

# Flourishing of Occidentalism in Iran After Cultural Revolution\*

## İran Kültür Devrimi'nden Sonra İran Oksidentalizm Canlanması

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### Abstract

Modernity changed the community interests; it idealized individuality and liberal democracy, and based its main aim on pushing religion to the outskirts of human life. Western Christianity adjusted to modernity to justify the developments while Islam accepted it only to the extent of its capacity to authenticate the realities stated by the Qur'an. Orientalism, Occidentalism, and Islamism play impressive role in a variety of contexts today. Occidentalism in its popular variety helps to reinforce the identities. This study considers the power relationship between people and cultures. The roles and the identities are changing throughout history. Nowadays Islamic culture is one of popular subjects to study on. So, the Muslim world and revival of Islamic culture are the beginning of Occidentalism. Occidentalism is developed in the Orient in order to study the West from a non-Western World point of view. It can be referred as revival of identity (for isteghrab) in Arab world by Hasan Hanafi or Talibanian or ISIS Occidentalists movements which stand for empowering Arab culture, Wahhabism or Salafism. All are revivalist movements to rapture Islamism as an ideology. This article tries to focus on the concept of Occidentalism in Iran after Iran Cultural Revolution.

**Keywords:** Anti westernization, Decolonization, Iran Cultural Revolution, Occidentalism, Orientalism, third world countries

### Öz

Modernite, toplum çıkarlarını değiştirdi; bireysellik ve liberal demokrasiyi idealize ederek dini insan hayatının dışına itmeye başladı. Batı Hıristiyanlığı kendini moderniteyle ayarlayarak gelişimini sağladı, Hâlbuki İslam sadece Kuran tarafından gerçekleri doğruladığı ölçüde kabul gördü. Bugün Oryantalizm oksidentalizm ve İslamcılık çeşitli bağlamlarda etkileyici bir rol oynamaktadır. Oksidentalizm Doğu'nun kimliğini güçlendirmek için yardımcı bir rol üstlenmektedir. Bu çalışma, insanlar ve kültürler arasındaki güç ilişkisini değerlendirmektedir. Roller ve kimlikler tarih boyunca değişiyor. Günümüzde İslam kültürü popüler bir konu haline gelmiştir. Yani, İslam dünyası ve İslam kültürünün canlanması Oksidentalizmin başlangıcıdır. Oksidentalizm doğuda gelişerek batıyı batılı olmayan Dünya noktasından araştırmaktadır. Arap dünyasında kimlik canlanması olarak (isteghrab için) Hasan Hanefi veya Talibanian veya ISIS Oksidentalistler tarafından Arap kültürü, Wahhâbîcilik veya uyanmasıyla ifade edilebilir. Bütün bu uyandırıcı hareketler İslamcılığı ideoloji olarak ele almaktadır. Bu makalede, İran Kültür Devrimi'nden sonra İran Oksidentalizm canlanmasını ele almaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Anti batılaşma, dekolonizasyon, İran Kültür Devrimi, oksidentalizm, Oryantalizm, üçüncü dünya ülkeleri

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## Introduction

The ideas of the West spread so widely since the end of the Cold War when many modern and developed countries influenced by different aspects of the Western or Occidental philosophy. First we must know that we cannot conceptualize the world without relying upon the notion of the East and West<sup>1</sup>. The notion of the Islamic world expresses that it is somehow unconnected with Europe and America by politics, economic, and military; also it is different in history, ethnicity, language, and culture. Edward Said has divided the world into two unequal halves of Orient and Occident. He believes that the distinction between them is a man-made relationship of power, domination and hegemony<sup>2</sup>

Actually, when we are talking about the West, we emphasize its superiority and its finer civilization which aims to rule over the rest of the world. Also, we overstress its political domination through the more subtle forms of globalizing economy. In fact the west isn't the west; it is centralized by its leaders to govern the world. In Said's view, Orientalism is a strategy of the West which began with the domination of Britain and France (until the Second World War) and the United States (after the end of the Second World War) on the Orient.

