

# CREATING AN ISLAMIC STATE

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# CREATING AN ISLAMIC STATE

Khomeini and the Making of a New  
Iran

VANESSA MARTIN

I.B. TAURIS

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To the memory of Norman Calder



# Introduction

From the time of the Iranian Revolution to the present, the Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini has been perceived by most people in the West as a dogmatic cleric with rigid views on Islam and the West derived from a hermetically sealed religious tradition. Yet in 1979 the popular Islamist movement he led overthrew an American backed regime held in place by a powerful army and security organization. His success set an example to subsequent Islamist challengers to the West since Khomeini emphasized self-assertion against over-whelming might, as well as the use of modern technology, organization, propaganda and organization.

The events of September 11th, tragic as they are, have reminded the West that the structures of authority which favour its domination, and the related economic system which developed in the Middle East following the victory in World War I, are open to challenge, a message implicit in the Iranian Revolution of 1979. Those confined to poverty and neglect have a willingness to sacrifice their lives as their only means of protest against Western protected might. Just as popular mobilization can overthrow a powerful regime, so in a battle over land and resources, the very notion of conviction, can challenge the superpower itself. Khomeini's success in achieving his objectives was in many ways a chapter in a continual struggle to establish new alternatives to the secular westernised state.

The purpose of this work is to show the complex intellectual background to Khomeini's vision, and the influences of both Islamic and Western ideas upon him and his following in the creation of an Islamic state. There are seven main themes. Firstly, Khomeini is discussed in the context of the influence on his ideas of Greek thought coming largely from Plato and Plotinus through the Islamic thinkers, al-Farabi, Ibn 'Arabi and Mulla Sadra, and even directly. Secondly, the work considers Iranian Islamism within the wider framework of Middle Eastern politics and the rise of the modern state in the region, with the ideological, institutional and social problems that this posed. Iran is compared with Turkey and Egypt, and it is argued that Khomeini used Islam as Nasser used Arab socialism to mobilize the

people and secure for the state a basis in popular support, a process that is ultimately influenced by Western ideologies and methods. A third and related theme is the place of the Iranian Islamist movement in the context of the evolution of other Islamist movements and their mutual influences.

Fourthly, from European distributive notions of justice and the power structures needed to implement them comes an emphasis on social justice common to the region. The fifth theme is the evolution over time of Khomeini's own ideas, with particular reference to the problems of authority, and the incompatibilities of the sovereignty of the people and that of the Divine Will as manifested in the *shari'a*. The sixth theme is formed by the struggle of the clerical Islamists, represented principally by Khomeini's pupil, Murtaza Mutahhari, to devise an ideology for the Islamist movement to inspire and attract support from the young intelligentsia, and to refute the claims of the religious laity that they might use their independent judgement in the interpretation of the sacred texts, and thus win control of political Islam. The final issue is the significance of the role of modern organization, technology and techniques of mobilization in providing Khomeini and his movement with the means and confidence to challenge and finally overthrow the Pahlavi state. The last two chapters show external perspectives, both from the secular British press and from Muslims outside Iran, by way of contrast with the internal views.

Being a work of history the study falls principally within the period of the last years of Reza Shah, the late 1930s, when Khomeini began to disseminate his ideas, and the ratification of the constitution of the Islamic Republic and the election of the first president, Abolhassan Bani Sadr, in 1979–80. Outside this period, a brief introduction is given to the nineteenth- and early twentieth-century background, and some concluding remarks are made on the consolidation of the Islamic state up to 1981. Inevitably, with such a long period and complex subject, there is much in Khomeini's thought, particularly from the Islamic intellectual tradition, that cannot be covered. The book also concentrates on the development of Khomeini's movement within Iran; the problems he encountered with the Ba'thist government in Iraq, and the enormous subject of the role of the students and other adherents abroad, have been left for another work.

The topics of the chapters are arranged in a broadly chronological order. However, to enable the reader to concentrate upon ideology and

organization as such in the main part of the work, the historical background (inevitably in the form of a brief outline) is provided in the first chapter. It is felt that the recent history of Iran is more readily understood through some reference to nineteenth- and early twentieth-century developments, of which the main trends and issues are highlighted. This is particularly so in relation to the problems generated by Iran's geopolitical position and the corresponding difficulties of foreign intervention. The reader may wish in the course of studying the work to refer from time to time to Chapter I to be reminded of the overall political situation.

The second chapter studies the influence of *'irfan* (mystical philosophy) upon Khomeini from his early years when he acquired an expertise in it. This kind of philosophy, also called Islamic gnosticism, originates in Neo-Platonism, which in particular influenced the ideas of two Islamic luminaries much studied by Khomeini, Ibn 'Arabi and Mulla Sadra. *'Irfan* is important for the understanding of Khomeini's world view, his concepts of leadership, his notions of authority and his view of the nature of the state. *'Irfan* inspired him with particular spiritual objectives and led him to inspire others. Through its ethics and stress on self-knowledge, it also provided a means of reaching and mobilizing ordinary people.

In Chapter III Khomeini's rise to prominence is discussed as well as his role in the reformist movement in Qum. He was involved in the establishment of a single religious leader (*marja'*) of all the Shi'a, Ayatollah Burujirdi, which had important implications for strengthening the position of religion against the state. The chapter in particular considers the role of modern organization in Khomeini's movement (the Nahzat) and the way it interacted with traditional networks. It attempts, using the relevant Persian sources, to give some sense of the viewpoint of the clerical and bazaari members of the Nahzat.

The struggle to win the hearts and minds of the educated young was fought mainly by Mutahhari, and his theory and arguments form the subject of Chapter IV. Mutahhari created an Islamic totalist (*tauhidi*) ideology for state, society and individual, which provided a vision, an ethic and goals for action. He sought to differentiate political Islam from Marxism and socialism, and to point out its superiority. He endeavoured to create for the individual a distinct role in the overall system. He also targeted the redefinition by the religious laity of Islamic terms in the light of Western political theories, and their attempt to gain control of political Islam.

Chapter V covers Khomeini's own political thought from the publication of *The Revealing of Secrets* in 1943–44 up until the revolution. It sets his ideas within the framework of previous Islamist theories, beginning with al-Afghani, and traces the development of this thought over the period, concentrating on particular topics relating to questions of authority, sovereignty and legitimacy – such as the nature of the state, attitudes to monarchy, and the problems posed by constitutionalism. It also looks at Khomeini's views on the role of the clergy in politics, as well as the importance of social justice and the need to protect Islam from both imperialists and secularists.

Khomeini's views in the context of other Islamist movements, especially in Egypt but also in India, are studied in Chapter VI. Comparisons with the Muslim Brotherhood in particular show similarities and possible influences on Khomeini's movement. All these movements are considered to have an authoritarian element, and to be influenced by Leninism in terms of organization and mass mobilization as well as in the development of a comprehensive ideology (even though the latter is Islamic and not Marxist). On questions of authority and sovereignty, consultation, community and individual, and social justice they have much in common. Their evolution owes a great deal to Western ideas and Western pressure on their prospective states.

Chapter VII draws together the themes of the preceding chapters in discussing the establishment of the Islamic Republic. Islam was implemented as a total way of life, infusing all aspects of state and society, but divine sovereignty was combined with popular sovereignty, and totalism diluted by relativism, adaptability and peculiarly Shi'i notions of consultation and debate. Khomeini's approach is shown to have been pragmatic as well as idealistic. The popular networks continued to provide a basis of support outside the military. Women had a dual role as the pivot of the family and as active participants in politics.

It is perhaps helpful to give definitions here of some of the terms central to the topic that may require elucidation or justification. Two terms are now current to describe Islamic political movements: 'Islamism' and 'Islamic fundamentalism'. The term 'Islamism' has been preferred, as it is reasonably close to the way in which members of such movements describe themselves, and also reflects their emphasis upon Islam rather than ideologies of what they term East and West, such as liberalism, socialism and Marxism. These Islamists are distinguished

from those who seek to combine Islam with Western ideologies – Islamic liberals, for example. ‘Fundamentalism’ has been rejected as it reflects a different, Christian religio-political environment, and finds no corresponding term in Islamist vocabulary; it also does not suggest the breadth and modernity of Islamist vision. That said, the extreme literalism demonstrated by some Islamists in their adherence to the holy texts and the Islamic law (*shari’a*), is fairly implied in the term fundamentalism.

A further and more precise term for Khomeini’s movement in particular, and indeed for others such as the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, might be ‘Islamic totalism’. ‘Totalism’ is one possible translation of *tauhid*, meaning unity, oneness, monism, monotheism, a total whole. While monism and monotheism have doctrinal and theological connotations in the Christian tradition which make them undesirable as translations for *tauhid*, totalism is a useful term in that it reflects the Islamist vision of Islam as pervading and infusing state, society and individual as part of one indivisible whole. It seems also a reasonably fair translation of Khomeini’s references at the time of the revolution to the *maktab-i tauhid*, the totalist ideology. For these reason the term has been found appropriate from time to time, with the reservation that some Islamists have seen more reason to compromise on totalities than others, that in practice debate remains, and that there is variety in legal, cultural and institutional arrangements amongst Islamists, particularly with regard to sovereignty.

Another term significant to the work is ‘social justice’. It is understood as meaning a set of conditions whereby the benefits and burdens of society are distributed equally, either naturally or through action by the state. Implied in the term is a structure of political power which seeks a fair distribution of advantages and disadvantages and has arrangements for the resolution of grievances. It is thus related to those who possess power and to their policies, as well as to the institutions, public organizations and regulations whereby those policies are implemented.

‘Ideology’ as a term has no generally accepted or precise definition. For the purposes of this work it is taken to mean, following principally Seliger’s *Ideology and Politics*, a coherent and comprehensive set of ideas which explains and evaluates social and political conditions and is a means of organized social and political action.

Other terms which may need illumination are ‘religious society’, taken to mean that portion of Iranian society, mainly the bazaar and clergy, to whom religion is a way of life and piety an integral part of culture, identity and authority. ‘Modern’ implies the introduction of new forms of

organization facilitated largely by technological change and their impact on various spheres of life. What are sometimes called modern ideologies (capitalism, socialism, constitutionalism and so on) are normally referred to as Western rather than modern. The term 'traditional' is not used to mean inferior, obstructive or in need of help, but what has been transmitted from the past in terms of customs, beliefs and institutions, although it is recognized that failure to change can be detrimental.

The main primary source for the study has been Khomeini's political writings, particularly *Kashf al-asrar* (*The Revealing of Secrets*), published in 1943–44, which although a work of refutation, gives some indication of his political theory in the earlier part of his life. His collected speeches, pronouncements and letters, published under the title *Sahifa-yi nur* (*The Book of Light*), and also various other editions, together with *Hukumat-i Islami* (*Islamic Government* also called *Vilayat-i faqih*, *The Government of the Jurist*), which sets out Khomeini's theory of the government of the jurist (*vilayat-i faqih*) and provides the material for a perspective on the evolution of his views. Some Persian references to sections relating to political theory in his works of jurisprudence have also been used. For the study of the influence of 'irfan, his early work of mystical philosophy *Misbah al-hidaya* (*The Light of Guidance*) provides important insights, as do references in the other works mentioned as well as his poetry. *Araba'in hadith* (*Forty Traditions*) reflects his thinking on ethics, which is related to his study of 'irfan. An account of Khomeini's early years is set out in the memoirs of his brother, Ayatollah Pasandideh.

A number of recently published memoirs have provide very useful information on the organization and objectives of Khomeini's movement; full details of all of these works and of the various secondary sources are given in the Bibliography. Particularly valuable were Rafsanjani (1997), Muhtashami (1997), Farsi (1994), Falsafi (1997), 'Iraqi (1991), Sutudeh (1996) and Vijdani (1992). A very important source is Badamchian (1983), as it reflects the personal views and experiences of ordinary bazaaris – mainly small traders and artisans who were involved in the Nahzat. Further understanding of this particular view may be gleaned from Baqiri (1996). Davani (1993) conveys in detail the significance of modernization in Qum. Every effort has been made using these sources to highlight the role of the merchants in the Nahzat, as there are as yet no merchants' memoirs, since they are by the nature of things involved in matters of business rather than of the pen. It has not been

possible to do more than touch upon the large and complex subject of the role of the poorest groups in the Nahzat, reaching the general and tentative conclusion that some at least were drawn into the religious networks by both piety and social dislocation, and that their support seemed to fluctuate with the state of the economy. For the section on Mutahhari, various editions of his numerous works have been used, some of which have been translated into English. The memoirs of, for example, Bazargan, Bakhtiar and Bani Sadr give the views of the opposition.

Of the secondary sources Bakhash (1985) is lucid and full of insight; Arjomand (1988) has some useful analysis of the complex religious background; and Milani (1994) is a particularly clear and balanced view. Abrahamian (1992) is a comprehensive account of Iranian politics in the twentieth century. Rahnema and Nomani (1990) provide a thoughtful analysis of the economic dimension and also of the various Islamist visions. Dabashi (1993) is a comprehensive study of the religious intellectual milieu in the years before the revolution. The story of religious response to the problems represented by the modern state is set out in Akhavi (1980), while the life of Khomeini and the view of his movement as seen from the inside are given in Ruhani (1977 and 1997) and Rajabi (1991). Moin (1999) gives a useful and well-told account in English of his social and religious intellectual background. For an understanding of the background to Khomeini's *'irfan*, Bonaud (1997) provides an erudite discussion. With regard to Islamist movements, Nasr's (1994) volume on Mawdudi proved particularly discerning on organization and ideals, while Shepard (1996) does much to highlight Islamism as a system. Probably the best comprehensive study of Mutahhari is Taqizadih-Davari (1996). Tahiri (1985) and Hasani (1997) have provided commentary on the government of the jurist. Kadivar's (1997) innovative and stimulating book on government and the state in Shi'ism is particularly helpful for its definition and differentiation. An illuminating work for the theoretical and cultural influences on authority in Shi'ism is Tabataba'i (1995). With regard to state and society, new initiatives may be found in Katouzian (1998) and Moslem (1995).

The transliteration system is that of the *Cambridge History of Islam* with its Persian additional and variant forms. Where proper names have an established spelling in English language texts, that has been preferred to the transliterated version. Certain Persian words frequently used in the text have been rendered in normal font on the grounds of familiarity.





# Chapter I: The Historical Background – Religion and State

Iran's geographic location is of great significance for the understanding of its political development. In the nineteenth century the Western penetration which was to open up the Middle East to modernity came more slowly to Iran than to the Ottoman Empire. Iran's location, 11,000 miles from Western Europe, and its rugged terrain, may be contrasted with the relative proximity to Europe of the Eastern Mediterranean, particularly the littoral, and the advantages that the Mediterranean gained in the 1820s from the advent of steam. Iran's location also became of political and strategic significance with the rise at the end of the eighteenth century of two new powers in the region, Britain and Russia.<sup>1</sup>

## **The Qajar Era**

In 1796 Iran, which then had a population of about 6 million, acquired a new ruling dynasty, the Qajars, whose founder Agha Muhammad Khan united the country after a long period of disintegration. His successor Fath Ali Shah (1797–1834) found himself confronted with a new problem, the steady encroachment of Russia in the north-east. In a succession of wars and the Treaties of Gulistan (1813) and Turkmanchay (1828), Iran lost much of the territory over which it claimed suzerainty in the Caucasus. The Crown Prince, 'Abbas Mirza, introduced a modernization programme of which the principal feature was reform of the army to combat the Russian threat. The reforms made some progress, but were much hindered by lack of money. However, by this time the British presence in India was making itself felt in Iran and Afghanistan, and the principal British preoccupation was defence of the country's Indian territories against Russian encroachment, in which regard Iran featured as a useful buffer state. The Qajars in turn

came to recognize that more was to be gained in terms of defence by playing off the British against the Russians than by pursuing expensive and demanding military reforms that were unlikely to win them victory. This remained in essence their policy throughout the nineteenth century, and the opportunity for military-driven reform was thus lost.

There were other disincentives to reform. The Iranian state was minimal, or decentralized. Such states were common in pre-modern societies, but the Iranian state had diminished in influence in relation to its powerful elites in the disorders of the eighteenth century, when many areas were essentially left to regulate themselves. The tribes, in particular, amounting to about one-third of the population, presented a challenge to the government. They inhabited the less accessible mountain areas, differed ethnically and linguistically from the Persian centre, and were largely answerable to their powerful khans. Large sections of the countryside were under the control of great landholders, whose influence over agricultural development tended to grow with the advance of the world economy in the course of the century. In the towns, affairs were regulated by the 'ulama (clergy), merchants and guilds. The leading clergy, being regarded as part of the elite, acted as intermediaries between other groups and the government. Merchants and guilds also had their own organizations and leading representatives who negotiated their affairs with the local governor.

The Qajars were short of money. For income they relied principally on the land tax, which was collected by the local governors and was returned fitfully, unpredictably and rarely in its entirety. With other, lesser, sources of revenue the total income of the central government by the end of the nineteenth century amounted to about £2 million. The provincial governors, who were increasingly members of the Qajar family, retained much of the state revenue for disbursement on the needs of their provinces, and on their own military forces, used to keep order. The central government, while theoretically able to raise an army of some 90,000 under the system of tribal levies, in reality had a small force for protection and the enforcement of order in Tehran. Its members were poorly and irregularly paid, and had frequently to resort to additional occupations to make a living. Although military reform was again attempted by Amir Kabir, prime minister from 1848 to 1851, by the beginning of the twentieth century Iran's army existed largely on paper. The most effective force was the Russian-officered Cossack Brigade,

numbering about 11,000 around the country with 1500 in Tehran by 1906. An Iranian force, under the command of the shah and in his employment, it not unexpectedly tended to enhance Russian influence at times of weakness. The Qajars were thus trapped. They did not have the money to fund much-needed reform of the army, and without reform of the army it was difficult for them to remove financial and military power from the provincial governors. Further, without the incentive of military reform, such as was demonstrated in the contemporary Ottoman Empire, there was not the incentive to modernize the bureaucracy and legal system. Attempts to develop education and regularize the law also brought them into confrontation with the clergy, whom they did not have the power to suppress.

The position of the clergy in the Qajar period was strong, and was further reinforced by the Shi'i doctrine of legitimacy on the subject of the state. According to this theory the rightful ruler is the 12th Imam, a descendant of the Prophet through his son-in-law, 'Ali; the Imam is held to have gone into hiding, his place having been seized by usurpers. In his absence, all actual rulers are accounted illegitimate. The only legitimate authorities are the 'ulama in their capacity as executors of the shari'a, which is based on long years of study. According to this, the classical Shi'i theory, however, the 'ulama do not have the right to govern. In practice they varied in their approach to the established power. Some were open allies of the shah, and benefited from royal and court patronage. Others sought accommodation with the state while maintaining an independent stance. Still more withdrew into scholarship, religious duties and quietism, and avoided contact with the ruler.

The general view, however, was in practice to treat the shah as legitimate; that is to say the clergy recognized the benefit to Shi'ism of living in an orderly state, and one with a Shi'i rather than a Sunni or infidel ruler. The 'ulama therefore cooperated with the Qajars, and received in return royal protection for their religion and patronage of religious institutions. Religion and state united to suppress sedition and heresy, particularly in the form of the Babi revolt of the 1840s. But the clergy were not dependent on the state, in contrast with their position in Sunni countries, where the leading 'ulama owe much to state support.

The clergy derived their income from a number of sources, which varied according to area and individual. Some income came from their duties with regard to the law, particularly matters of personal law, such as marriage, divorce and inheritance. Other income came from a variety

of activities in education, such as their role as teachers in the religious seminaries or simply being the most literate section of the population. Additionally, they received income from religious endowments, some of which, like the wealthy Shrine of Imam Reza at Mashhad, were under the supervision of the shah, but others of which were supervised by clerics, the office of supervisor passing down in families. A further source of funding were the canonical taxes, *khums* and *zakat*, which were disbursed both to the poor and to members of the religious body.

According to Shi'i Islam, the ordinary believer must emulate a senior member of the 'ulama, styled *mujtahid*. It takes long years of study to reach the level of *mujtahid*, and to gain thereby the entitlement to exercise independent judgement, or *ijtihad*, in the interpretation of the law. At the beginning of the nineteenth century there were only six *mujtahids* in Iran, but by the end of the century the number had grown, there being around a dozen in Tehran alone. At the beginning of the twentieth century, the outstanding *mujtahids* came to be styled 'ayatollah'. *Mujtahids* varied in their expertise and objectives, some being teachers in seminaries, others being occupied mainly with legal duties, aspiring to political influence, or being outright politicians.

To be politically influential in such a pre-modern society required the exertion of patronage, which in turn required the encouragement of donations from the faithful. This demanded sensitivity to the interests and problems of the faithful, and the ability to represent their views successfully to the state. A powerful *mujtahid* was thus a source of religious emulation, highly trained, particularly in legal matters, widely read, at least in the Islamic tradition, politically aware, and in many cases often dependent on pleasing his followers for the larger portion of his income. He thus had to be attuned to the interests of the community, and in particular to the influential merchants and guilds of the bazaar, the commercial heart of Iran.

A major source of authority for the 'ulama was the role of the shari'a in Qajar state and society. In theory the shari'a is omniscient, infallible and eternal. In practice it is mostly preoccupied with personal law, and has little specific to say on, for example, matters of government administration or commerce. With regard to criminal law, there are prescribed penalties, the *hudud*, but they were not necessarily enforced, the state having its own penal system. There was thus a variety of legal practice in addition to the shari'a, for example, customary law, tribal law, merchant regulation through consultation, and especially government rules,

though these last were arbitrary. Indeed, none was codified or rationalized, and only the shari'a was looked upon as a legitimate system, particularly by the 'ulama. It was government according to the shari'a which conferred legitimacy on the shah and the state, so the shah was not in the true sense an absolute monarch. Government according to the shari'a ensured protection and respect for Muslims and Islam, and, so it followed, for the 'ulama who interpreted it.

The bond established between the Qajar state and the clergy began to crumble in the latter part of the nineteenth century as a result of pressure from the West. The Qajars had firstly to contend with constant interference in the politics of Iran by Britain and Russia as they sought both to extend their own influence and to prevent each other from doing so. They manipulated the tribes – for example, the Russians among the Turkoman in the north-east and the British among the Bakhtiari in the south – and as a consequence some of the tribes were better equipped than the government troops. The fear of foreign incursion, and the demands of the foreign interests on the bureaucracy, induced Nasir al-Din Shah (1848–1896), particularly from the 1870s onwards, to attempt a modest measure of reform and development, though he tended to retain the duties of the prime minister in his own hands. Measures to control the shari'a courts in the 1850s and 1870s were consistently resisted by the 'ulama and therefore failed. Some secular institutions of further education were set up, such as the Dar al-Fanun inspired by French liberalism in 1851, the school of languages in 1873, military colleges in 1883 and 1886 and an agricultural college in 1900, but Iran still remained 50 years behind the Ottoman Empire in this respect, and more so behind Egypt. Nevertheless, the 'ulama, who acknowledged no separation of religion and politics, were concerned over seeping secularization.

These modest measures were accompanied by the growth of a new small but influential intelligentsia, many of whom belonged to the higher bureaucracy. They were influenced by the enlightenment concepts of the rights of the individual and the will of the people, and sought a constitutionalist, secular nation-state. Fath 'Ali Akhundzadeh, Muhammad Khan Majd al-Mulk and Mirza Malkum Khan emphasized the need for a proper code of laws, to which government could be accountable, and for the protection of property. Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, born a Persian, advocated reform to strengthen the state against Western incursion.

The government, however, was becoming more and more impecunious. In an attempt to encourage foreign investment and raise state income, the shah sold concessions to foreign companies. The telegraph concession led to the successful building of a network in the 1860s, which was to change Iranian society by permitting interest groups from different areas to collaborate in response to government policies. More controversial were the Reuter concession of 1872 and the tobacco concession of 1890. Both were monopolies granted to British subjects, the former to exploit minerals and build a modern communications network and the latter to distribute and export tobacco. On both occasions the concessions were withdrawn in the face of combined opposition from the merchants, the clergy – increasingly anxious about foreign involvement in Iran but also supportive of the merchants – the Russians, and court factions out of power. The tobacco concession was withdrawn after the 'ulama persuaded the leading *mujtahid* of the time, Mirza Hasan Shirazi, resident in the Shi'i holy city of Samarra in what is now Iraq, to issue a fatwa banning the smoking of tobacco in Iran. The government was forced by the British to pay compensation of £500,000 to the tobacco company, which brought the government seriously into debt, and the peasantry, who had benefited from the concession, lost out.

