AGNATIC¹ INFRASTRUCTURE: MIDDLE EASTERN COUNTRIES IN THE TEST OF TIME

Gideon M. Kressel*

This article deals with the question of feuds among tribes that lead to all out domestic wars now current in ME countries. A mix of a tribal infrastructure and modern armament in hands of its segments, knock down the traditional upkeep of conventions that retain a balance, on which a State superstructure can bridle intertribal conflicts. Add a counter-modern salafi frame of mind and missiles of the newest brand at the tribes' hands lead up to a torrent of atrocities. Alternative infrastructure of local patriotism; trade unions; voluntary associations; rugged individualism and so on, triumph democracy of all sorts. All these are inattentive where tribalism prevails. Ahmadi Islam that relinquishes Jihad while emphasizing social qualities of the Muslim faith may help de-tribal it, hence show a way of intra creed harmony for coexistence of Shi'ites and Sunnis alike, suggesting a remedy for their current trouble.

INTRODUCTION.....	898
I. EXCHANGES OF FIRE	899
II. APT QUESTIONS.....	900
III. TRIBAL AFFILIATION AND TRIBAL RANKING IN MIDDLE EASTERN SOCIETY	902
IV. BASIC CONDITIONS FOR CHANGING INDIVIDUAL-GROUP RELATIONS IN THE MIDDLE EAST.....	906
CONCLUSION.....	908

INTRODUCTION

These past five years since the onset of the “Arab Spring” (or “Islamic Spring”) have underscored a fundamental dissimilarity between superstructure and infrastructure in the Middle Eastern states. Whereas their current superstructure ostensibly resembles the one that is common in “the

¹ **Agnates** are patrilineal kin. These are people who are related to an individual on the father's side (T. Barfield. 1997). They are committed to one another politically by virtue of being descendants of this paternal forefather; **Enates** are matrilineal kin; i.e., they are related to an individual on the mother's side (T. Barfield 1997). They are committed to one another by virtue of being related through a common foremother; **Cognates** are relatives who are related to ego through consanguine ties, on either or both their mothers' and or their fathers' side; **Affine** are consanguine relatives of one's spouse, known also as “in-laws”.

* Emeritus professor of Oriental (Middle Eastern) Studies and Anthropology (Cultural & Social), Ben-Gurion University, Israel. Research fields: Intentional (Egalitarian) Communes, Nomadic Pastoralists Along the Sedentary Process, Roma Migrants Begin in Trade at the Post-Communist Balkan.

West”, the infrastructure is set apart by a systematic difference that until recently was often insufficiently taken into account by external observers. Ostensibly, in the Middle East as in the “West”, presidents and kings stand above governments that lead the operation of the State’s organs. A formal separation of functions of executive, legislative and judicial entities may look alike those existing in the “West”, but the role reserved to the States’ subjects, the citizens, is dissimilar and largely let out insignificant or perhaps, not even viewed as related to the current regimes.²

I. EXCHANGES OF FIRE

Gunfire across town’s quarters occurs now despite an absence of open debates over different worldviews. An attempt to reconcile differences amid controversial position could save the unprovoked waging of war against innocent neighbors. Residents of towns and villages who are at war now, do not struggle over matters of existence; concrete conflicts of interest such as owning or lacking property; homeowners and homeless; competing professionals; employers and employees disputing wages or rates of “*surplus value*” (in Marxian terms); nor over ridiculous mutual misunderstandings of speech habits (see *Shibboleth* and the case of the Biblical tribe of Benjamin).

At issue on which the parties differ and lead, as warring camps, against one another are now:

(1) Variegated religious affiliation, such as the one that parts Shi’ites and Sunnis. Externalized and intensely exaggerated contrasts provoke hate. Ever since the Soviet incursion into Afghanistan at the end of the 1970s, following eons of a lethargic status-quo, the extinct volcano turned active again; and (2) the rank of tribes on the scale of prestige in their common residential region. When doubt rises as to which one of them has more fighting men and who is better united, climb up the social ladder at the expense of the lesser in number, or, who is less united. Growing in number of combatant men thus betters one’s status vis-à-vis those who happened to bear more girls than boys. Where tribes are ranked based on their number of fighting men their struggle for rank deploys the essence of war for a **principal**, or for a “**holy cause**”. Each duel bears ranking significance, meaning that the hierarchy ultimately derives from relative size.