Hanafi believes that Orientalism belongs for the most part to similar aspects of colonial culture in the West such as Imperialism, Racism, Nazism, Fascism, a package of hegemonic ideologies and European Supremacy<sup>3</sup>. It is a Western activity which defines the self and the others or in the other words the west and the Non West; the new world and the classical world; modern times and ancient times. On the contrary, he expresses that Occidentalism is a discipline formed in Third World countries in order to complete the process of decolonization (especially cultural decolonization) and is based on military and economical issues. Occidentalism bases its mirrors on European Consciousness. It is the knowledge of the West (in terms of language, history, culture and ...). They are major literature on Occidentalism, some of famous researchers are Carrier (1992), Chen (1992), Cole (1992), Howard (1995), Hanafi (1996), Ning (1997) Coronil (1996), Venn (2001), Tavakoli(2001), Buruma and Margalit (2004, 2005), Furumizo (2005), Bilgrami (2006), RothSeneff (2007), Friedman (2009) and Santos (2009).

Orientalism has turned into a political discourse, dominating relations between the West and East. Orientalism is, however, one end of the spectrum. The other end is Occidentalism. The Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine used it

- 1 Ernst W. Carl (2012) *the West and Islam?: Rethinking Occidentalism and Orientalism* <http://iph.ras.ru/uplfile/smironov/ishraq/1/ernst.pdf>
- 2 Said E. W (2003) *Culture and Resistance: Conversations with* [Interviews by David Barsamian]
- 3 Hanafi H (1992), *Muqaddima fi 'Alm al-Istighrab*, 2nd edition (Cairo: Al-Mu'assasa al-Jami'iyya), 10; and idem, *Al-Turath wa al-Tajdid*, 176–180.

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for the first time in writings back to 1839. It was about an Iranian king, Soltan Mahmoud Ghaznavi (971-1030) "...The Sultan Mahmoud and his Turkish subjects...have no taste for...the Occidentalism, the journalism, the budgetism, the parliamentarism of the nineteenth Century<sup>4</sup>." For Hasan Hanafi the liberation of colonized country is object, so he focuses his study on decolonization process subject. The object of study in Orientalism becomes the studying subject in Occidentalism, and the studying subject in Orientalism becomes an object of study in Occidentalism. Hanafi defines the transition of Orientalism to Occidentalism with such words "If Orientalism was the creation of the center, Occidentalism is the creation of the periphery".

According to Ian Buruma and Avishai Margalit individual liberty, liberal democracy, free market capitalism, toleration, emancipation of women, diversity, scientific advancement, and dynamism are the things Occidentalists look down on<sup>5</sup>. Generally Occidentalism can be considered from two aspects: first, the criticism, reaction and analysis of European culture by Third World intellectuals. So all third world countries do is liberation of their national cultures from the hegemony and supremacy of Western culture. The second source of critique is inside the West by the Europeans thinkers and philosophers. Nietzsche declares "God is dead," Derrida and the post-modernists declare "Man is dead," and Barthes even declares "The Author is dead!" they are testimony of Occidentalism flourishing in Europe. It shows the development of European Consciousness. Consequently there is no mean that occidentalists be in non western society, Westerners such as Noam Chomsky and Edward Said, who are critical of the foreign policy of the United States, fall in the category of Occidentalists.

Ning uses Occidentalism as a counter to Western colonialism and hegemonism; so it is the process of "decolonising" and "anti-colonialist" strategy against Western hegemonists bias. Ning describes Chinese Occidentalism as "struggle against imperialism and hegemonism". She points out Occidentalism manifested itself in different forms in different periods, but its fundamental view point is hostility to the West, imperialism, and Western cultural hegemonism<sup>6</sup>

Ning believes that Occidentalism glorify among Muslim countries oppose to Western hegemonies. As a result it can be said, today the world is under the threat of Islamization, the German weekly *Süddeutsche Magazin*, emphasized "Attempts to Islamize the West cannot be denied. The danger for