The financial and political troubles of Iran were linked to its gradual absorption into the world economy. For example, the Iranian coinage was based on silver, but in the 1890s in particular the world value of silver decreased, with a corresponding fall in the value of the Iranian coinage on the foreign exchanges and a rise in inflation. On the one hand, inflation generated discontent and ate into the value of the land tax, which was fixed. From early in the century, increasing importation of European manufactured goods, particularly textiles, undermined local products and led to a decline in the income and status of the guilds. On the other hand, with the development of the carpet industry and of cash crops, such as opium, Iran's trade increased 12 times between 1800 and 1914, and led to the rise of a prosperous merchant class. Improvements in health, partly as a result of quarantine, may be noted here, leading to a population of about 10 million in 1900.

Government borrowing had been comparatively small, £7 million compared to the Ottoman Empire's £200 million, but by 1900 the government was seriously in debt, one of the problems being the insistence of Muzaffar al-Din Shah (1896–1907) on visiting Europe. Russia, then actively pursuing a forward policy, granted the government two

loans, one of £2 million in 1900 and one of £1 million in 1902, a cause of much concern to the 'ulama both for their foreign origin and for what they perceived as financial mismanagement on the part of the government. At the same time the government attempted to avail itself of a share in the increased profits of the import-export trade following a new tariff agreement with the Russians in 1903, and introduced a new customs administration run by Belgians, producing a substantial rise in customs revenue – to the consternation of the merchants. In 1904, however, war broke out between Russia and Japan, and the Russian economy collapsed, a disaster for Iran as Russian trade amounted to 59 per cent of exports and 38 per cent of imports.

The combination of state weakness, economic problems, popular discontent and elite disgruntlement produced the Constitutional Revolution of 1905–11. The revolution began as a protest movement organized by the bazaaris and the 'ulama against the customs reforms, but the initiative was seized by members of the intelligentsia who worked tirelessly to persuade the clergy to ask for wider reforms. As a result, in 1906 the shah granted a constitutional assembly, and then in 1907 a constitution based on the Belgian one, acknowledging sovereignty of the people, ministerial responsibility to parliament, and financial accountability in the form of a budget. It also, however, recognized Twelver Shi'ism as the state religion, and in Article 2, initially the idea of Shaikh Fazlullah Nuri, provided for a Council of Guardians consisting of five *mujtahids* with the duty of monitoring legislation to ensure that it conformed with the shari'a. In 1908 there was a reaction when Muhammad Ali Shah (1907–1909) bombarded the assembly building and returned to absolutist rule. Two movements, one of revolutionaries from Rasht and the Caucasus, and the other of Bakhtiari tribesmen led by their khans, marched on Tehran in 1909 and restored the constitution, replacing Muhammad Ali by his son, Ahmad Shah (1909–1925).

As a result of the revolution, new groups began to emerge, especially the secular intelligentsia through the lively press, members of the lower bureaucracy, the merchants and guilds, and revolutionary socialists, particularly from Rasht and Tabriz. Their views emerged in the programme of the Democratic Party in the second assembly, which included separation of religion and politics, free education for all, including women, two years' military service, state control of religious endowments, industrialization, land reform, railway construction, centralization and national unification. The revolution introduced new

institutions, and by forcing the shah, many members of the Qajar family, the court and the notables into exile, effected a partial change in the ruling elite.

The clergy played an important part in the revolution, but were not united, in effect representing the divisions in society. Some, such as Tabataba'i, were responsive to Western ideas on reform and sought a path of moderate change in conformity with the shari'a. Others, such as Bihbihani, played the role of a politician, representing in particular the interests of the merchants and guilds in the new political order. The presence of these two had originally contributed to the legitimacy of the constitutional movement in a country still overwhelmingly Islamic. A third view was represented by Shaikh Fazlallah Nuri, allied to the court, who perceived the conflict between the shari'a, a law based on the divine will, and parliamentary law, based on the will of the people. As a whole the clergy sought to protect and strengthen Islam, and resisted the encroachments of secularism, the reform of the Ministry of Justice, the codification of the shari'a and equality before the law.

Meanwhile, in 1907 the British and Russians, seeking to resolve their differences in the light of the growing rivalry in Europe and the possibility of impending war, concluded an agreement designed to settle their differences in Iran, Afghanistan and Tibet. The agreement provided for Iran to be divided into spheres of influence, whereby Russia was recognized as having priority of interest in the north and Britain in the south.

By 1911 the financial crisis had so weakened the central government that its authority had crumbled in many areas, affecting the commercial and strategic interests of Britain and Russia. An attempt to reform the finances by a newly appointed American expert, Morgan Shuster, antagonized the Russians, who issued an ultimatum demanding his dismissal. When the assembly refused, it was suppressed, and Britain and Russia more or less occupied the country on the lines of the 1907 agreement. The country remained under foreign occupation for the period of the First World War, during which time it suffered a sense of ignominy and much deprivation. In 1915 the Russian-Ottoman front devastated the villages in the west. Brigandage became prevalent, the country was ravaged by famine, and typhoid and influenza epidemics killed thousands. The north was controlled by the Jangali movement of peasants and workers led by communists. In the south the Bakhtiari dominated, having made deals with the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, founded after the discovery of oil in Khuzestan in 1908. The south was held by the



British-controlled South Persian Rifles. A weak central government was propped up by British subsidies, intent on defending it against centrifugal forces.

In 1917 the Russians withdrew following the Bolshevik Revolution. Curzon sought to consolidate subsequent British dominance by the Anglo-Persian Agreement of 1919. The most effective measure taken by the British was to reorganize the Cossack Brigade, which had virtually disintegrated by 1920, and replace its White Russian officers by Iranians. The proposed extension of British influence brought a renewed Soviet involvement, and Britain had not the finances to support further imperialist ventures. Both powers began to withdraw, leaving as the single most effective, united and well-placed force 2200 men from the Cossack Brigade, based in Qazvin and under the command of a British-appointed colonel, Reza Khan. In 1921 a series of manoeuvres between Iranian politicians, the British military and Reza Khan himself brought him to power in alliance with Sayyid Ziya Tabataba'i, a journalist.

### **The Period of Reza Shah**

Reza Khan came to power with a vision to make Iran strong. He did not adhere to any particular political ideology, and in the course of his rise to power was to collaborate with both socialist and conservative parties and the clerics in accordance with the dictates of pragmatism. He had, nevertheless, his own utopia, which comprised a strong, unified state, free from internal and particularly ethnic and tribal divisions; free also from foreign interference and the manipulation of Iran's diversity. His dream was of a secular state, and like his contemporary Atatürk, he perceived religion as retrogressive and the 'ulama as backward-looking obstacles to progress. He identified national strength with modernization and industrialization, which in turn required increasing the level of trade and commerce.

Significantly, Reza Khan's ambitions coincided with the system of modern and comparatively centralized states that the British and French established in the Middle East in the wake of the First World War. This in turn was shaped by a new international order finding its principal representation in the League of Nations. The great powers were primarily concerned with protecting their strategic and commercial interests, and the mandate system set up in the former Ottoman Empire was intended to serve this purpose. In Iran, however, the British perceived

that Reza Khan's goal of a strong centralized state would achieve their objectives as well as containing the Soviets. Having received assurance of Reza Khan's independence, the Soviets also permitted him control of the country. Though Reza Khan did not rise to power through outside intervention, his interests and objectives ran in tandem with those of the great powers.

It is important to realize that such had been the weakness, deprivation and humiliation of the war years that Reza Khan's goal of creating a strong and independent state had the support of many Iranians. The commercial groups understood that only with order could trade and commerce prosper. A strong state would, in the eyes of the clerics, protect Shi'i Islam from foreign infidel encroachments such as were being suffered by the Shi'i population under the British in neighbouring Iraq. Both the socialist and liberal intelligentsia desired a strong state to keep foreign powers out, and to create modernity and prosperity, though at least a few of them realized early on that the price might have to be paid in civil liberty, creating a grim dilemma. There were also divisions among the political elite on the important issues of the nature of the economy (how much state control), and whether the desired strong state should be religious or secular. In fact Reza Khan's goals, though they lacked the dimensions of social egalitarianism and welfare provision, corresponded with the more statist version of socialism. By 'statism' is here implied an increase in all levels of state control, a drive to end political and economic subordination to the West, the creation of a modern secular national identity, the fashioning of a mixed economy under state guidance, and having a corporatist approach to social division so that all 'national' groups are often, though not always, joined in a single political organization.

In May 1921 Sayyid Ziya was forced to resign and Reza Khan became Minister of War, making him easily the most powerful member of the government. In accordance with his vision of strength through unity, Reza Khan perceived his first task as being to unite the country and restore order and the authority of the central government. This would require suppression of centrifugal tribal aspirations and rebellion, and forcing on Iran's considerable diversity a new uniformity. It would also require a much larger and more efficient modern army, and that would need money. Reza Khan had an advantage over the Qajars, in that by 1921 the country was already benefiting from a small but significant oil revenue. Such revenue was comparatively predictable, and paid regularly

and directly into the central government treasury. Reza Khan used his position as Minister of War to ensure he received all that he felt necessary for the army, even though this bypassed the regular accounting system which he was also endeavouring to establish. The government had recruited from the USA an able financial adviser, Arthur Millspaugh, and his efforts in bringing order and accountability to the financial system, as well as the introduction of a uniform tax administration, were of invaluable assistance in the reassertion of central power.

By October 1923 Reza Khan had reorganized Iran's various small coercive forces, merging the Cossack Brigade and the Gendarmerie, which enabled him to defeat separatist and autonomous movements in Gilan, Khurasan, Azerbaijan and Kurdistan. He therefore felt in a sufficiently strong position to assume the office of prime minister. The shah, who preferred life in Europe, left Iran in 1923. Believing that modernization and development required even stronger leadership, Reza Khan set out to abolish the Qajar dynasty and, inspired by the example of Atatürk, planned to create a republic in Iran. His ambition was, however, thwarted by a combination of opponents, including politicians of various hues, independent notables, some of the merchants and guilds of Tehran, fearful as always of state control, those 'ulama, principally Sayyid Hasan Mudarris, who represented their political views, and clerics, who feared the secular character of republicanism currently being manifested in the Turkish reforms, such as the abolition of the caliphate.

Faced with a crisis, Reza Khan responded with a series of manoeuvres, which included a considerable effort to propitiate the 'ulama of Qum. He issued a proclamation promising to preserve and guard the independence of Iran and the glory of Islam, as well as to protect the good order of the country and the foundations of the state, much in the traditional manner of previous shahs. He solicited especially the support of the 'ulama of Najaf in a campaign to initiate a change of dynasty. However, the elections to the fifth Majlis (assembly), convened in February 1924, were subject in Tehran, in particular, to coercion of the electorate by the secret police, while in the provinces the military authorities ensured that there were many more supporters of Reza Khan than of other candidates. In December 1925 the Qajar dynasty was abolished and in April 1926 Reza Khan duly became shah.

By 1930 the relative suppression of the tribes, the modernization and growth of the army, and the use of military authority to secure an increasingly compliant assembly in the elections, ensured that Reza Shah

was in a sufficiently strong position to implement his vision unimpeded. The bulwark of this utopia was the modernized army, which was to be an overwhelmingly significant power base for both Pahlavi shahs. The annual defence budget increased more than fivefold between 1926 and 1941. The armed forces grew from 40,000 in 1926 to 127,000 in 1941; the military elite was bound by interest and privilege to the regime.

A further cornerstone of the Pahlavi regime was the burgeoning state bureaucracy, of which the number grew from a probable few thousand in 1921 to 90,000 full-time personnel by 1941. The state gradually assumed control of bodies that had previously been independent, and the traditional administration, including the governors of the provinces, were all drawn into the new system. The control of the Ministry of the Interior, in particular, was extended so that it became represented at small-town and even village level.

The political system, however, developed more in theory than in practice. Ostensibly there was an elective system, with constitutional rule, and an assembly of popular representatives organized in parties, presenting a facade of legitimacy. In reality there was no real institutionalized popular participation, but rule from above based on the power of the army. Reza Shah dominated the system, convinced that he alone had the answers to Iran's problems and mistrustful of even his close associates. The assembly became in effect a rubber stamp, with the ministers personally chosen by the shah. Censorship of the press became increasingly rigorous, and the shah's secret service increasingly pervasive, though state influence was felt more in urban areas than in the countryside. The old parties were destroyed, and although attempts were made to start new ones, Reza Shah showed little faith in them. Theoretically he believed in a cross-class coalition working for national progress and unity; in practice he dominated the political system. The problems of political underdevelopment and overdependence on the military, so typical of the Pahlavi era, thus became entrenched early on. Reza Shah did not have the advantage of charisma, which frequently derives from a national struggle (as it did, for example, for Mao and Atatürk), and support for him personally, as opposed to some of his objectives, was never particularly strong. Gradually, his popularity declined. The situation was not helped by his propensity to seize the land of other people or compel forced purchases, so that he became the greatest landlord in Iran. One of his principal instruments of control was the court, in which he encouraged members of the old land-owning families to participate by using court positions and stipends

(in what was in many ways a traditional manner) to coopt them into collaboration with the regime. The old landed elite benefited under Reza Shah from both the sales of state lands and the abolition of the land tax in 1934, and he remained in some part dependent for his power on them for control of the countryside. Those who opposed him were dealt with ruthlessly, and lost their lands and were imprisoned or executed.

The presiding ethos of the new system was a militant form of secular nationalism, with a vision of Iran regaining the glories of its pre-Islamic past. In the late nineteenth century there had been a perception of Islam as a barrier to progress which confined the country to a state of weakness – not entirely unjustified given the reluctance of many clergy to confront the need for change. The eras of the Achaemenids and the Sasanians were recalled as glorious examples of what Iran could still become, and Reza Shah took the name of a pre-Islamic language for his dynasty. A major step to the return to past glories was perceived to be secularism, and the division of religion and state. Reza Shah, personally pious, was nevertheless determined to remove the influence of religion from politics and above all to undermine the political influence of the clerics. Iran did not, unlike Turkey, have a tradition of a powerful state and acquiescent Sunni 'ulama, so it was not possible even for Reza Shah to go as far as disestablishing Islam, but he attacked its role as the doctrine of state legitimacy, turning instead to a combination of theoretical popular sovereignty and the concept of continuity from the pre-Islamic past as a source of legitimization. The monarchy both served as a link with the past and benefited from the idea of continuity of Iranian greatness enshrined in an ancient tradition. The emphasis on the pre-Islamic past was also intended to help forge a modern national identity, but to a population that was 85 per cent devout Shi'a, the vision meant little.

Determined, like many contemporary and earlier Middle Eastern reformers, that a modern legal system would mean greater efficiency in government and facilitate the conditions for economic development, Reza Shah began a major programme of law reform under his Minister of Justice, 'Ali Akbar Davar, in 1928. Modified versions of the French civil code and Italian penal code were brought in. Personal law reform was not, however, as radical as it seemed, being in conformity with the shari'a and in effect a codification of many shari'a precepts. Although certain rulings became established in law, and the 'ulama lost the right to issue the contradictory judgements which had so exasperated nineteenth-century legal reformers, nothing new was added contrary to the

shari'a. Some of its precepts were allowed to lapse, however, and the legal system was gradually removed from the control of the clerics and brought under the auspices of the Ministry of Justice, which had been reorganized in 1927. In 1932 the registration of documents and property came under the administration of the secular authority. By 1936 all officials in the Ministry of Justice had to have university law degrees and secular legal training.

The power and influence of the clergy was also undermined by the rapid growth of a state education system, one of Reza Shah's greatest achievements. State spending on education rose 20 times between 1919 and 1940. In 1919 there were about 300 schools with 23,000 pupils; by 1941 there were over 8000 schools catering for half a million pupils. Thirty-six colleges had been founded by 1941, most notably the amalgamation of a number of existing colleges to create Tehran University in 1934. In 1936 the university acquired a faculty of theology, in part a measure to secularize control of religious education. The numbers being educated in religious schools also increased in the years up to 1936, but those in the seminaries declined sharply.

The influence of religion was further attacked in the disregard of the ancient right of sanctuary in shrines, and the outlawing and restriction of some aspects of religious ceremonies, particularly the 'Ashura processions. In 1934 an endowment law extended state control over religious endowments, in which the 'ulama had hitherto played an important part. Restrictions were placed on pilgrimages; human dissection in medical training became permissible. A series of laws enforced the wearing of Western dress, beginning with the 1928 hat law, which required the abandonment of traditional headgear and also placed on the 'ulama the burden of proving that they were genuine clerics. Further laws on headgear in 1935 and unveiling in 1936 followed. Reza Shah's intention was to use dress to instil in Iranians solidarity in a modern and uniform sense of identity, to accompany loyalty to the new-style state. Ethnic and religious differences were to be eradicated. This somewhat dictatorial and simple-minded approach to identity-building, unaccompanied as it was by allowing time for attitudes to change through education and economic and social development, resulted in riots in Mashhad in 1935; these were harshly suppressed, leaving several hundred dead and many more wounded. Many Iranian women, angered at what appeared to them as an attack on their decency, reverted to their traditional garb in 1941. But with men, for whom the cultural and religious barriers were

less significant, the new dress struck a chord of modernity, and perhaps of convenience, which they perceived as in keeping with the times, and the wearing of Western dress became customary in most parts of Iran.

Clerical resistance to the Westernizing reforms of Reza Shah was most notable by its absence. True, there were reports of criticisms of the government in Tabriz in 1928, and the 'ulama of the Shrine of Imam Reza in Mashhad were involved in the protests in 1935, but the leading clergy, particularly those of the seminary in Qum, remained silent. While there is a need for more research on this topic, it may be suggested that there was more than one reason for this. To begin with, the attitude of the clergy to Reza Shah in the course of his reign changed over the years. Some welcomed his coming to power, as did their lay counterparts, perceiving him as a saviour of Iran from a long period of weakness and outright foreign control. They supported him during his rise to power, and he in turn courted their approval. Differences arose first between shah and 'ulama over the conscription of members of the clergy in the law of 1925, and the shah was essentially obliged to yield, though for the last time. Although the legal reforms appeared radical, the fact that the codes remained in conformity with the shari'a meant the clergy had fewer grounds for objection than might be supposed. In addition, the employment of so many former and aspiring members of the religious body in the state and private sectors meant there was less pressure on their finances, as they no longer bore the heavy responsibility of maintaining the indigent pious on meagre resources. Reza Shah was not unpopular in the earlier part of his rule, and in the past much clerical opposition had come not so much from a perceived need to protect the interests of Islam, and with these their own, as from representations by the discontented faithful. It may to some extent be assumed that the 'ulama did not adopt a united oppositional role because there was not a united oppositional following to support them. That said, the state which confronted them was formidable, with its power base in the army and its increasingly prevalent secret police. The 'ulama used the situation to consolidate what they could. The principal ayatollah of Qum, Abd al-Karim Ha'iri, devoted his energies to reforming and developing Qum as a centre of religious learning which could take its place beside the seminaries in Iraq.

Society was otherwise changing, with a new middle class emerging, benefiting from better and more regular salaries, though resentful of repression. The old middle class, found mainly in the bazaars, were

antagonistic towards Reza Shah's state-supported financial enterprises, his monopolies, economic centralization, state control of foreign trade and higher taxation. The abolition of the guild tax weakened guild organization, and hence economic protection. The small working class was discontented over low wages, long hours and poor labour conditions. The poor suffered from a tax on tea and sugar to finance what Reza Shah perceived as his prestigious state railway project. However, Reza Shah's road-building achievements, although primarily linked to military needs, did much to open up the country to trade and develop its economy. This was accompanied in the 1930s by the development of modern industry based on import substitution, much of it encouraged by Germany.

Whether Reza Shah would have reigned to end of his natural life will never be known, for foreign interference was once more to change the fate of Iran. Reza Shah had already suffered a setback in 1933 when he attempted to negotiate a more beneficial agreement with the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, but only managed to raise the Iranian government share from 16 per cent to 20 per cent. Meanwhile, the oil revenue had grown from £1 million in 1925 to £4 million in 1941. Angry at the history of British and Russian interference in Iran, Reza Shah began to cultivate good relations with Germany, so that by the late 1930s a third of Iran's trade was with Germany and the trans-Iranian railway was built with German help. Soviet trade fell correspondingly, from 38 per cent in 1929 to 11.5 per cent in 1939. Reza Shah failed to address the realities of the proximity of British and Russian influence, however, or to acquire sufficient familiarity with the escalating problems in Europe. In 1941 Germany invaded Russia, and Britain and Russia moved into Iran, forcing Reza Shah to abdicate in favour of his son. He had made mistakes, but the fact remains that he had compressed a whole series of nineteenth-century reform proposals into two decades.

Iran was now drawn into the Second World War, but although there was foreign occupation and deprivation, the situation was not as bad as in the First World War, nor did the country suffer the kind of devastation endured for example by China and Japan. Thus the war did not bring with it the breakdown of the remaining traditional structures of society nor the corresponding opportunity for the mobilization of ordinary people in support of the state and the development of a more united national awareness. On the contrary, with a weak state and a smaller army many areas reverted to semi-autonomy and traditional powers regained lost influence. Likewise, with foreign control but no



outright alliance, no opportunity was provided for military experience such as that gained by the Transjordanians and the Jews of Palestine. On the other hand, in Syria, Egypt and Iraq, where the great powers also reasserted their influence during the war period, they withdrew in the years immediately following, eventually allowing these countries the opportunity to engage in their own political development; by contrast, in Iran, because of its sensitive geographical position, the great powers stayed on after the war, continuing to shape its politics directly in response to their interests.

### **Muhammad Reza Shah**

Reza Shah was succeeded by his son, Muhammad Reza, then aged 22 and inexperienced. In time he was to reveal that he had his father's vision, but though conscious of the strengths of his father's rule, he had little awareness of its inadequacies. His reign was also to be marked primarily by modernization, centralization and secular nationalism. In 1941, however, his position was weak, as desertion had reduced the strong Pahlavi army to 65,000 men. There was therefore a need to propitiate the powerful elements in Iran's society, particularly great notables and tribal leaders, and the religious section, led by the clergy. To win the support of the former, elections were called to a new assembly; these took place without state interference, resulting in the notables becoming the dominant interest. They were grouped in constantly fluctuating political factions rather than parties, intent upon protecting the interests of their members. To placate the clergy Muhammad Reza rescinded all his father's measures on dress and revoked his rulings on religious endowments, which were now returned to the control of the 'ulama, and also on the performance of religious ceremonies, which were once more permitted. Significantly, the clergy seem as a whole to have accepted the majority of Reza Shah's educational and legal reforms. Only one major work appeared in refutation of his secularism and the attacks on the 'ulama: *The Revealing of Secrets* by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, published in 1943-44.

In addition to the notables, who filled the majority of cabinet posts and were determined to ensure that he was as powerless as possible, the shah faced opposition from new ideological parties. The most significant was the Tudeh, the communist party, founded in 1941, with a sizeable following among the intelligentsia and professional groups and a

membership of 50,000. Most parties and factions had a distinct nationalist character, an example being the Iran Party, composed of both religious and secular-minded liberal intellectuals. The bazaar, or old middle class, under the leadership of Ayatollah Kashani, remained determined to resist state control; their opposition was expressed particularly in the form of the radical Islamist movement, the Fada'ayan-i Islam.

Great power interference also continued to shape political development. At this stage influence began to pass from Britain, although it still had a major interest in the oil company, to the USA, which did not desire overt control but was nevertheless anxious to protect its strategic interests. This was the Stalinist era, and US fears were not allayed by Iran's political instability: between 1941 and 1953 there was intense factionalization, leading to 31 cabinets and 148 ministers holding office. Eventually the USA came to see the shah as the one consistent pro-Western element in the situation, and encouraged him to rebuild his army, which reached 80,000 by 1943. The gradual enhancement of the shah's power that ensued naturally led to intense suspicion on the part of his opponents, who became organized in 1944 in a movement known as the National Front, led by Muhammad Musaddiq, a committed independent liberal from the old elite.

