "holy interdiction against aggression" and offensive attacks (Sullivan and Sana Abed-Kotob, 1999: 60). *Jihad* is seen as "justice towards enemies and the guidance of Muslims to show mercy in this respect". Furthermore, *jihad* is "to utter a word of truth in the presence of a tyrannical ruler" (Sullivan and Sana Abed-Kotob, 1999: 60).

By this stance the Muslim Brotherhood also hopes to separate itself from other radical Islamists who employ violence. The conduct of individual radical Islamists

is attributed to the restrictive policies of the government in not recognising the position of the Muslim Brotherhood. Despite the government restrictions, the Muslim Brotherhood is still intent on working within the system. There is ample evidence to show that the movement has become more inclined to use the current political system.<sup>33</sup> The most important indication of this has been its emphasis on the upgrading of the organisation to the status of a recognised political party. This view differs from the view of Hasan al-Banna in that he believed that the call or *da`wa* could not be confined to a party aligned with patrons of the ruling authority. The *da`wa* was to address the general interest of the entire Muslim community and not only a segment of the Muslim community, as in the case of a political party (Sullivan and Sana Abed-Kotob, 1999: 60).

Under the Mubarak government restrictions on the Muslim Brotherhood have continued despite its intent to work within the system (even though it boycotted the elections in 1990). It has declared its intention to participate fully in the political system as well as in the political process, to recognise the rights of other religious groups and to accept the application of the rule of law in dealing with militant organisations. Through this the Muslim Brotherhood hopes to demonstrate its willingness to work within a political system based on pluralism.

The importance of this stance of the Muslim Brotherhood is the change in attitude from the more militant views of Sayyid Qutb to the more moderate views of Hasan al-Banna. Qutb had justified *jihad* as an armed rebellion in a society where a situation of *jahiliyya* exists. This concept of *jihad* was seen as more than merely a personal struggle for self-improvement and the improvement of society. Already in 1969, when the Muslim Brotherhood's general guide Hasan al-Hudaybi published his work *Du`ah la Quḍah* (Missionaries, Not Judges) (Sullivan and Sana Abed-Kotob, 1999: 60), he declared that the principle of *takfir*, implying the rationale for active revolution, had been rejected. While Qutb stated that true Muslims are unable to survive in a *jahiliyya* society, al-Hudaybi argued that

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<sup>33</sup> See Chapter Four, section 5.1.

Muslims had individual responsibilities within society to survive and adhere to the stipulations of Islam despite societal conditions. In addition, a Muslim society should work together to establish an Islamic government without resorting to a revolution to replace an un-Islamic government (Sullivan and Sana Abed-Kotob, 1999: 60).

In this manner active political participation will be possible while recognising that the nation is the source of authority, not a single party or group. Respect for the principles of power by means of free and fair elections as well as securing freedom of belief and worship and freedom of speech and opinion have to be guaranteed. Furthermore, freedom to establish a political party without any interference and freedom to attend meetings or peaceful demonstrations must be ensured. The people have to be represented through a House of Representatives and processes of fair election in which all citizens who are eligible to vote are to be introduced. The role of the defence force has to be focused on an external threat and it should not be used to wield control or threaten to restrict freedom. The Minister of Defence as well as the police and all their agencies must be civilians, while the power of the president should be limited to that of a symbolic figure instead of the head of a specific party. Laws such as the Emergency Law as well as laws on the detention of political prisoners should be lifted and these prisoners released. Torture must be stopped. Laws that restrict trade unions should be revised. The Muslim Brotherhood's calls for reform of the judicial system by rendering the judiciary independent and separating the body of accusation from the body of investigation. Laws should be refined to fit the sharia. The Muslim Brotherhood also calls for the reform of elections, the economy, education and scientific research. The Al Azhar has to be reformed, while poverty has to be addressed. In addition, the Muslim Brotherhood demanded that attention be paid to the reform of social structures, the role of women, the position of the Copts, culture and foreign policy (*Arab Press Review*, 15/3/2004:11).

These views confirm that the Muslim Brotherhood has always endorsed a non-



violent approach to achieving its goals and has instead opted for a policy of accommodation and constitutional change within the existing political system. It has endorsed democracy within an open multiparty system and acknowledged the attempts of the Mubarak government to broaden its implementation in Egypt. However, calls are made for more openness and less repression to facilitate the change of the relationship between the state and Islam from a clash with the Islamist movement to a period of truce (*hudna*) or reconciliation (*muṣallaḥa*) (Sullivan and Sana Abed-Kotob, 1999: 49). It is also believed that security should be achieved within the parameters of law and justice and the trust of people in the government, rather than gained by repression. The Muslim Brotherhood emphasises the socio-economic disparity in Egypt. While addressing this need it also stresses the Islamic principle of *zakaṭ* by emphasising socio-economic principles. The *zakaṭ* falls within the “overall objective of establishing an Islamic society, governed in its totality by Islamic precepts” (Sullivan and Sana Abed-Kotob, 1999: 51).

These views of the Muslim Brotherhood are an important deviation from the radical views held previously, while they also indicate that individuals are not responsible for the actions of society, but rather the whole society has to work collectively to establish an Islamic government. The Muslim Brotherhood has consequently refrained from branding society as unbelievers as well as using violence to achieve its aims. The Muslim Brotherhood as a group is also adamant about protecting itself against blanket accusations made with regard to radical Islamist groups that do not adhere to the Muslim Brotherhood’s principles. It endeavours to be seen as the true representatives of society. It supports an Islamic society based on the sharia, with the state adopting democratic ideals such as liberty, representation and accountability as well as the pursuit of socio-economic justice. Rulers are held accountable for enforcing Islamic laws and ideals. The position of the Muslim Brotherhood in society is one that will not be removed; as its focus changes, it is likely to become even more entrenched, especially as regards its call for the expansion of democracy. The Muslim

Brotherhood has been encouraged by renewed attempts by the government and the West, especially the USA, to suppress militant forces within Islamist movements. They, the Muslim Brotherhood are deemed to be functioning as a legitimate outlet for the grievances of Egyptian society while also mitigating the growth of more radical elements (Sullivan and Sana Abed-Kotob, 1999: 51).

The General Guide of the Muslim Brotherhood set out its reform initiative for Egypt in an *Arab Press Review* of 15 March 2004. It stated that it based its conviction on the fact that Allah changes conditions only if the people change internally. Currently the Arab world is witnessing changes imposed by external forces under the guise of genuine reform, but this is a fallacy in that these reforms are only a confirmation of USA hegemony. The Egyptian government is also blamed for not implementing reform fast enough. For all these ills, the Muslim Brotherhood has provided answers. It continues to clarify its views and starts by rejecting any foreign hegemony and condemning foreign intervention in Egypt's domestic affairs. Islam demands reform for its people in order to provide freedom, justice, equality and the *Shura*. Political reform is seen as the launching point for any reform, but one party alone cannot achieve this. Thus, the Muslim Brotherhood sees the unity of all interest groups in a combined effort as the only salvation. People have to be called to the Path of Allah, and the sharia and the Qur'an have to be re-introduced. The Muslim Brotherhood sees reform taking place along basic lines, namely constructing the Egyptian character by focusing on belief in Allah, His messenger and His Books and legislation. Other aspects are the upbringing of the youth according to the correct principles as well as providing advocates of Islam free reign to explain its principles, using all legal means to prompt people to abide by worship and staging a campaign to purge the media of any material that is contrary to the rules of Islam. Areas of political reform focus on a "republican system of rule provided that it is a democratic, constitutional and parliamentary one within the Islamic principles" (*Arab Press Review*, 15/3/2004:11).

Currently the Muslim Brotherhood still tries to address the needs of the Muslim

community. However, it concedes that restricting the organisation has to take place at local level according to the norms of the community. It demands full party status for participation in politics at the national level, and has led an intensified campaign to take control of the syndicates and professional associations (Abed-Kotob, 1995:330). However, its members are still imprisoned regularly, as happened prior to the presidential elections on 9 September 2005.

## **5.2 Modus operandi of other Islamic resurgent groups**

In contrast to the non-violent Muslim Brotherhood, most of the other Islamic groups adhered to a more violent strategy. Many acts of violence perpetrated by these groups reflected the violent manner in which the government dealt with them. This generation of Islamists had very little religious training, even though they might have been well qualified academically. Justification of their actions showed a “creative interpretation” of the written word, whether it was the Sunna, Qur’an or medieval scholars such as Ibn Taimiyya. In general, the more radical Islamist movements either supported Islamisation from above, as in the case of the Iranian revolution, or from below at grass-roots level. The individual’s daily life was targeted and they became involved in community projects and social services. The minorities that justified violent action against repressive measures supported Islamisation from above. Various groups that derived their ideology from the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt fall within this category.

Following the break with *al-Jihad* in 1984, *al-Jama’a al-Islamiyya* developed a strategy that incorporated the mass agitation approach of the 1970s campus radicals. It also reflected the group’s roots in the society of Upper Egypt and the extent to which it was articulating popular resentments, which combined regionalist as well as class and sectarian elements (Kepel, 2002: 218).

The re-Islamising of society led to the *al-Jama’a al-Islamiyya* investing in the poorer

quarters of Cairo, which had been neglected by the authorities, and imposing its own conception of Islamic order, turning these areas into “Islamic liberated zones”. The Imbaba neighbourhood on the north-western edge of Cairo, which the *Jama‘a*’s local leader, Sheikh Gaber, proclaimed an “Islamic state”, was an example of this. In establishing an “Islamic order”, the *al-Jama‘a al-Islamiyya* engaged in massive intimidation of the Coptic Christian population, notably in the Assiut and Minya districts of Upper Egypt.