4 Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine Vol. 46, 1839:105

5 Buruma I and Avishai M (2004) *occidentalism: The West in the Eyes of its Enemies* (New York: Penguin, 2004).

6 Ning,W. (1997). Orientalism versus Occidentalism? *New Literary History*, Vol. 28, No. 1, Cultural Studies: China and the West (Winter, 1997), pp. 57-67 Available at: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20057401> [Accessed: 30/10/2009]

the identity of Europe that is connected with it should not be ignored out of a wrongly understood respectfulness"<sup>7</sup>. This statement is striking. Islam is regarded as a danger to Europe. So the West which grows up Islamophobes in its heart is shocked and horrified by the picture of Islam. In fact Occidentalism is not just a critique of Western possessions but it portrays the Jew as rootless, money-grubbing, global enemy who deserve to be eliminated. If the Europe accomplished the cycle of world history and identity consciousness, it has made the flourishing of the new third world consciousness in itself; so the question is, which world-consciousness will take the lead? Today the symptoms of revival are emerging in Third World consciousness. Most philosophers of the West declared the rebirth of world consciousness in the East and its decline in the West.

Iran radical Islamists who were flourished with Iran Cultural Revolution based their ideology on anti-westernization. In fact Iran radical Islamists base their policy upon it. This is obvious that Iran revolution in a case of leadership, ideology and goals of the revolution was unique. It was under the banner of Islam and was the symbol of returning to the model of Islam and was promising simple, puritanical and authentic life for Muslims. Iran revolution was not just political but social and economical and cultural one. It brought up new social, cultural orders and new Islamic revolutionary elites. The outburst of revolution at the centre of a multi-ethnic country or at the heart of a plural country had international consequences. There was determined attempt to export the revolution to Muslim ethnics' countries, this attempt was tempting regional rivalries and fostering conditions to inter-state war.

As in the case of Iran, Occidentalism in third world countries is the discourse of oppression and liberation. Coronil has defined three modes of Occidentalism representation: the dissolution of the Other by the Self; the incorporation of the Other into the Self; and the destabilization of the Self by the Other. Here the "Other" represents the East and the "Self" represents the West<sup>8</sup>. Studying the case of Occidentalism in both the West (Germany and Russia) and the East (Japan, China, Egypt, Turkey, Iran and Pakistan), is defined as hatred toward "an offensive display of superiority by the West"<sup>9</sup> They argue that Occidentalism in the Third World (the East) flourished during 1960s-1970s by Mao's Cultural Revolution in China and it followed by the Islamic Revolution of Iran in 1979.

Mao believes that Western imperialism destroyed Chinese traditions and thoughts. In 1950s, he ordered intellectuals to be cleansed of bourgeois

7 New York Times, July 27, 2007

8 Coronil, F. (1996) *Beyond occidentalism: toward nonimperial geohistorical categories*. Cultural Anthropology 11.1: 51-87. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/656209> [Accessed: 30/10/2009]

9 Buruma I and Avishai M (2004) *occidentalism: The West in the Eyes of its Enemies* (New York: Penguin, 2004), 160 pp.

ideology (individualism and pro-Americanism) in a similar way after Iran cultural revolution, the Supreme Council of Iran's Cultural Revolution set up to clear universities of the Western ideology and mindset. They expressed their hatred with dissatisfaction with the US foreign policy too. In the context of Iranian Occidentalism, some of Iranian intellectuals (such as Fardid and Jalal Al-e Ahmad) and president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad showed his opposition to be "dissolved" or "absorbed" to the West. The west tendency is rejected by most of Muslim scholars and radicals. It is common idea between Iranian Occidentalists to develop an Islamic ideology (religious Occidentalism) to confront the West. The same movement can be found between the works of sayid Gutb, Maudidi who "struggle against the enemies of Islam". As far as the focus of this study in on context of Iran, it will be far from main aim of study to consider the process of Occidentalism in Pakistan, India or Egypt.

This study will focus on the concept of Occidentalism in third world countries with focus on Iran's resistance after Cultural Revolution. So, the Western modernity as a product of European Enlightenment is somewhat unacceptable in Islamic republic of Iran. Islamic Republic of Iran constructs its foundation on westophobes and such views generate Occidentalism at the heart of Islam.