The shah, under pressure financially, began a series of attempts to revise the Anglo-Persian Oil Agreement, and the opposition perceived an opportunity to embarrass him. It was evident that the shah's proposed 50 per cent share for Iran was as much as Britain would be willing to yield, and there was little hope of Iran gaining full control. In May 1951 the assembly elected Musaddiq as prime minister, and in July he nationalized the oil industry, regarded not only as a source of revenue but also as a symbol of Iran's independence. The British responded by closing down the Abadan refinery, so that oil revenues ceased and the economy was adversely affected. Under financial pressure, the National Front coalition began to crack. It was Musaddiq's misfortune to make his bid for total national control of resources on the basis of a movement with heavy communist involvement at the height of the Cold War. Once again Iran's geopolitical position, with its proximity of the oil fields and long border with Russia, played its part. In August 1953 Musaddiq was brought down by a CIA-inspired coup and the shah, who had briefly fled the country, was restored to his former position.

The leading mujtahid of this period was Ayatollah Husain Burujirdi. As will be discussed later, Burujirdi united behind him all the other

leaders of the Iranian Shi'a, and with them the religious body, in a way that had not been evident since Mirza Hasan Shirazi led the opposition to the tobacco concession in 1891. Burujirdi intervened very little in politics, and the shah likewise refrained from introducing change in religious matters and impinging in any way on the rights of the clergy. He also trod carefully with their supporters in the bazaar, avoiding price controls and interference in guild practice. Burujirdi disliked Kashani's political involvement, and himself kept silent during the oil crisis, but lesser clerics issued fatwas in favour of nationalization. By the time of the August 1953 coup there is some evidence that the leading clerics, particularly the influential Ayatollah Muhammad Bihbihani of Tehran, had come round to supporting the shah against Musaddiq, partly because of the secular and financial implications of some of Musaddiq's reform proposals and partly because of his links with the Tudeh. If the leading 'ulama disliked the left, they also did not favour the religious right in its principal manifestation, the Fada'iyān-i Islam, an organization established in 1945 with the main aim of creating an Islamic state and expelling all foreign influence from Iran. The Fada'iyān, whose members came largely from the traditional middle class and a bazaar petty-trade background, sought an Islamic state with an emphasis on both strict implementation of the shari'a and modern science and technology. In 1951 they assassinated the prime minister, Ali Razmara. The Fada'iyān had some connection with Kashani, which ended after Musaddiq became prime minister in 1951 and Kashani failed to press for Islamic government. In 1955 their leader, Navvab Safavi, was executed and their activities thereafter declined.

In the years following 1953 the implicit concordat between Burujirdi and the shah became more marked, and in effect in exchange for offering no criticism of the government's growing links with foreign powers, specifically America, the 'ulama were allowed to expand the role of religious institutions in the country. Thus in 1952 the Qum seminary had around 3200 students, and by 1956 the number had risen to 5000. As part of the same bargain, in 1955 the shah did not protect the Baha'i centre in Tehran from attack and destruction.

The bitterness of the legacy of the 1953 coup was to colour the view of most political groups of the Pahlavi regime and of the West. Liberals, socialists, the Tudeh and Islamists all execrated it. It was to be the profound weakness of the second Pahlavi ruler that from this point onwards he was perceived as owing his position to foreign intervention.

The divisions between the shah and his subjects were further exacerbated by the American perception that it was now necessary to secure the shah's position by military aid and the expansion of the army. The USA provided \$500 million worth of military aid between 1953 and 1963, which permitted the shah to expand his armed forces from 120,000 men to 200,000. The military budget rose from \$80 million in 1953 to nearly \$183 million in 1963, subsidized also by oil revenues which had increased from \$34 million in 1954/5 to \$437 million in 1962/3.

The resurgence of the army meant, of course, an increase in the control and centralization of the state. The Americans gave assistance in intelligence-gathering and surveillance, leading in 1957 to the establishment of SAVAK, the secret service, which being Western-trained was more efficient than previous versions. The opposition was crushed, Musaddiq was placed under house arrest, and the Tudeh, the principal object of Western fear, was banned, its members purged from the army. The suppression of the secular opposition, and particularly the secular left, associated in the mind of the regime with the USSR, was to have profound repercussions. The press was censored and the shah reverted to his father's practice of controlling elections to the assembly, which became once again a rubber stamp. Once again the problem of political underdevelopment was to reassert itself. The income from oil and military aid meant that the shah was increasingly liberated from negotiation with and accountability to his people, and so, although he did much in particular to develop education, he was able to embark upon projects which appeared less and less in the national interest and more and more in the interests of the regime and the West.

In 1961 Iran reached a turning point. There was an economic crisis resulting from overspending on an ambitious seven-year plan and the army. Deficit financing was exacerbated by a bad harvest, and produced serious inflation. The shah turned to the International Monetary Fund and the USA for financial assistance; the Kennedy administration promised \$85 million if the shah brought in land reform and a liberal cabinet. The shah had hitherto refrained from bringing in land reform partly because of his need to placate the clergy (who, of course, received much income from their landed endowments) while he was expanding the army, and partly because of Burujirdi's opposition, explicitly expressed in 1959. But the year 1961 also saw the death in March of Burujirdi, who had no obvious successor, so the clergy were divided on how to deal with the increasing consolidation of state power.

In May 1961 the shah dissolved the assembly and started to rule by decree. In 1962 he embarked on a major reform programme, which he styled the White Revolution. It had six points, in the manner of Middle Eastern reform programmes, and included nationalization of the forests, sale of state factories to private entrepreneurs, profit-sharing for workers, the establishment of a literacy corps for rural areas, votes for women and land reform. There has been some debate about what the shah intended with the White Revolution, and particularly land reform. Some scholars, noting the timing, have perceived it as originating from American pressure. Others have accepted the shah's own assertions that he had long intended to embark on such a modernization programme to break the power of the great landowners, who are estimated to have owned about half of Iran's cultivated lands, but that the time had not previously been appropriate. Yet others have seen the reform as part of a long trend towards centralization and the growth of state control. One of the shah's own stated objectives was to create a loyal base for the state among the middle peasantry, who stood most to gain from the reforms. A further goal was the modernization of agriculture to increase production and create, through wealth distribution, a larger internal market for Iran's industrial products. The reform succeeded in breaking the influence of the great landowners in the countryside, though many, through investing their compensation payments, remained part of Iran's wealthy elite. The principal beneficiaries of the reform were apparently those peasantry possessing cultivation rights, but the smallholdings they acquired were uneconomic, and many were gradually compelled to sell their land to agri-businesses and join the landless labourers in the drift to the cities.

The land reform duly saw the extension of state control. The traditional system of landlord, head man and peasants working in *buna* (a pre-modern form of agricultural cooperation) was replaced by government agents and new village councils under government supervisors. The influence of the state also extended into the countryside through such measures as the nationalization of the forests and organizations like the Literacy Corps and the Health Corps. Modern organization, however, was also to bring the 'ulama into the countryside in a manner hitherto not experienced, for only about 10 per cent of Iranian villages had clerics before land reform.

The White Revolution was faced by opposition from landowners, tribal leaders and the National Front, briefly revived but suppressed

again in 1963. The most vehement opposition, however, came not from the clergy as a whole but from the traditional urban middle class and the urban poor. There were extensive demonstrations in Iranian cities in the spring of 1963, especially in Tehran under the leadership of Ayatollah Khomeini. Hundreds were killed after the Minister of Court, Amir Asadullah 'Alam, ordered the army to fire on the crowd. Khomeini was arrested following a series of incendiary speeches in Qum, in which he articulated a range of grievances. He was imprisoned in Tehran but was released after some months at the intercession of other ayatollahs, notably the moderate Shari'atmadari, and returned to Qum. It has been asserted that the principal reason for 'ulama opposition was the loss of endowed land and its large income as well as the introduction of votes for women, perceived as contrary to Islam. A more detailed analysis of the movement's objections will be given in Chapter III, but it may be pointed out here that this was an urban movement in areas where income from religious endowments was less significant. Four issues dominated Khomeini's speeches at the time: the advance of state control, particularly in the local council laws; the concomitant growth of secularism and weakening of Islam; the increase in state repression; and the influence of the USA upon government policy. He was also unhappy with the Literacy Corps because it would introduce a government-inspired secular education into rural areas. Overall it may be said that he most vehemently opposed the extension of Westernized, secular state control, and foreign influence.

Khomeini again spoke out in open opposition to the government in 1964 when the shah agreed to allow American personnel special legal rights, including that of trial in their own courts, which recalled the humiliation of the capitulation system of the Qajar period. This time, as a result of his vehement criticism of the shah, Khomeini was deported to Turkey, whence he moved to the Shi'i holy city of Najaf in Iraq, then still in a state of political uncertainty following the revolution of 1958. During the crisis the army stayed loyal to the shah, as did the modern middle class, and there were no strikes in the oil industry as there were to be in 1979.

The period from 1964 to 1978 was one of precipitous change, which owed much to the continuing rise in oil revenues. For a while growing political discontent was muffled by economic prosperity, creating more jobs and a higher standard of living. The chief beneficiary was the army. The military budget rose 34 times between 1954 and 1972, while the

national budget went up 24 times. By 1977 the army numbered 410,000. The bureaucracy also expanded from 310,000 in 1956 to 630,000 in 1977; in some towns half the population were employed by the state. With regard to the elite, Muhammad Reza Shah followed his father's practice of bestowing on them pensions, sinecures and privileged positions. The royal family was the richest of all, having regained the lands lost at Reza Shah's fall, and profiting from a share in a variety of commercial transactions.

The political system became increasingly personalized, with the shah coming to equate Iran with himself, and to listen less and less to the advice of others; he thus became more and more remote from his people. In 1975 the two former official political parties were ordered to disband and were replaced by the Resurgence party, which everyone was obliged to join. Resurgence was meant to imply regeneration, unity, solidarity and strength, goals also dear to the Iraqi and Syrian Ba'th parties. The shah dreamed of becoming the leader of the fifth industrial power in the world, and of Iran being the major military power in the Middle East. His regime in the meantime became increasingly repressive as SAVAK grew and came to monitor every kind of organization – particularly the left, the universities and the Iranian Committee for the Defence of Freedom and Human Rights. Organizations not accustomed to state interference found themselves subject to arbitrary regulations decided by decree.

The shah's policy was much influenced by America and American preoccupations with security. US guidance was sought on foreign policy and US firms were given precedence in the allocation of contracts. The American influence brought what many perceived as cultural imperialism and a departure from traditional Islamic values, demonstrated in the growing preference for Western luxury goods, music and films. The result was conduct by some of the elite, in particular, which was perceived as moral laxity by more traditional social groups. The secularism and Westernism of the regime were duly blamed for undermining the ethical teachings of Islam.

Despite the growing power of the state, Islam in Iran did not decline, rather it prospered. It has been estimated that in Iran during the 1960s there were about 100 mujtahids, 10,000 'ulama, 80,000 other religious functionaries, 5000 major mosques and around 15,000 minor ones, four major seminaries, and about 100 *madrasas* (theological schools) with nearly 10,000 students. As the country grew wealthier, so did religious institutions, thanks to increased contributions from the faithful

(particularly those from the bazaar) through religious taxes. Though excluded from many of their former legal functions, the clergy remained an important source of referral on personal law and conduct. They also branched out into publishing, the establishment of Islamic societies, and welfare activities, all of which ensured their influence among the Shi'i community remained high.

The 1960s and 1970s saw the growth of reformist movements among both clergy and religious laity. Possibly the most significant stimulant was the increasing alienation of the young from religious institutions, which were perceived as stagnating. The Liberation Movement of Iran, founded in 1961 and led by Mehdi Bazargan, and a cleric, Mahmud Taliqani, had an Islamic liberal ideology and a large following among the religious middle class of Tehran.

Islamic reformism, however, centred mainly on the Husainiyya Irshad, a religious institution founded in 1967 through lay and clerical collaboration. One notable clerical reformer was Murtaza Mutahhari, who developed a modern philosophy of Islam, independent of East and West. He found first a collaborator and then an opponent in 'Ali Shari'ati, who strove in essence to reconcile Islam and Marxist sociology, and propounded a revolutionary socialist view of Islam. As a result, both the regime and the clergy turned against him. The Husainiyya was closed in 1973, and Shari'ati driven into exile in Britain. Another product of the new religious radical thinking was the Mujahidin-i Khalq, established in 1966 with distinct Marxist inclinations. Together with their secular counterpart, the Fada'iyan-i Khalq, they entered into armed revolt against the government in the 1970s.

By the 1970s Iran was an economic giant but a political dwarf. There was a void between the elite and the increasingly disenchanted populace, which was demonstrated when the shah held a celebration at Persepolis to mark the 2500th anniversary of the founding of the Iranian monarchy. Most of the trappings came from abroad, and the shah's own subjects were disgruntled, principally at the expense. The state continued to make incursions into areas where it had hitherto exercised some influence but little outright control. A major example is the bazaar. The shah attempted to curtail the bazaar's control of the retail and distribution network in the country by tactics such as employing Korean truck drivers to transport goods round Tehran rather than through it.

Although the standard of living of Iranians rose generally, the gulf between rich and poor also widened, with the wealthy elite and



especially the royal family developing a luxurious Westernized lifestyle, much of it spent abroad, and buying numerous foreign imports. Government policy favoured the elite, the agri-businesses and the large companies over small businesses and cultivators. The shah was anxious to encourage industry. The Third (1963–67) and Fourth (1968–72) Development Plans stressed improvement of the infrastructure and state incentives to initiatives in private industry, resulting in rapid growth in the industrial sector. In combination with his agricultural policy, this led to migration to urban areas, where many lived in squalid housing and shanty towns in the south of Tehran which greatly contrasted with the mansions of the elite in the north of the city. Between 1956 and 1976 the urban population of Iran rose from 6 million to 16 million.

In the resulting social dislocation, various Islamic organizations stepped into the gap left by the state and drew the dislocated poor into the mosque networks, where they found both spiritual and charitable support. The clergy had been subjected to increasing repression by the expanding state, which included attacks on the position of the main Qum seminary and the destruction in 1975 of religious organizations in Mashhad under the pretext of better town planning. However, the expansion of higher education, with about 150,000 students enrolled, permitted people from religious society to acquire a modern education, with significant consequences. The clergy disliked the shah's new Religious Corps and the discarding of the Islamic calendar in favour of an imperial one. They became increasingly restive at the growing emphasis on continuous monarchy as a form of cultural glory and political legitimacy. Eulogies of the pre-Islamic past by implication denigrated the faith. In exile in Najaf, in a series of lectures given around 1969 to 1970 and later widely disseminated, Khomeini produced *Islamic Government*, which argued that monarchy was an illegitimate form of rule and that government should be the responsibility of the clergy, specifically as jurists (*fuqaha*).

In 1970/1 oil revenues were \$1.2 billion, but after the formation of OPEC in 1973 the revenues went up to \$20 billion a year in 1976. In pursuit of his utopia, the Great Civilization, the shah embarked on a major spending programme. The effect was the rapid industrial growth which the shah desired, but at the cost of high inflation, and the prices of housing and basic necessities soared. The inflation eroded the income of the shah's principal base of support, the modern middle class, many

of whom, especially those in state employment, were on fixed salaries. The economy also overheated, and there was strain on the infrastructure, ports, roads and the telephone system. In 1976 recession in the West, originating from the rise in oil prices, led to a decline in the demand for oil, and the Iranian economy suffered in consequence. Inflation rose to 30 per cent and the repressed populace grew increasingly restless.

The shah put the blame on the business community, accusing the bazaaris of price-fixing and jailing well-known industrialists. In an effort to control prices he sent students round the bazaar to check prices; he then fined many shopkeepers for alleged overpricing and jailed others or prevented them from doing business. The government adopted a deflationary policy, curtailing investment and cutting down on jobs in the state sector. Unemployment rose and business declined. Standards of living went down for many, creating a mood of frustrated expectations. One effect was to antagonize perhaps the most powerful organization in Tehran outside of the state, the traditional merchant-guild-'ulama network which had provided the popular support for the tobacco movement and the Constitutional Revolution. Small and traditional businesses still dominated a substantial section of the economy. Apart from handicraft production, the bazaar was involved in two-thirds of retail trade and three-quarters of wholesale trade. Trading networks and modern communications systems enabled the bazaars of Tehran and other towns to form links with each other and extend into the countryside, concomitantly with similar networks of 'ulama. This body of opinion looked principally for leadership to Ayatollah Khomeini, then in Najaf.

At the same time the shah came under pressure from the Carter administration to improve his record on human rights. As a result he eased press controls and permitted better representation for defendants in court. The opposition took advantage of the opportunity, and in May 1977 a group of lawyers demanded an independent judiciary. In the universities, especially Tehran University, a variety of organizations, including Marxists, liberals, Islamic liberals and Islamic socialists, began to mobilize their support against the regime.

October 1977 saw demonstrations by university students, and in January 1978 there were riots in Qum following an attack on Khomeini in a government-controlled newspaper. Thereafter a cycle of rioting emerged, whereby a new riot took place 40 days after the last in

commemoration of its suppression. In August the shah appointed a new prime minister, Sharif Emami, and began propitiating the opposition. However, on 8 September a large demonstration in Tehran's Jaleh Square was brutally put down, and martial law was introduced. By now a huge movement had built up under the leadership of Khomeini, who had moved from Iraq to Paris, where he could more readily address the world's press. In a last attempt to conciliate at least some of his critics, the shah appointed Shahpour Bakhtiar of the National Front as prime minister. His position was by now hopeless, however, and he left Tehran on 16 January 1979. Bakhtiar made an effort to retain secular constitutionalism but failed, and Khomeini returned to Iran on 1 February 1979.

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In the nineteenth century Iran fell behind the remainder of the Middle East, due mainly to geopolitical factors. The government attempted to reform, but in the process antagonized the clergy and many of their bazaar following, mainly because of centralizing policies but also because of Western secular influences. The Constitutional Revolution of 1906 brought in new institutions and ideas of government but failed to provide security. Reza Shah rose to power on a wave of opinion that desired to see the country strong. Working at great speed, he accomplished much but relinquished the judicious negotiations of his early years in favour of overdependence on the army and consequent political underdevelopment, a pattern that was to continue under his son. Muhammad Reza also pursued a relentlessly secular identity for the state in a country that, whatever the social and economic change, remained overwhelmingly Shi'i in both religious and cultural feeling. Further, the overriding strategic importance of the region to the West meant that foreign interests became an increased impediment to balanced development in Iran in the decades following 1941.

In the 1950s and 1960s in a number of Arab countries a form of socialism emerged which, while stressing nationalism, modernization and the growth of central control in order to accelerate development, particularly in industry, also sought to secure the state in a wider base of popular support, principally by emphasizing and embarking upon redistribution of wealth. Combined with an elective system, though hardly

democracy, these policies conferred upon the state a measure of legitimacy in the popular mind, and won for it a broad acceptance. The possibility of introducing such policies, accompanied by moderation towards Islam (achieved for example by Nasser), was lost in Iran by the suppression of the left, even the moderate left, feared by both the West and the Pahlavi regime for its possible connections with the neighbouring Soviet Union. At the same time there was little attempt to create a state which might in some way take the place of these policies. The failure to adopt more socially equitable policies was the choice of the shah, who came increasingly to perceive his own interests as those of his country.

The suppression of the left created an opportunity for Shi'i Islamism, on the one hand more difficult to tar with illegitimacy and sedition because of its religious character, and on the other hand of less concern as a potential threat to Western interests. But Shi'i Islamism could not have triumphed without reform of its institutions, organizations and values, of the Islamic view of the state, and of the role of Islam and the 'ulama in the contemporary world. Just as the state began to modernize and reform in organizational terms, so, in parallel, did the religious institution. Shi'i Islam produced ideologies for a modern state, with a conceptual vocabulary to match.

## Chapter II: Early Years and the Influence of 'Irfan

### Youth and Development

Khomeini was born on 24 September 1902 in the small town of Khomein in the province of Isfahan.<sup>1</sup> His grandfather came to Khomein from India, though his family probably originated in Nishapur, in north-eastern Iran. His father, Sayyid Mustafa, was a cleric and a minor landowner who had spent some years studying in the religious seminary of Najaf, the Shi'i holy city in Iraq, and thus belonged to the Qajar secondary elite. In 1903 when Khomeini was a few months old his father died in a battle with local minor khans who were engaged in banditry. As a result Khomeini was brought up by his mother with the assistance of his father's sister. As a child he went to the local religious school before acquiring individual teachers in special subjects such as logic. By the time he was 16 both his aunt and his mother had died, but he remained in Khomein in the care of his family until he was 19, when he went to Arak, then a major centre for religious studies, to continue his education under, among others, Haj Shaikh 'Abd al-Karim Ha'iri Yazdi, one of the most prominent clerics of his time. In 1922, following an invitation from the 'ulama of Qum, Ayatollah Ha'iri Yazdi moved there and founded the Qum seminary. Khomeini followed soon after and studied under a variety of experts. He undertook the usual studies, particularly first principles (*usus*), jurisprudence (*fiqh*), logic and Islamic taxation (*kharaj*), under Ha'iri himself (although Ha'iri Yazdi died not long after Khomeini's move to Qum). Above all he developed a speciality in Islamic gnosticism, or mystical philosophy ('*irfan*'), and in ethics, *akhlaq*. He received his *ijaza* or permission to act as a mujtahid in 1936, at a remarkably early age. In 1308/1929 he married Khadija Thaqafi, the daughter of a well-known cleric.

Khomeini was widely read and interested in politics from his youth, and would probe his teachers concerning their political memories.<sup>2</sup>

During the rise to power of Reza Shah and the consolidation of the Pahlavi state, he was still a student and a very young man. In political terms there were two major options confronting him, that of following Ha'iri Yazdi's policy of quietism, accommodation and consolidation, or that of supporting Mudarris's activist struggle against the perceived rise of dictatorship.<sup>3</sup> His writings give no firm clue, possibly out of respect for Ha'iri Yazdi, his teacher, but his subsequent praise of the policies of Mudarris and implied criticism of others reveal where his sympathies lay. He was not, however, notably activist, though he had some contact with clergy-led demonstrations against Reza Shah, for example that of Haj Aqa Nurullah in Isfahan over a plan by the government to turn opium cultivation into a state monopoly; Haj Nurullah marched to Qum and Tehran at the head of a column of merchants, clergy and peasants. Khomeini was also in touch with an 'ulama-led movement against the introduction of compulsory education in Tabriz, where the bazaar closed in 1928. At the time of the dress-code law in 1935 he helped his students with their examinations to ensure they gained the requisite standard to retain their clerical dress.<sup>4</sup>

Khomeini greatly admired Mudarris for the strength and courage of his stand against Reza Shah.<sup>5,6</sup> He also felt that lack of support of Mudarris on the part of others had permitted the consolidation of power by the Pahlavi dynasty. He went frequently to listen to Mudarris speak in the assembly, and often went to his classes and his home. He particularly respected the simplicity of Mudarris's lifestyle, and the fact that he was dressed in cloth of Iranian make. This admiration is significant because of both the similarities and the differences between the two. Mudarris was also born in the province of Isfahan, in his case near Ardistan, into a clerical family, and had a similar upbringing and education. His first prominent role in politics was as assembly representative from Isfahan. Supportive of reform and constitutionalism, he nevertheless fought legal change that might weaken Islam and strongly opposed the secularizing inclinations of the radical democrats. Also like Khomeini, Mudarris demonstrated his simplicity of lifestyle and piety in such a way that he secured a following among the poorer classes. However, he had less standing in terms of learning and was more willing throughout his career to make compromises with elite groups. His perception of the role of the clergy in politics was more one of supervision than of outright rule. Mudarris, like Khomeini, had his power base among the bazaar networks, merchants, guilds and lesser

clergy. These groups were not averse to reform, but were traditionally resistant to the encroachments of the arbitrary power of the state, especially in the form of financial exactions. They had, it will be recalled, played a highly significant role at the time of the Reuter concession in 1872, the tobacco concession in 1891 and the Constitutional Revolution of 1906; but in such support for reform but resistance to the centralization of the state lay potential inconsistencies. Their perception of a link between republicanism and the centralization of power in the hands of a secular state led them to resist Reza Khan's move towards republicanism in 1924. When the Qajar dynasty was finally deposed in 1925, Mudarris was one of the few deputies to resist the move, and thereafter criticized the growing power of the army, representing a conservative constitutionalist view. Following his forced retirement in 1927, he was arrested in 1929 and imprisoned in Khurasan, where in 1938 he finally paid with his life. If Mudarris resisted republicanism and Khomeini fought for it, the difference originates from their circumstances. Mudarris, however, was unwavering in his support for constitutionalism, despite the evident problems it presented in the contemporary Iranian context. As will be discussed below, the same was not necessarily true of Khomeini.