² DANIEL LERNER, *THE PASSING OF TRADITIONAL SOCIETY MODERNIZING THE MIDDLE EAST* (London: The Free Press of Glencoe 1958); A. J. MEYER, *MIDDLE EASTERN CAPITALISM* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press 1959); MARIYON MUSHKAT, *VIOLENCE AND PEACE BUILDING IN THE MIDDLE EAST* (Yeda-Sela, Tel Aviv University 1981); ROBERTS & HUGH P., *AN URBAN PROFILE OF THE MIDDLE EAST* (London: Groom Helm 1979).

During the distant past, before *firearms*, the total of swordsmen was what determined the tribal ranking in power and prestige. Those who increased their numbers ascended, while those who lost swordsmen inevitably plummeted down the scale. The situation changed upon the appearance of firearms (the 16th Century) in the Middle East), which provided a clear advantage to those wielding guns rather than swords. Yet the quantitative determinant still persisted for a long time, despite the shooters' advantage. Perhaps this was because firearms became accessible to everyone at the same time, and maybe since they were in no hurry to shoot and eradicate their adversaries, as rising above them was more important than killing them. Thus they armed themselves with the new weapons perhaps similarly to the way atomic weapons are maintained today, cautiously and in no rush to use them in battle. However, the kind of fighting at present Middle Eastern battle fronts depart from former restraints. Disrespect to inhibitions used in the past bestows the horrors occurring a scene of all out wars.

The balance of power between Shi'ites and Sunnis differs in Lebanon, Iraq, Syria, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, and Emirates of the Arabian-Persian Gulf. As well, subdivisions split both the Shi'ites and the Sunnis camps. Different as well is their socio-economic position. Nevertheless, in all of them awakened at once is recollection of the first century of Islam place the accent on the killing of 'Ali Ibn-Abi Talib (at Kufa, 661) and the defeat of his son Hussein in Karbala (680). Having in mind **Jihad** directed counter lands of other creeds' believers, nourished by recollection of the first century of Islam, implies its heroic *Salafi*³ term, i.e., its blessed retro which implies as well the camp's cleavage. So near as, if seen through 'telescopic' lenses,⁴ although its pertinence for current affairs is slight, could, unexpectedly, exacerbate neighbor relationships of Shi'ites and Sunnis.

II. APT QUESTIONS

What leads to swapping of traditional blood feuds mentality⁵ for "all-out wars"? Or, how were the obstacles to reckless wars, such as those ones observed now, lifted? The Middle Eastern fronts have recently even become replete with the use of chemical and biological ("nonconventional")

³ The age of Islam's forefathers. See TAMAR YAGNES, *SUNNAH AND SHI'AH: THE CHANGING BALANCE OF POWER* (Hebrew: Tel Aviv University 2008).

⁴ Emrys L. Peters, *The Proliferation of Segments in the Lineage of the Bedouin of Cyrenaica*, 90 JOURNAL ROYAL ANTHROPOLOGICAL INSTITUTE 29—53 (1960).

⁵ See KRESSEL G. M., *ASCENDENCY THROUGH AGGRESSION: THE ANATOMY OF A BLOOD FEUD AMONG URBANIZED BEDOUINS* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag 1996).

weapons that are banned by international treaties. Launching long-range missiles spares the launchers from sharing their feelings about the atrocious sights, but media photos reveal all. All of a sudden, the mores of brotherhood among tribes of selfsame nations, who share all possible traits of social and cultural identity, save for being ascribed to different agnatic stocks—cease holding. Since nurturing agnatic awareness is a fundamental trait and a prerequisite in this part of the world, “fraternal wars” were rarely a battle of annihilation throughout the recent centuries.⁶ This is not necessarily the case with *ihwaal* who are consanguine through their mothers’ ascription, a bond of potential endearing relationships that must succumb to agnation’s priority. Although status struggles between tribes related on their mothers’ side are largely uncommon they do occasionally occur.