### Iran's Cultural Revolution

Modern civil society is a place to debate on individual choice and their ultimate issues. While Islam clings to the ultimate meanings of the transcendental dimension<sup>10</sup>. Islam refuses to dissociate the natural world from the supernatural world. It believes to enjoyment of life within the Qur'an order. But between two worlds it gives predominance to the supernatural world. The nationalist principles and fighting for God are foundation of Islamic view. Iran's Islamic revolution based its goals on Qur'an orders to revive its identity and Islamic culture. Tavakoli Targhi believes that Persian publication of Descartes in the 1860s was the beginning of a new age of rationality and modernity and it reinforces the foundational myth of modern Orientalism that it constitutes the West as ontologically and epistemologically different from the Orient. He regards modernity as an ethos rather than as a decisive epoch of the nation. Humanities go through this way to find fact<sup>11</sup>.

By flourishing of Iran's Islamic revolution, its heritage has profound contradictory consequences in Middle East. The creativity of cultural practices of Iran was regarded as potent and dynamic force and this social and cultural innovation caused changes and movements in Islam world. During

10 Tāmaş Ch (2012) *Patterns of Modernity: Christianity, Occidentalism and Islam* file:///C:/Users/ALADDIN/Downloads/v10317-012-0008-z.pdf

11 Tavakoli-Targhi. M (2001) *Refashioning Iran: Orientalism, Occidentalism and Historiography*. Hampshire and New York: Palgrave Macmillan

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shah period political and intellectual lives were engaging with enormous and complex mobilizations. But wide-ranging number of opposition forces that were from different ethnicity came together to overthrow shah's regime and establish an Islamic state against the West interests and power. With overthrowing the powerful regime of Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi in 1979 and establishing new state of the Islamic Republic of Iran with victorious leaders Ayetollah Ruhollah Khomeyni the popular wave of Islamism flourished in Iran and this was proclaimed in a national referendum on 2-3 December 1979. With establishing Islamic Republic of Iran, the mobilization of past system gave its place to political system which was entirely taken from Qu'ran. It contained some remarkable components that were affecting modern politics too. It was against corruption, foreign linked elites; also it was aiming to use country oil to improve equally social programs in cities and country sides. It was against dominant power on oppressed people. It was unique one because it wasn't relied on force, military insurrection and it was organized through mosques and local committees.

Iran's shah social policies were based on the "modern" attitudes. With overturning of Shah's regime beside social and cultural alteration, the Islamic Republic of Iran improved rural development schemes in modern history. However, the Islamic Republic of Iran caused the notable rural development; it was under the attack of Western-supported Iraqi forces and economic sanction of world's leading power. Consequently, it was the best excuse to base its ideology upon the West hatred and rejection of westernization. Anti Americanism was Islamic ideological movement that by the supreme leader of Iran spread out the world. Ruhollah Khomeini leader of Islamic and Cultural Revolution substituted the word *estekbare jahani* for Imperialism in order to fight with such dominant power. It was Qur'anic term substituted for fighting with Imperialism. So like all revolutions it wanted to overthrow an oppressive government. Edward Said (2003) perceptively expresses, "Clichés, caricatures, ignorance, unqualified ethnocentrism and inaccuracy were inordinately evident ... with the result that the distinctive continuities and discontinuities of Iranian revolutionary life never emerged." Iranian revolution rewrites the history. Furthermore, perpetually it was a rejection of modernization and was based on theology.