### 'Irfan and its Background

'*Irfan*<sup>7</sup> is a kind of mystical philosophy which encompasses the possibility of unity with the divine one and universal self. At the heart of it is the perception that all creation derives from the One, the eternal truth. The social and political transformation of the late Qajar period and the Constitutional Revolution coincided with and were related to a revival of '*irfan* along with other schools.<sup>8</sup> These developments in ideas among the religious intelligentsia, which were at least partly provoked by confrontation with the West and the need to embark upon new ways forward, appear to have had an influence on Khomeini. The revival in '*irfan* took the form of renewed interest in the thought of the great seventeenth-century mystic philosopher Mulla Sadra, as exemplified in his work *Asfar al-arba'a* (*The Four Journeys*). The famous nineteenth-century mystic philosopher, Mulla Hadi Sabzavari (d. 1872) produced a

summary of the teaching of Mulla Sadra in *Sharh-i manzuma* (*Commentary on the Composition*), one of the main texts of Islamic mystic philosophy. Khomeini's teachers in Qum came out of this milieu, and included Mirza Ali Akbar Yazdi, a pupil of Sabzavari.<sup>9</sup> A second early guide was Mirza Aqa Javad Maliki Tabrizi (d. 1924), who held classes in philosophy and ethics<sup>10</sup> at probably the most radical of the Qum schools, the Madrasa-yi Faiziyya, and taught *'irfan* privately at home, a pattern Khomeini was to follow. His principal mentor was Ayatollah Muhammad 'Ali Shahabadi,<sup>11</sup> who led Khomeini through *Fusus al-Hikam* (*The Bezels of Wisdom*) of the outstanding twelfth-century mystic philosopher Ibn 'Arabi, and also taught him the thought of Mulla Sadra. Shahabadi was briefly a pupil of Aqa Muhammad Riza Qumsha'i, a leading exponent of the thought of Ibn 'Arabi, as well as other gnostic luminaries in Tehran, such as Mulla Hashim Rashti.<sup>12</sup> Khomeini spent many years studying Mulla Sadra under Shahabadi, and achieved the rare accolade of being known as a scholar learned in Sadra's works, particularly *The Four Journeys*.<sup>13</sup> He also made annotations on Davud Qaisari's commentary on *The Bezels of Wisdom*, the fundamental text for the study of *'irfan* in Iran.<sup>14</sup> His published works between 1925 and 1937 were mainly on the subject of *'irfan*. His book *Misbah al-hidaya*, (*The Light of Guidance*), published in 1931, refers to both Ibn 'Arabi and Mulla Sadra,<sup>15</sup> and they are again mentioned in *Kashf al-asrar* (*The Revealing of Secrets*) published 1943–44, as is Plato's *Timaeus*.<sup>16</sup> Khomeini further placed great value on the so-called *Theologia of Aristotle*, a text falsely attributed to Aristotle throughout the Middle Ages, and in fact based on the *Enneads* of Plotinus.<sup>17</sup> In the 1930s his mystical poetry, which he wrote throughout his life, was known in Qum, especially the verse:

I have sacrificed myself to for the sake of the Friend,  
I have separated myself from my homeland and my kind.<sup>18</sup>

According to his son, Shahabadi, like Khomeini, was not just a teacher but a political activist with influence among the ordinary people.<sup>19</sup> He sought to train them, with the cooperation of his students, in groups (*hayatha*) which met at his home. In particular, he spread the message of al-Afghani that Islamic countries had begun to decline as a result of corruption, so the pride of Muslims and their rights under Islam had been undermined.<sup>20</sup> As a result they had forsaken propaganda



work and the deployment of the concept of enjoining the good and forsaking the evil (*amr-i bi ma'ruf va nahy az munkar*). Shahabadi also gave classes in ethics to the members of the guilds of Tehran. Disillusioned with the failure of the clergy to act in unity in the face of government weakness over foreign interference, in the late 1920s Shahabadi went first to Rayy and then to Qum, where he helped Ha'iri to build up the new seminary. In the mid-1930s, however, he returned to Tehran where, as Leader of Friday Prayers (Imam Jum'a) he criticized the regime and exhorted the clergy to struggle for Islam even to martyrdom. Like Mudarris and Khomeini, and also Sabzavari,<sup>21</sup> Shahabadi was much respected for his piety and the simplicity of his lifestyle.

Khomeini began by teaching ethics in the 1930s and then moved to *'irfan* in the 1940s. *'Irfan* had always been to some extent frowned upon by orthodox Islam, as with its supposition of individual union with God and, in its more extreme form of pantheism, the presence of God in all things, it undermined the orthodox concept of divine transcendence. The tendency in *'irfan* and particularly its more purely spiritual manifestation, Sufism, to challenge established authority, whether lay or religious, to favour direct individual action, to encourage the notion of a worthy death, and of preparation to meet it, as well as to risk disorder in pursuit of its goals, made it the object of suspicion of both orthodox Islam and the state. Its relative independence of the rigidities of established texts has also made it more open to revolutionary politics not only in Iran for example in the 15th century rise to power of the Safavids, but in the leadership of revolutionary movements in other countries, such as that of Izz al-Din Qasam in Palestine in the 1930s or Said Nursi in Turkey, or further afield, Ahmad Bamba in Senegal.

The teaching of *'irfan* was thus disapproved of in Qum and its specialists had to be both circumspect and selective in their choice of students, who rarely numbered more than a few at any one time. Khomeini appears to have used it in part to develop an independent critical attitude which contributed to the growth in popularity of his classes. He began by teaching philosophy to selected students.<sup>22</sup> He then moved to private classes in *'irfan* especially scrutinising the section on the carnal soul (*nafs*) in *The Four Journeys* of Mulla Sadra and in Sabzavari's *Sharh-i manzuma*.<sup>23</sup> Amongst his earlier pupils were Murtiza Mutahhari and Husain Ali Muntaziri, who studied under him for a few years from 1946, and both of whom played a significant role in the movement which brought him to power. It was his classes on ethics which attracted the

widest attention, perhaps because of their link to self-empowerment. The ethics he taught were drawn from the tradition of *'irfan* and propounded the benefits in terms of self-discipline which may arise from self-knowledge. In *'irfan* it is believed that the resulting self-purification is the pathway to inner union with the divine. Most of his students had some sort of interest in either *'irfan* or philosophy.<sup>24</sup> He ensured that the students were aware of their social responsibilities of which he considered *'irfan* to be the basis; it was also seen as a means of assuming the hardest responsibilities and duties.<sup>25</sup>

### The Role of 'Irfan

*'Irfan* in terms of Khomeini is here examined from the point of view of two main themes, the first of which has its origins in Plato and the second in the way Plotinus and the Neo-Platonists developed elements in Plato's thought. From Plato's Republic, as well as from the Shi'i figure of the Imam, derived the concept of the wise and virtuous leader who will guide his community to a better life. The influence of Plato's *Republic* was felt primarily in the Islamic tradition in al-Farabi's *Al-Madina al-fazila* (The Virtuous City) which interpreted leadership in the light of Plato's Republic and the *Laws* and Aristotle's *Ethics*. Al-Farabi addressed the question of who should be leader of the Islamic community. According to the general Islamic philosophic tradition, which derived from the Greeks, man can only attain felicity and flourish to the fullest extent in a community in which full cooperation in pursuit of the common good exists. A virtuous individual may have the chance of a virtuous life in a virtuous state. Therefore a state is necessary for the fulfilment of human nature. The most noble state is that which is ruled by the best leader, and that is he who possesses not only the moral virtues but also wisdom. For the Greeks the perfect leader was a philosopher. For Muslims, whose approach is essentially spiritual and religious, the first and best leader was the Prophet, whose example all others should emulate. Whereas, however, for Plato, the philosopher was limited only by truth, for Muslims all leaders are limited by the law, the shari'a. Further, whereas religion does not play an ostensible role in Plato's *Republic*, its influence combined with that of Plotinus may be

discerned in the opening to al-Farabi's City, where he discusses the First Being, his attributes and the way in which through emanation he generates creation.<sup>26</sup> Like Plato, al-Farabi set out the conditions for the perfect ruler. Plato emphasized among other qualities knowledge of the eternal truth and unchanging reality, which in effect is wisdom, as well as justice, courage and self-discipline. Al-Farabi's ruler was also devoted to justice and concern for the oppressed.

Ibn 'Arabi, however, focused not on the community but on the central figure of the perfect man who, being free from sin and imbued with wisdom and knowledge of the divine, acquires the rank of vice-regent of God on earth.<sup>27</sup> Both al-Farabi and Ibn 'Arabi's visions in turn influenced Mulla Sadra, who perceived the development of the perfect man in terms of a journey in four stages to union with the divine; in the last stage the perfect man will return to the larger community with a combination of knowledge of the transcendent and an understanding of the possibilities for effective thought and action in service of the community.<sup>28</sup> Khomeini's vision, as manifested not only in his mystic works but also in *Islamic Government*, which in certain respects recalls Plato's *Republic*,<sup>29</sup> falls in part within this tradition of Islamic utopias.

From Plotinus *'irfan* inherited the view of the divine intellect that is the origin of all creation and which provides unity to existence. In the Neo-Platonic tradition the individual perception of the divine was primarily intellectual in emphasis, but in the Islamic tradition, particularly in the works of Ibn 'Arabi, it became profoundly spiritual, though retaining an intellectual dimension. Ibn 'Arabi believed in the unity of all existence, which he termed *wahdat al-wujud*, and considered that perceived diversity is an illusion, as Khomeini points out in *The Light of Guidance*, where he cites Ibn 'Arabi as saying 'The Truth is creation and creation is the Truth'.<sup>30</sup> *'Irfan* derives from a knowledge of the divine, *ma'rifat*, which has been defined in English as 'knowledge by presence'.<sup>31</sup> It means the true inner knowledge acquired by direct experience of the intelligible order which lies behind the visible world, and enlightened inner awareness of the transcendent. The person who acquires such knowledge is termed an *'arif*. The emphasis in *'irfan* is upon individual union with God without intermediaries and through continual striving to destroy the barrier of the senses or the carnal soul (*nafs*) so the mystic may reach a state of union with the divine (*fana*). In so doing he may also acquire divine wisdom and the status of sainthood. *'Irfan* is important for understanding how Khomeini constructed himself as a

leader, the philosophic and cultural traditions he drew upon, the objectives he gave his followers, his relationship with them, and his vision, particularly in terms of authority, of the relationship between the leader and the community.

*Ma'rifat*, knowledge of the essential reality of things, is acquired by profound mystical training. It comes directly from the divine, the one or universal self, with whom the gnostic is united by presence to return afterwards to the world of multiplicity.<sup>32</sup> Such ideas were originally most fully formulated in Islam by Ibn 'Arabi in his doctrine of the perfect man, created in the image of God as his vice-regent on earth, a synthesis of God and the universe.<sup>33</sup> Only a gnostic who sees the emanation of the divine names in every manifestation of the universe can be called a completed human being, or perfect man. He is one who reaches such a degree of unity that he sees that all things form part of the divine essence, and he has penetrated the mystery of the one truth and its many manifestations. He can further actualize himself in the oneness of all the attributes, thus establishing a truly comprehensive unity, corresponding to the unity of the absolute.<sup>34</sup> In *The Light of Guidance* Khomeini attacks philosophers who deny the link between Creator and creation, and argues that the gnostic understands the true fusion of the one with the other. This unity lies behind the religion of *tauhid* (unity of all things), which is the one set out in the Qur'an.<sup>35</sup>

The special knowledge of the perfect man confers powers of judgement which enable him to attain the inner light without recourse to the external provisions of the shari'a, and perceive through their very nature the just relationship between different matters.<sup>36</sup> He sees all things in their proper place, to the point where he embodies the precepts of the divine law in his very soul.<sup>37</sup> Those who attain such knowledge reach the highest of all human levels, sainthood or *wilaya*.<sup>38</sup> A saint is the highest knower of God and a perfect man *par excellence*, one who has perfect knowledge of the ultimate truth concerning the absolute, the world and the relationship between the two. Ibn 'Arabi considered that potentially any believer has the power within himself to rise to such knowledge, to the point where the vision of the believer may become part of prophethood, in the sense of attaining affinity with the divine.<sup>39</sup>

The perfect man's knowledge of God is carefully differentiated from that of a prophet. Ibn 'Arabi established this differentiation on the grounds that there are two types of prophethood, the prophethood of

legislation (*al-nubuwwa al-tashri'*) and the general prophethood (*al-nubuwwa al-'amma*).<sup>40</sup> The prophethood of legislation, of messengership, came to an end with Muhammad, who is termed the Seal of the Prophets. Legislative power is not granted to anyone after him, however saintly. His worldly successors, termed the caliphs, may only act as his vice-regents to enforce the laws that derive from his message. The general prophethood, however, continues in the form of sainthood (*wilaya*), which has the function of general transmission (*inba' 'amma*)

The saints are also the caliphs – successors of the Prophet but in a spiritual rather than worldly sense. God manifests his greatness through them, and each of them has his own station in the divine scheme.<sup>41</sup> Such general prophesy or sainthood is the inner truth and essence of the Prophet's message, and it resides in the saints as well as in the Prophet.<sup>42</sup> The saints, therefore, receive their divine knowledge directly from God although they are not prophets. What God divulges to them is separate and different to the prophethood of legislation and legal judgement.<sup>43</sup> The saints therefore follow the outer law brought by Muhammad but receive the same knowledge as the Prophet in the inner sense.<sup>44</sup> God thus has on earth vice-regents – *khulafa* – who receive authority directly. There is no contradiction between their judgement and that of Muhammad. They are vice-regents because they contain in themselves the things demanded of them by the people, who are dependent on them. They are also expected to take care of the special needs of all the people. They must be differentiated from the historical caliph, for they are vice-regents of God and he is the vice-regent of the Prophet. Very rarely there may arise one who is outwardly a caliph of the Prophet and inwardly a caliph of God, and thus knows both the inner and the outer law. Saints who receive knowledge by esoteric means are superior to the 'ulama, specifically because they preserve not only the prophetic revelation but also their own secret knowledge.<sup>45</sup> In *The Light of Guidance* Khomeini stresses the secrecy of this knowledge, which is the reflection of the hidden truth, and thus not within the power of more ordinary mortals to understand.<sup>46</sup>

The question is, who can become a saint? Ibn 'Arabi followed the tradition that the vision of the believer is a part of prophethood, and stated that mystics may attain a part of the same. The mystic may thus be a prophet in respect of his knowledge, although his knowledge will not be equal to that of the prophets. The mystic is one who is pious and ascetic and trusts in God.<sup>47</sup>

In *The Light of Guidance* (1931), a work written to reconcile the originally Neo-Platonic theory of divine manifestation of the *'irfan* tradition and the Shi'i vision of the same subject, the perfect man has a pivotal role in representing both Shi'i prophethood and sainthood, and the means of revelation through the divine names. A further theme is that of the spiritual quest, whereby the pilgrim undertakes four journeys and reaches the position where he may lead other men; that is to say, becomes a saint. The work reflects the influence of Ibn 'Arabi, where the perfect man is seen as saint, prophet and vice-regent of God, and the heart and key of the process of theophany and regeneration.<sup>48</sup> Khomeini discusses the role of the perfect man as the means of immutable emanation, and as the head of a chain of revelation, particularly under the influence of the divine name, Great (*a'zam*).<sup>49</sup>

Khomeini also considers how the ability derived from knowledge of the divine gives the gnostic the capacity to see on the one hand the One and on the other the many, and set out on the journey to unity with the divine, a course of action open only to the chosen saints, prophets and *'arifs* of high position.<sup>50</sup> In the course of the four journeys the *'arif* arrives at a state of perfect being. Khomeini is here following Ibn 'Arabi and Mulla Sadra. The concept of the perfect man comes from Ibn 'Arabi, and the division of his experience of transcendence into four journeys derives from Mulla Sadra. In the first stage the mystic travels from creation to the truth, so the veils of obscurity and multiplicity are lifted and he becomes one with the eternal being in a state of annihilation.<sup>51</sup> As a result of the first journey, Khomeini wrote, all creatures may see the appearance of the truth, which by implication means also ordinary people.<sup>52</sup> Thereafter he becomes by successive stages a perfect man or saint, having reached the level of *wilaya*, and a member of the divine realm, until by the fourth stage he knows not only the Creator but also the creation of things.<sup>53</sup> At that point, according to Mulla Sadra, having experienced withdrawal, transcendence, devotion and contemplation, he returns to an active life and also to the guidance of the community with heightened understanding.<sup>54</sup> To Khomeini, only one who has accomplished the fourth journey, that is to say reached the point where he may reveal the secrets of the immutable emanation and act as a guide to others on their own journeys, may be said to have attained the rank of saint or prophet.<sup>55</sup>

Mulla Sadra believed the one who attains such an awareness to be an *imam*, in the sense of guide or interpreter. Outwardly he is simply the interpreter of the symbols and prescriptions of the prophetic lawgiver.<sup>56</sup>

Inwardly he is sustained by his own interpretation of divine reality. The *imam* has an additional task to that of guidance – integrating the transcendent and actual dimensions of man's existence. This includes drawing together the religious symbols that engender the formal allegiance of the community as a whole, and the theological perspective of a spiritually inclined elite.<sup>57</sup> Such an aim is attained through the *imam's* awareness of the ultimate relationship of all existence, which alone can bestow the unifying vision necessary to provide appropriate guidance.<sup>58</sup> At the same time he distinguishes between external forms and the inner meaning of the prophetic symbols of transcendence. The *imam*, who may be a person or an awareness in the believer, has developed a rare insight and ability to foster both the inner and outer aspects of our existence, making him a guide and leader with knowledge of the inner light.<sup>59</sup>

Khomeini's precise position on these ideas was ambiguous. The references in *The Light of Guidance* suggest that he identified a perfect man as one who has the status of the prophets and imams.<sup>60</sup> He says that the one who understands the fourth journey reaches the level of legislative prophesy, again implying that it is unlikely to be possible for ordinary believers.<sup>61</sup> There is, however, a hint that the status of perfect man may be achieved by ordinary mortals, but only the rarest few:

'Anyone who has the quality of a perfect man, that is the quality of the divine essence, is a caliph in this world as he was in the origins.'<sup>62</sup>

There is also an assumption that an ordinary believer may become a perfect man in his description of the four journeys, but, as with much else, Khomeini left vague the answer to the question of who could reach the eminence implied in such terms as *insan-i kamil* and *wali* (saint). Probably to Khomeini the concept of saint or perfect man, so elevated and idealistic, functioned more in the real world as a goal than as a title which the ordinary believer can claim. At one point he said that there was a class of people who migrate to God and attain the goal of unity with the divine, adding that there were also 'still another group to which you and I belong which has not even begun to migrate'.<sup>63</sup>

The title of '*arif*' alone, however, would appear to be attainable, for Khomeini refers several times to the mystic philosophers and their commentators as '*arif*', including Qumsha'i and his own teacher, Shaha-badi.<sup>64</sup> He defines an '*arif*' as one who has taken a step forward from

ordinary humanity and who sees the world with two eyes – the one which discerns the relationship between Creator and creation and the other which perceives the non-existence of diversity, so that through the rule of justice he accords to each his right and sets out on the path of unity (*tauhid*).<sup>65</sup> Khomeini also states that only the elect, the saints and the *'arif*s of high position, can understand the nature of the divine emanation.<sup>66</sup> However, he saw believers as being at a variety of stages on the way.<sup>67</sup> He says at one point that prophets and masters of the shari'a have reached different stages on these journeys; even after the attainment of annihilation (*fana*) some residue of egotism may remain to the believer, so:

The people of righteousness must lead him to the path of righteousness and the leader [*rahbar*] must be aware of the qualities of righteousness. The believer must not stray from the path of abstinence so that he belongs to the group of souls who draw people along the way of righteousness.<sup>68</sup>

Of course, Khomeini was sensitive to charges of unorthodoxy, particularly since the concepts of perfect man and saint suggest the immaculate nature normally allowed only to the 12 Imams.

The believer's journey along the path of *ma'rifat* and *'irfan* may provide him with qualities of leadership. In particular, his special knowledge of the inner realities is deemed to confer powers of judgement not accessible to an ordinary *'alim* (learned person, cleric). On the one hand he is learned in the external provisions of the shari'a, and on the other he is aware of their internal significance and its bearing upon the just order of the community. In believing that the study of the law represented only one dimension of Islam, and that there existed concerns of religion on a different plain to the legal, Khomeini followed Mulla Sadra, whose philosophy rested on three basic principles: intellectual intuition or illumination, rational demonstration, and religion and revelation.<sup>69</sup> Also like Mulla Sadra, he perceives *'irfan* and the shari'a as being two manifestations of the same truth, compatible with each other and emanating from the same sources.<sup>70</sup>

In addition to the knowledge conferred by the holy law, the *'arif* possesses exceptional spiritual qualities derived from his striving towards knowledge by presence which entitles him to respect and obedience.<sup>71</sup> He is thus eminently equipped to be the guide and leader – imam and *rahbar* – of the community. Such titles were not inadvertently



applied to Khomeini at the time of the revolution for the exceptional understanding and therefore charisma they imply. They form part of a conceptual vocabulary that was used to mobilize the ordinary people and create a unique image for Khomeini.

The belief that one imbued with *ma'rifat* sees beyond multiplicity and the contingent to the essential and eternal, combined with the idea that the shari'a and *ma'rifat* are manifestations of the same divine message, was to have profound implications for Khomeini once he became the jurist (*faqih*). Then he appears to have used his theory of knowledge by presence, and its implications for power, to alter the powers of the jurist designated in the constitution of 1979. In 1988 he declared *vilayat-i faqih* to be absolute, and made changes to the law which in effect amounted to altering the shari'a as a result of political exigency. The justification for such a ruling may be interpreted as a manifestation of the hidden influence of the *'irfan* tradition, in that if the *'arif* is imbued with the same divine wisdom as the shari'a he may be justified in altering it in particular circumstances as the ruling jurist. In changing the law, Khomeini acted more closely to Plato's ideal of the philosopher ruler uninhibited by legal constraints than to Islamic practice.