The Middle Eastern “Spring” wars digress from blood feud conventions because they involve mass carnage, the destruction of cities and entire branches of the economy, and the millions of residents fleeing their homes and cities hence migrate out of their native lands, beyond the borders of the Middle East. Using suitable indices to examine this particular society’s infrastructural traits and cultural roots can help us understand the deepest causes of the permutation observed. This is the impetus behind changing the focus of research from material relations, such as the struggle over the foundations of existence or as in a search for bread, to the study of agnatic stratification, based on the size of camps or the length of rows of fighting agnates, men holding arms.

Blood feuds can develop from a verbal provocation that leads to a violent assault, which can subsequently snowball even if it does not culminate in slaughter. The cycle of hostile actions that include killing or a vendetta lasts for many years. Murder is followed by reprisal murder, and so on and so forth.⁷ Conciliation usually requires outside intervention and massive arbitration efforts, because blood feuds stack up a long list of losses, with details both added and forgotten along the way. Peacemakers have to rummage through the minutia of the feud’s history to expose the initial spark that ignited the doing of evil (*awal e(l)-shaar shararah*). Discussing the events from the earliest to the latest is essential for preparing a settlement agreement and ultimately achieving reconciliation. Bringing the

⁶ An exception was “the ‘Odah and ‘Amer war” in the Negev Desert some 160 years ago. See Al ‘Aaref 1932.

⁷ KRESSEL G. M., *ASCENDANCY THROUGH AGGRESSION: THE ANATOMY OF A BLOOD FEUD AMONG URBANIZED BEDOUINS* (Mediterranean Language and Culture Monograph Series 12, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag 1996).

two disputing sides to mutual acceptance (*suleh*) necessitates the precise weighing of strikes and counterstrikes. The blood feuds typical to this cultural region (the Middle East) are waged according to characteristic conventions, which differ from those common in the “West”. Hostile relations generally pertain to the place of honor on the scale of power and prestige. Neighboring tribes are ranked throughout the ME in accordance with their relative size. The bigger come on top. This trait is not unique just to this “culture area”, however, it is alien to the current cultures in “the West” and to observers who arrive from afar.⁸

According to the “Western” model, it is just and proper for each national society to balance and separate the complementary executive, legislative and judicial authorities. An elected government acts in service of the nation, subject to its laws, the shaping of which lies in the hands of the legislative branch. The executive authorities are audited by the judicial ones while all these three have discretion, jurisdictional space and public platforms for speaking their piece. The procedures of all three are subject to the scrutiny of the state comptroller’s office, entrusted with monitoring adherence to explicit, written law. Periodic elections change the party representatives staffing the government ministries, an arrangement which foils nepotism lest “weeds” take root and grow. Police investigators are let in on the secrets of state service, to locate anomalies and bring offenders to trial as criminal defendants, if necessary. Thus, people stand as individuals against the test of the government institutions.

III. TRIBAL AFFILIATION AND TRIBAL RANKING IN MIDDLE EASTERN SOCIETY

Presidents, kings or military officers that serve as heads of state in Middle Eastern countries have excessive authority compared to the leaders of “Western” countries. In any case, their power detracts from the importance of institutions like a state comptroller, monitoring committees in elected legislatures, police investigators and subordination to high court rulings. Anomalies, if any exist, are caught less often, and then handled merely through exposure to the press and public opinion. Media coverage of exceptions in governance and of criminals in state service is rare. The *modus vivendi* is hushing, due to the firm grip of government bodies.