Ian Buruma and Avishai Margalit declare "that Occidentalism, like capitalism, Marxism, and many other modern isms, was born in Europe, before it was transferred to other parts of the world." They believe that the roots of Occidentalism lie in the western, rather than non-western, world<sup>12</sup>. They represent Occidentalism as holy warrior who hate modern city. To the Occidentalism,

12 Buruma I and Avishai M (2004) *occidentalism: The West in the Eyes of its Enemies* (New York: Penguin, 2004), 160 pp.

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the City is “an inhuman zoo of depraved animals consumed by lust.” It is a place of Bourgeois capitalism, which destroys culture and replaces it with a marketplace and materialist consumers. Occidentalism disdains the “Western Mind” as too rationalistic. It is opposed to culture and race. So, Iran revolution was Occidentalist one which overturned Iran’s political, economic, social and cultural orders and it was a living testament to the will and determination of a people to break the chains and assert their independency. It is up to say for the United States or the West the Iranian Revolution has a much different meaning, because the US lost its closest ally in the Middle East and encountered with revisionist state which wasn’t eager to maintain America’s privileges in the region.

In an increasingly diverse and multicultural world, the mere assumption of western superiority won’t be how to protect liberal democracy against its enemies. As a result the main focus of this paper will be on Islam and its anti-western attitude. In order to define Occidentalism in the best way, first we need to define the west against non-west by seeking the process of anti westernization and anti western modernity in non west countries like Iran. All it does is to know precisely what is worth - and what is not worth for defending.

### **The Process of Occidentalism in Iran**

Occidentalism eliminates the superiority of the West as Self to the Orient as Other. The relation between the self and the other, is equal relation, not high-low one. It aims at balancing of justice in history of world civilization. Occidentalism has desire self-producing and self-liberation. Occidentalism is partly a defense of national character, national culture and national life-style against alienation and westernization. It is against cultural dependence on the West and gradual loss of national independence. Occidentalism is the base for preserving belongings of homeland for all humanity.

Actually the debates on Occidentalism start whenever the conflictual implications of a unitary Muslim world in opposition to “the West” are highlighted. We all the times have problems in the East-West dichotomy. The broader ideologies of Orientalism and Occidentalism certainly draw upon the basic concepts of East and West, since Orient and Occident are simply the Latin forms of these geographic markers<sup>13</sup>. Occidentalism, accordingly the anti-western attitude is the process that is brought up at the center of west. Ian Buruma and Avishai Margalit in their book, *Occidentalism: The West in the Eyes of its Enemies* looks for the answer on the question of “why do they hate us,” they argue that the Islamists’ hatred of the West is not because of a clash of civilization. They think their hate originated within the West itself. It isn’t

13 Ernst W. Carl (2012) *the West and Islam?: Rethinking Occidentalism and Orientalism* <http://iph.ras.ru/uplfile/smironov/ishraq/1/ernst.pdf>

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the reflective of an ideology but “constellation of images” which is so called “Occidentalism.<sup>14</sup>”

<i>Current status</i>	<i>Cause of Entry</i>	<i>Form of Entry</i>	<i>Westernization process in Iran</i>
Not any more	Colonization	Political _ Military	First wave period
Affecting Iranian life style	West upgrading in technology and needs for applying them in daily life	technological _ technical	Second wave period
Orienting universities programs	West progress in sciences and needs for them	Scientific_ theoretical	Third wave period

After trenchant effect of physic in Iran, Iranian occidentalists started to dissection the process of westernization in Iran and the Middle East. They believe that it is based on materialism and humanism, and all its focus is on marginalization of God and religion. Some of Iranian historians base the inauguration of Occidentalism on the Safavid period, but this article makes its focus on the rise of Islamic revolution as anti-western process to highlight the picture of west and modernity in Iranian researchers' views. It will be appropriate to consider Iranian reality through history and its unexpected influence on modern time.

The main root of anti-western attitudes in Iran is to belittle and underestimate the cultures of non-western societies. It can be got that, on the nature of Islam little attention is paid to western ideas and discourse. Hence the interplay of the ideas and the power-relationship between west and non-west are defining factor in Occidentalism. Buruma and Margalit analyze this power-relationship and believe that “Since our contemporary forms of Occidentalism are often focused on America, it should be pointed out that anti-Americanism is sometimes the result of specific American policies”<sup>15</sup>.

