

## Introduction

Nationalism being an issue which has always commanded society's attention, it would be fitting to analyze this concept from a scientific angle. How can it be defined and what principles does it entail? How far does Islam accept these principles? Is there any incompatibility between Islam and nationalism? Can an individual be a Muslim believer and a faithful nationalist at the same time? What are the weak strong points of nationalism? What has been the historical course of the birth and spread of nationalism in Islamic countries? It is by means of research and investigation and far from tumultuous propaganda that it becomes clear whether nationalism has a place in a society where an Islamic revolution has taken place in a society which is decided on establishing Islamic values and an Islamic order.

Communism and nationalism are two living schools in the contemporary West. Today, Islam is not confronting idolatry, Christianity and Zoroastrianism; it is in fact confronting communism and nationalism. Even if the number of Christians may amount to a billion, yet as an active, effective religion and ideology, Christianity has become a 'corpse' which is kept in the church, where its followers go every Sunday to say prayers, or once or twice a year to hold a ceremony in memory of that defunct institution. Christianity is no longer a determining factor in the life of the Westerners or a motive force in their social life. The driving forces which direct their lives are actually nationalism and communism. That is why a profound study and understanding of nationalism becomes important.

Today, it is mainly with nationalism and communism that Islam, as an ideology is in confrontation. Eastern and Western imperialism in its bid at undermining Islam, expands and imposes these two schools of thought, so that, like Christianity in the West, Islam would be sunk into oblivion, becoming a useless religion which would only serve for homely acts of devotion, and which would eventually decay and disappear.

Nationalism is a new plot hatched by the imperialism of the cross to deal Islam a blow. The aim is to realize that dream which could not be realized in the Wars of Crusades. A look at the works of the orientalists can help us to understand this wishful objective of the West and discover the depth of this concoction. Nationalism attempts to break up the unity and solidarity of the world Islamic Ummah which endangers imperialistic interests, and which is a potential threat to colonization in international politics.

With the progressive spread of nationalism, imperialism was able to divide the world of Islam into small pieces, and swallow them one by one. Thus, the dangerous dimensions of nationalism make it imperative for the Islamic world to unveil its true visage.

The Islamic Revolution of Iran is founded on monotheism and Islam. Therefore, it is not nationalistic in nature, its fabric being Islam, not nationalism. The nationalists could have been followers of the revolution, but not its pioneers. In fact they constantly tried to check its rapid advance. Objective wise also, the Islamic Revolution of Iran is territorially unlimited and therefore, not confined to Iran; it has a universal mission, being a vanguard of a new dawn for the East, and must spread to any realm where live the Muslims.

It would therefore be fitting to make a survey of the Islamic unity of belief and internationalism and investigate the connection between Islam and nationalism.

The expansion of such ideologies as nationalism, liberalism or communism will deny the revolution its Islamic, essence. It is, therefore, the revolutionary duty of all Muslims to carry on a constant ideological and political war with the said poisonous ideologies. However, this combat must be based on awareness and strongly supported by intellectual and religious conviction, and the reasons for our rejection of nationalism must be explained both to our compatriots and aliens.

In the Islamic order and monotheistic society, there is no room for nationalism or Marxism, and from a social and political viewpoint, the only acceptable and dominant school is Islam. *"Surely the (true) religion with Allah is Islam" (3: 18)*. But from a subjective viewpoint, every person is allowed freedom of thought and expression, and no compulsion in whatever way, is permissible.

***"There is no compulsion in religion." (2: 256)***

***"Those who listen to the word, then follow the best of it." (39: 18)***

Moreover, the weak and strong points of existent ideologies should be critically examined in a logical and unprejudiced way, and presented to the society to make it aware of them.

Therefore, the various schools of thought must be analyzed in a lucid way with an open mind, free from fanatical prejudices, and the position of Islam should be clarified in this connection.

We hope that this book will throw light upon various aspects of the problem, and will prove fruitful in the discussion on Islamic ideology.

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<https://www.al-islam.org/islam-and-nationalism-ali-mohammed-naqvi/introduction#comment-0>