Despite the cease-fire and collective renunciation of radicalism, the Egyptian youth is still radicalised owing to expectations, and while there has been a shift away from Sayyid Qutb, there is still some loyalty towards him. *In the Shadow of the Qur’an* is still a best-selling Islamic book, and *Ma‘alim fi ‘l-Ṭariq* (Signposts on the Road) is also still sold and read. However, his thinking is not properly debated. There has been no thorough written critique of Qutb’s thought within the Islamist movement (ICG, 2003: 12). Thus, despite the *Jama‘a*’s admission that its campaign of violence was illicit rebellion, not *jihad*, the intellectual reasoning of the contrary view developed by Qutb has not been effectively challenged. An example is the *Document of the Holy War and Aspects of Revolutionary Action* published by the *Al-Jihad* Group (Thabet, 2001:22), which explains their view of the world order. This work targets the superpowers and the UN as being pagan forces that support “propagandistic slogans such as human rights, global peace, freedom” (Thabet, 2001: 22). The document refers to occupational forces suppressing people, paying particular attention to Israel and Jewish aspirations. Similarly, global capitalism is termed occupation. Paganism is used to refer to the concept of racism and secularism, Western materialism and democracy, while nationalism and minorities are seen as proof of the failure of modern rule. The *Jihad* movements see the US role in the Arab Gulf as brutal and as the exploitation of resources.

### 5.3. New strategies

The new resurgent revolutionary projects of ideological transformation have been replaced by plans to implement the sharia, purify morals and surrender the right to individual interpretation (*ijtihad*), focusing on filling daily lives with morality and establishing the sharia. "It has replaced a discourse on the state with a discourse on society" (Roy, 1994: 76). Strategies of action have been detected within resurgent movements, namely entry into official political life, re-investment in the social sphere as well as the formation of small groups that are either ultra-orthodox religious movements or terrorist groups. The entry of the Muslim Brotherhood in the 1980s into politics was indicative of this trend. Its support base has been derived from intellectuals with a modern education who have experienced loss of social status, as well as the urban lower middle classes. Thus many Muslim Brotherhood members are leaving politics and are committing themselves to preaching transformation of daily morals, a return to strict moral practices and lobbying for the implementation of the sharia. They assume positions in professional associations and finance.

Roy (1994) argues that during the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, as the Islamists became enclosed within their own justifications of thought patterns, the weakening of Islamist positions also started to take place, especially regarding strict fundamentalist interpretations. Instead, Islamists have increasingly become involved in striving for re-Islamisation from below. A more intellectual stance has become prominent among Islamists, in contrast to previous generations. While these new generations of Islamists who support a return to the stipulations of Islam people concentrate more on socio-educational issues than political ones, focusing on political integration. This popular terminology of a "return to Islam" still serves as a powerful motivator but has, among these new generations of Islamists, adopted a socio-educational stance rather than a political one. New generations of Islamists have become integrated into the fabric of society before they have questioned the state. Their focus has been on rectifying the Islamic

way of life from the bottom up rather than resorting to violent confrontation.

## **6. CONCLUSIONS**

Under the Mubarak government resurgent movements have gone from violent confrontation to strategies of co-operating with the government. The defeat of *jihad* groups that had been inspired by Qutb's ideologies presents an important opportunity to channel Egyptian Islamism in positive directions and to reform Egyptian politics as a whole. The attacks in Egypt in 2004 and 2005 are indicative of the fact that there are still serious under-currents of discontent in society. Unless the Egyptian government changes its approach, opens up the political field and undertakes serious political reform, the frustration that many Egyptians feel could lead to a recurrence of violent activism at some stage.

### **6.1. New political paradigms are needed**

What is required in Egypt is a governmental system through which reform is generated from within and that includes the opposition. This mindset still has not changed and the major power-broker currently in Egypt, the USA, also does not follow a policy towards Egypt that is conducive to internally generated changes. The USA exerts pressure on the present government to adopt its own norms. President Mubarak has inherited an authoritarian political system from Sadat and Nasser. It rests on control of the economy and will, therefore, never abdicate voluntarily to the private sector.

Despite imposing his identity and policy after he took over from President Sadat, President Mubarak paid attention to issues that were problematic under previous governments. However, most of these issues were not adequately addressed. As before, the government seeks legitimacy, remains autocratic, excludes those who oppose it and has so far failed to rectify the socio-economic ills of Egyptian

society.

President Mubarak sought legitimacy by adopting Islamic symbols and Islamising the socio-political space as well as blaming countries such as Sudan for rendering assistance to groups in Egypt. The Mubarak government still has not managed to acquire legitimacy. The opinion was expressed in an article in the *Al-Ahram* of 14 August 2004 that “no regime since 1952 has had legitimacy ... There is no legitimacy other than that obtained from the consent of the people through free and fair elections. When under colonial rule the British and the palace manipulated elections, we at least had rotation of power, but instead, we have ended up with a government that has no accountability” (*Al-Ahram*, August 2004). This political strategy diverted attention from Egypt’s internal problems. In adopting Islamic symbols the government has not been successful in countering Islamists. Also, its failure to implement genuine political and economic reforms could create animosity in future.

External sources of income have made it unnecessary for successive governments to succumb to pressure to change, but also proved to be a weakness in the government that has been targeted and exploited by the Islamic opposition groups with some success. In addition, the fragmentation of Mubarak’s government by lack of organisational and ideological cohesiveness within the political elite has undermined the effectiveness of the government’s efforts to reform. Key variables influencing Egypt’s political economy are its external sources of income from tourism, Suez Canal revenue and substantial US aid. Lack of reform has been another weakness exploited by the Islamic opposition movements, even though the government is simply too strong for the alternative elite to challenge it.

The strategies followed by the Mubarak government have coincided with the US-led war on terrorism and were therefore fairly successful in apprehending figureheads as well as followers of radical Islamic resurgent movements. However, the continued presence of external influences such as those exercised

by the USA will continue to discredit the government. The visible influence and role of the West, especially the USA, has remained and has increased despite the Islamic world's negative view of the USA.

In addition, the legacies of the past, under Presidents Nasser and Sadat, have simply been perpetuated under President Mubarak. No significant changes have been introduced and aspects such as socio-economic inequalities, lack of transparency in elections, a restricted press, martial law and corruption, to name but a few, have remained unchanged. The fact that the government has managed to address the violent conduct of Islamic opposition groups does not imply society's grievances have disappeared. In fact, aspects such as the collapse of apartment buildings due to sub-standard materials and workmanship, as well as the train crash in 2002, all resulted in severe criticisms of the government's inability to meet the needs of society at large. The opposition has changed its strategy but will not disappear until its grievances have been met. In addition, the political choices are equally polarised, with secularism opposing theocracy, authoritarian control opposing liberalisation, and those who still support the legacy of previous leaders such as Sadat, Nasser, and Hasan al-Banna also opposing one another. As a result the political scene is still influenced by those who rose to power under President Sadat. Apart from these diverse groups, President Mubarak's personal style and preferences also contribute to his failure to structure a client group through which he can direct Egypt's affairs (*Al Ahram*, 14 August 2004).

It therefore seems that by containing the opposition and portraying especially the Islamists as evil, the government has managed to retain the status quo. It is consequently unlikely that the present government will legalise all opposition and allow new parties soon. This situation will provide for cosmetic changes and little reform.



## 6.2. Failed strategies do not eradicate motivating factors

Even though Islamism in Egypt has dissipated and no longer represents a real threat to the government, the factors motivating the development of Islamism in Egypt are still there. In addition, the geo-strategic importance of Egypt renders the decline of Islamism in Egypt important because in the past the growth of Islamist movements in Egypt had given rise to similar movements elsewhere. The motivation for the events of 11 September 2001 has also been attributed (rightly or wrongly) to the ideology of Sayyid Qutb in the popular press.

The future of *al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya* in Egypt became clear in the wake of the radical changes and ideological shifts announced by its members after having served a 25-year imprisonment term for involvement in the assassination of President Sadat. The announcement of the dissolution of the military wing of the group has been seen as a prelude to totally disbanding *al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya* and turning it into a *Dawa'a* society such as Sharia-regulated societies and Sunna associations. The previous political attitude of the group ended with its withdrawal from its position and readiness to apologise to the Egyptian people. In future there could be attempts to change the established leaders and replace them with second-rank leaders embracing peaceful ideas and ideology. Division has already taken place in the group. Some members, who did not approve of the continuation of the current leaders in their positions, have deserted the group to live abroad. By the same token, the *al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya* has achieved a relative balance between acceptance in society and the maintenance of its historical position as an Islamic movement in Egypt.

The rise and fall of *al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya* is indicative of the strategic errors that most of the radical movements have committed by failing to cultivate and sustain a strong social support base and simply focusing on capturing political power. The al-Jama also underestimated the strength of local, regional and international opposition. Furthermore, its shock tactics alienated it from the Egyptian public.

The Luxor attack in 1997 proved to be a case in point. After a cease-fire was declared in 1999 a subsequent re-organisation of the *al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya's* leadership abroad resulted in the marginalisation of extremist elements and gave more prominence to a new collective *Shura* that supported the cease-fire. However, the impact of governmental security measures compelled them to concentrate on evading arrest instead of focusing on the group's activities.

Currently, Islamist groups air criticism of the government for its failure to uphold Islamic mores in a particular area. The government responds by defending its actions, and emphasising its Islamic 'correctness', transferring significant administrative powers to Al Azhar in that particular field. The Muslim Brotherhood spreads its views through sympathetic preachers and the newspaper *Al-Sha'b*, which regularly prints statements by leading Muslim Brotherhood. The radical groups, such as *al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya*, the Islamic *Jihad* and the Vanguard of Conquest, relocated to Afghanistan from where they must rely on their networks and whatever coverage they can get from the international media.