Musaviniya divides the process of westernization in Iran for three periods and defines the modernity in two processes<sup>16</sup>. Musavinia divided it to religion oriented and norm oriented. Norm oriented process started with second period wave and it is continued up to now. It has materialistic and humanistic views. In this view religion is restricted to individuals and accompanied with the process of civilization. So, civilizing the humanity, and making progress in

14 Buruma I and Avishai M (2004) *occidentalism: The West in the Eyes of its Enemies* (New York: Penguin, 2004), 160 pp.

15 Buruma I and Avishai M (2004) *occidentalism: The West in the Eyes of its Enemies* (New York: Penguin, 2004), 160 pp.

16 Musavinia M(2015) *the process of Occidentalists in Iran* <http://didban.ir/fa/news-details>



science and economy are indispensable part of norm oriented process. This process appeared to be the supporter of westernization. Some supporters of this process in Iran were Nazemohdoleh, Mohammad Ali

Frughi, Talbof and Fathali Akhunzadeh. While religion oriented process is embodied in its entirety in Iran current policy, is based upon the involvement and interference of religion in all social affairs. As a result it is not individual but social need.

Bakhshandeh is divided the Iranian Occidentalism to state and non state Occidentalism. In state Occidentalism the image of the West is constructed by the state. The state Occidentalism is created through "government policies and official statements and speeches, also carried by the media (through publishing domestic news"<sup>17</sup>. It is mainly associated with the political and economic relations between Iran and the West. Non-state (public or media) Occidentalism: It is the image of the West "portrayed" among the Iranians through media or intellectuals. Non-state Occidentalism in its place created has led to the formation of anti-Westernism (particularly after the revolution) also Westernism (Westernised inclinations) among the Iranians (particularly before the revolution). The important note to refer is that whatever policy rules in Iran, it should follow the strategy described by the Leader of Islamic Revolution, which is base for flourishing of Iranian Occidentalism after Islamic Revolution.

In Occidentalism religion play a significant role in shaping culture. Islamism is religious kind of Occidentalism, which combines Puritanism and political power. Radical Islamic Occidentalism, especially Wahhabism and in some cases Shi'ism consider the West as the main enemy for its support of idolatry and paganism in the Middle East. While Islamic Occidentalism supports a unified and pure Islamic world. After Iran Islamic Revolution, the reason for showing such hatred reflection is the United States policies in the Middle East, especially their supports of Israel. It is what Huntington calls it the clash of civilizations, which creates the situation for the rise of terror against the West. Maybe the west opposition with radical Islam is because they overstate the case of Islamism and represent it the instrument of terror.

Apart from dissatisfaction with the US foreign policy, with the development in technology especially spreading of internet in the global life, the Iranian Occidentalism encounter with the "modernity". So for investigating the relationship between modernity and Occidentalism, we need to mainly focus on literature, stories, movies and generally concentrate on the first-hand ac-

17 Bakhshandeh E (2012) Politics of Iran-West Relations within the Context of Iranian Occidentalism; Image of the West in the Iranian press During Reformism (1997-2001) and Conservatism (2005-2009) [http://westminsterresearch.wmin.ac.uk/12919/1/Ehsan\\_BAKHSHANDEH.pdf](http://westminsterresearch.wmin.ac.uk/12919/1/Ehsan_BAKHSHANDEH.pdf)

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counts of diplomats. Thanks to the west colonial and imperial (military) presence in the East, the Westerners gained information about the East. With such strategy the Easterners became familiarized with the Western “modernity”. The countries like Iran because of their oppose strategy against the US are labeled as “rogue states” or “axis of evil”. According to the US National Security Strategy, “rogue states” are countries that “hate the United States and everything for which it stands”.

Hasan Hanafi in a book entitled Introduction to the Science of Occidentalism (Muqaddima fi ‘ilm al-istighrāb) states the assumption that Arabs need to make a critical study of Orientalism rather than using it as a factual source of self-knowledge. With this act he tries to rescue the Oriental self from its alienation by “reinforcing its own positive self image”<sup>18</sup>.