Infrastructure shaped according to agnatic affiliation binds specific men to each other and to the warring political system, by virtue of their

⁸ Kressel G. M., *Continuity and Endurance of Patrilineages in Towns*, 27(1) MIDDLE EASTERN STUDIES 79—93 (1991).

being the offspring of a common ancestor (*sheikh*). The ascription is tribal and makes it difficult to forge social or economic-business ties with outsiders who are descended from other sheiks, even if such ancestors were cognates or in laws (Smith, 1903). City, town and village districts in the Middle East are divided according to agnatic affiliation; clusters of families belonging to the same tribe nestle together to populate their own neighborhoods. Alongside this prevalent pattern in the region, social subordination continues at the discretion of the “tribal elders”, the patriarchs of the tribe’s various interrelated families. This ensures the continuity of obedience to the customary, ancient (prior to the Shar’i) law, *al-‘Urf* and to its restriction.⁹ The tribe inhibits its members on manners of interactions with its ‘others’. Agnatic division especially limits the departure of girls and women outside the gates of their tribe’s residence quarter.

Curbing individual liberty to maintain contact with “others” harms ties with professional, voluntary and other interest groups, when dealing with “foreigners” is considered a violation. Patri-lineage is primed to fill the ranks of fighters during disputes with other (= “foreign”) neighboring tribes. The commandment of unity (*‘assabiyyah*) makes it hard for men to disengage from the hub of the agnatic residential area in favor of conducting private business and moving to distant locations. The tribe adhering to its class ranking will not allow its members to “scatter” in forgotten realms to the point of renouncing their duty to report to its line of warriors whenever that need arises¹⁰.

In “Western” cities, choice of residence derives from financial capability, professional classification or preferred lifestyle. City quarters are largely inhabited by different level of wealth, a set up which is rare in the Middle East. Moreover, an unwritten rule instructs citizens to prefer join forces with individuals how are their agnatic relatives, who stem from same forefathers, same line of ascription, over transactions with partners who are “others”, i.e., not agnates. Therefore, there are no voluntary organizations like guilds that are purely professional and open to colleagues in the field, unconnected to tribal affiliation, nor are there firms that issue shares and dividends to encourage every potential, interested buyer.

The agnatic culture negates the possibility of strictly capitalistic activity, such as competition over market share, or collaboration among

⁹ Khalil Abu Rabia, *Three Circles in the Desert: The Conflict Between Traditional Law, the Shari’a Law and the State Law in Israel* (B. G. University 2011). Be’er Shev’a. (Hebrew), *Tribes and Political Parties among the Negev Bedouin* (2012).

¹⁰ LARRY S. BOURNE, *INTERNAL STRUCTURE OF THE CITY: READING SPACE AND ENVIRONMENT* (New York: Oxford University Press 1971).

manufactures or consumers on a common interest, product quality or pricing, open to all comers. Cooperation based on principles of economy and society net, with a division of labor¹¹, is rare. Companies in national Middle Eastern economies are led by governing families (such as in the oil-producing nations) or by foreign capital entities. Local tycoons are shackled in their attempts to invest in promising ventures and thereby break out beyond the limits of their affiliation. The similarity between city neighborhoods, with their differences based on affiliation (rather than on professions or measures of wealth), harms the possibility of mutual acceptance and interactions between counterparts in various neighborhoods for the sake of public order. This increases everyone's common dependence on business being regulated by "neutral" government bodies, which hold the sole "keys" to advancing order in the public domain. In addition, the military is a frequently interloper in Middle Eastern businesses. This practice is especially widespread in Egypt, where the army, by state order (in the absence of any other feasible body), intervenes in the management of service and production companies. This recourse also helps augment officers' meager salaries.

Tribal groups foster internal unity to provoke their members against becoming addicted to private business that would weaken their devotion to tribal concord. Exchanges of fire between city neighborhoods, one of the characteristics of the "Arab Spring", now emphasize that the weight of tribal affiliation is dominant and uncompromising. No internal strife is waged either, so the socio-economic situation appears unlikely to change. Even though the set up in need for farming prevails as ever and water resources avail as in the past and even better now, the social array in need for following traditional agriculture do not allow for more.