The government's strategies on Islamists have been successful even in convincing other governments to hand over any person wanted by the Egyptian government. This, together with the relocation of Islamists abroad, internationalised the targets of the Islamists and led to *al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya* members, as well as Islamists in general from Egypt, joining the Al Qa'ida movement based in Afghanistan, which claimed responsibility for the attack on the USA of 11 September 2001. While radical movements such as *al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya* thus declined in importance, moderate Islamist organisations are satisfying the needs of the people and have created an alternative structure to the government through their welfare and social services. So far, some of the individuals have been apprehended in the US-led war on terrorism, some of which are of Egyptian origin.

While Islamism has ended without creating a radically new society or bringing forth a new ideology, sustained reaction against external "isms" or ideologies has

taken place. Even though theological and political rivalries or acts of violence during the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century have not brought any new ideas to the fore, the government will have to address those aspects posing a challenge – social inequalities, crowded cities, corruption, political repression, democratic deficits and globalisation. If not, a new ideology is more than likely to develop.

### **6.3. Islamic resurgent movements have never been a united front**

The Islamic opposition movements in Egypt have never been a unified movement but have been characterised by factions with different approaches towards the government and for alleviating the socio-economic ills of society and spiritual laxity. The more militant groups demand radical changes, while the moderate groups such as the Muslim Brotherhood call for gradual changes from within the political system together with the support of the masses (Kepel 1984: 242).

Faction fighting among Islamist movements, sectarian quarrels and ideological and political rivalries undermined the ability of militant groups to achieve victories. Islamists have also been divided into radical, centrist and more conservative elements and have not been able to form a united front either nationally or internationally. Lack of well-defined political and economic programmes has added to their failure. The violent methods they used have further added to their marginalisation in societies. When the government succeeded in mobilising the internal security apparatus, it managed to overcome the movements. Despite successive Egyptian leaders' discourses, none has provided insight into opposition movements. Islamists differ in their interpretations of their objectives and their modus operandi. Discontent has resulted in three basic mechanisms of escape, namely rebellion, the *hijra* and emigration to other countries. Their discontent led them to become involved in

counter-strategies to overthrow the government. "Islamist movements function as a surrogate for the direct political expression which the regime suppresses in all other social debate ... the Islamists implicitly criticise the established order and devise actions that aim to transform and overturn it" (Kepel 1984: 242).

Despite Egypt's success in destroying the *al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya* movement, the splintering of this movement into radical cells and factions that have spread as far as Afghanistan took place and reverberated in the attacks on the USA. Also, despite the government's success in dealing with Islamists, the concerns of legitimate opposition groups have not been addressed. While the radical movements have failed in their strategies, their aims have been communicated successfully in that they have exposed the weakness of the political system and have focused on economic problems, corruption and the government's subordination to the USA. In addition, the defeat of the Islamists does not mean that the mainstream Islamist movement will stop trying to achieve social changes through political and social mobilisation. While the government still deploys the Egyptian army alongside police at tourist points, the tourism trade has not returned to its previous level. The government's acceptance of a legitimate opposition has not given it the ability to differentiate between Islamists who espouse violence and those who do not.

Even though the Muslim Brotherhood is kept out of the government and depicted as perpetuating Islamism, the mere fact that it is still in existence proves that it still has a role to play. It has, for example, become the main beneficiary of the demise of the *al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya*. While the government is apprehensive of the possible destabilisation of political liberalisation, it is more than likely that expanding political participation will prevent further radicalisation. The Muslim Brotherhood still supports the concept of the establishment of an Islamic state, a goal alien to Western concepts. However, "it is significant that the vision of an Islamic state encompasses other, less alien objectives, namely the imposition of democratic ideals such as liberty, representation, and accountability and the pursuit of socio-economic justice" (Abed-Kotob, 1995:336). Furthermore, the

Muslim Brotherhood's strategy allows for total accommodation within the existing political system. Thus, whereas the West and Islamic militants often interpret the armed struggle as *jihad*, the Muslim Brotherhood has chosen a different option, namely a struggle to employ justice, mercy and communication in such a manner that the envisaged Islamic state will be built from the individual upwards.

#### **6.4. Islamic resurgent movements see Islam as political ideology**

Islamic resurgent movements should be seen against the background of Islam, which is both a religion and a state or a complete system governing all aspects of life. Islamic resurgent movements therefore emphasise the confrontational as well as the accommodating *modus operandi*, in achieving their objectives. The confrontational groups espouse an anti-democratic and hostile philosophy that encourages violence and terrorism. In contrast, the accommodating approach argues against violence and supports movements that are politically moderate, thus representing ultimate political progress towards greater democracy and popular government. Therefore, members of the Muslim Brotherhood regard their movement as more than a political party with goals and functions in civil society based on Islamic values.

Each generation of the Islamist movement focused on achieving its aim by means of a definite field of activity. Violence was justified in the removal of those in power that were not "Islamic" but in a state of *jahiliyya*. Sayyid Qutb saw in Egyptian society a situation of *jahiliyya* that could only be rectified when "a head of state exercises legitimate power only insofar as he carries out the will of God ... and ... the Qur'an is our constitution" (Kepel 1984, 13). The Muslim Brotherhood's stance is different from that of Sayyid Qutb. The current views of the Muslim Brotherhood are more closely aligned with the views of Hasan al-Banna and entail a shift away from Qutb's charge of takfir, which the more militant groups have adopted. In his criticism of Egyptian society in *Ma 'alim fi al-*

*Tariq* (Signposts along the Road), Qutb applied the concept of *jahiliyya* (paganism) to both rulers and society and insisted that any normal Muslim who did not uphold Islamic tenets was a *kafir* (unbeliever who was no longer Muslim) (Abed-Kotob, 1995: 335).

This laid the groundwork for Qutb's authorisation of active revolution, for *jahiliyya* and Islam could not coexist in the same social order. Indeed, Qutb's very definition of *jihad* was a complete armed rebellion against the rule by secular laws (Abed-Kotob, 1995: 333). These views are different from the thoughts of Hasan al-Banna, who judged society harshly and preferred to teach the Islamic society until it was rebuilt peacefully. The view that the Muslim Brotherhood had shifted away from Qutb's ideology towards that of Hasan al-Banna already became evident in 1969, when the general guide of the Muslim Brotherhood, Hasan al-Hudaybi, published his book, *Du'ah la Quḍah* "(Missionaries, Not Judges). Al-Hudaybi states that the Muslim Brotherhood rejects the practice of *takfir* and thus the rationale for active revolution. Since then the Muslim Brotherhood has continued to support this statement while blaming the government on several occasions for terrorism because of the manner in which it dealt with the Islamic opposition groups. Islamists have not managed either to convince the masses that their modus operandi of violence and terror has achieved any governmental changes. Even their charitable achievements have not reached the desired aims (Abed-Kotob, 1995:333).

The Islamic resurgent movements have begun to treat Islam as a political ideology because they introduced changes in the way the Islamic political tradition is understood. While they want to preserve the close link between religion and politics that the traditional jurisprudence had developed, they want to reverse the order within this link. Traditional jurists had forged a link between politics and religion by giving a religious legitimacy to political power. The political Islamists maintain that religion and politics cannot be separated, but because they are now in the position of resisting the existing state, not of legitimising it,

they are seeking the politicisation of a particular vision of religion that they have in mind. To achieve this purpose the contemporary Islamists are often inclined to be more innovative and less textual in their approach. They do, of course, invoke the text and quote the source, but in doing so they are highly selective and remarkably innovative. Political precedence is of practically no interest to them, neither is the main body of official jurisprudence, apart from a few exceptions such as *Ibn Taimiya*. Indeed, in spite of being *Sunnis*, they seem to have no qualms about borrowing concepts and practices from the anti-*Sunni* sects: their major concept of *ḥakimiyya* seems to be of *kharijite* inspiration, and their frequently practised *taqiyya* seems to be of *Shi'i* inspiration. What political Islam keeps from the past is the juridic tradition of linking politics and religion. But even then, it seeks to transform the formalistic and symbolic link that the jurists had forged between politics and religion into a real bond. Furthermore, political Islamists want to reverse the traditional relationship between the two spheres so that politics becomes subservient to religion, and not the other way round, as was the case historically. This deviation is not understood in the West. For example, the public reacted negatively to the government's intervention in people's daily lives. Resurgent movements began carving out areas of autonomous activities and establishing structures and value systems that gave meaning to their lives in the face of an oppressive system. They justified this process on religious grounds and communities that benefited turned religious. Islam was relied on more and more to provide structure and meaning to everyday life (Abed-Kotob, 1995:333).

Roy stated that while the Islamists' message had a clear message in the beginning, it has become less so, especially since there is no pyramidal organisation to ensure its transformation into coherent political practice from below, as was the case for Marxist movements (Roy, 1994: 113). The social diversity and differences of opinions regarding the authentic political and social implications of the Quranic message determines this diffusion so that individual interpretations deviate from the original.

## **6.5. Role of civil society**

“Islam and Islamic movements are not necessarily anti-Western, anti-American or anti-democratic ... most significant aspects of Islamism are not bombs and hostages but clinics and schools” (Abed-Kotob, 1995: 322). Since the inception of the Muslim Brotherhood, Islamic resurgent movements have had a definite role and function in social and civil society due to the unwillingness or inability of government to alleviate these problems. In 2001 the Egyptian government was thought to be on the brink of collapse due to sectarian violence in Upper Egypt leading to terror attacks in Cairo. In addition it was proven that Islamist organisations were capable of handling social crises after the 1992 earthquake.