The process of Occidentalism in Iran is not totally against modernization, it wanted to become modernized and at the same time preserve Islamic culture and tradition. In some Islamic countries like Afghanistan, they set up “extremist and violent” mindset as Taliban regime which is confronted all signs of Westernization. In order to remove all signs of Westernization, the Taliban draws on violence and rely on Shariah law. As far as Westernization is the mirror which is reflecting all the West belongings, O’Connor defines anti-Americanism, as the hatred of the west culture, politics and ideology, globalization and terrorism<sup>19</sup>. There was a very clear anti-Americanism that wanted the US to leave Iran alone. So; American hostility stresses xenophobia of the US in region. Such resistance is against the West cultural penetration and its political and military intervention in other societies. Political intervention is even more likely to generate hostility.

Snyder argues that the lack of action by America after Iran Cultural Revolution was because Americans did not want to “hurt the moderates and help the radicals”<sup>20</sup>. However, Jimmy Carter changed this policy in 1980 and broke diplomatic relations with Iran. In its Islamic and political identity, the Iranian Revolution was largely in opposition to the West. He argues the United States antagonistic measures such as economic sanctions, military threats, covert aid and political pressure trigger such movements in Iran especially after Islamic revolution. In explaining the rise of political Islam and in particular Shiism after Iran’s Islamic revolution Akbarzadeh argue that the emergence of an anti-US regime in Iran reflected the “wave of popular discontent with US interference and influence throughout the region”. Another reason for expand-

18 Hanafi, Hasan.( 1996) *Islam in the Modern World*. Cairo: Anglo-Egyptian Bookshop..

19 O’Connor, B and Griffiths. M(2006). *The Rise of Anti-Americanism. USA and Canada*: Routledge

20 Snyder, Robert S. (1999). *The U.S. and Third World Revolutionary States: Understanding the Breakdown in Relations*. International Studies Quarterly, Vol. 43, No. 2, pp. 265-290 Available at:<http://www.jstor.org/stable/2600756>

ing anti Americanism in Iran was America's siding with Iraq and in particular arming Saddam with chemical weapons during the 1980-88 war. Also, throughout the 1980s and 1990s, the United States presence in the Gulf and its central role in the arming, advising and finally fighting triggered such hatred in Middle East and especially in Iran.

To sum up, the aim of occidentalists is to recognize the fractured realities and to work towards devolution of power where everyone can live their lives in their own way. As far as the Occidentalism is a critique of the West as negative one in every sense, but in some cases some rentier states with highlighting their sectaries aims to support religious radicalism. So, Occidentalism becomes dangerous when it aims to encourage political power. So as it stated before all we need is to know precisely what is worth - and what not worth for defending is.

### Conclusion

The signs of rousing consciousness began to appear in Third World countries after cold war. Liberation movements, decolonization, development, a new world ethical social and political order, a new World consensus against Zionism, a new decolonization regime in Palestine are the sign of rising identity consciousness in the world. The new world is against dictatorships, militarism, new classes. So the process of acculturation is failed and considering the world culture as unique entity remained myth by its dominant entity.

Buruma and Margalit contend "Occidentalism" phenomenon originated within the West in the late eighteenth century and later spread to the Middle East and Asia<sup>21</sup>. Occidentalists regard the Western liberalism as a threat because of encompassing their own brand of utopianism and considering the Western Modernity hostile to their civilizations, religions, and cultures. It is accepted that in Islam, the community has a protective context (Qur'an) which individual can accomplish himself and reach promised truth and freedom through it. Islam emphasizes that there is only desolation out of its context. Therefore, the individual has no alternative than to act with it. It tends to integrate all realities into the cosmic Qur'an, while the West model is incompatible with the Islamic ideology. The western world is based on the freedom of conscience which legitimizes the idea of individual freedom to choose his own way. Individual is free to choose, so the shift of interest from community to individuality is the focus in western world.