There was another aspect of *'irfan* which Khomeini emphasized to his students and followers, and later in public lectures to the Iranian people, and that was self-knowledge and with it ethics. The *'arif* seeks knowledge of the divine through himself. In order to find the divine within himself he must first purge his soul of egohood. The study of *'irfan* has long been considered to develop strength of character and courage in adversity, qualities which Khomeini sought to develop in his students.<sup>72</sup> In his teaching Khomeini reportedly conveyed a sense of awareness of a feeling of spiritual nobility and of responsibility and commitment.<sup>73</sup> Implied in Khomeini's lecture is the view that by self-knowledge a person brings into order his own nature. Becoming thus master of himself, he may proceed to act justly and wisely:

'Have you read the book of your soul and have you perceived in it the great divine goal, a goal whereby God has fixed a ladder to knowing him through knowing yourself.'<sup>74</sup>

He affirmed that a person who had completely conquered the ego had taken a powerful step and had reached the highest level,<sup>75</sup> and he offered the advice that:

After you have read the book of your soul and gathered the necessary understanding, go a step further, turn to the witnessing of the people of *'irfan* and the house of the master of truth so you may find the truth of prophecy and the awareness that is in the world of the attributes.<sup>76</sup>

In other words, in order to draw the proper conclusions a person must have the help of one who is able to throw light into the soul and help him distinguish between permanent and impermanent. The knowledge of the divine and the in-dwelling reason of the universe may be arrived at by the soul's perception of its own nature and origins enabling it to distinguish between the everlasting and the flux of multiplicity. Ibn 'Arabi also stressed self-knowledge, 'He who knows himself knows his lord' being his favourite adage.<sup>77</sup> He believed that man is in a position to know within himself the relationship between the shadow that is the world and the reality that is the absolute. Self-knowledge and the concomitant development of self-discipline were to play an important part in the struggle in Khomeini's movement, and his students were equipped to take up the hardest responsibilities, which in turn were the basis of social and political duties.<sup>78</sup> Beyond the individual lay the wider goal – as described by Khomeini: 'We cannot reform our country unless we reform ourselves. If you want your country to be independent begin with your self.'<sup>79</sup>

Throughout his life Khomeini taught ethics, particularly to try and strengthen the resolve of the 'ulama, but also spreading his net more widely. In the late 1930s he held classes on Thursdays and Fridays at the Faiziyya school which many ordinary people, bazaaris, artisans and workers of the Qum district attended. The fame of the classes became such that people from other areas joined them. Reza Shah's police asked Khomeini to close them and, despite his reluctance, he ultimately reduced the classes to protect the people from police harassment, and also moved their location as a means to limit attendance.<sup>80</sup> After the removal of Reza Shah he returned to the Faiziyya and the classes continued for some years, until pressure in Qum itself forced their closure.

Khomeini's students also took up the subject of self-knowledge as a means of providing the people with inner strength. Mutaahhari wrote that a person must know his own limitations and weaknesses to know how great God is; ownership of oneself and release from one's desires

constitute the fundamental aim of Islamic teaching. With knowledge of the self human beings feel a kind of dignity and reject humiliation. They may also discern the value of social and ethical practices. Knowledge of self means the human being is not totally earthbound – he has a ray of divine spirit and may take precedence over the angels in wisdom as well as being free and self-sufficient.<sup>81</sup> Human beings can change and construct themselves through self-knowledge, which enables them to shape their future and that of society according to their own will.<sup>82</sup> In this way self-knowledge not only encourages endurance, it promotes political activism and gives political confidence to ordinary people.

Khomeini also emphasized that it is necessary to engage in struggle, jihad, to be released from egotism. He said the lesser jihad is that waged on the battlefield and the greater jihad is the war waged by man against his carnal self, advice unheard of in Qum.<sup>83</sup> All forms of jihad that may be waged in the world depend on this greater jihad. Without the inner jihad the outer jihad is impossible. Later, in 1972, Khomeini developed these ideas in a thesis called *The Greater Jihad* as a way of exhorting the 'ulama to purge their souls and engage in political struggle.<sup>84</sup> Izz al-Din Qasam preached the same message in his struggle against the British in Palestine, when he also enjoined the greater jihad against the carnal soul.<sup>85</sup>

It may be noted that overall in movements by Islamists against incumbent regimes the vanguard has a significant role to play in mobilization. Firstly they provide an example of good Muslims whom others must strive to emulate. Secondly they embody the corps of a network which extends through other religious institutions such as mosques and schools. This corps may then mobilize a larger section of the population, permeating, in situations where discontent is great enough, the public as a whole.<sup>86</sup> Thus 'Allama Mawdudi of Pakistan stressed discipline, ideological purity and asceticism. He endeavoured to train a small, informed and dedicated group to assume political and social leadership. Their duty would be to administer and control the Islamic state; they would be pious, committed Muslims, who not only believed in the law but were imbued with its spirit, and would thus form a regulated and cohesive cadre.<sup>87</sup> Sayyid Qutb in Egypt sought the regeneration of Islam through the emergence of a disciplined vanguard dedicated to the concept of God's oneness, *tauhid*, who could take the lead in transforming society. He perceived himself as living in an era of moral decline and corruption, and saw the answer to society's ills in the creation of a

leadership that would provide a fresh stock of high ideals. Rejuvenation depends on the rediscovery of the true substance of the faith, and restoration of the understanding of the oneness of God would produce a corps of believers in whom the essence of Islam could be actualized.<sup>88</sup> Thus Khomeini's exhortations to form a vanguard to give the movement moral example and inspiration would seem to be part of what might be called Islamic ideologies of the vanguard. Khomeini was widely read, but it is still not possible to say exactly how far he was aware of this kind of development in Islamic movements elsewhere, especially as prior to him in Iran's past lay the endeavours of Mulla Sadra to inspire a theoretical elite to action in the community through instruction and example.<sup>89</sup> Khomeini's lectures on character-building in Qum clearly had political implications, as Reza Shah's security services felt it necessary to force their closure.<sup>90</sup>

Ultimately, as Khomeini made clear in *Islamic Government*, his authority rested on his knowledge as a jurist. So why, with his background in *'irfan*, did he not make more use of the potential of knowledge of the transcendent? As already mentioned, Khomeini's earliest interest had been in *'irfan*. From 1936 to 1941 he moved to the related topic of ethics, and from 1941 onwards he gradually developed an expertise in jurisprudence, *fiqh*, publishing many works in this discipline in which he had hitherto had little experience.<sup>91</sup> It appears that he even terminated the classes in *'irfan* that he taught to a select few of his students.<sup>92</sup>

Mysticism has always had the devotion of the few and knowledge gained through the mystic path has by its nature been considered esoteric – indeed, Khomeini warned in *The Light of Guidance* that it cannot be widely disseminated.<sup>93</sup> As long as Khomeini kept to *'irfan* he was confronted by the classic problems of the philosopher who seeks to engage in the actual political context – that is, philosophy, by its elevated nature, cannot provide a link with or power base among the ordinary people. The philosopher is thus dependent upon others to implement his ideas, be they individuals such as kings and priests, or organizations such as those related to religion and the shari'a. Movements in the past based on Sufism, such as that of the Safavids, were also largely tribal in origin. There was in addition the possibility of Khomeini laying himself open to the accusation of heterodoxy. Ibn 'Arabi had always been regarded as suspect by the orthodox 'ulama. Khomeini's mentor, Shaha-badi, was frowned upon in Qum for his interest in *'irfan*. In terms of engagement with society at large, therefore, *'irfan* did not provide a solid

base. The ordinary people came to religion through the Qur'an, the mosque and the shari'a – that is, through jurisprudence, which transforms abstract ideas about people's lives and goals into political directives and social norms which shape the life of the community.<sup>94</sup> It thus opens up the way to much wider base of support and a door to mobilization of the masses. Ordinary Muslims seeking guidance come to a *mujtahid* to know what the shari'a says. They attach themselves as followers to a particular *mujtahid* for his reputation among other matters in knowledge of the shari'a. So such knowledge was one element necessary in securing popular support. Further, knowledge of the shari'a was important because only through its implementation under the 'ulama could there be true and just Islamic government, that is to say legitimate government. Nevertheless, the creation of the government of the jurist was subtly shaped by 'irfan and its ethics.

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What then was the impact of 'irfan upon the making of Khomeini's state? As stated, it functioned on three levels: the creation of a leader, the creation of a vanguard and through these two mobilizing the people, though in the latter case along with other perhaps more significant factors.

*Irfan* provided the ideal of an ordinary believer who could rise to become a perfect man, saint or 'arif, and whose knowledge of the divine enables him to provide right guidance for his community, so that he functions as God's vice-regent on earth. Such knowledge of eternal truths confers special powers of judgement as well as courage, self-discipline and a sense of justice. He is in effect a more religious version of Plato's philosopher ruler, and the Islamic state in this context is a utopia in the tradition of Plato's *Republic*. As such it is to be a virtuous state which encourages the creation of virtuous individuals. In such a political vision the divine knowledge and wisdom of the leader, in effect another version of the divine message, makes his unfettered judgement higher than the law; not above it, but able to change or suspend it. Such a concept, however, creates problems of both orthodoxy and legitimacy in terms of the shari'a, which ultimately demands knowledge of the holy texts as the rightful source of authority.

In a utopia led by the philosopher ruler there are questions of what the state is and where authority and sovereignty reside. A state may be defined as an organization which shapes or forms a fixed relationship between humankind and their possessions. It presupposes a relationship of command and obedience between rulers and ruled. The rulers, a public office or person, possess sovereignty, the incontestable right and power to resolve differences. In the Platonic tradition the state is epitomized by the just agent who will make the state just. Sovereignty and authority reside in the ruler or guardians, among whom, however, there may be consultation and consensus. The state produced by the Platonic concept of leadership and the *'irfan* tradition is nevertheless one where authority is wielded from above.

The leader encourages self-knowledge in his followers so that they may also aspire to strength through communing with the divine. The purging of the soul creates self-discipline, which in turn generates self-empowerment and the will to struggle against the debilitations of the ego. Although not individualistic in the Western sense, there is nevertheless a strong element of individual endeavour. Among the followers is a vanguard who provide guidance and an example to the ordinary people, so building up a wider basis of support. At the same time individual initiative and direct action emerge liberated from the constraints of constant referral to written authority, but are still based on rightful guidance. The result is an activist movement not dissimilar in many ways to contemporary dedicated and organized secular groups. A further modern influence is indicated in the linking of gnostic ethics to the needs of society and social responsibility. In essence the vanguard is prepared for the administration and control of the Islamic state which will ultimately totally transform society. Such promotion of ethics and self-discipline as a weapon in the political struggle of the weak against the mighty was used by Izz al-Din Qasam in his battle against the British in Palestine, and by Gandhi in the struggle against the empire in India, and it is not impossible that they provided examples for Khomeini.

The jurist as such does not emanate political charisma – the ability to generate widespread devotion in the political arena. That must be drawn from personal qualities and reference to their association. So Khomeini played upon the image of the leader with the divine aura evolved in the Iranian Islamic tradition from the tales of the Imams and the vision of Ibn 'Arabi and Mulla Sadra. He was able to use the gulf that had developed between ordinary Shi'a and a remote secular state that insistently

emphasized the pre-Islamic past – a state that was increasingly perceived as pursuing the interests of its own elite and of a foreign power while operating an oppressive political system and neglecting the poor. In such circumstances adherence to a charismatic leader conferred dignity, and a release from humiliation and rejection; it provided new goals along with the potential for human transformation.

Finally, it is unsurprising that the leader of the revolution should also be one of the principal scholars of Islamic gnosticism, willing to risk the anarchy which orthodox Islam abhors. Nor is it surprising that the mysticism so manifest in Iranian culture and thought should have played an important role in its revolution.

# Chapter III: Restructuring, Organization and the Emergence of the Nahzat

The main subject of this chapter is the role of organization, especially modern organization, in the emergence of Khomeini's movement, the Nahzat. The organizational reforms in the Qum seminary in the 1940s and 1950s assisted the 'ulama in the struggle with the state and paved the way for the rise of the Nahzat. The reshaping of the religious organization produced a divergence of opinion, in which Khomeini was deeply involved, on managing relations with the state. Both traditional and modern-style networks played an important role in spreading the influence of the movement and mobilizing popular support. The movement gradually established its character and identity, which crystallized in particular in the 15 Khurdad/5 June 1963 uprising.

## **Restructuring in Qum in the 1940s and 1950s**

The resurgence of Qum and the religious establishment in Iran began with the arrival there in 1922 of Ayatollah 'Abd al-Karim Ha'iri Yazdi. Whilst Reza Shah was reforming and centralizing the state, Ha'iri quietly reorganized the Qum seminary. From the early nineteenth century its schools had become run down and had gradually fallen into disuse.<sup>1</sup> It was then known largely only as a centre of pilgrimage. Faced by the fact that Reza Shah was backed by a modern army, Ha'iri adopted a policy of quietism and patience. Although he was in reality covertly opposed to government policies, his aim was to be forbearing and impartial and thereby give no pretext for interference. He remonstrated with Reza Shah over exams for students, but only in such a way as not to provoke retribution.<sup>2</sup> Most of the clergy of Qum supported him in this policy, but Khomeini is reported to have considered that his quietism



had a highly deleterious effect on the students, in making them subsequently reluctant to engage in politics.<sup>3</sup>

Ha'iri died in 1937, and for a while three of his former students, Sayyid Muhammad Hujjat Tabrizi, Sadr al-Din Sadr and Sayyid Muhammad Taqi Khwansari, managed the seminary together and prevented it breaking up. Following the abdication of Reza Shah in 1941, the clergy of Qum began to discuss a major restructuring of their organization. They had before them the state experience of transformation from a minimal and weak government to strong, united control, and centralization of both resources and authority. Just as Reza Shah had perceived the advantages of a strong state as better able to resist the intrusion of the great powers, especially in the era of emerging nation-states after the First World War, so the clerics understood the advantages of centralization and coordination in protecting Islam against both radical secularism and foreign influence. One of the main problems confronting them was the diffusion of resources, and the fact that each area tended to have its own leading cleric to whom the canonical taxes were sent. As with the minimal state, the religious resources remained in the provinces and the centre in Qum was financially weak. This was all the more so as the leading scholars of Shi'ism tended to be in the shrine cities in Iraq, and so much of the contributions of the faithful was sent to them, to the detriment of Shi'ism in Iran. Further, there were a number of different leading scholars, instead of just one, and the division of authority made Shi'ism vulnerable to manipulation by the state.

By the mid-1940s some at least of the clergy of Qum, including Khomeini, came to recognize that the old generation of leaders who had rebuilt the seminary was passing, and the opportunity now presented itself for a new style of leadership. They began the quest for someone who could be a credible *marja'* or sole leader of all the Shi'a.<sup>4</sup> It was hoped that such a figure would not only bring together all the diverse views of Shi'ism, particularly in Iran and Iraq, but would also unite the contributions of the faithful in his person. Funds could then be deployed to refurbish the schools and attract more teachers and students who could go out and spread the word concerning the regeneration and modernization of Shi'ism, which would in turn open up further financial opportunities. As with much in the way that the 'ulama adapted to the West, in Iran there were elements of tradition in this policy as well as considerable modernity. In Shi'i as in Sunni Islam the tendency amongst the 'ulama had always been towards seeking a consensus (*ijma'*) of views

rather than accepting the leadership of a single cleric, such as the pope in Christianity. From time to time in the past there had been a single *marja'*, such as Shaikh Murtaza Ansari (d. 1864), who was known for his outstanding intellect and scholarship, or Mirza Hasan Shirazi (d. 1895), who emerged at the time of the tobacco concession in 1890, though he appears to have owed his eminence as much to political factors as to intellect and erudition. Hindsight has constructed a chain of *marja's* by date of death, although in their lifetimes there may have been no clear pre-eminent jurist.<sup>5</sup> Thus tradition provided examples, but the move actually to create a single *marja'* was modern.

The quest of the 'ulama of Qum for a *marja'* ended in the choice of Ayatollah Muhammad Husain Burujirdi. Born in 1292/1875–76 in Burujird, and educated in Isfahan and Najaf, where his stipend was paid by a merchant, he returned to Burujird in 1328/1910–11 and remained there for 33 years, initially to look after his brother and sister after the death of their father.<sup>6</sup> He was already known to the Qum clergy for his learning when he came to Tehran in 1944 for an operation, and some of them, including Khomeini, visited him and invited him to move to Qum. As a result he arrived there in the winter of 1944–45, and when the then pre-eminent Ayatollah Sayyid Abu'l Hasan Isfahani died in 1946, he became *marja'-i taqlid*.<sup>7</sup>

Burujirdi is principally mentioned as having been chosen for his knowledge, and for being a very good teacher who would train *mujtahids*, as would be appropriate, but it may be noted that in his 33 years at Burujird he had gained political experience, both in dealing with state officials and with the welfare, interests and problems of the community. He was also considered progressive and flexible in his response to new contingencies and to the exigencies of the current age.<sup>8</sup> Khomeini in particular wanted a scholar who would protect Islam.<sup>9</sup> Burujirdi had a reputation for defying the state in Burujird, and for saying he would never remain silent in the face of government lawlessness. As the other three leading *marja's* in Qum died, Khvansari in 1952, Hujjat and Sadr in 1953, all their followers transferred their allegiance to Burujirdi, strengthening his position as sole *marja'*.<sup>10</sup>

At first Burujirdi faced considerable financial difficulties as a result of both the Reza Shah period and the depredations of the Second World War. An undated letter written by Khomeini to Hujjat al-Islam Falsafi, who became Burujirdi's representative to the shah, reveals the desperate state of the seminary and the problems confronting Burujirdi. On the

one hand his representatives in the provinces were ineffective, and on the other they were failing to remit the expected funds from the religious dues.<sup>11</sup> Unlike Isfahani, Burujirdi was reluctant to depend on the bazaar merchants for funding and exhaust their good will. As a result he was greatly in debt and had not the money to pay the seminary stipends in the schools of both Iran and Iraq, the disbursement of which was his responsibility. Khomeini requested Falsafi to use his powers of persuasion with the merchants of Tehran, particularly 'Alinaqi Kashani, Husain Shalchi, Khusraushahi, Bazargan and Sayyid Ahmad Mustafavi, to advance money immediately, and also if possible come to an agreement with them for a regular undertaking on their behalf. (The irregular nature of their funding was another source of difficulty for the clergy in dealing with the state.) Interestingly, Khomeini remarked that getting up on the pulpit and asking for financial support was nothing like as efficacious as asking for it directly from the merchants. He also pointed out that, one way or another, the leading merchants of Tehran influenced or controlled the loan system in other towns.

In the same letter Khomeini made clear the development of his objectives in terms of organization. Matters to be dealt with included propaganda and who was to have charge of it, problems concerning the arrangements for the study of religious sciences in the seminaries, and particularly the appointment of appropriate administrators with some demonstrable ability in organization.

As a result of having in effect a star figure, the Qum seminary flourished. In 1941 the town had been small, with a low standard of living and no more than 2000 students eking out a precarious existence.<sup>12</sup> The ascension to the throne of Muhammad Reza Shah had alleviated state pressure, but financial troubles remained till the end of the war. From then on the town gradually prospered with the improved general economic situation. So as the funds flowed in to the one *marja'*, the seminary was repaired and expanded, bringing in more students. Burujirdi was exceptionally able at dealing with community and welfare problems, so merchants and guilds and other religious followers gradually came to Qum both on pilgrimages and to bring donations. The number of students rose to 6000, who were regularly visited by their families, and the services required by these many visitors helped the town to prosper.<sup>13</sup> Burujirdi also modernized the system of collecting and registering the religious taxes; previously there had been no precise record of the agents, who were often volunteers, but Burujirdi created

such a register with details of their districts, responsibilities and the amounts they collected.<sup>14</sup> Problems over disbursement, however, remained.

As the country grew wealthier after the war, so did the clergy and their followers. There was a market for religious publications which found expression in nine publishing houses, two newspapers, four magazines and other journals, and the *Maktab-i Islam* (School or Ideology of Islam), the seminary's own publication, which sold 8000 copies by 1964 and was distributed in Europe, Asia and Africa. A propaganda movement flourished, and at particular times of the year emissaries went to different parts of the country to provide guidance and encouragement in the building of mosques and Islamic schools.<sup>15</sup> Burujirdi himself was especially active in the establishment of a mosque in Hamburg, Germany.<sup>16</sup>

Burujirdi was conscious of the need for curriculum reform to meet the challenges of the time and keep the allegiance of the young. Under his progressive leadership a new generation emerged, well-versed in the developments in knowledge and society, well-informed about world politics, and better equipped than in the past to make the truths of Shi'ism understood.<sup>17</sup>

One of the characteristics of the seminary was its emphasis on freedom of question and discussion, which often resulted in the teacher spending days on particular issues which had become the subject of intense debate. In addition the students had freedom of choice with regard to teachers and courses.<sup>18</sup> Teachers were exhorted to raise the standards of teaching and learning, and large numbers of new volumes on *fiqh* (jurisprudence), *usul* (first principles) and philosophy were produced. At the same time Burujirdi placed emphasis on lucidity and simplicity of style so that Islamic literature could be understood by people of different levels of education.<sup>19</sup> Most significantly, Burujirdi encouraged the learning of reading, writing and preaching in a foreign language, so that some 'ulama could go abroad and spread the word on Islam and Shi'ism. Emissaries went to Mecca and Medina as well as to Europe and the USA.

As a result the centre of learning in the Shi'i world began to shift from Najaf to Qum. Burujirdi made a point of being well-informed on the affairs of the country and the predicament of Muslims elsewhere. He grieved for the backwardness of Islamic countries and blamed the problem on the lack of unity in the Muslim world, a view which

Khomeini also held. He believed in Sunni-Shi'i reconciliation and helped found the Centre for Reconciliation (Dar al-Taqrīb) of Sunnism and Shi'ism in Cairo. At the same time he stood up to the shah and resisted pressure over any matter which he felt might weaken Islam.<sup>20</sup> In particular, in February 1960 he requested Ja'far Bihbihani, one of the leading clerics of Tehran, to organize resistance to land reform in the assembly.<sup>21</sup>

Relations between Burujirdi and Khomeini began well, but gradually deteriorated as a result of a difference in opinion over how to respond to the resurgent power of the Pahlavi state under Muhammad Reza Shah after the Second World War. It has been asked why Khomeini took so long to emerge on the national political scene. To begin with Khomeini was in a relatively junior position at this time, being an *ustad* or teacher at the seminary, known most usually as Haj Aqa Ruhullah, and therefore not really able to aspire to leadership. There is also the issue of Burujirdi's policies towards the state and Khomeini's evaluation of those policies. Since Burujirdi became *marja'* at a time of state weakness, he was able to take a much firmer stand against the government than Ha'iri had done. He and Muhammad Reza Shah came in practice to an agreement that the clergy would stay out of politics as long as the shah did not interfere in religious matters. The agreement was in essence reflected in the terms on which Burujirdi's representative to the shah, Hujjat al-Islam Falsafi, was to act on his behalf. He was not to raise matters which might be dealt with by representatives in the assembly or provincial officials. Inadvertent involvement in any matter which might be seen as seditious was to be avoided. However, Falsafi was to act in anything concerning the interests of Islam.<sup>22</sup> Throughout the 16 years that he was *marja'*, Burujirdi maintained this position. He strictly forbade engagement in politics and all the other 'ulama followed him, except Kashani and the radical Fada'iyān-i Islam.<sup>23</sup> In the earlier part of the period up to the mid-1950s the policy worked well. After the 1953 coup, however, US influence over the Iranian government became much more pronounced, most obviously manifested in the military aid which led to an increase in the size and power of the army. With, in addition, the growing income from oil, the government was able to consolidate its position. Nevertheless, while Burujirdi lived, and because of the immense prestige in which he was held throughout the Shi'i world, the shah avoided confrontation.

Initially Burujirdi and Khomeini cooperated closely. Burujirdi brought Khomeini into his own inner circle, and made him one of the

committee authorized to reform the seminary.<sup>24</sup> When Burujirdi went to Mashhad, Khomeini remained as his agent in Qum.<sup>25</sup> Khomeini had, however, originally probably wished that Burujirdi would take a more activist role against the state and at least attempt to supervise or positively control the government and assembly, and by implication reduce the influence of the West, especially the USA, in Iran and increase that of Islam. His main concern, however, was to ensure that no divisions developed amongst the 'ulama which might be used by the government to weaken Shi'ism, most particularly at a time when divisions were already being caused by communist activities in Qum. There were other practical considerations. Khomeini may have realized that any attempt to start a movement against the government without the participation of the *marja'* of the time was doomed to defeat. As long as Burujirdi lived, most of the students in Qum were his followers. The people could not be mobilized without his leadership.<sup>26</sup>

On the subject of reform of the seminary and its curriculum, Khomeini was also more radical than Burujirdi and most other clerics in Qum. He was the leader of the reform group, but impeded from persuading Burujirdi from implementing some of his policies by conservatives who increasingly gained influence over the *marja'*.<sup>27</sup> One dispute arose in 1949 when the shah requested Burujirdi's concurrence with changes in the constitution giving greater power to the monarchy. Burujirdi at first demurred, but finally agreed to the establishment of a committee to consider the matter, as long as there was no interference in the interests of Islam. Khomeini challenged him on the issue, demanding to know if he had thought out what effect the committee would be likely to have on religion, people and society. He was especially concerned with the proposed limitations to the rights of deputies. Burujirdi defended his policy on the grounds there would be no detriment to Islam.<sup>28</sup> In 1952-53 Khomeini and his colleagues devised a plan whereby the country's endowments would come under the supervision of the *marja'*.<sup>29</sup> The plan was to be put to the national assembly for approval after confirmation by Burujirdi. It was defeated by the 'ulama around Burujirdi, who turned him against Khomeini, accusing him of weakening the *marja'*.