## **6.6. Liberals see Islam as evolving over time and place.**

Within Egypt the liberals see the Islamic heritage in terms of the times and places in which it was produced. Binder rightly states, “For Islamic traditionalists, the language of the Qur’an is the basis of absolute knowledge of the world. For Islamic liberals, the language of the Qur’an is co-ordinated with the essence of revelation, but the content and meaning is not essentially verbal. Since the words of the Qur’an do not exhaust the meaning of revelation, there is a need for an effort at understanding which is based on the words but which goes beyond them, seeking that which is represented or revealed by language” (Binder, 1988: 4).

Therefore people such as Taha Hussein and Ahmad Amin have undertaken the study of the evolution of law, political and social history as well as the hadith and philosophy to indicate that Islam has been evolving over time. In this process of



evolution it has maintained its allegiance to the core prophetic message. So far their efforts have justified the use of *ijtihad* in a flexible manner to deliver pluralistic solutions instead of uniform solutions as sought by the radical groups. Thus Islam would be able to join the rest of the world by taking from it what was needed without having to bridge the divide separating the two worlds.

As Islam had very little to offer in providing political paradigms, because it had not developed a modern Islamic political system after the abolishment of the Caliphate, liberals are of the opinion that the radicals' call for an Islamic state is an illusion, while the sharia only refers to matters pertaining to rituals and personal status. Therefore, the liberals see the real political reform as compromising democracy, human and civil rights, tolerance, transparency and accountability in government. They also doubted that the *Shura* could be seen as historically justified from an Islamic theological point of view. However, the liberals do not necessarily enjoy official support and many live outside Egypt. Despite the fact that their modus operandi differs from that of the radicals, they rely on organisational skills required in a globally connected world via internet, namely websites and chat rooms, while the media and conferences also provide a forum.

The Islamic opposition movements under President Sadat took Qutb's concept further by justifying the killing of the 'pharaoh'. Under President Mubarak the movements that were involved in the Luxor attacks continued with their justification. However, they became lesser ideologically driven than before. As a result their ideological justification has deviated even further from the ideas professed in the past; however, they have not developed any new ideas. They still rely on, or refer to, past justifications or have simply acted on impulse and have not necessarily been driven by a specific ideology.

The caliphate, in Qutb's conception, was a civil, not a religious system. It was improvised by people, but did not in any way deviate from God's authority or Muhammad's prophethood. Nor should the contemporary Muslims rely too

heavily on the elaborations of the early jurists on matters of political and social organisation, because the current ‘interests’ of Muslims (*maṣāliḥ*) are very different from the interests of those who lived nearly a thousand years earlier and, who thus required different rulings and regulations (Binder, 1988: 4).

Qutb also argues that Islam is against imparting a religious character to politics and the state, or uniting the two authorities in one. This should be left for the endeavour of the people. *Imama* (leadership, rule), he reiterates, is not – except for the Shi’is – part of the fundamentals of religion (*usûl al-din*), but is a branch of jurisprudence (*furu` al-fiqh*). Religion and the state were distinguished from the beginning; thus the Qur’an could be regarded as the ‘constitution’ of the umma in its religious sense, whereas the *ṣaḥīfa* (the ‘Constitution’ of Madina) was meant to regulate the affairs of the Muslim community in its broader, political sense. Several contemporary writers on Islam and politics suggest similar ideas. Thus, for example, although *‘Ismat Saif al-Dawla* agrees that *‘ibadat* (matters of worship) are collective rather than individual in Islam, he rejects the concept of the Islamic state either in the sense of a state including only Muslims, or in the sense of a state including all Muslims. Each of these, he maintains, is “a mythical state, not an Islamic State because it was based on a decision by the Muslims of the time, and not on a commandment from God or a recommendation from the prophet” (Binder, 1988: 4).

The neo-fundamentalists’<sup>34</sup> concept of God’s *ḥakimiyya* is, in Qutb’s view, a *Kharijite* deviation, while, in his opinion the excessive emphasis on sharia is heavily influenced by Jewish tradition. Unlike Judaism, which is mainly legislation, Islam is basically a message of compassion and morals, with legislation occupying a secondary place. Thus among the Qur’an’s 6 000 verses,

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<sup>34</sup> Neo-fundamentalists are often splinter groups from the larger fundamentalist gatherings, and are usually more radical or militant in orientation. They tend to be more eclectic in their selection and in their reading of the authoritative sources, and they are generally more inclined towards immediate action of one sort or another. Examples of such groups are the *Takfir* in Egypt, and the *Jihad* in Egypt and in several Arab countries.

fewer than 700 are of a legislative nature, and of these only about 200 verses deal with regulations of worship. Qutb argues that the legislative category has been the main one in Judaism, to the extent that Moses is called the giver of legislation and in Judaism the *torah* is understood as an act of legislation. The Arabic term sharia, on the other hand, originally meant path or method. Islamic thought has thus, in his view, followed Judaism without realising the difference in nature between the two religions (Binder, 1988: 4). Thus, the current Islamists have gone further than the earlier generation of Islamic reformers in assuming that Islam alone, and on its own, can offer the solution to all problems.

## **7. SUMMARY**

The significance of the Mubarak government lies in the perpetuation of the type of government that was introduced under President Nasser in 1952. While Egypt became a more modern country, the autocratic style of government has remained the same. While the external forces under the Nasser government were the former Soviet Union, the USA has been exerting power through President Mubarak. Thus, despite the efforts of the Islamic opposition movements to obtain a more representative government void of external influences, it appears as if very little has changed in Egypt since independence in 1952. The question that needs to be answered, however, is what the future dispensation in Egypt is going to be.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### CONCLUSION

***“The belief that worldly Islam ought to take the form of a political community is not dependent upon a theory of the caliphate or indeed any specific doctrine regarding the ideal form of Islamic government.” (Binder, 1988: 128)***

#### 1. SUMMARY

In recent times Islamic resurgent movements, including those in Egypt, have been presented as obstacles, intellectually and historically, on the road to progress, modernisation and Westernisation. However, when the historical factors that have motivated them are scrutinised, the broader framework against which events took place comes to light. Historical circumstances in Egypt at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century led to a drive for independence in the aftermath of colonialism. The newly independent government, however, failed to provide a political as well as socio-economic dispensation inclusive of Islam. External stakeholders such as the colonial forces, the former Soviet Union and the USA indirectly encouraged the development of resurgent movements, especially in Egypt, because they were seen by local people as imposing foreign political and socio-economic concepts as well as rendering aid to unpopular governments.

An important motivational factor initially was the desire for achieving independence. Nationalism was emphasised, while preserving the Islamic character of the country. Hasan al-Banna was the first Islamic reformist to stress the importance of creating a modern political party and the necessity of formulating a comprehensive programme of action. However, in his description of

the future of Islam he did not refer to the institution of the caliphate as a future goal, but generalised about it “within the terms of the Islamic system” (*al-nizām al-Islami*) without much specification as to what this meant with regard to governmental theory and practice (Mitchell, 1969: 40). It has not been clarified whether the Islamic system (mentioned by al-Banna) refers to a more radical dispensation that emphasises a caliphate concept (as proposed by *Hizb al Tahrir* or *al-Jama’ā al-Islamiyya*) where strict understanding and interpretation of the Sacred Text are required. Alternatively, a more pragmatic option has been suggested of following *ijtihad* that would reconcile Islam with contemporary political systems. This vagueness about the concept of an Islamic state has survived until the present and is still found among Islamic resurgent movements everywhere.<sup>35</sup>

Animosity between the Free Officers and the Muslim Brotherhood and the subsequent harsh treatment of Sayyid Qutb in the concentration camps gave justification to the adoption of violent means instead of the more moderate stance of al-Banna and the Muslim Brotherhood in general. Radical movements were motivated by the views of contemporary ideologists such as Sayyid Qutb as well as by historic figures and ancient groups such as the Kharijites, especially under the Nasser government, when severe repression was experienced. Radical movements supported Islamisation of the society through state power.

The objectives of resurgent movements were to achieve an inclusive political system within the frame of reference of Islam. These objectives were aimed not so much at achieving an Islamic state, as at a dispensation in which Islamic principles, norms and values were central. Islam had to be more than tokenism providing legitimacy to leaders. In achieving these objectives a variety of modi operandi have been followed, ranging from moderate measures to calling for *total-Jihad*. The current aim of the largest resurgent movement, the Muslim Brotherhood, has been to interpret Islam as both a religion and a state or *din wa*

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<sup>35</sup> In the aftermath of the July 2005 bombs in the UK groups such as the *Hizb al Tahrir* have been accused of wanting to establish an Islamic state.

*dawla*. Islam is thus a complete system governing all aspects of life.

The objectives of the Muslim Brotherhood have evolved to the current stage of accepting democracy with a multiparty system. Its members acknowledge the attempts of the Mubarak government to broaden the implementation of democracy in Egypt; however, they are still excluded from any participation in the political process. A call for greater democracy has been made by Dr Mohammad Umara of the Muslim Brotherhood, who stated: "This encourages us to ask President Mubarak, whom we recognise as having transferred the relationship between the state and Islam from a clash with the Islamist movement to a period of truce (*hudna*), we encourage him to transfer this relationship to a period of peace (*muṣalaḥa*)" (Abed-Kotob, 1995: 326). Therefore the Muslim Brotherhood has been supportive of an open multiparty system in Egypt. While the discourse of the Muslim Brotherhood does not specify the type of democracy sought, nor the type of political order conceptualised, the vital criterion is the application of the sharia by the government and not the technical form of the state itself.