There is the dichotomy in religion definition of the west and the orient. Islam accepted modernity only to the extent of this one's capacity to verify the realities stated by the Qur'an<sup>22</sup>. While modernity as Castoriadis' believes assist

21 Buruma I and Avishai M (2004) *occidentalism: The West in the Eyes of its Enemies* (New York: Penguin, 2004), 160 pp.

22 Tâmaş Ch (2012) *Patterns of Modernity: Christianity, Occidentalism and Islam* file:///C:/Users/

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us to a passage from a world of heteronomy to a world of autonomy, a world where people build their own rules ceasing to attribute their imaginaries to any entity or element outside the social authority<sup>23</sup>. From religious perspective, there will be little chance to have significant changes in the real situation especially in social and cultural dynamic<sup>24</sup>. Major gaps in the case of having different interests between the western and the Islamic worlds or the religious and the secular ones are hard to be filled in. but it can be said modernity is trying to reshape the role of religion in secularized world.

The Egyptian scholar Hasan Hanafi considers Occidentalism as discipline built up in the Third World countries as a completion of the decolonization process. So it is important to define independent Islam and Arab in such way<sup>25</sup>. In this respect, modernity and westernization are threat for the Arab and Islamic identity<sup>26</sup>. Any attempt to find the similarities between religion and secularism will be complex and unpredictable in the current circumstances.

In a case of being enemy with western and modernity Buruma and Margalit argued that the hostility of Islamic jihadists toward the United States and the West is a reaction to the rise of Western modernity. For occidentalists the only source in Islam is God<sup>27</sup>. God knows better what is all about (Allahu a'lam), is the basis of the Muslim's faith. All matters are based on assertions of Qur'an and Prophet. With the development of science and technology, human relations with God and with the world have dramatically changed<sup>28</sup>. Modernity inaugurates accessing to the autonomy regarding the religious, philosophical, political, social and individual lives.

Said argues that the west media represent the Islam based on ignorance, cultural hostility and racial hatred, while the west in Iranian Islamic context is symbolized as hypocritical one<sup>29</sup>. Occidentalism process in the Iranian Islamic context is defined as the anti-colonialism, anti-imperialism and anti-Westernisation (anti-Americanism). Iranians believe that the West is against them and blame the US for imposing sanctions to weaken the Islamic regime.

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Iranian Occidentalism is like the Chinese Occidentalism in a case of setting up its position in the World and stand against the Western hegemony. Maybe one important similarity between the Iranian and Chinese Occidentalism is their opposition with “imperialist Western superpowers” and the “exploitation of the East by the West”<sup>30</sup>. President Khatami’s “dialogue among civilisations” and President Ahmadinejad’s “global management initiative” are within the framework of the Iranian Occidentalism following the Chinese Occidentalism. Iran’s effort to access nuclear technology was in track of Occidentalism. Occidentalism in Iran has turned into an ideology which is based greatly on theology. As far as there are political differences between Iran and the West after the 1979, the sanctions against Iran, military threats by the US, financial restrictions by the West are examples of the political disputes between Iran and the West. Also, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is the main source of hostility between Iran and the West.

It is “misrepresentation” of the East by the West. Iranian Occidentalism is a natural reaction and opposition to the West to represent Iran as “sponsor of terrorism” by “developing nuclear weapons” and “violating human rights”. It is also a kind of misrepresentation of the west in Islamic world media. The West in press is portrayed as an “arrogant” power which relies on war and violence to reach its “imperialistic” goals and “dominate the world”. It must be emphasized that by passing of time the image of the West in mainstream Iranian views is changing (as it is happening during President Ruhani period). Public political inclinations, ideological tendencies are changing. The nature of developments in the West is affecting public mind. During Conservatism the image of West is presented as “negative” and “neutral” image of the West was presented during Reformism.

With developing human consciousness in Middle East each country is trying to preserve its own culture, life and history. Joining to flow of cultural interaction does not mean acculturation anymore. Today we need an equal exchange, a give and take to found our existing values. So, the main focus must be on deconstructing the powerful paradigm between Islam and the west and offering a more holistic alternative<sup>31</sup>. As far as occidentalists are spreading out Islam, some alternatives are needed to deal with Muslim’s Westphobia and the west Islamphobia. So the media is an effective factor in changing public thoughts and mind and balancing their reconciliation with the West; in other words, controlled media are the tools of promoting this strategy. It is time to move beyond these limited conceptions.

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