One result of the infrastructure set up is competitive procreation; since the size of the agnatic group determines its ranking on the scale of power and status, it must (1) maximize increase its numbers, and (2) make sure its members do not leave and scatter. Since the surrounding society is tribal and all the tribes compete over size, the demographic race is marked by a "population explosion." Efforts are consequently made to safeguard the optimal conditions for procreation. Ideally, the girls of each group are saved for intra-tribal marriages (endogamy). Women's unions with men are subject to tribal judgment rather than up to individual choice or decided

¹¹ EMILE DURKHEIM, *THE DIVISION OF LABOR IN SOCIETY* (New York: Macmillan 1933, originally published in 1893).

solely at the nuclear family's discretion. Polygyny¹² is common, especially among large and therefore strong groups. The tactic adopted for maximum growth and power is maximum reproduction. The birth of sons ("sword-bearers") will determine the tribe's place on the scale of prestige and status. At any rate, procreation is the main tool for social advancement, since an alternative to the tribal infrastructure has yet to be adopted.

Marrying a daughter off to her father's brother's son, that is the very essence of endogamy, is the ultimate ideal and symbol. Daughters' marriages outside the agnatic circle are coerced upon weak families. But, actually, strong families take their brothers' daughters as brides for their sons even from small (weak) families so the girls can "marry up" or marry grooms from families of a preferential status (hypergamy)¹³. The pattern of suitable unions for girls, supported by agnatic stratification, is important for economic-financial status. A study of matches in these communities indicates shifts in family status. Over the years, some rise and some fall, corresponding with who managed to give birth to sons as opposed to who brought mainly daughters into the world. The "male world" remains fanatical in its concepts, especially regarding the status of women.

Although some of the younger generation is calling to adjust the tribal conventions to the modern era by granting a choice to girls and individual discretion to couples, their success has thus far been limited. Preservation of the tribe's status is fervently bound up in female sexual honor (*'ird*) and submission to traditional dictates. Zealousness about the tribe and its conceptual world also explains why its members turn away from internal controversies toward external objects of hatred. The need to mend rifts for the sake of unity among the ranks at home requires a designated, available and concrete enemy who can serve as scapegoat.

The failure of the Middle Eastern "Spring" is evident from the eruption of intertribal and interethnic battles in the region. Blood feuds between tribes originate in the sanctification of war on others. As has always been the case, the common institutional means of uniting the masses is *jihad*. That is why our generation is witnessing on one hand a return of the call to battle the outside world, and on the other hand the outbreak of wars over the role of leading the faithful into battle, in which the Sunnis faithful once (in Islam's first century) prevailed over the Shi'as faithful.

¹² Polygyny is a form of marriage allowing a man to have more than one wife at one time. See THOMAS BARFIELD, *THE DICTIONARY OF ANTHROPOLOGY* (Blackwell, Malden USA, Oxford UK, Carlton Australia 1997).

¹³ Hypergamy is the practice of women being married "up" in social status, i.e., to men of tribes more numerous in combatant men than their tribe of origin.

Ever since their defeat, the Shi'ites have been waiting for an opportunity to return to leadership of the *Umma*—the Islamic nation—and nurturing the memory of their displacement by annually reliving their mourning (*ta'aziyyeh*) over the loss of Hussein Ibn Ali, during the first ten days of the month of Muharram. Recently they have regained hope that the time is ripe for a chance, as they have amassed enough strength to return to leadership. Guided by Iran, now the Shi'a faithful camp feel they have sufficiently armed and fortified positioned, to lead the nation (*'Umma*) of Islam faithful in battle. Their intents made clear and have come to exacerbate the Sunni camp.

The division into nations that came to replace the Ottoman empire in the Middle East (*see* the Sykes-Picot Agreement of 1916), again appears to have unnecessarily created rifts among the Islamic faithful and in any event to have been redundant. The old-new idea has returned to nest among those fighting each other, to make peace in the spirit of a pan-*Salafi* entity. The *Umma*'s space with no national borders partitioning it, with an appeal to do battle with the rest of the world's nations, until victory, has returned and fired imaginations.