A further matter of difference between Khomeini and Burujirdi came over the passing of the death sentence on the Fada'iyan in 1951. Burujirdi, who deeply disapproved of their violence, refused to intervene on their behalf.<sup>30</sup> Khomeini disliked their criticism of Burujirdi for not standing up more to the shah but made some attempt to prevent the

execution – to no avail. Khomeini tried to warn Burujirdi against his close associates, and those generally resistant to reform and, it may be inferred, revolutionary change, whom he called the hypocrites or falsely religious.<sup>31</sup> With considerable frustration he watched the growing power of the secular state. In the interests of unity Khomeini initially made sure that his differences with Burujirdi did not become public knowledge, and was meticulous in treating him with forbearance and respect, continuing at least for a while to frequent his house.<sup>32</sup> However, the disputes over reform and the role of the 'ulama in politics continued, to the point where Khomeini withdrew from contact with Burujirdi and occupied himself with his classes. By the later 1950s the influence of the conservative Hujjatiyya organization (Charitable Society of the Mahdi – the Proof of God, founded 1953 and chiefly anti-Baha'i), opposed to involvement in political rule, was also much felt in Qum.<sup>33</sup> Khomeini used regularly to visit the grave of Shaikh Fazlullah Nuri, where prayers would be followed by brief discussions. The growth in his interest in *fiqh* and *usul* as opposed to philosophy and *'irfan* accelerated at this time in response to opposition in Qum, and as an attempt to gain more support there. He decided to employ the tactic of conducting himself so as not to reveal his thoughts and intentions until conditions were more propitious. He pursued his goal for long years, building up a following of combative 'ulama, but in such a way as not to attract the attention of the regime.<sup>34</sup>

If Khomeini was radical for Qum, his students were more so, particularly Murtaza Mutahhari. In 1951–52, as part of Khomeini's reform policy, Mutahhari devised a programme of reform for the Faiziyya school which involved the centralization of funding and administration, and a new curriculum. Suggestions for financial reform included a single treasury for all contributions under the supervision of the leading 'ulama. Additionally, entitlement to salaries would be more strictly defined. With regard to the curriculum, some of the literature would change and study time would be regulated to ensure more profitable use of student time.<sup>35</sup> He presented the changes to Burujirdi, but conservative arguments prevailed and Burujirdi refused to see Mutahhari, who was so disheartened that he left Qum for Tehran, even though this meant exchanging a secure income for an insecure one, as he could no longer appeal to Burujirdi for financial assistance.<sup>36</sup> As a consequence unrest developed among the younger and more progressive scholars in Qum, who complained to Burujirdi about the influence of his entourage.

However, the tendency towards conservatism and orthodoxy prevailed throughout the 1950s. In 1959 'Allama Muhammad Husain Tabataba'i, one of the most renowned intellects of Qum, came under attack over his classes in government and philosophy, as Burujirdi complained that they were giving a bad name to a seminary which should be devoted to the teaching and publishing of *fiqh*, *usul* and traditions. Pleas were made to Khomeini for his support, but he replied that he could do nothing as he had no influence over Burujirdi.<sup>37</sup> In the event Tabataba'i was obliged to give up teaching for a while.

Overall, Burujirdi appears to have disappointed the radical reformists who had done much to bring him to Qum. He had the difficult task of maintaining unity among the clerics in the face of the state, an objective in which he largely succeeded. His gifts as a *marja'* helped to expand and consolidate the institutions of Qum while introducing much-needed modernization. Assisted by a favourable economy in the 1950s, he left the seminary in a much stronger position in terms of organization and finance than he found it. Indeed, in the impending battle with the state the clergy were better prepared and equipped in the 1960s and 1970s than they had been in the 1920s. In particular they had a better understanding of the contemporary world and its politics, and were thus able to cope with it.

### **The Quest for a New Marja'**

The death of Burujirdi in 1961 was seminal for the relationship of religion and state in Iran. On the one hand it provided the opportunity for the emergence of a new religious leadership. On the other hand it left the clergy at least temporarily at a loss and divided, and enabled the shah to introduce a new programme of reform and centralization, aimed at curtailing the influence of traditional interest groups.

As was customary at the death of a *marja'*, an opportunity presented itself for a new leader to emerge. In the habitual manner contenders were introduced to the faithful at large by their students, who publicized and distributed their work, gave interviews regarding their personal character and ability, and encouraged debate on them in the press, where their pictures were also displayed. To the bemusement of his students Khomeini did not encourage them to promote him as a *marja'* and only reluctantly permitted them to print one of his works.<sup>38</sup> He was in fact eventually to emerge as *marja'* not, as was most usual, for his reputation in knowledge of *fiqh* and *usul*, in any case considered to be weaker than that of many of his contemporaries, but for his political courage. He



owed his future prominence not only to his students in Qum but to his following among the deeply religious society of the bazaars of Iran and in particular to one event, the 15 Khurdad/5 June uprising of 1963, which was to provide his movement with a unifying identity and symbol, as well as clear objectives.

Khomeini's students held him in the highest respect, emphasizing his piety, his purity of character and his strength. He was without pomp, pretensions or self-promotion and always greeted people with respect. Outside of class, unlike most senior clerics, he did not walk round accompanied by an entourage of students. He was also decisive, fastidious, efficient and meticulous; he was so well-ordered that even marriage could not disrupt his routine. He had a strictly moral lifestyle, pursuing continuously the subject of ethics and its study, which he believed formed the greatest protection against oppression. His students derived strength from him, and absence from him produced a kind of loneliness. He emphatically hated gossip. His means were not so great, and he had to be very thrifty. Khomeini also avoided ostentatious piety, and did not for example start saying his *zīkr* (invocation) in the middle of a meeting in an obvious fashion as others did.<sup>39</sup>

Khomeini taught a variety of classes, *fiqh*, *usul*, philosophy and *'irfan*, and each class had in his mind a purpose from the point of view of service to Islam. The classes in *fiqh* and *usul* were larger and had a general intake. On the whole the students came to him as one of several teachers on a variety of subjects in the curriculum. Students chose their own teachers and there was no allocated place for lessons, which were held in mosques, houses or offices. Discussion was free.<sup>40</sup> Some students had a particular allegiance to him, others were more impersonal in their attitude. If a student attended a few times and then felt the subject not suitable, Khomeini did not oblige him to come back.<sup>41</sup> Classes on ethics varied in size. Those on philosophy were more select, with the students carefully chosen by Khomeini and sometimes having to win his approval through considerable endeavour. The classes on *'irfan* were exclusive to his most brilliant and familiar students, such as Mutahhari and Muntaziri, and numbered no more than three to five people attending in private at his house.<sup>42</sup>

Khomeini's income came from Burujirdi, as was customary, and was about 500 tomans a month in 1961.<sup>43</sup> In addition he had some income from his father's property, which was administered by his older brother, Ayatollah Sayyid Murtaza Pasandideh.<sup>44</sup> He also received income for his

students, which he spent on descendants of the Prophet and religious performances.<sup>45</sup>

Khomeini provided his students with a particular kind of intellectual training in which they were required to challenge, debate, think for themselves and discuss and air their views.<sup>46</sup> He encouraged comment on what he said, and original contributions. Different opinions were aired and then the group came to a conclusion; they were expected to think and ask questions. Knowledge was thus acquired through discussion and consultation. It may be said that this style of teaching was not unique in Qum, but it was especially marked in the case of Khomeini. On one occasion he commented:

This is a class and a discussion, not a sermon. Why are you silent? Mr Muhammad Taqi Shirazi's classes lasted two-and-a-half hours, but mine are only an hour long.<sup>47</sup>

In discussion, while encouraging the views of others Khomeini always stood up for his own, and no one could influence him to their way of thinking.<sup>48</sup>

According to some of Khomeini's students, his classes already had a radical, even revolutionary, component in the 1940s and 1950s, with some discussion of the duties of the *vali-i faqih*.<sup>49</sup> In his more private classes, he attacked the shah and gave it as his view that the 'ulama should not only undertake spiritual duties but also assume those of government as well. As his students grew closer to him, this view became clearer. His opinions were to some extent known in Qum and he therefore attracted the most radical and progressive students, and the most independent in attitude.<sup>50</sup> They met at his house for discussion, and perceived him as the person most likely to stand up to the shah, principally on the basis of his combative approach in *Kashf al-asrar*. It was rare for a religious figure of Khomeini's status to become involved in revolutionary politics.

On the death of Burujirdi, the leading figures in Qum, such as Gulpaigani, Shari'atmadari, Najafi Mar'ashi and Khomeini, were close in age and ability, which provided the government with a good opportunity to implement a divide-and-rule policy. In addition, the suppression of the communists, the Fada'iyān-i Islam and Kashani, and the National Front enabled the regime to turn its attention to the clergy. At the same time, although many clerics had been rendered cautious by Burujirdi's policies,

the decline of earlier radical groups led to the rise of new ones. Between 1953 and 1961, in particular, new ideas appeared in the seminaries, enshrined in publications such as the *Maktab-i Islam*, founded with a merchant's donation, and the *Maktab-i Tashaiyul*, in which Taliqani, Beheshti, Bahonar, Mutaahhari and Bazargan were involved and which addressed matters of social, theoretical and ideological importance.<sup>51</sup> One aim of the latter journal was to reach more people and establish a network linking them. Through the journal the ideas of Islam were spread from one end of the country to another, creating a politico-cultural organization which could be brought into action when needed. A list of representatives and their funds was held in Qum. A focal issue in Islamic politics at this time was Palestine, and it is claimed that Khomeini was the first person in the Muslim world to issue a fatwa requiring help for Palestine. During this period the work of Muhammad Husain Tabataba'i in writing on political and social matters in Islam, and on *vilayat* (guardianship) and *imamat* (leadership), also played an important part in preparing the Iranian people for the concept of an Islamic state.<sup>52</sup>

One means by which the younger 'ulama received training for their future role in mobilizing the people was in their duty of going out to the villages and expounding on religious and ethical matters from the pulpit.<sup>53</sup> They also propagated Islamic culture (*farhang*) and endeavoured to give the people an education in it. These visits to the villages provided an opportunity to meet future collaborators. Students who made their living from preaching were also able to bring back religious donations from their journeys to the provinces for their *marja*.<sup>54</sup> Sermons in the small towns and villages were not only an opportunity for people to raise points of concern, but also provided a chance for the people to express their views to the 'ulama, who then took them back to Qum for discussion. In this way they were up to date with the latest popular preoccupations.

Khomeini's students were also an important link between him and the bazaar, (as will be discussed further below). Principal among them was Beheshti, who guided the artisans and small shopkeepers of Tehran, enjoining them to be influenced neither by East nor by West but to stay loyal to Islam and the imam. Murtaza Mutaahhari, 'Ali Akbar Rafsanjani and Muhammad Javad Bahonar were active in building up the cell and committee system of the bazaar organizations, and in raising and disbursing funds.<sup>55</sup> All these activities had the support of Khomeini, who realized that a battle with the state was impending.

## Conflicts Between Clergy and State

With the death of Burujirdi, the shah made his first move against the religious establishment by trying unsuccessfully to have one of the 'ulama of Najaf chosen as *marja*'.<sup>56</sup> He was anxious to prevent all power being concentrated in a single *marja* in Iran again. There were around nine or ten claimants to the title, and the court hoped leadership would be scattered among the religious centres. In their turn the clergy struggled to maintain a united face against the court and not to be manipulated.<sup>57</sup>

Realizing that the Fada'iyān-i Islam had failed partly for lack of support in the seminary, Khomeini made sure to draw other *marja*'s into the struggle as well as the students. The real battle between the state and religious society, however, was joined over the local councils law. The law provided for the election of representatives on local councils throughout the country. The clerics objected to it for three reasons: adherence to Islam was not required as a necessary qualification for either voters or candidates; councillors elected were to take their oath of office not on the Qur'an but on their 'holy book', a wording which allowed non-Muslim religious denominations to be sworn in; and women had permission to vote. The electoral system for non-Muslims was contrary to the system in the assembly, where members of the recognized minority faiths – Christians, Jews and Zoroastrians – voted separately as distinct groups and elected their own representatives. The local council law itself was not individually of great significance, but the 'ulama considered the measures with regard to Islam and the Qur'an as an attempt to weaken and marginalize the religion. They also thought of it as a means of opening the way for Baha'is, apostates in their eyes, to come to office. Most significant was the growth in power of the secular centralized state, and the shah's increasingly authoritarian style of rule, considered to protect not only the Pahlavi dynasty but also the interests of America.

The question of votes for women, and Khomeini's strong opposition to it, has been subject to different interpretations. Khomeini designated it as contrary to the shari'a and felt very strongly that women should remain secluded:

You have brought women into offices. See that every office they enter is paralysed... Do not send them to the provinces... If women come into any organization everything will be turned upside down. Do you want women to secure your independence?<sup>58</sup>

Again:

The court of the oppressor [illegitimate ruler] wants to give equal rights to women and men, and trample on the precepts of the Qur'an and the shari'a, and to take 18-year-old girls into compulsory military service.<sup>59</sup>

He also argued that to give equality to women in inheritance and divorce was contrary to the precepts of Islam, which had taken particular measures to ensure that women had social and intellectual respect and so prevent the kind of familiarity which was contrary to their modesty and virtue.<sup>60</sup> Khomeini later constantly supported the rights of women to participate in politics in the period leading up to the revolution, so he changed his position on this matter. It has been argued that in 1962 Khomeini and the 'ulama considered the granting of women's rights to be nothing more than propaganda for the regime, and that the government passed the law so that its dictatorship would look like democracy.<sup>61</sup> Certainly Khomeini was under pressure from his deeply conservative bazaar following to resist giving the vote to women.<sup>62</sup> Khomeini's own wife, it may be noted, had received a level of education which was unusual for her time, but could not continue beyond the eighth grade because of the lack of opportunity to progress in all-female institutions. He therefore taught her himself for a total of eight years after their marriage.<sup>63</sup> He based his argument in the speeches quoted above on the perception of Islamic law that women do not have the intellectual maturity of men. Further, according to Islamic notions of decorum, freedom for women is perceived as encouraging sexual openness that will undermine Islamic order. In sum, in one context the opposition to votes for women may be seen as part of a perceived need to resist an attack on Islam and a whole configuration of un-Islamic practice that was but another manifestation of secularization; in another context Khomeini may be seen as reflecting the view of the deeply traditional society of which he formed a part. In 1963 he depended solely on this society for his uprising. One of the problems he was to confront after its suppression was the need in future to draw in other more progressive groups. To attract their support, his views on certain issues would have to be modified, and that included his views on the rights of women.

Along with other clergy and encouraged by popular agitation, Khomeini protested over the local councils law to the shah and the Minister of Court, Amir Asadullah 'Alam, though being careful not to

implicate the shah directly. He argued that 'Alam was violating the constitution and the shari'a, and required that he correct the disputed section of the law. He used the people's faith to mobilize them: 'You cannot be broken as long as your soul is not broken.'<sup>64</sup> He expressed openly his view that the 'ulama had a responsibility to guide the people.<sup>65</sup> From the beginning he also acted more independently and assertively than the other 'ulama, pursuing the matter until 1 December 1962 when 'Alam called a press conference and announced that the local council law had been suspended.<sup>66</sup> After the law was withdrawn, Khomeini thanked the people and announced that 'In this Islamic movement [*nahzat-i islami*] you may hold your head up high in the presence of God',<sup>67</sup> providing a name for his organization, which became known as the Nahzat.

Khomeini realized that the government had not given up on its policies of reform and centralization, and was thus prepared when land reform was put to a referendum in January 1963. The upper limit of land ownership was much reduced and the law was also extended to religious and other endowed properties. On 26 January the shah submitted the six principles of his White Revolution to a referendum. There was some landlord influence exerted in Qum, but the 'ulama were largely silent on the subject, possibly because it was popular in the villages.<sup>68</sup> However, Khomeini's support was among the urban lower middle class and poor, who did not oppose land reform as such. Khomeini attacked the whole programme of the White Revolution and forbade his followers to participate in the referendum to approve it, designating the terms on which it was conducted as illegal. Some of the economic preoccupations of his following are revealed in his speeches. 'Why do they prepare cooperatives which take money away from the farmers? The market in Iran will be destroyed and the bazaar and the cultivators lose out.'<sup>69</sup> In other words, a new system of land tenure and cultivation might bring a new distribution network.

Khomeini also attacked the deprivation and neglect of the poor and asserted that the government acted only in the interests of foreign powers, principally the USA and Israel, a theme he was to maintain continually. In Qum, anti-government sentiment was manifested in protest and prayer, which instigated a government response in the form of a commando attack on the Faiziyya school, where Khomeini taught, on 22 March 1963. One student was killed and many others injured. Khomeini moved instantly to take the advantage and discredit the government as much as possible, designating it to be a 'usurper' and *ipso*

*facto* illegitimate. He played skilfully on the fact that the attackers had been shouting pro-shah slogans. 'Love of the shah means rapine, violation of the rights of Muslims, and the commandments of Islam', he said.<sup>70</sup> He also now openly blamed the shah for the attack, and further endeavoured to win over the army to his cause. He moved to make immediate reparations to the Faiziyya school by opening a bank account in Qum for the proceeds of the collections from 'Ashura.<sup>71</sup>

Soon came Muharram, the month of mourning, when religious fervour is greatest over the passion and martyrdom of the Imam Husain. The ninth and tenth days of the month, Tasu'a and 'Ashura, mark the prelude to the tragedy and the death of the Imam at Karbala in an attempt to overthrow the usurper, Yazid, and restore just government. The religious ceremonies and dramatic performances (*rauza khwan* and *taziyya*), usually attended by large crowds, are a perennial re-enactment of courage, martyrdom and resistance to an unjust state. From the point of view of mobilization of opposition to the state, this period had always been recognized as potentially inflammatory because popular passions run high. Before 'Ashura intense pressure was brought on the quarter leaders of Tehran by both the shah and the 'ulama to take their part.<sup>72</sup> In the event the principal such quarter leader, Hajji Riza'i Taiyib, previously an ally of the regime, joined the 'Ashura parade with a picture of Khomeini on his standard. He was later on taken prisoner as an example to other quarter leaders, and, in an indirect challenge to the 'ulama, tortured to make him confess to taking money from Khomeini, to which he would not admit. He was then executed. Ni'matullah Nasiri, the head of SAVAK, was keen to reduce the influence such figures traditionally exerted over the urban population as part of the extension of state control.

Following prior publicity, Khomeini delivered a sermon on 'Ashura, 3 June, in which he expressed his indignation at the regime's designation of the 'ulama as reactionary, and strongly attacked the regime, the USA and Israel. On 5 June (15 Khurdad in the Iranian calendar) Khomeini was arrested. Agitation began to appear in Tehran and Qum, and Khomeini was taken to prison in Tehran. Violent demonstrations erupted in Tehran, followed by Qum, Shiraz, Isfahan and Mashhad, and martial law had to be imposed. Hundreds of people were killed in the events, which gave the movement its martyrs and its popular legitimacy, as well as justification for its objectives of the overthrow of the regime. The uprising crystallized existing anti-regime feeling and revolutionary tendencies, and the legitimacy of the Pahlavis was correspondingly undermined.

Senior members of the 'ulama, including Shari'atmadari and Hadi Milani, made representations on behalf of Khomeini, and the government relinquished their intention to try him. Khomeini's students also worked tirelessly for his release, writing and distributing a declaration of protest. In April 1964 Khomeini was finally released and allowed to return to Qum after ten months' incarceration. Despite reports that he had promised to be conciliatory, Khomeini maintained his criticism of the government, which he designated as bullying and anti-Islamic. He also demanded government according to Islamic principles.

Battle was soon rejoined over the status of the forces law, which extended diplomatic immunity to the personnel of US military advisory missions and their families. Similar to the old capitulations of the Qajar period, with which it was identified by the opposition, the law placed Americans resident in Iran outside Iranian law and implied a humiliating loss of sovereignty. In October 1964 the assembly approved a \$200 million loan from the USA for arms purchases immediately after agreeing to the status of the forces law, and the two measures were believed to be connected. Khomeini made an impassioned speech against the law, saying that it reduced Iran to little more than a colony, and lamenting that such a measure could not be passed in a government influenced by the 'ulama. Khomeini's views were taped and distributed in leaflets. Within days he was arrested and exiled to Turkey, residing first in Ankara and then in Bursa. A year later, in October 1965, he was permitted to change his place of banishment to Najaf, where he remained until 1978.

## The Association of United Societies

Khomeini owed much of the success of his revolutionary movement to the ceaseless endeavours of its foot-soldiers and most loyal supporters, the bazaar networks of small shopkeepers and artisans. Theirs was a more orthodox world than the classes in *'irfan* in Qum, and it centred around religious gatherings. The identity of this section of society had for centuries been associated with Shi'i Islam, and its values were assiduously passed from generation to generation. In this closed world foreign influence was rigorously excluded and there was no interest in the principles of democracy.<sup>73</sup> The abiding ideal was that of justice, particularly in the struggle against a state which, if not necessarily perceived as unjust, was certainly seen as liable to be so. The paragon of the believers was the Imam Husain, whose passion and martyrdom exemplified resistance to tyranny and self-sacrifice in the cause of Islam and of justice. The other heroes of



this community were the just ruler, Anushirvan, and the legendary warriors of Firdausi's eleventh-century poetic epic, the *Shahnama*, such as Jamshid and Rustam, depicted in bristly combat in the pictures which adorned their coffee-houses. Iran as a just state under a brave and just leader represented yet another utopia in its cultural tradition.

There were many societies in Tehran at this time, each centred in a particular quarter. Some had formed in the days of Reza Shah to continue mourning ceremonies and demonstrate to the Pahlavi regime that the religion of Husain was stronger than ever. They tried as far as possible not to wear dress regarded as unsuitable in Islamic terms, and, since this created problems for their children in the state school system, they established parallel Islamic schools.<sup>74</sup> Some of these groups were purely religious, being self-sufficient and not involved in politics;<sup>75</sup> one society was associated with a non-profit-making organization engaged in social work.<sup>76</sup> Another had evolved from an Islamic society in Isfahan founded in response to the spread of communist influence.<sup>77</sup> This organization had already been in existence for 27 years when Beheshti came from Qum to give guidance on religious matters. One of their main objections to the Pahlavi state was its tendency towards over-punishment and brutality. A further group, that of Masjid-i Shaikh 'Ali, founded in about 1947-48, was active in the service of Islam and held classes in Arabic, piety and Islamic precepts. It emphasized cooperation on common problems and had an elite group known for its piety and morality.<sup>78</sup> It was their duty to bring other members to the same standard, using the principle of enjoining good and forbidding evil. The 'ulama were invited to lead the movement to ensure that it did not go astray. Many society members had already supported the Fada'iyān-i Islam and their programme of martyrdom on the road to attaining Islamic government.<sup>79</sup> At a time when government pressure was really on the communists, the societies had a better chance of gaining ground.

After the crushing of the Fada'iyān-i Islam came a period of disillusionment with political activism and political parties, but gradually new groups began to emerge, especially those affiliated to Bazargan and Taliqani.<sup>80</sup> Some of these organizations had communist affiliations or combined Islamic and Marxist ideology, such as the Hizb-i Millal-i Islami.<sup>81</sup> This group operated as an independent secret organization before Khomeini's movement appeared. Members were mostly middle class, teachers and students, and were thus from a different social group

to Khomeini's following. Their principal aim was justice in both socialist and Islamic terms. The organization was short-lived, as it was discovered by SAVAK and its members arrested.