A multifaceted society has also determined the differences in *modus operandi* and objectives of the Islamic resurgent movements. No one single factor has been found to be responsible for the existence of resurgent movements. The approaches of Islamic resurgent movements are diverse and they do not have a common agenda or *modus operandi*. The strategies of Islamic resurgent movements have been determined and justified through interaction among them. Differences among them do not lie "in the question of the necessity of an Islamic state, but on the means by which to arrive at one and on the attitude to adopt with respect to the powers in place; destruction, opposition, collaboration, indifference" (Roy, 1994:24). Radical and moderate reactions have been determined by convictions based on different diagnoses of the problems at hand as well as of how to deal with the problems within the appropriate spheres of politics, religion and socio-economics.

The moderates support social and political activities aimed at re-Islamisation of

society from below in order to achieve an Islamic state. Moderate Islamic resurgent movements support the establishment of an Islamic society through preaching and educational methods from below as well as the introduction of the sharia into legislation. These moderate Islamists reject excommunication; they see unjust power as preferable to the division of the community (*fitna*). Moderate modi operandi have focused on education and dissemination of the Islamic message to uplift society out of their decline as a result of the imitation (*taqlid*) of Western concepts.

The radical resurgent movements that adhered to Qutb's ideas either applied the concept of *jahiliyya* and *takfir* in its widest possible interpretation or confined this excommunication only to the leaders. The right to individual interpretation or *ijtihad* of the founding text (Qur'an and the Sunna) without regard to previous commentaries divided the world (according to them) into the abode of unbelief (*dar al-kufr*) and the house of Islam (*dar al-Islam*). Some espoused withdrawal from society, while others supported political collaboration with the government with a view to Islamise; another group saw the only way out in forcibly seizing power.

Sayyid Qutb supported a radical approach that justified *jihad* against the leaders and those in society living in *jahiliyya* or a state of ignorance. *Jihad* or a complete armed rebellion against secular laws was justified because the said leadership replaced God's sharia with man-made laws. This modus operandi was an important deviation from the path espoused by al-Banna. Al-Banna wanted reform of Egyptian legal and political systems by implementation of the sharia. Qutb deviated from al-Banna by wanting to rid society of the state of *jahiliyya*. This entailed a feeling of spiritual maturity, freeing society from *jahiliyya* and *jihad* against the *jahiliyya* society.

Since his era all radical Islamic resurgent movements have built on Qutb's concepts. Despite a lull in activities in Egypt since the 1997 Luxor attack in

Egypt, the bomb attacks of 24 July 2005 are indicative of unmet expectations. It would seem that governmental changes should provide for equal socio-economic progress, and governmental systems should evolve to include everybody. A segment of society that is left behind will continue to seek inclusion. Despite the fact that it appears as if society has been fairly modernised in Egypt, a political and socially integrated society will only be achieved if and when those experiencing exclusion have been totally integrated and the government has delivered promised goods and services. More openness and less repression to facilitate the change are sought. The process of generating a workable system would have to take place in relative isolation – that is, without coercion from the West for political gain or political dominance. This should lead to positive dialogue to contribute to an internally generated political system.

## **2. THEMATIC OVERVIEW**

The different hypotheses stated in the introductory chapter, subdivision 8, have been elucidated in the thesis. This thesis has found that the term resurgent is a very apt description for the phenomenon of Muslims expressing their aims and objectives, using various strategies. Despite the fact that the movements were ideologically centred on achieving political and socio-economic aims, a recurrent central theme can be discerned. This central theme has been the manner in which the Islamic way of life had to become compatible with a foreign and external culture. During the process of adaptation and seeking of own identity the predominant role of Islam was also pointed out. Unless these aspects are understood, external sources will always fail to fully comprehend resurgent movements. Islamic principles and values have remained the focal point of Muslims in Egypt.

Even though it can be argued that Islamic resurgent movements have failed to achieve their aims, this is to miss the point. At the interface of the Muslim culture and the Western culture Islamic resurgence represents a segment of the Muslim



population's attempts to deal with the process of acculturation. This point has also been emphasised by Hafez (2003) when he stated that despite the variation in the aims and objectives of the resurgent movements, they have reacted when "they encounter exclusionary states that deny them meaningful access to political institutions and employ indiscriminate repressive policies against their citizens" (Hafez, 2003: xv).

While there has been significant development in the ideological arguments, as well as the objectives and modus operandi of Islamic resurgent movements, this process is far from over. Islamic resurgence's attention to socio-economic problems has led to the creation of a socio-economic sub-structure in society. Islamic resurgent movements are undergoing continuous changes as each generation is confronted with its own acculturation process. The intensity with which each generation experienced its specific crisis had a direct bearing on its levels of spiritual reawakening and also justified its level of violence. Hafez confirms this point when he states that proponents of revolutionary violence were a small part of a broader social movement that did not seek confrontational means to effect change (Hafez, 2003: 35). Thus, each new generation has found its own methods of interpreting the stipulations of Islam.

In the thesis a series of important trends have been identified regarding the evolution of resurgent movements. These trends were found to apply to all the chosen generations up to the present. Their impact will diminish only when their causes are addressed. They will now be discussed broadly.

## **2.1. Positive and negative factors inducing growth**

*"The Egyptian government has not fully comprehended the multifaceted phenomenon of Islamic militancy, which reflects a profound social crisis compounded by simultaneous crises in the polity, economy and the culture." (Sullivan and Sana Abed-Kotob, 1999: 93)*

Seen from the point of view of individual Muslims, two subsequent, but also contrary, events have been in action simultaneously. They are those of inclusion and exclusion. Civil society relates to the government in three ways: it is part of the democratisation process, it can support the government, or it can develop as an alternative to the government (*ISIM*, 2005: 41). In Egypt, negative factors inspiring the development of movements have been a sense of alienation and exclusion. These, in turn, led to the development of an alternative society that eventually manifested in resurgent movements and Islamic organisations within society.<sup>36</sup> Dissatisfaction has led to confrontation between the Islamists and the government. Even though the government has made progress and aims such as independence were achieved, the modern secular bureaucratic state has failed to provide the political and economic opportunities required by the masses.

An important factor that has pushed people away or created a sense of exclusion has been the creation of an elite or privileged class, particularly since the colonial era. This societal disparity was reinforced by lack of social mobility and socio-economic and political exclusion from the elite classes. This aspect has also been emphasised by Entelis (2005:547), who argues that “as long as civil societies exhibit a variety of socio-economic and cultural cleavages and remain seriously divided along religious-secular, urban-rural, male-female, modern-traditional, literate-illiterate, and indigenous-global lines, it will be difficult for high levels of popular mobilisation to develop, thus facilitating the state’s ability to repress political reform and choose coercion over compromise when such challenges do emerge”.

The geographical locations of resurgent movements in either southern or northern Egypt<sup>37</sup> and differences in the government’s policies for different geographical regions led to socio-economic and political exclusion, encouraging the formation of resurgent movements. Another factor that created a sense of

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<sup>36</sup> See Chapter Four, section 3.4.

<sup>37</sup> See Chapter Three, section 2.1.1 and Chapter Four, section 3.2.

exclusion was the continuation of an autocratic political dispensation in which people had very little input. The political exclusion of the opposition served to motivate not only resurgent movements but also a broad spectrum of opposition. Even after independence and the 1952 take-over, successive governments failed to develop a political system that included everyone, and instead continued to experiment with external models that were not inclusive of Islam or legitimised by Islam. This process has continued up to the present and has motivated resurgent in Egypt, as can be seen in the battle with the government prior to the presidential elections in September 2005.<sup>38</sup>

The US-led war on terrorism (also refer to the next subsection) has added to a feeling of exclusion by the West. The bombs that exploded in Egypt in July 2005 are indicative of this stance. While Egypt is supposed to be free from external “isms”, those excluded have continuously directed their hostility towards the government run by their own people. However, the situation within Egypt has remained the same and it seems as if nothing significant has changed in the country’s dispensation. Gilsenan is of the opinion that at this stage “the enemy is within, the problems arise within and must be answered within; yet the solutions are the same and are cast in the same terms as they were forty years before” (Gilsenan, 1982: 225). Entelis (2005: 543) confirms this statement and argues that sustained authoritarianism has been aided by international support networks such as that of the USA to Egypt.

In contrast, aspects that ensured a sense of inclusion or belonging, together with acknowledgement of Islam, facilitated the evolution of resurgent movements. The positive factors have provided centrifugal forces or a sense of inclusion that encouraged the formation of resurgent movements. These movements initially not only provided structure to people’s lives by way of Islam, but also focused on socio-economic needs as a whole. The ideologies that were developed by leaders of the resurgent movements also provided a frame of reference whereby

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<sup>38</sup> See Chapter Four, section 2.5.

Islamic resurgence filled the vacuum for Muslims between the distant government and the immediate needs of society. Islam provides inclusion and a sense of intellectual belonging, while Islamism provides practical application of principles in addition to mere innovation of theoretical concepts. While modernity means the integration of the Islamic world into a multinational world with alien concepts such as interest, taxation and insurance, the Islamic religion provides a sense of belonging and inclusion that is not found in the West.