However, tribal warring, now like always, is endemic. It is influenced by the culture of the society shaping its structures, so there is no escape from it. Futurists admonish visionaries, warning that right after universal devotion to *jihad*, clans will resume their tribal fighting. *Jihad*, now like always, might achieve peace during battle but not the peace of the "end of days" (Isaiah 2: 2-4), immediately thereafter. It will not lead to the cessation of internal battles, now like always, as long as the tribal structure maintains its grip.

IV. BASIC CONDITIONS FOR CHANGING INDIVIDUAL-GROUP RELATIONS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Neutralizing tribalism, meaning liberation from its avowed and inherent symbols, may be accomplished by adapting the Middle Eastern cultural region to modern social reality. Placing a religious emphasis on human beings in direct, private relation to their Creator will negate the sanction of violence under the cloak of *jihad*. Problems arouse by privatizing faith (individuation) will emphasize concern for the faithful and human society, without the tribe's judgment. The change reached by the Ahmadi Islam, that renounces *Jihad* from its agenda, evinces progress. It enhances tolerance towards believers of other creeds. Hence, essential to deliver control to critical leaders with an eye to the future, who can read the

evolving reality in the “Western World”. The accent will thus be shifted from **ascription** to **performance**, while judging each innovation for its practical value without labeling the person or innovating party according to their ethnic or agnatic belonging.

Those looking for true discoveries, talent and the potential for innovation should better make the intrinsic treasures in women’s minds equally accessible. Removing the traditional yoke of discrimination that blocks women and girls from advance in all social forums is contingent on free discussion about it in every possible forum. Advancing the status of women to be equal to men can start with a ban on polygamy, however hard to achieve. Despite a law passed in 1951, not even in Israel has polygamy fallen out of practice. The rate of polygynous men¹⁴ reaches some 37% of the total family homes of the Negev Bedouin.

The spark that set off the democratic revolts in the Middle Eastern countries for the first time, starting in Tunisia in 2011, was ignited by Internet users of the mounting generation, who sought change in traditional barriers. Although they shared the same ideological bent and a common denominator, they lacked an alternative to tribalism. They therefore fell an easy prey to their countries’ religious authorities. Rallying around Islam was essential for creating a bond among warring clans; this is the case today just as it was in the days of the Prophet Muhammad. Only a decrease in tribalism will render *jihad* a moot point, ease the building of a joint future and then facilitate a status quo of domestic peace, based on a civic connection among peoples in relation to their homelands and nations with the other nations around them. The region’s soil is fertile and the sun overhead is beneficial to agriculture. The treasures of nature bring wealth. These are only those unbridled human traits that are destructive thus require a change.

The latter-day peoples of the Middle East are no longer the shepherd tribes they once were, that drew towards or apart from one another depending on the pasture conditions or business with the settlement populations. Only the enemy shelling that destroyed their homes and livelihoods made them move on once again, and the roads leading “westward” have filled with people. A wide circle in Middle Eastern society is modeled after European fascism, which was deemed suitable¹⁵ and, although officially rejected, is still perceived as benefitting the national societies in the Middle East.

¹⁴ Men married simultaneously to several women.

¹⁵ ISRAEL GERSHONI, *LIGHT IN THE SHADOW: EGYPT AND FASCISM, 1922-1937* (Hebrew, Tel Aviv: Am Oved 1999).

A rampant error in deciphering recent events in the Middle East stems from the individualist worldview, according to which material relations or chasing after money is what determines people's behavior. The question of whether to be "tribal" or "individual" is based on the Western criterion of monetary value. Increasingly, the question of being a citizen in a civilian population, as opposed to a tribe member within a cluster of tribes, is being asked by outsiders and presented as a dilemma, implying that one of the two modes is more worthwhile. How, in what and by how much is it more lucrative to play as an individual than as a tribe member—this is a question for researchers in the "far West", not yet in the Middle East.