Khomeini had two qualities which his bazaar following especially valued – the first was courage and the second was piety. After the death of Burujirdi his followers (*muqallids*) set about finding a new *marja'* by making enquiries in both Tehran and Qum. There were feelings of frustration that the clergy under Burujirdi had enjoined non-involvement in politics. Nevertheless, they feared that with the passing of Burujirdi there would be no one capable of withstanding the secular state and protecting the religion. Khomeini at this time was still a virtually unknown *ustad* or teacher at the seminary. His reluctance to allow his students to press his case as a contender for the position of *marja'* meant that he remained little known.

One of Khomeini's leading supporters in the bazaar at the time recounts how after the death of Burujirdi he went to Qum to find a *marja'*, seeking one who was knowledgeable, just and pious; piety was of particular value in an age perceived as corrupt.<sup>82</sup> However much he and his companions investigated the matter it emerged that Khomeini came closest to the ideal. One group hired a bus, went to Qum and visited the houses of all the *marja's* before they decided on Khomeini.<sup>83</sup> Another follower heard of Khomeini by word of mouth from the person who distributed his leaflets in the bazaar. Still others were recruited by his students. Khomeini had particularly close connections with the Tehranis,<sup>84</sup> although some groups had links with Shari'atmadari.<sup>85</sup>

Khomeini's piety was well known. He was devout and ascetic, his life-style imbued with self-discipline, and his conduct immaculate at all times. He was also perceived as a man of the people living a humble life and disregarding material comforts.<sup>86</sup> These qualities were important for both gaining and mobilizing support amongst the devout poor. His courage, however, did not become generally known in the bazaar until he withstood the state over the local councils law, perceived there as anti-Islamic.

Khomeini kept the profile of his bazaar following low, by avoiding conspicuous titles such as *sazman* (organization) and encouraging them to keep their humble names. In this way they would not attract outside influence and interference, particularly from those of leftist tendencies, and they would protect themselves from the vigilance of SAVAK. Khomeini's followers had a favourable view of Bazargan's Freedom Movement as it had an Islamic ideology, and there was a conscious effort

for Islamist movements to unite against the regime.<sup>87</sup> Neither the Freedom Movement nor Khomeini wished for contact with the National Front, really seeking a leader who was purely Islamic. In its religious and cultural purism the Nahzat was different to all other organizations.

It was in 1962–63, as it became clear that a major battle was impending with the state, that Khomeini and his students came to realize the need to establish a network of support in Tehran, especially in the printing and distribution of leaflets, which was not possible in Qum. Khomeini therefore instigated the collaboration of three bazaar societies (*hayatha*) in a coalition called the Association of United Societies (*Hayatha-yi Mu'talifa*).<sup>88</sup> He invited a group of artisans and merchants to Qum to take part in a class of exegesis (*tafsir*) on the Qur'an. Khomeini saw people in groups of 20; the purpose was to exchange views and information which could then be passed to other groups.<sup>89</sup> One of the questions addressed, for example, was a lapse in the use of the concept of enjoining good and forbidding evil. Khomeini's discourse created a deep impression, and he inspired a devotion so great that his followers were willing to give their lives. On another occasion Khomeini told his followers that they must change their way of thinking; action they had considered in the past to be in the interest of Islam was no longer sufficient. One of his followers commented that he realized that this was completely new and revolutionary.<sup>90</sup>

The new association decided to set up a special fund which would enable them to print and distribute any announcement they received from Khomeini as soon as it reached them. Separate groups of activists formed within the existing associations, and the movement gathered pace with letters being sent out to invite people to join.<sup>91</sup> There was a telephone chain of communication when the bazaar was to protest by complete closure.<sup>92</sup> The organization developed with a clear concept of Khomeini as a leader, but otherwise no one person was to dominate. It was constructed in cells which were linked but did not know each other. Members had to be dedicated but free of other ideological influences, so there was unity of ideology and vision. The aim was slowly to build up ideological unity from which strategic and tactical coordination would emerge.<sup>93</sup> There were three spheres of operation, the mosque, work and the family. A funding system developed to support the families of those in prison, and money was sent to designated persons for distribution to others.

The societies used the traditional mosque network to organize meetings and demonstrations. Outwardly religious gatherings were used to

encourage people to withstand the regime, even to the point of martyrdom. The revolutionary potential of these meetings was not lost on SAVAK, who had informers present on most occasions, but they had difficulty suppressing them because of their ostensibly religious nature and the danger of the regime being accused of attacking Islam, thus providing useful mobilizing material for the shah's opponents. The struggle to overthrow the shah was really externalized at the time of the referendum. The Association of United Societies organized the demonstrations over the referendum in 1963, the 'Ashura processions, the mourning ceremonies over the events at Faiziyya school, the meetings to celebrate Khomeini's release from prison, and the demonstrations in support of the assassination of Mansur. Their goals included the enforcement of the shari'a, the introduction of Islamic government, and an end to foreign interference, oppression and corruption. Dedication to Islam included dedication to Islamic culture, which infused all actions and organization. Islamic purism and freedom from both East and West were emphasized, and membership of any non-Islamic body was prohibited.

After Khomeini's exile the organization was rationalized and tightened in an extensive network. There was a council of four 'ulama and a central committee of 12.<sup>94</sup> Under the central committee each society had a committee responsible for its own affairs. Links with other towns were maintained through personal contacts, and each member of the committee was responsible for a town or area. Membership was about 5000 countrywide, with about 3000 in Tehran.<sup>95</sup>

Classes and guidance were given by Beheshti in particular, who taught members to take control of their own destiny and not to be fatalistic – this went against the grain with many and was considered erroneous by some.<sup>96</sup> The programme was one of activism, to incite a people who were accustomed to remaining passive and to give hope to the hopeless. The classes also considered issues in the newspapers and discussed plans for action. In theoretical terms the movement was also different to all others, such as those of Marxist inclination, in being dependent on the imam (Khomeini) as leader. His qualifications for leadership were strictly orthodox in that he was *na'ib-i imam* (the deputy of the 12th Imam), *marja'-i taqlid* (the source of emulation for his knowledge of the religious law), and *vali-yi faqih* (the guardian jurist). Obedience to him was a shari'a duty, and it was heresy (*shirk* - polytheism) to oppose him.

Decisions were ultimately made by Khomeini, though sometimes by other 'ulama if time was short, and he always asked for the views of

others, including members of the Association of United Societies, who were encouraged to give their opinions.<sup>97</sup> Issues of wider relevance were passed from one group to another. Financially the members of each group contributed within their means. When the cost of printing leaflets went up, Khomeini gave permission for a portion of the canonical taxes to be used. Funds were allocated to both central and local committees for disbursement so that the organization was flexible, and both centralized and decentralized.<sup>98</sup> Centralization was useful for unity of purpose, but the dispersal of finances also made it more difficult for the security forces to monitor the movement. Funding also came from the traditional bazaar money-lenders.<sup>99</sup>

After the assassination of Mansur the government cracked down on the armed struggle, and the original Association of United Societies was broken. A residue survived, and while Khomeini was in exile he guided them through Anvari and Mutahhari.<sup>100</sup> The bazaar societies remained very important to Khomeini, even more so than the mosques, particularly from the viewpoint of the distribution of propaganda and information leaflets, but also in providing institutional links to the migrant poor, who looked for guidance to the clergy.

### **Organization and Khomeini's Students after his Exile**

The battle between religion and state greatly intensified from 1963–64, and for the first time an armed element appeared which has been the subject of some controversy. One group engaged in armed struggle was the 200-strong Hizb-i Millal-i Islami, who were already in existence before 15 Khurdad.<sup>101</sup> Ideas on organization came from writers on guerrilla warfare, and from the model of guerrilla leaders such as Che Guevara.<sup>102</sup> Methods of organization, for example in linked cells of ten, derive from similar sources. The Association of United Societies, the Hayatha-yi Mu'talifa, formed a military wing connected to some of the 'ulama, with arms being smuggled in from abroad and sometimes obtained clandestinely from government officials.<sup>103</sup>

A debate went on in Khomeini's movement about the armed struggle. Khomeini was reportedly much opposed to it and regarded it as ineffective and poor strategy. He had reservations about the Marxist-inclined ideology of some of the groups involved. However, in the 1960s and early 1970s those engaged in it found immense prestige, and it was seen by the young as an example of affirmative action. In this, as in much else, the Nahzat was in competition with the Marxists and could not afford to be

seen as passive and conciliatory. It also provided an outlet for the perceived need to retaliate against the oppression of the regime and for the exile of Khomeini. Like all guerrilla warfare it was the war of the weak, but nevertheless it provided a means of disrupting US policy. Some of the clerics in Khomeini's movement thus approved the armed struggle to a limited extent. So it came about that groups of the bazaar societies were armed and assassinated the prime minister, Mansur, in January 1965.<sup>104</sup> The assassins were seized and much damage was done to the Association of United Societies. As a result the interest in armed struggle subsided, as one small action was seen to bring much damage to the movement and incite the regime to be more brutal to all forces in the struggle.

Khomeini did not openly condemn the armed struggle: in the 1960s such condemnation would have undermined the popularity of his movement, as armed struggle had become virtually sanctified and anyone who opposed it would have risked loss of support.<sup>105</sup> However, from the mid-1970s the Nahzat firmly dissociated itself from the armed struggle and endeavoured to segregate its members from the Marxist organizations and the Mujahidin. The leaders of the Nahzat focused on political and social methods of building up the movement and challenging the regime. In prison they gave classes in exegesis and knowledge of the divine, and struggled to develop an Islamic world view and philosophy.<sup>106</sup> Prison proved a fruitful experience, as it was an opportunity for the Islamists to exchange ideas with the communists, who formed the majority of the prisoners and were indeed the ones who received the worst treatment.<sup>107</sup> Relations with Bazargan and Talyani's Liberation Movement of Iran were also good, and the Nahzat used these to extend their influence among educated religious people, such as the Islamic Society for Engineers – an element in the overall strategy of widening and developing the struggle.<sup>108</sup>

With Khomeini in exile his students took up leadership of his movement in Iran, occasionally referring to him but often acting on their own initiative.<sup>109</sup> An organization was established with 11 people at the centre, including 'Ali Khamene'i, Husain 'Ali Muntaziri, 'Ali Akbar Rafsanjani and 'Ali Mishkini.<sup>110</sup> They had their own secret publication entitled *Mission and Retribution*, the former term being more political and combative and the latter more ideological. The paper gave the views of the 'ulama and the news of the struggle. Safety precautions were also tightened, with everyone being given a code name and the poly-copy machine being moved regularly.<sup>111</sup> Another feature of the organization

was the use of all the technological facilities available at that time, particularly tapes.

The need was perceived for a cultural and educational programme to provide sufficient challenge to the state. The struggle spread to the state schools. A group of carpet merchants of the bazaar provided the funds for an Islamic Cultural Institute, and also for the establishment of the Rifah School for Girls to enable families which could not afford to educate their daughters to do so.<sup>112</sup> At the same time the Rifah Foundation was a good cover for helping those who had got into financial difficulties during the struggle.

The clerics engaged in the struggle also gave cohesion to their movement by the establishment of a Combative Clerics Organization, which held weekly meetings to address current issues.<sup>113</sup> The fortunes of the movement varied and it appears to have been at a low ebb in the late 1960s and early 1970s, when the economic situation was relatively prosperous and the standard of living rising.<sup>114</sup> For a while it was a loose group of associations with particular links to Khomeini, but in the later 1970s it developed connections with the provinces through a nationwide organization which, by 1978, came to involve some 30,000 ulama and students through mosques and universities.<sup>115</sup> It was a means of providing more uniform guidance at religious gatherings, and brought about united action at the time of the death of Ayatollah Hakim in Iraq to strengthen the position of Khomeini as *marja'* against the more conservative 'ulama who opposed him. In the 1970s scholars in the seminary in Qum, under the leadership of Muntaziri, worked out details of Islamic government.

Khomeini's students in Najaf were also active in maintaining contact with the movement in Iran and distributing propaganda for it in other countries. Their organization became fully fledged with the establishment of the Combative Clerics Outside the Country Group in 1972, which set out a full programme for the movement.<sup>116</sup> The transcripts of lectures were corrected by Khomeini and disseminated both on tape and in print. They were dispatched to Islamic societies in the USA, Europe, India and Pakistan as well as in Iran. The most important points from the speeches and announcements of Khomeini were arranged in a manner common to political treatises as a work entitled *Manshur-i Nahzat-i Islami (Pronouncements of the Islamic Movement)*.<sup>117</sup>

The publication gave the principles and goals of the Islamic struggle, and included such topics as opposition to the regime, with an analysis of

the latter's nature and goals, anti-imperialism, views on Zionism, the economic ideas of the movement, internal policy, foreign policy, foreign affairs, Islamic unity and leadership. In 1970 a text based on Khomeini's lectures on the government of the jurist was compiled in Beirut, using money sent from Najaf, and was then secretly sent to Iran.<sup>118</sup> Khomeini was very anxious that his ideas should reach the young, still perceived as being very much in danger from Marxist influence.<sup>119</sup> An Arabic version was published in Beirut and distributed to the Arabic-speaking countries.

Mostly the propaganda material and Khomeini's lectures were given to travellers to take in their suitcases. As this was risky and people were frequently caught, the tactic was changed to sending one copy in, for example, a traveller's shoe.<sup>120</sup> In the last years of the struggle the authorities' control weakened and announcements were read over the telephone to contacts in Iran. The regime experienced considerable loss of face at this stage, as Khomeini would speak in Najaf at nine in the morning and by the evening the substance of his talk had spread through the mosque and university networks across the country. Travellers to Lebanon, Kuwait and Syria, particularly those going on the *haj*, were recruited to disseminate material.

When Khomeini began to preach the message of the government of the jurist, the 'ulama of Najaf were very much against it, though the number of his students doubled.<sup>121</sup> Some 'ulama had connections with the court, and were moreover anxious about the weakening of relations with the shah's regime when the Shi'a were under pressure from the secular Ba'thists in Iraq. In the 1970s Khomeini attacked the monarchical regime in Saudi Arabia and leaflets giving his views were distributed there. Leaflets were taken by both men and women in, for example, specially adapted water containers for distribution among the pilgrims.<sup>122</sup> By 1975, although it had become difficult for the Iraqi Shi'a to see Khomeini, Syrians, Lebanese and Afghans had close relations with him. After the death of Ayatollah Hakim many of the Shi'a in other Islamic countries followed Khomeini. Since Khomeini wanted Islamic unity, he also encouraged Sunni followers. One of the reasons he stood up for the Palestinians was to win more support in the Sunni world, and he issued a fatwa saying the Palestinians could use their canonical taxes in Palestine to fight Israel.

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Modern organization and acute awareness of its significance assisted the rise to power of Khomeini and his movement. The benefits of centralization were recognized particularly in the deliberate creation for the first time of a single leader of all the Shi'a. The effect, helped by post-war prosperity, was to revive Qum, and the clergy became much better equipped to confront both the modern state and new ideologies.

Divisions also emerged about how the religious organization was to confront the state. Whilst Burujirdi's policy was essentially quietist, Khomeini represented a much more activist, radical, trend within Qum. Khomeini chose not to oppose Burujirdi openly for fear that the state would use divisions among the 'ulama to undermine Islam, but adopted a policy of waiting, also pursued by the shah, until Burujirdi died.

Three kinds of popular networks assisted the rise of the 'ulama. The first was traditional, the networks surrounding religious institutions. As a group, the artisans and small shopkeepers were important supporters of Khomeini, especially as by the 1970s they and their employees constituted more than a quarter of the urban workforce. The merchants in the traditional sector in occupations such as money-lending and carpet-dealing were also among Khomeini's most significant supporters. The second type of organization was more modern, and centred on the educational and welfare societies in the model of those started by Hasan al-Banna and the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt. Such groups had experience of organization in membership and financial arrangements, in rapid dissemination of ideas in small towns and villages, and in the provision of classes and religious guidance, moral development and sacrifice. The third type of organization, the networks created in the bazaars throughout Iran, was influenced ultimately by Marxist methods. It was coherent and detailed, systematic and efficient.

The shah's policies on agriculture and industry brought a rise in the migration of poorer people to the cities. With little in the way of state support they came to depend on the Islamic organizations, especially in the conditions of economic difficulty of the later 1970s. No other opposition organization was as powerful as Khomeini's because none was so close to the poorer people, their problems, beliefs and values. In 1963 the movement acquired its Long March in the 15 Khurdad uprising, which gave it symbols, heroes and martyrs, as well as a cohesion and identity which had not previously existed.

The ideology that developed at this stage, which will be studied in a later chapter, called for the defence of Islam and freedom from control

by the secular state. Its ideal was an Islamic state. In character its was Shi'i and Iranian, priding itself on being pure in culture and religion, free from outside influence from either East or West. The Nahzat, therefore, was both traditional and modern; contact with the people through religion was important, but modern organizational methods gave it the power to mobilize for resistance to the state.

## Chapter IV: Mutahhari – Towards an Islamic Ideology and the Battle for Control of Political Islam

During Khomeini's long exile in Turkey and Najaf from 1964 to 1978, the battle with the laity for control of political Islam was largely fought by perhaps his most brilliant student, Murtaza Mutahhari. By 'political Islam' is meant Islam not as a religion but as a kind of political ideology used as a means to interpret, mobilize and organize society. It was also principally Mutahhari who devised an Islamic alternative to Marxism and socialist Islam that could win the hearts and minds of the young. Mutahhari's targeted audience were the young religious middle class, many of them rising through the expanding education system from devout urban lower-middle-class families and small rural landholders. Mutahhari was thus Khomeini's emissary in quite a different section of society to the bazaar networks referred to in the previous chapter, although he was active in that milieu as well.

Mutahhari was an outstanding political theorist, reformer and radical activist in his own right. Readers wishing to deepen their knowledge of his thought are referred, for example, to Algar's fine exposition of his world view,<sup>1</sup> Rahnema and Nomani's incisive and more secular approach,<sup>2</sup> Dabashi's lucid coverage of his overall vision<sup>3</sup> and Taqizadih-Davari's valuable and comprehensive study of his social and political thought.<sup>4</sup> The present work being concerned with the movement that brought Khomeini to power, Mutahhari is here considered as one of the leaders of that movement up to 1978, and his ideas are perceived very much as shaped by the historical context.

## Mutahhari's Life and Background

Mutahhari was born in 1920 in Fariman near Mashhad, his father being a well-known religious scholar devoted to the study of Mulla Sadra.<sup>5</sup> In 1937 he went to study in Qum, where he remained until 1952. He was inspired by Khomeini's lectures on ethics, to which he went twice weekly. He studied the rational sciences under Burujirdi from 1944 to 1952, and from 1950 to 1953 he attended 'Allama Sayyid Muhammad Husain Tabataba'i's classes on Avicenna and materialist philosophy, later published as *The Principles of Philosophy and the Realistic Method*, which Mutahhari afterwards edited with a commentary.<sup>6</sup> In 1946 Khomeini initiated a series of classes on *'irfan*, particularly on the *Asfar-i arba'a* of Mulla Sadra and the *Sharh-i manzuma* of Sabzavari, which were attended by a small group of students, including Mutahhari and Muntaziri. These classes lasted until 1951, and established a close link between Mutahhari and Khomeini; indeed, Mutahhari is considered to have had the closest affinity to Khomeini of all his students.<sup>7</sup> They both had a faith in traditional scholarship, a comprehensive vision of Islam as a total system of life and belief, a world view profoundly influenced by philosophical and mystical traditions in Islam, and a strongly radical streak which included absolute belief in political and social change. A major difference was that while Khomeini was practical and pragmatic in adapting his views to the political context, in terms of political thought he remained more conservative; Mutahhari was open to leftist ideas and became drawn to the study of material philosophy from 1946 when he started to read the Tudeh literature. He made an effort to understand modern philosophical terminology, and his understanding of Marxism, together with his capacity for logic, was to enable him to demonstrate the contradictory nature of some Marxist principles.

At about this time Mutahhari also became involved with the Fada'iyān-i Islam, whose centre was the Madrasa-yi Faiziyya in Qum, where he taught. Members of the group sometimes spoke there, criticizing the shah and the government, and they frequented his house. Although he was not in favour of armed struggle, Mutahhari was supportive of the Fada'iyān's political views.<sup>8</sup> A cause of his growing rift with Burujirdi was the latter's debarment of the Fada'iyān from the Faiziyya and his disapproval of their programme.

In 1952, having failed to introduce a radical reform programme in Qum, Mutahhari became disheartened with the conservatism and introspection there and went to Tehran. After a period of financial struggle,

with some support from the factory-owner, Hajj Muhammad Hasan Kushanpur, he found employment in 1954 teaching philosophy in the faculty of theology in Tehran University, where his lectures proved popular and many leading figures in the Islamic Republic, including Beheshti and Bahonar, were his students. He was also active in the Islamic associations among the educated middle class, which had grown up largely through the initiatives of Bazargan and Taliqani. A number of his subsequent books are revised transcripts of his lectures at this time. They were the beginning of a long career of writing on religious issues, especially those of political and social relevance, at an ideological and intellectual level rarely equalled by other clerics.

In 1960 he assumed leadership of the principal association of the reformist 'ulama of Tehran, the Anjuman-i Mahana-yi Dini, a religious society situated near Jaleh Square which organized monthly lectures attended by hundreds of people of different backgrounds.<sup>9</sup> The society was supported financially by wealthy bazaaris, especially Muhammad Humayun and Ja'far Kharrazi,<sup>10</sup> and the lectures attempted to demonstrate the relevance of Islam to contemporary issues and encourage reformist thinking amongst the 'ulama; they were later published in book form.<sup>11</sup> The association had branches in major towns and brought Mutahhari to the attention of a countrywide readership and audience. The journal *Guftar-i mah* (*Monthly Discourse*) was the major discussion forum for this group; it was, however, banned after the 1963 uprising. Mutahhari also gave lectures at the Islamic professional associations, for example of doctors and engineers. At the time of the uprising Mutahhari was incarcerated for 43 days for his support of Khomeini; he became a member of the Association of Combative Clergy, formed in prison and including Rafsanjani, Mahdavi Kani and Mahallati, which organized and coordinated the activities of the Nahzat.<sup>12</sup>

Following Khomeini's exile in 1964, Mutahhari's presence within Iran became even more significant from the point of view of internal leadership, and it was important that he remained there. Up to the revolution, Mutahhari was continually in touch with Khomeini and became his sole designated representative in Iran for the collection and disbursement of religious dues paid to Khomeini as *marja*.<sup>13</sup> In pursuing his reformist agenda in the struggle to influence the young, Mutahhari was always careful not to provoke the regime unduly. In 1965 he was one of the founding members of the Husainiyya-yi Irshad, a new style of religious institution which would appeal to a different audience, that is to say the

religious educated young and those who attended the sermons in the mosques. The institute was funded by a merchant, Muhammad Humayun, and its legal affairs were dealt with by Nasir Minachi, a lawyer. Its discourse was characterized by lectures on society, politics and economics in relation to Islam, and its relevance to modern life. It aimed to liberate Islam from its perceived and actual ossification and present it as engaged in matters other than the formulistic study of dry traditional texts. Other progressive clergy involved were Abu'l Fazl Musavi Zanjani, Mahmud Taliqani, Muhammad Taqi Ja'fari and Muhammad Beheshti. In addition to lectures there was also provision for health and welfare services, and initiatives in education and publication. The Husainiyya-yi Irshad institute's activities contrasted greatly with the traditional performances and rituals of the *husainiyyas* and *takiyyas* in the bazaar of Tehran. It was intended as a centre for the development of ideas but not for active political engagement. In 1968 Mutahhari, who was familiar with the views expounded by the rising Islamic modernist thinker 'Ali Shari'ati, then in Mashhad, invited him to join the Irshad. Mutahhari's reputation at that time attracted modernist speakers, and the Irshad played a significant part in the diffusion of understanding of Islam as a modern world view. It aimed to prepare young Muslims to win over society to Islam and divert it from Pahlavi secularism. It also helped to instil political consciousness and engagement among the quietist and conservative clergy.