Resurgent movements have provided inclusiveness as well as a safe haven to many, whether within the movement or within Islamic civic organisations.<sup>39</sup> The creation of NGOs has provided places of refuge and a mechanism through which the “hearts and minds” (Sivan, *Survival*: 27) of society, especially the younger generation, can be influenced. These semi-legal political, educational and welfare activities have provided a counter-society immune to secularism and orientated instead towards Islamisation. This sense of inclusiveness has provided a safe haven to many dislocated and disillusioned Islamists and will continue to do so.<sup>40</sup>

## **2.2. Foreign involvement**

External stakeholders introduced political and socio-economic systems that have not been compatible with the stipulations of Islam. Since the earliest times ideologists such as Ibn Kathir, who wrote at the time of the crusades, expressed opinions that could just as well have referred to the present situation between the West and Islam. He quoted from the Qur’an where it is stated that neither the Jews nor the Christians will ever find Muslims acceptable (Tibi, 1983: 22). Sayyid Qutb reiterated the same ideas when he reacted against colonialism in Egypt.

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<sup>39</sup> See Chapter Four, section 4.1.

<sup>40</sup> After the bomb attacks in the UK in July 2005 it was pointed out that the suspects were radicalised because they had found a sense of belonging in Islamic organisations in comparison to the alienation that they had been experiencing. The same conclusions were reached after the arrest of the Hofstadt member in the Netherlands for the murder of Theo van Gogh.

The current campaign against the West, especially the US-led forces in Iraq, reflects the same arguments.

External influence has also brought to Egypt ideologies such as nationalism, secularism, socialism, communism, democracy and capitalism. In general, these political trends were weighed in terms of Islam. For example, nationalism was seen not in its Western conceptualisation but as a concept of sacredness in that it meant an unqualified commitment to defend the nation, not as Egypt but as a Muslim country, against imperialism. To distinguish between nation and nationalism, Egypt had to be “recreated in its (Islamic) image after God has granted her the teachings of Islam” (Mitchell, 1969: 266). Secularism and even democracy represented the usurpation of God’s sovereignty because they have put the responsibility of legislation with humans. Therefore, Islamic resurgence under Qutb formulated the theory that the practice of democracy is ipso facto a form of polytheism because judgement belongs only to God (al-Qur’an, XII: 40). The pressure of external role-players on Egypt to democratise will continue to be met with this type of argument.

The creation of the state of Israel at the time of Egypt’s growth as a nation, as well as the subsequent wars with Israel, has been seen as a reflection of the biased attitudes of the external world to the Muslims. Therefore, as long as the USA is viewed as being biased in the Arab-Israeli conflict, its credibility as well as its efforts to introduce reform in Egypt will be regarded with scepticism.

Currently the wars waged by the West in Muslim countries such as Iraq, as well as the US-led war on terrorism, are regarded as a continuation of anti-Muslim strategies but in a different format. Support from Western countries to several Muslim governments is seen as a continuation of these schemes from the enemies of Islam. Egyptian Islamic resurgent groups have spread across the globe in the aftermath of the success of the repressive measures of the Mubarak government as well as the impact of the US-led war on terrorism.

If external role-players in Egypt continue with this type of strategy and involvement in Egypt, it is foreseen that hostilities against the government, as well as those seen to support them, will continue.

### 2.3. Islamic order

***“The belief that worldly Islam ought to take the form of a political community is not dependent upon a theory of the caliphate or indeed any specific doctrine regarding the ideal form of Islamic government.” (Binder, 1988: 128)***

Islamic resurgent movements have not provided a blueprint or conceptual frame according to which the governmental and political aspects of society could be addressed. However, they have been involved in a three-way struggle between an Islamic way of life, socio-economic and political objectives of governments and the ideal of an Islamic state. While the autocratic government used religion to ensure its legitimacy, Islamic resurgence has professed to have as its objective the establishment of an Islamic dispensation. Resurgent movements have as their objective the instituting of unity of religion and politics, domains that cannot be separated. This point is also emphasised by Abdulkader Tayob (2005: 57) in an article in the *International Institute for the Study of Islam Review (ISIM)* where he said that religion provides a framework for the transformation of societies, provided all of society is involved in the transformation.

While the traditional jurists established a link between politics and religion by giving religious legitimacy to political power, Islamic resurgent movements have reversed the traditional relationship between religion and politics to make politics subservient to religion. Therefore the Muslim Brotherhood’s ultimate goal was the creation of an Islamic order (*al-Nizam al-Islami*) and not a Muslim state. The Islamic order refers to legal principles that are regarded as fundamental to a Muslim society, irrespective of the form of political order. They seek to change

society and impose the rule of law in place of rulers and demand a degree of social justice.

Islamic resurgent movements' commitment to reinstalling the caliphate does not necessarily imply that they would want to replace the Egyptian government with a so-called "Islamic state". The Islamic state is primarily regarded as a community of believers bound by a common faith and commitment to their divinely mandated mission to obey God and spread God's just rule. Islam is a religion of laws and dogmas; therefore insistence on an Islamic state has more to do with living under God's laws and not man-made or imposed Western laws.

The immediate concern of the Muslim Brotherhood was the nature and destiny of Muslim society in the 20<sup>th</sup> century as well as the relevance of the Islamic order and the sharia and the related question of the separation of "church and state", which was seen as a Western concept. For Islam to keep abreast of the times and be true to its nature of renewal (*tajdid*) not imitation (*taqlid*), the sharia was to be freed from traditional interpretation. The first principles of action that the Muslim Brotherhood supported were the opening of the door of *ijtihad* to facilitate contemporary interpretation. Secondly, the principles of analogy (*qiyas*) and consensus (*ijma*) had to be used to bring Islam abreast of modern times.

The sharia was the determining factor. However, the call was for a return to Islamic principles: not a literal return to the seventh century (Islam's historical beginning), but a return to the system of Islam. The Islamic law is not a social phenomenon but an external manifestation of God's will, which defines the duties and rights of individuals and the state. The sharia is not only meant for ruling life on earth, but is preparation for the next life or hereafter. Therefore man has to live under the sharia in preparation for the afterlife. If man had to live under man-made laws, this continuous process could not take place, thus making the achievement of the hereafter more difficult. The Islamic state implies God as the only ruler with no individual or groups having any judicial role. Therefore the law

has to be grounded in revelation.

As both Hasan al-Banna and Sayyid Qutb argue, the importance of the government is not so much related to the identity of the leader as to that which he represents. This can be interpreted as meaning that the leader or the government should be credible and legitimate in the eyes of the Muslim community. The ruler must be selected or elected as stipulated in Qur'anic prescriptions in Surah 42:38 and 3:159 and early Islamic practice (Esposito, 1992: 282). This may occur through direct elections or indirectly through a consultative assembly. The Islamists have made the recognition of the sharia as the only source of authority their central argument. However, the central role should be reserved for the Muslim community in its fullest context – socio-economic as well as political and religious. Qutb also underlined the necessity of consultation in Islam. Particular methods of implementation have not been specified because the changing nature of political and social conditions that could lead to changes in implementation were seen as reflecting God's wisdom (Ayubi, 1982: 114). Therefore, an Islamic system can take many forms depending on its agreement with the natural development of societies within the general principles of Islam. The normative system on which they grounded their ideologies is the absolute truth and eternity as guaranteed by God. The mere fact that Sura 5:3 says "this day I have perfected for you your religion and completed my grace upon you and have chosen Islam as your religion" (Tibi, 1983: 415) is indicative of the fact that Islam is the religion of God.

#### **2.4. Personalities**

***"[The] Muslim Brotherhood still identified with the names and thoughts of Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, Muhammad Abduh, Rashid Rida. The view of each of these reformers depicts their role in general in that Afghani was referred to as the caller or announcer, Rida as the archivist or historian and Banna as the builder (bani) or founder of a nation, thus a practical extension of previous ideas." (Mitchell, 1969: 321)***



All the major movements that have existed in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries have built on the ideologies formulated by two people, Hasan al-Banna and Sayyid Qutb. The two ideologues managed to do what the other movements could not do, namely provide a concrete and workable plan of action, and more importantly, they could conceptualise their motivations, objectives and *modi operandi*. Even though neither lived long enough to explain his ideas fully or comprehend the impact of his ideas on reality, the ideologies of the two thinkers have remained the basis of all subsequent movements. The original ideas of the two scholars were based on ideologies that have emanated from the past and do not represent a coherent stream of thought, but various groups of ideas existing together and indicating multidimensional groups within society. Economic, social and political factors might have given rise to specific trends at specific times. However, the ideologists' economic, social and political arguments clearly reflect their different convictions. The doctrines that have been followed prove to be based on very selective interpretations of the older texts. An example is the manner in which Hasan al-Banna sought to define Islam as a political system similar to political systems of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, but justifying this ideological view by basing it on a return to past texts.

Personalities such as Al Mawardi (364-450/974-1058), Al Ghazali (450-505/1058-1111), Ibn Taimiyya (1263-1328) and Ibn Khaldun (1332-1406) all contributed to views reflecting contemporary and local factors pertaining to a specific era.<sup>41</sup> Ibn Taimiyya (1263-1328) has been regarded as a founder of resurgence despite the fact that he cautioned against destabilising the state during crucial times of emergency (Sivan, 1985: 100). Furthermore, Ibn Taimiyya criticised Muslim society but refrained from attacking it during times of crisis. These attitudes are markedly different from current ones. In addition, the manner in which past ideologists such as Ibn Taimiyya have been portrayed in the

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<sup>41</sup> See Chapter One, section 2.1.