If we remove the inhibitions of religion and tradition from the equation, we will find people who sacrifice their personal freedom and private fortune for the sake of their tribal group's prestige. The "added value" they receive in return is protection, by ensuring the support of their agnatic kin who will stand beside them in the face of attacks by outsiders. Moreover, a look at the public coffers in the Middle Eastern countries, cities and villages reveals a systematic lack of tax collection.

CONCLUSION

This essay investigates the underlying causes of the ethnic and tribal wars in the Middle East over the past five years. An analysis of the division between the rivals' *casus belli* to the point of opening fire reveals senseless excuses that usually led to a concrete dispute: a contemporary conflict of interests over subjects of economy and society or over the trappings of modernity that harm the tradition's inherent values. However, the bitter fighting in the Middle East, as experienced by every warring party, dates back to Islam's first century. The tribal system (infrastructure) is not openly presented as being at odds with the state institutions (superstructure). No one is grumbling about wasting "easy money" (some of the region's nations hold great fortunes in petrodollars). Nor is there opposition to corrupt government agents embezzling public funds, or to those sticking a hand into citizens' pockets under the pretext of collecting commission fees, in order to make up for a lack in their salaries. No Middle Eastern municipality is filling city treasuries by collecting property taxes¹⁶. No Middle Eastern

¹⁶ Janet L. Abu-Lughod, *Varieties of Urban Experience: Contrast, Coexistence and Coalescence in Cairo*, in MIDDLE EASTERN CITIES 159—187 (Ira M. Lapidus ed., Berkeley: University of California Press 1969); JANET L. ABU-LUGHOD, *CAIRO: 1001 YEARS OF THE CITY VICTORIOUS* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press 1971); Janet L. Abu-Lughod, *The Islamic City: History, Myth, Islamic Essence, and Contemporary Relevance*, 19 INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF MIDDLE EAST STUDIES 55—176 (1981).

nation's reserves are overflowing with tax money. Therefore no one complains about a predatory finance minister or a country's duty officer who is not devoted to meet his client citizens' need, searching to overcome a concrete shortage faced by the poor.

The current wars do not reflect a protest as regards neglected, ineffectual treat of civilian affairs. Nor they are intended counter inefficient bureaucratic labyrinth. Concepts of "individualism" have not yet taken root. The units comprising the organizational structure are not private homes vis-à-vis the State Organs but rather, extended families and tribes,¹⁷ who shake free of dependence on their labile public domain. The Middle Eastern battles of these days prove that the tribes hold last, hence it is rigid, as compared to the nation's hold. Whether tribes can or cannot obviate the State institutions, a minute come that make them feel they are to do so. This joining points to the special relationship between the two entities; government apparatus that reins the State's organs and the tribal system perpetuates its own undisturbed existence and regulate order at the infrastructure. Innately rooted in, the tribes have not been built anew. They are primordial while the State is a renewal. Division of the two, however, leads to war of all against all and destruction. The trampling of national institutions brings back to mind the "State of Islam", a dream of tribes unity in battle, that had been tried by Muhammad the Prophet. An enemy-for-ever is in need to hold tribes united, i.e., there is no way to maintain their unity at time of peace.

Analysis of the binary relations observed indicates a possible egress that has a real chance, immediately following a ceasefire. In the second stage an effort can be made to build a civilian society that appeals to the individual, man and woman alike, and overrides step by step the tribal affiliation. Reducing agnatic differentiations may eliminate friction in tribal and ethnic relations, and gradually erode the implicit approach of *'ird*. This requires pedagogic thinking that nurtures female liberties, and establishing social institutions that are transparent, accountable and open to public scrutiny; institutions proscribed to act along with a fixed in law, vigilant against slipping back into past patterns by force of personal vagaries, open to encounter the challenges ahead.

¹⁷ DONALD N. LEVINE, *GEORG SIMMEL ON INDIVIDUALITY AND SOCIAL FORMS* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. Ch. 4-6 1971).