Western media in particular is coloured by the current political situation.<sup>42</sup>

Al-Banna was predominantly anti-Western, conservative and illiberal, and explicitly counter-posed Islamic political ideas to democracy, defined as intrinsically Western and so un-Islamic. The perspectives of al-Banna were further radicalised by the thinking of Sayyid Qutb in his confrontation with President Nasser. Qutb argued that the Muslim world was *jahiliyya* and that nationalism, by substituting the principle of popular sovereignty for that of God's sovereignty, was therefore an obligatory target of *jihad*. According to Tayob, Qutb provided an important contribution "to an ongoing contemporary discourse" (Tayob, 2005: 57). The unique personality of Sayyid Qutb gave rise to the introduction of the concept of *mufaṣṣala* or *`uzla* as spiritual detachment and the practice of *takfir* from the *jahiliyya* society. Those who preached *mufaṣṣala kamila* or total separation physically withdrew from the *jahiliyya* society. Qutb expands on the ideas of many contemporary Islamists; he also rejects many ideas from 'Abduh and Iqbal. The basic concept that Qutb's emphasised was the need for a comprehensive interpretation of existence to define man's place and goal in his social and political approach and method. In Jansen (1986) this is set out as the conceptual awareness or *al-taṣawwur*, which is composed of seven characteristics, namely *al-tawḥid* (God's oneness), *al-'uluhiyyah* (divinity), *al-thabat* (fixity), *al-shumuliyyah* (comprehensiveness), *al-tawazun* (equilibrium), *al-ṭabiyyah* (positiveness) and *al-waqiyyah* (realism). Qutb defined religion as not only concepts and principles, but also behaviour and cultural necessities that would manifest in people's behaviour. Therefore, professing Islam but adhering to behaviour associated with other systems was *jahiliyya*. He argued that obedience to God necessitates a different conception of the existence of the

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<sup>42</sup> The bomb attacks on the Egyptian government on 24 July 2005 came at a time when the Muslim world as a whole was under attack from the West.

state, in that man cannot know law on his own independently. It has to be transmitted by revelation. The rejection of human legislation does not, however, imply that everyday matters do not require organisational structures.

The belief that worldly Islam ought to take the form of a political community is not dependent upon a theory of the caliphate or indeed any specific doctrine on the ideal form of Islamic government (Binder, 1988: 128). The notion of a state being a mere collective of individuals is rejected and the morality and spirituality of the state is valued highly. The Muslim people as a whole have the right to choose their leader, then and now. The rejection of the use of force to attain power is directed at current leaders. This implies that Muslims have the right to free themselves from preordained leaders. The identity of the ruler is not as important as the introduction of the sharia or a ruler that applies or adheres to the Qur'an's stipulations. The Qur'an is a normative weapon to prevent a society from declining and being engulfed by a foreign ideology. President Sadat's assassin, Muhammad 'Abd al-Salam Faraj (1954-1982),<sup>43</sup> justified the duty of *jihad* against unbelievers based on Ibn Taymiyya's work in which a *fatwa* was issued for a *jihad* "as part of a hidden Muslim tradition whose restoration was his (Ibn Taimiya) task ... and ... the only effective way to fight for the establishment of an Islamic state, since all the other possibilities...had ended in failure" (Kepel 1984: 199).

However, 'Abd al-Salam Faraj deviated far from the ideas espoused by Qutb and al-Banna when he denounced the charitable organisations and associations that functioned under the close surveillance of the Ministry of Social Affairs because they made no contribution to the fight for Islam. Jansen (1986) argues that 'Abd al-Salam Faraj did not agree with the various strategies that the other resurgent movements demanded had to be followed in order to establish an Islamic state, such as establishing organisations, opposing political parties, filling posts of responsibility with true Muslim academics or preaching (*da'wa*) alone or hijra to

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<sup>43</sup> See Chapter Three, section 4.4.

another country. Ultimately, the most successful strategy to be followed is a *jihad*. He argued that the *jihad* served two purposes, namely the expansion of the territory of Islam, as well as defence of the territory when it is attacked. 'Abd al-Salam Faraj regarded the liberation of Jerusalem as a priority. He believed that the Muslim leaders he was determined to depose were primarily responsible for the existence of these imperialistic centres in the world of Islam.

The significance of this ideology was that *jihad* was given the same significance as the other pillars of Islam. This indicated the influence of Qutb and a deviation from Hasan al-Banna's concept of *jihad* as a personal struggle associated with personal and social actions. For the latter the struggle was seen to be in the form of truth and persuasion "to a misguided ruler while struggling to better one's spiritual and social lot in life" (Sullivan and Sana Abed-Kotob, 1999: 79).

However, the more moderate Islamists such as the Muslim Brotherhood dissociated the movement from Qutb's radical ideas and reverted to al-Banna's less revolutionary outlook and adopted a gradualist and non-violent perspective. These developments of the concepts espoused by al-Banna and Qutb are not indicative of the failure of Islamism but show the differentiating varieties of Islamic activism derived from the concepts of major ideologists. These developments are also indicative of the nature of the convictions as well as the different diagnoses of the problems faced by Muslim societies, namely different approaches to Islamic law, and different conceptions both of the appropriate spheres (political, religious, military) in which to act and of the kinds of action that are legitimate and appropriate.

The Muslim Brotherhood has adopted a more positive orientation to Western democratic principles. Thus, contrary to widespread Western perceptions that equate "political Islam" with an anti-democratic outlook, most political currents in Islamic activism have proved able and inclined to adopt or at least accommodate modernist and democratic ideas. This has not been the result of any necessary

affinity between Islam and democratic principles at the level of abstract ideas. It instead has taken place due to the objective of maintaining and where possible extending social and political influence, the need to adapt to the current political context in the countries as well as due to lessons learnt from past experience (JCG, 2005: 8).

What has taken place, however, has been an ideological revision emanating from the Muslim Brotherhood's new generation in particular. This revision focused on the acknowledgement of women as candidates for public office as well as the endorsement of multiple political parties. Even though this stance is contradictory to Hasan al-Banna's views on party politics, it has been argued that it is indicative of its progress and that the Qur'an stipulates a rule of public consultation in governance (El-Ghobashy, 2005: 383). However, Qutb had underlined the necessity of consultation in Islam even though the particular methods of its implementation had not been specified. The changing nature of political and social conditions that could lead to changes in its implementation was seen as reflecting God's wisdom (Ayubi, 1982:114). Qutb argued that the Islamic system or *nizam* can take many forms depending on its agreement with the natural development of societies within the stipulations of the general principles of Islam (Moussalli, 1992: 164).

The Muslim Brotherhood has declared that it is the institutional rules of participation rather than the commandments of ideology that have motivated the formation of political parties. El-Ghobashy rightly argues that this survival technique of the Muslim Brotherhood has been a response to the threats by the authoritarian governments they have been subjected to. El-Ghobashy argues that, as the Muslim Brotherhood has survived and responded the way it has done so far within an authoritarian government, it is quite possible that more development will be possible within an open electoral system (El-Ghobashy, 2005: 391).

It is foreseen that this process will continue to be a strategy of the Islamists who as a new generation will use methods and scenarios determined by specific time and place factors. Neither the Egyptian government nor the West has managed to provide a workable alternative or ideology to resolve socio-economic and political problems. No alternative and acceptable political ideology based on Islam has been provided by the government. As long as this vacuum exists, those who have provided an ideological base to the Islamists will be relevant and, more importantly, legitimatise their modus operandi. This process should not be seen as the failure of Islamism but rather as part of their development.

## **2.5. Ideology versus religion**

Islamic resurgent movements are motivated by what they perceive as the Divine Word and not the reign of any group in particular. Because the Egyptian government has adopted an external system that is deemed responsible for the alienation, both the government and the foreign system have been rejected. In addition, external forces have “offered” new systems ranging from colonialism, socialism and communism to capitalism. While ideology determines the paradigm of specification, religion is the manner in which these stipulations are interpreted. In other words, ideology provides the how and what, while religion provides practicalities or interpretations that are not fixed and can deviate according to personalities and circumstances. The most important aspect to understand here is that the unity of Islamic civilisation is “an ideal which has guided the action of many Muslims of all walks of life, but particularly that of members of the Islamic intellectual elite in every age” (Binder, 1988: 107). While Islam is a set and fixed paradigm of specifications, interpretations have deviated and have not been the selfsame phenomenon in every historical context.

Contemporary Islamist movements see Islam as a political ideology. However, in the West there is a perception that Islam and Muslim societies are one global and cultural system. The social diversity and differences of opinion among

Muslim intellectuals on the correct political and social implications of the Qur'anic message are overlooked. "The Islamic religion is often perceived by imposing the grid of the culturalist reading" (Roy, 1994: viii) on the Middle East. This results in seeing reality as pre-determined by the grid and generic statements. Although these statements do explain leaders' discourse and provide insight into opposition movements, they do not explain aspects derived from new government policies, external influences, new social classes, and the influence of globalisation or the evolvement of new ideologies.

## **2.6. The process of acculturation will continue**

*"The world is on the verge of a new age in the relationships among cultures and countries, where barriers are destroyed and where nations seek common interests to achieve a cultural rapprochement to serve the values of justice, peace, freedom and respect for human rights. In the midst of these continuous efforts, Islam is presented to the world as the antithesis of such efforts and as unrelated to values and principles, which the new world is seeking ... Arabs and Muslims are pictured as strangers to this common humanitarian heritage. The matter reaches the point of picturing Arabs and Muslims as being an obstacle intellectually and historically on the road of this emerging humanitarian culture and a danger of threatening its future." (Esposito, 1982: 131)*

While many concepts in the West have evolved naturally over time, and became part of civilisation and were internalised, the same did not take place to the same degree in so-called developing countries. The process through which modernisation and the Western world influenced the Muslim world can be seen as a process of acculturation between two cultures. While the levels of impact and accompanying changes have not been visible to both cultures, the traumatic impact of a foreign culture on the Muslim world can be seen in the activities of Islamic resurgent movements at the interface where the two cultures have met.

That is not to say that the imposition of an alien culture was the only reason for the discontent that has been experienced in the Muslim world. Imposing an alien culture simply exacerbated the manner in which discontent in general was dealt with. Western-sponsored or supported governments have perpetuated the process of imposing a foreign cultural paradigm.

The rate at which acculturation has taken place, as well as the overpowering manner in which it has taken place, allowed for very little natural and internally generated development of unique political and socio-economic systems in the Muslim world. While Western cultures have evolved over a period of time, the same developmental process did not take place in the Muslim world. Reformers such as Afghani and 'Abdu initiated reform as a counter-mechanism against external forces that were confronting them with a marked superiority in the technological and political spheres. However, the reforms that emanated internally depicted a "hurried attempt" (Ayubi, 1982: 58), because the Islamic world did not have the time or opportunity to develop a counter-system from within. Therefore confusion and resentment against the imposed systems as well as the government that was instrumental in supporting these systems developed.

All along, the Islamists emphasised the inseparable character of religion and politics and justified their attitudes and approaches as being a response to the impact of a new and foreign frame of reference that was imposed on them. In recent times the Islamic world has never had the opportunity for independent political and economic evolution because of a dominant foreign and alien dispensation brought from outside its frame of reference, with which it had to deal by ignoring it, adopting it or adapting to it. So, when colonial forces arrived with alternative and more advanced political and socio-economic systems and imposed these on the Muslim world, it led to a negative response. In addition, the two worlds are also very different in that the Western world is based on culture steering clear of attachment to religion, while the Muslim world seeks to define itself in terms of religion that is an all-encompassing way of life.



Western transformation of Muslim societies was also distorted and incomplete and on the whole Muslim states have undergone a historical process of construction from the top down. To Qutb and al-Banna the direction of change should come from below and move upwards. Instead, transformation was imposed from outside or externally generated and this prevented the full adoption of “the thinking patterns of the bourgeois liberalism” (Ayubi, 1982: 58). Qutb’s revolution focused on educating societies in order to teach the true meaning of Islam. This in itself was already a process of starting from the bottom upwards. This concept was also at the basis of what al-Banna had espoused. Qutb stated: “There is a difference between having a plan to construct gradually and patching up a construction based on another plan. In the end, this patching up does not establish a new building for you. Thus, it is necessary to destroy the old system and build a new one” (Moussalli, 1992: 203). Qutb argued that the revolution started by the Prophet Muhammad had to be repeated in the sense that *jahili* societies had to be transferred into unified, monotheistic nations.

The political and socio-economic system had not grown from within the society from grass roots level but was something foreign imposed on it. In this manner a situation has developed whereby dogmatic and conservative hermeneutics of Islam are contrasted with pragmatic and piecemeal borrowing from modern Western sciences. In general, not even their social and economic development is on a par with the West. What was given was externally generated and “forced down” without growing from the bottom upwards. The upward movement tries to penetrate and transform society while the downward movement tends to maintain existing structure. The failure to oust Western-imposed ideas and influence will exacerbate the arguments and actions emanating from violent resurgent groups.

## **2. 7. Modernity versus Westernisation**

Roy (1994) states that, whereas Islamists have ultimately failed to address modernity, modernity has manifested itself as a sociological fact for many movements. Negatively defined, modernity means the integration of the Islamic

world into a multi-national world with alien concepts. The need to modernise led to the introduction of reforms and changes totally divorced from the Islamic sources of authority and without the possibility that they could be integrated. A moderate *modus operandi* has focused on education and dissemination of the Islamic message to uplift society from the decline it has become trapped in owing to imitation (*taqlid*).

Islamic resurgent movements' apparent hostility to the West, together with the current political dominance of US-led democracy as well as anti-Westernisation, created the impression that the West as well as modernity is rejected. The views of Ibrahim Nafie, editor-in-chief of the *Al-Ahram*, expressed in his latest work, *Junun al-Khatar al-Akhḍar wa Ḥamlat Tashwin Al Islam* (Green Peril Madness – The Campaign to Distort Islam), reflect the perception by Muslims that the West is continuing to distort Islam deliberately. His book is viewed as the “must-read for all those who want to understand the roots of the tension between Muslims and the West” (*Al Ahram*, 2004: 12). Nafie says the West wants a moderate Islam, cosmetically altered to its liking. This attitude from the West is considered responsible for the hostilities of Muslims towards the West, even of those Muslims from countries like Egypt that are more pro-Western and economically dependent on the West. He suggests that this could also explain why most members of the Al Qa'ida movement as well as the largest percentage of perpetrators of terrorist attacks against US citizens hail from countries closely linked to the West.

Secularism and modernism are singled out as the main causes of the government's failure and, gradually, condemnation of secularism is practically turned into condemnation of modernisation in general. Modernity now appears to be the polite name for an authority that protects an alien project on native soil, whereas the call for 'authenticity' appears to be a means of negating such an authority and depriving it of legitimacy, and a prelude to attempts by the marginalised and the excluded groups to gain power.

Therefore, in rejecting Westernisation, the Muslim world is not rejecting modernisation. Westernisation has been experienced as eroding the authenticity of Islam and represents a new *jahiliyya* or humanity's pagan ignorance. In this new *jahiliyya* Muslim reformers and rulers are deemed to be secularists in Islamic disguise, and more destructive. Western reformists are seen as compromising Islamic principles, while radical elements accept no compromises. They advocate political rupture and revolution. Islamists give precedence to political action because they perceive this as their only defence. Disenchantment with the West, together with disillusionment over the pervasive social and political decline, adds to a quest for identity and authenticity. Islam is the only source of salvation. It provides the source of Islamic pride and identity and has led to a revival of Islam in both personal and public life. This can be seen in adherence to religious observance as well as in dress and publications.

## **2.8. PREDICTIONS**

While the traditionalists regarded the Qur'an as absolute knowledge, the radicals espoused a creative interpretation of the Qur'an. The deconstruction of the Written Word is set to increase and continue. The possible outcome of this is more diversity in opinions and groups and intense verbal attacks on government and opponents that will contribute to the marginalisation of governments. It is foreseen that the new generation of so-called Islamists will continue to question those aspects that they disagree with, but their methodology has changed.

In the current global environment the battle is fought on a different level. The outcome of the war on Iraq and the prominence of the use of the media and the Internet to address an ever-increasing audience is proof of this. It is foreseen that till the governmental changes provide for equal socio-economic progress and the development of a government system inclusive of all, a segment of society that has been left behind will seek inclusion. Because Muslim society's frame of

reference has always been that of Islam, the latter has provided an acceptable and familiar alternative to the exclusion experienced within an alien dispensation.

The evolution of political and socio-economic dispensations will have to be inclusive of Islam because it is a way of life providing a political as well as socio-economic paradigm. As long as religious relevance remains a central point of view in the Muslim world, those in political power as well as those opposing it will justify their arguments on the tenets of Islam. Therefore, imposing a foreign system will not have the desired results compared to systems that have evolved from within or at grass-roots level. It is doubtful if any Western system would be the answer. Islamic resurgent movements have been seeking a voice in their own government, but thus does not mean that the so-called democratic systems are the answer. It should be clear by now that any system that is externally generated and imposed but not internalised by the Islamic world (or any non-Western society for that matter), is not the answer. An internally generated and fully representative system is the answer.

Finally, the trends that have been identified are still, as stated, relevant in Egypt's current situation. Resurgent movements have been motivated by compatible and conflicting factors. Added to these circumstances, foreign stakeholders have motivated resurgent movements by empowering autocratic governments as well as providing new political and socio-economic paradigms. All of these motivational factors have emerged within a process of acculturation between Islamic culture and Western culture. Animosity towards a foreign culture should rather be seen as a reaction against the manner in which the foreign culture has been imposed and not so much against those that represent the foreign culture. Thus, it is not so much against the Western world as against the manner in which the political and socio-economic conditions in the Muslim world have been allowed to develop, albeit with Western help. It is argued that the objectives of resurgent movements of an Islamic dispensation are idealistic, not attainable and a threat to the West, but this manner of arguing misses the point.

The objectives of Islamic resurgent movements have all been centred in Islam because this is their frame of reference and way of life, inclusive of political and socio-economic dispensations. To analyse the objectives of Islamic resurgent movements according to their violent manifestations only is to misunderstand their arguments. These movements are seeking a system inclusive of Islam simply because it is their way of life, their culture. Because Islam provides unity resurgent movements will always seek to overcome political and socio-economic exclusion and replace it with a system inclusive of all. However, Muslims will have to find a way of meeting their aims and objectives in a modern world. The outside world can facilitate but not dictate.

The manner in which the objectives of resurgent movements have been met has arguably manifested itself in violence as a *modus operandi*, as this study has pointed out, but there has been another more important consequence. This has been the emergence of socio-economic organisations and infrastructure that have managed to entrench the significance of resurgent movements in broader society. Not only has the presence of these organisations provided a workable alternative for resurgent movements, but their popularity has shown what the true needs in society are and, more importantly, that these needs have not been addressed. The *modi operandi* of resurgent movements have been derived from the ideologies of mainly al-Banna and Qutb. They included the ideas and aspirations of past ideologies and formulated ideologies and *modi operandi* for their era. Since then very few have managed to come forward and capture an audience in the same manner.

The problem is not centred in Islam but in the interpretation of the Qur'an. Muslims will have to take the opportunity to find different interpretations inclusive of Islam. Till then the trends identified in this study will continue, with each new generation simply adding its own experiences. They will build on past experiences but the cycle will not have been broken

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