The success of the Irshad, however, became marred by political divisions between radical reformers and revolutionaries seeking confrontation with the state. The problem was further exacerbated by what emerged as in effect a struggle between the modernist 'ulama and the religious laity, inspired by Shari'ati, for leadership of radical Islam. Both groups wished to win the educated young to Islam and transform Iranian society. Mutahhari, representing the first group, was more deeply rooted in traditional learning and authoritative exegesis, such as only the 'ulama had. In the ensuing debate he was hampered by a lack of depth of knowledge of the Western intellectual tradition. He sought to confront the spread of secularism by regenerating the Islamic philosophical tradition. Although like others of the reformist clergy Mutahhari did not totally approve of Shari'ati, he was to use the latter's ideas against his opponents – Marxists, socialists and liberals.

By 1969–70 Shari'ati's lectures at the Irshad were becoming increasingly revolutionary and attracting adverse attention from both the conservative 'ulama and the state, as well as from well-to-do traditionalists in the

bazaar. Mutahhari at first endeavoured to counter charges against Shari'ati of being a Wahhabi<sup>14</sup> (and by implication heretical). He also tried to persuade Shari'ati to moderate his position but he faced counterpressure, partly from the sheer popularity of Shari'ati's lectures among the educated young, which far exceeded that of any other lecturer, and secondly from members of the laity who had gained control of the institution. Shari'ati had, in particular, the support of the primary sponsor, Humayun, who believed he was playing a key role in evolving a necessary Islamic ideology. He was also aided and abetted by Minachi as legal adviser and key administrator. Mutahhari was now having to grapple with what amounted to a challenge to the authority of the 'ulama over the sacred texts. In the face of mounting difficulties, he withdrew from the Husainiyya Irshad in March 1971 and taught at the al-Javad Mosque until it was closed and he was briefly arrested in 1972. The Irshad was also closed because of Shari'ati's revolutionary influence over the young, especially the armed Mujahidin movement. Mutahhari thereafter became largely based in Qum, where he found among the seminary students the sympathetic audience which he had lacked in middle-class Tehran. He continued his opposition to Shari'ati, campaigning to purge his writings of 'anti-Islamic' elements and threatening him with a well-documented critique which would expose his deviation if his works were not amended. After Shari'ati died in 1977, Mutahhari wrote to Khomeini complaining of his dishonesty, slander of the clergy and deviation, and requesting a ban on his works until they had been revised or corrected.<sup>15</sup>

From 1977 Mutahhari became increasingly involved in the organization of the struggle, being a member of both the revolutionary council and the committee which organized demonstrations and other matters in Tehran. In May 1979 Mutahhari was assassinated by Furqan, a group which opposed the involvement of the clergy in politics. He had singled them out as particularly dangerous for their techniques of distorting Qur'anic verses and giving materialist expositions of such texts.<sup>16</sup>

In sum it is important to realize that Mutahhari, in formulating his position, had to take account of greater political complexities than the more idealistic and revolutionary Shari'ati. As the principal representative in Iran of a movement whose leader was in exile, he had to make some concessions to the state to protect that movement and further its objectives. For this reason he took care not to provoke the regime too far, and felt obliged to withdraw from the Irshad because of its increasing association with revolution. Secondly, he had to fend off the leftist

attacks on the 'ulama's right to speak for Islam, as well as on their control of religious knowledge and their authority over the sacred texts – in fact to protect their position and prestige. At the same time he had to make an 'ulama-led Islam attractive to the young, who were turning to various forms of socialism. The task had to be accomplished in the face of great reluctance and opposition from the conservative clergy, who feared the integrity of Islam would be undermined by innovation and who had been long schooled under Ha'iri and Burujirdi against active political involvement. Some of them had reached a degree of accommodation with the state and, prospering in the economic conditions of the 1950s, 1960s and early 1970s, saw no reason to embark on a path of political challenge. But perhaps the most formidable obstacle to Mutahhari's reformist Islam, as he himself recognized, came from Islam's most devoted adherents, the bazaar guilds and merchants who were quite as traditionalist, if not more so, than the conservative clergy themselves. Mutahhari's position was further complicated by the fact that the 'ulama had a following among the urban poor, as well as the lower middle class, and both he and Khomeini had to bear in mind the divergence in the economic interests of these two broad groups, as well as the factors that united them.

In *Dah guftar* (*Ten Lectures*) Mutahhari discussed the problems of funding for the 'ulama, in particular that they were most dependent for financial support on traditional society in the form of canonical dues (*sahm-i imam*). He pointed out that in the early years of Islam the 'ulama had a greater variety in their sources of income, but such was the nature of their responsibilities that this kind of activity was no longer possible. Religious endowments had been very important in the past, but most of them had become private property and what remained was not under the control of the clergy in such a way as to benefit Islam and Muslims properly.<sup>17</sup> Some attempt had been made to gain control of these endowments for the 'ulama in discussion with the government, but to no effect. With regard to charitable donations, they had both strong and weak points.<sup>18</sup> On the positive side was the fact that it was a source of income quite independent of government control; it could not be used by the state to bring pressure on the clergy, as for example in appointment and dismissal, to which the Sunni 'ulama were vulnerable. Thus the Shi'i 'ulama were relatively protected from government manipulation. The principal weakness, according to Mutahhari, was that the 'ulama had to pay attention and respond to the views of their popular base, and further that this popular base was in the most traditional section of society. The people were bound



to the past, suspicious of innovation, anxious to protect what existed. Their attitude created difficulties for the clergy, who needed to examine Islam in the light of the new problems of the modern age if it was not to be seriously weakened. Thus they were accountable to the ignorant and uneducated, though not to the government, which was educated but oppressive; in this way some of the freedom gained from the state was lost.

Mutahhari argued that the detriment caused to Islam by this dependence could be remedied by the reorganization of the budget and much further centralization of resources than had hitherto been achieved (even under Burujirdi). Instead of each cleric spending money as he wished, funding should be institutionalized in a joint account, with proper balance sheets.<sup>19</sup> Money would be paid by the people into this account and then disbursed to each cleric according to the service he gave, under the supervision of the leading 'ulama.

Mutahhari also aimed to strengthen the position of the *marja'* further along the lines which had already taken place under Burujirdi. If the position could be made stronger, it would make political mobilization easier. A politically conscious leader attuned to the modern world and able to inspire popular support would be much more effective on the political scene than the current divided leadership.<sup>20</sup> Such a reformulation amounted to a profound repositioning of the supreme judicial authority in Shi'ism, and would augment the influence of the political jurists over the apolitical. There would be more impersonal control of the mosques, thereby preventing ignorant people from collecting in them and harassing those who attempted change.

### **Mutahhari's Philosophy of Islam**

Mutahhari developed his own philosophy of Islam in the course of his refutation of the left. It comprised a total world view in which Islam was perceived as providing guidance for the contemporary world. In the light of Islam, man was seen as empowered and responsible for his own destiny, and his empowerment came through his knowledge. In Mutahhari's view the attainment of knowledge and understanding was the principal objective and benefit of religion.<sup>21</sup> However, knowledge meant much more than the narrow familiarity with jurisprudence and religious principles so highly regarded in the seminaries, and did not demand literal application of the law. It meant a broad understanding of and insight into the philosophical sense of Islam and its role in the world.

Mutahhari used his concept of philosophical Islam combined with faith and acquired through profound reflection, moderation and patience to counteract the view that precipitative revolutionary ardour was necessary to cure the ills of Iran. His reformed Islam was intended to provide a modern way forward, independent of both East and West, and to give spiritual sustenance by contrast with the arid materialism of Marxism. At the same time it enabled him to challenge Marxism without using the religious dogma which would have alienated the young. Marxism could be presented as part of a Western intellectual tradition too slavishly admired by Iranian intellectuals.<sup>22</sup>

Mutahhari thus set out to construct his own theory of Islam which would offer an alternative, particularly to the educated young, to Marxism, socialism and liberalism, and above all to the beguiling Islamic socialist world view of Shari'ati. However, it was not to be inflexible and particularist, like the programme of the Fada'iyan. Mutahhari's system incorporated Islamic theory, Islamic society and the individual Muslim. As with Shari'ati, certain concepts, such as *tauhid* (monotheism, oneness), were deployed in the service of his vision, but with his own particular interpretation. One of the principal features of his theory of Islam was that it was a total system, based on the concept of *tauhid*, which made it unique and distinct from all other systems, a view which was also propounded amongst the bazaar societies. Unlike Shar'ati's system it contained no class divisions, reflecting Mutahhari's need to keep both the poor and the middle class behind the Nahzat, and to maintain unity in challenging the state. His theory was collectivist, like both Islam and socialism, having only a modest place for the individual, believing implicitly in a strong state and being somewhat mistrustful of democracy. In its approach to the existing political system it was initially reformist rather than revolutionary.

Mutahhari presented his theory in the most positive possible light. He described it as true and optimistic, unlike, in his view, Marxism.<sup>23</sup> The Qur'an, on which it is based, accords man a certain nobility; he is not an instrument of blind determinism. Islam also has noble goals, in that it seeks wisdom and justice not as ends in themselves, but as a means to another end, the perfection of man through faith in God.<sup>24</sup> Islam has a pure, humane, innate and divine logic which raises it above the level of materialist logic.<sup>25</sup> It is a social philosophy as well as a benevolent system of thought and ideas which had brought a new order, a new mode of thinking and new arrangements. It can be seen as a guide on a journey from a familiar place to a new one.

There is no insoluble conflict between Islam and new conditions. Nor is Islam fixed in a certain time and unable to keep pace with change. In fact, it can adapt and improve with the advance of time, and can be in harmony with all the latest developments in learning as well as the changes arising from such developments.<sup>26</sup> It is not concerned with outward patterns and forms of life, but with its spiritual meaning and aims. Islam joins faith and science, and in history the effects of distancing them had been shown in fanaticism as a result of the absence of science, and in exploitation as the result of the lack of faith.<sup>27</sup>

Mutahhari argued that there is a need for an ideology in modern life, and preferably an Islamic one.<sup>28</sup> Ideology enables a human being to comprehend his life as a totality instead of in an isolated, selfish way. It provides a general theory, an all-embracing harmonious design which enables man to understand his world as well as to attain perfection and secure happiness. It provides particular guidance on what must and must not be done, and on responsibilities and duties. Man has always needed an ideology: in the language of the Qur'an, a shari'a.

To convey the essence of his ideology in Islamic terms, Mutahhari employed the concept of *tauhid* – oneness – the unity of all things. While the oneness of God is one of the principal tenets of Islam, in its orthodox version God is transcendent, the creator of all things but above them. Mutahhari's *tauhid*, by contrast, is infused with the sense of the immanence of God as expounded in the *'irfan* tradition which he had learnt principally from Khomeini. In *tauhid*, he argued, truth is the basis of all things, it is the essence of God and his manifestation in the shape of created beings. The universe had appeared through the wisdom of the divine will, and its creation is a harmonious system evolving in one direction.<sup>29</sup> In this system man has a special nobility and therefore a special mission. Mutahhari drew upon Qur'anic terminology to demonstrate the special potential qualities which creation had conferred upon humankind.<sup>30</sup> Every creature in this system is the shadow of God, who alone is the truth, but it is man who has the chance to gain perfection through return to Him.<sup>31</sup> The universe to Mutahhari was a combination of the unseen and the visible world. Contrary to the materialist vision, which sees creation as confined to palpable phenomenon and limited to sensible objects, Mutahhari saw it as divided into two parts in accordance with his *'irfani* vision, the manifest and the unseen. As a divine emanation it incorporated intent and will.

The system of *tauhid*, then, is infused with a divine obligation and goal besides which existentialism seems desiccated and isolated. In its concept

of the realization of divine immanence it is activist, and in its ideals, obligations and responsibilities it provides a way forward for its followers. In the ideology of *tauhid* man is superior to other creatures because of his knowledge and insight into the world, which takes three forms.<sup>32</sup> The first is scientific and engages in hypothesis and experiments; it is precise and discriminating, but limited and transient. The second is philosophical and inexact, but enduring. It is activist in the sense that it enables man to distinguish particular reasons for action and criteria for human choice in life. The third world view is religious and shares the same domain as philosophy, but is based on a different source of knowledge. These three aspects of the world view of *tauhid* form the basis of its ideology, providing it with the firmness and breadth of philosophical thought and the sanctity of religious principles. In the devising of such a world view we may detect Mutahhari's need to create an Islamic vision in accordance with the spirit of philosophical enquiry and responsive to modern science, but emanating from a religion and based on the divine will, not dominated by it.

Mutahhari's understanding of *tauhid* may be usefully contrasted with Shari'ati's. To the latter, *tauhid* was a philosophy of history, a sociological outlook, an ethical doctrine and a social mission.<sup>33</sup> Thus Mutahhari's interpretation reflects his preoccupations with philosophy and religion, while Shari'ati's shows the influence of Western ideas on his view of history and society. Further, Shari'ati had an interpretation of the concept of monotheism inspired by Marxism, according to which he saw it as a sociopolitical mission. It was a historical movement against a class- and status-ridden society in which idols are taken as the symbols of class discrimination.<sup>34</sup> The polytheists were the deceitful guardians of the faith who justified and rationalized the unjust state. They were further dependent on the affluent and dominant classes, whose exploitation they were obliged to vindicate. The religion of monotheism was in effect a battle cry against class discrimination and an attempt to create a classless society. Therefore, polytheism to Shari'ati meant a socio-economic system based on class exploitation; it was further a means of attacking the religious establishment for either depending on or acquiescing with the status quo. Mutahhari and Shari'ati's visions of *tauhid* not only demonstrate the divergence between them intellectually and practically, but also show the wide difference in the ways in which an Islamic term, traditionally meaning simply monotheism, may be used.

Such was Mutahhari's ideology of Islam; what then was his concept of the state? His writings do not deal at length with the nature of the

state. The failure to discuss it, notable also in the work of Shari'ati, may be attributed to the repressive political conditions in which Mutahhari developed his views and the possibility of being charged with sedition by advocating an alternative to the existing system. From his ideology it may be inferred that the state should be Islamic. Secondly, being Shi'i it is also a just state, and Mutahhari interprets 'just' in a modernist way as meaning belief in the principles of human freedom (not clearly defined), human responsibility and human creativity. Divine justice as implied in the Qur'an militates against certain inequalities. In his refutation of the Marxist interpretation of society in the Qur'an, however, Mutahhari makes clear that his state is not tied to one particular class.<sup>35</sup> He rejects the notion that early Islam belonged to the oppressed, and points out that not only were some of the first believers of affluent background, but that Khadija, the Prophet's wife, was wealthy. He allowed, however, that there was a tendency for those believing in the Prophet to come from the poor, as they had less complicity in the status quo. He added that to confine believers in an Islamic society only to the oppressed would be to deny the Qur'anic principle that even the most depraved have the possibility of salvation. Further, the Qur'an was not addressed simply to the most deprived, but to all who listened – the early Islamic community (*umma*) consisted of various social groups. In short, the Islamic state is not characterized by material orientation and class struggle but by ideological struggle for God and faith.

Would the Islamic state be constitutional? Constitutionalism was not one of Mutahhari's preoccupations, though he discussed it at some length in *Islam va muqtaziyat-i zaman* (*Islam and the Exigencies of the Age*).<sup>36</sup> Would it be possible, he considered, in a country where there was no foreign interference (in other words one that could not be manipulated in the interests of foreign powers, as some perceived Iran to have been at the time of the Constitutional Revolution) and where the people understood how constitutionalism worked? That would depend on whether it was in conformity with the laws of Islam. To argue against it on the grounds that it was contrary to the shari'a was too simplistic. A major problem was that under a constitutional system one group tended to take the decisions, which were then executed by others. Then there were the problems of legislation. Mutahhari did not often allude to the authority of the shari'a, as it was unlikely to win him support among his educated audience in the middle class. He made it clear, however, that Islam had a comprehensive plan for all people for all times.<sup>37</sup> There

were, all the same, 'slight, trivial matters' on which it was possible to pass laws while being aware of the divine law. Further, protection for the shari'a could be provided by a council of five who would oversee the law, being well-versed in it and in the exigencies of the age. As the latter phrase suggests, Mutahhari accepted some degree of independent judgement. He accepted also that the divine law did not require that people refer to the holy texts over each small matter, and there should be no systematic intervention in the private affairs of individuals.<sup>38</sup> His arguments on the lesser and greater principles of the shari'a, the former being subject to different interpretations at different times, and the latter being immutable and eternal, resemble arguments which were put forward on the subject of legislation at the time of the Constitutional Revolution.<sup>39</sup> In Mutahhari's Islamic state, therefore, legislation is permitted provided that it is in conformity with the shari'a, and it may be inferred that the 'ulama have a supervisory role in ensuring such conformity. There would, of course, be no separation of religion and state, for that would be like separation of mind and body.<sup>40</sup>

Elsewhere he argued that there was a series of laws and principles incorporated into Islam, and termed by the jurists governing principles, which were intended to control and harmonize other laws. Islam, he believed, acknowledged these principles as having the right of veto over all other laws and precepts.<sup>41</sup> Further, Mirza Muhammad Na'ini and Muhammad Husain Tabataba'i had both laid great emphasis on the authority Islam conferred on a competent Islamic government which might make use of the aforementioned governing principles. It may thus be inferred that Mutahhari's Islamic state resembled in certain respects that of Na'ini in his work on constitutional government written in 1909<sup>42</sup> in terms of its arrangements for legislation. However, Mutahhari stated that if there was a conflict between the will of the people and the Islamic government, the latter must prevail.

Speaking after the establishment of the Islamic Republic, Mutahhari explained that its foundations were based on both Islam and democracy. He argued that freedom, individual rights and democracy are inherent in Islam, but freedom has different roots than in the West, where it is based on desires and inclinations, limited only by the desires of others, and is expressed like the freedom of animals. Democracy in Islam is based on freedom, but not freedom that finds its expression in desire; rather it exists in the sense of binding the animal and releasing the human. It is in fact based on what makes man perfect and develops his

talent as a human being. Mutahhari thus had a vision of a limited freedom in which conspiracies were prohibited, but people were free to present their thoughts.<sup>43</sup> The contrast between Mutahhari's Islamic concept of freedom and the classical liberal version is evident in his view that though some freedom is necessary for development, it can be harmful to both individual and society.

The question of leadership, on the other hand, indicates some difference between Mutahhari and Na'ini. Mutahhari refuted the view that society did not need a leader or guide, saying that such a figure is necessary for society to evolve, particularly in avoiding deviation and sedition from within.<sup>44</sup> Without a leader mankind is ignorant(*jahl*), and the correct exegesis and execution of the divine precepts depends on the existence of a leader. This person is an *insan-i kamil*, a perfect man who exists in every age to protect the spirituality of mankind.<sup>45</sup> The need for such a leader is not met by mere democracy.<sup>46</sup> After the revolution Mutahhari made it clear that though the people had a right to choose a ruler, he must be qualified in justice and *fiqh*. His duty would not be to run the country but to act as a supervisory ideologue.<sup>47</sup> There was also a need for centralized and organized power and control so that the initiative may be seized.<sup>48</sup> Islam, however, does not accept absolute personal government, but considers the ruler to be responsible to the people.<sup>49</sup>

To Mutahhari religious duties and the responsibility of asserting the validity of the religion repose in the individual. Both preservation of the religion and the pursuit of religious ideology depended upon the conscience of the individual and his religious activism. The goals of the individual must be first to empower himself, and then acting collectively with other individuals to change and lead society – in other words to function as a vanguard. In so doing the individual has to challenge quietist piety and abstinence from involvement. Mutahhari believed that social reform must originate among the masses and not emerge through the dominant class. In order to achieve this goal, public culture and lifestyle have to be changed.<sup>50</sup> In pursuit of activism, Mutahhari questioned all passive understanding of piety (*zuhd*) and endeavoured to give the term a radical meaning compatible with an activist, politically responsible individual, an example being Gandhi.<sup>51</sup>

Mutahhari thus gave special responsibility to the individual in terms of his Islamic ideology. His epitome of an activist individual was 'Ali, a perfect man, a fighter for Islam with the power to attract followers, in

fact a whole philosophy in himself.<sup>52</sup> The call of 'Ali is not like other calls, limited in time and breadth and depth of social influence.<sup>53</sup> 'Ali had the ability to inspire love and affection in the people, for power and force are not enough to awaken them; the ruler must show his affection to the people to foster their devotion.<sup>54</sup> In the *'irfan* tradition taught to him by Khomeini, Mutahhari explains that elevation came from ownership of oneself, release from the carnal soul, and the eventual ability to discern the meaning and value of social and ethical sanctities.<sup>55</sup> Man, however, is subject to constraints, among which are the set of conditions that ensure (according to the shari'a) the correctness of performance necessary for their proper fulfilment;<sup>56</sup> he cannot devise a path entirely of his own choosing. The choice lies in whether to follow the path of self-empowerment or not. To Mutahhari the individual is thus a believer who promotes the system – a view which may be contrasted with the cornerstone of liberalism, the individual pure and simple.<sup>57</sup>

The needs of society provide a further constraint. Islam is oriented towards society, and the individual has to use his powers as a responsible person to secure society's needs. One of these is the authority to enforce the concept of enjoining good and prohibiting evil (*amr-i bi ma'ruf va nahy az munkar*). This involves among other duties the command to the individual to rebel against the corruption of society,<sup>58</sup> which developed, argued Mutahhari, from the concept of *hisbah* (general affairs) and the need for persons both knowledgeable and pious to control them, which provides scope for action by the 'ulama to demonstrate their interest in social affairs and in reform. The work of the official with responsibility for the *hisbah*, the *muhtasib*, is supposed to be confined to the eradication of such miscreance as wine-drinking and debauchery. Originally, however, Mutahhari argued, it was more comprehensive and included supervision of mosques and pulpits, which suggests that its true purpose is to improve the whole of society, enforced by all individuals. The concept of enjoining the good, however, must not be used by everyone according to their own ideas, but must be supervised by those who understand it (who, it is to be inferred, would be the 'ulama). Mutahhari also used the concept to encourage self-sacrifice and martyrdom. He argued that these may be a means to good action, whereby someone might choose to relinquish his own concerns and put himself at the service of others.<sup>59</sup> In short the concept may be used as a major reformist principle through which society might be challenged and changed.



Mutahhari's view of leadership may be compared to that of Shari'ati, who envisaged for society a system of guided democracy before it arrived at a classless state based on equality and justice.<sup>60</sup> In effect a benevolent dictatorship, the leadership was charged with the task of constructing an ideal society by transforming existing social relations, culture and values on the basis of a revolutionary doctrine and a reformist ideology. The leader would be a perfect man in the *'irfan* tradition, and indeed on the model of the Imam, in a vision not dissimilar to that of Mutahhari. The concept of authority and guidance emanating from a single leader is also comparable with the Marxist-Leninist-influenced systems produced in Europe, especially in the first half of the twentieth century. Both Mutahhari and Shari'ati were influenced by Western political thought in their desire for a comprehensive and totalist ideology to encompass change. Neither was particularly democratic: both were quintessentially elitist. Shari'ati had, however, a slightly stronger faith in individual rights. For one thing, he was not impeded by the necessity of upholding clerical authority. In his earlier work *Islamshinasi* (*Islamology*, 1969), he argued that Islam was based on democracy, majority vote and majority rule, which could be attained by consensus.<sup>61</sup> Later, as his struggle with the state intensified, he affirmed that the exploited class needed to be steeped in revolutionary ideology which had to be disseminated to the masses by a revolutionary vanguard of Marxist inspiration.<sup>62</sup> His ideal society was not to be a democracy, but would be governed and trained by a dedicated revolutionary leadership. In time of struggle, obedience to that leadership must be absolute.

Shari'ati also employed the concept of enjoining good and prohibiting evil in his political scheme. He viewed it as an instrument of promotion of political subversion, a means of awakening the pacific and oppressed.<sup>63</sup> As with Mutahhari, it was a social responsibility incumbent on everyone, but in Shari'ati's view it was particularly to be used in the struggle against international imperialism, Zionism and dictatorship. It was seen as a collective responsibility to initiate it, not just the duty of the clerical leadership. Shari'ati's enjoining good was thus more revolutionary than that of Mutahhari, but their promotion of it to change society and implement a new ideology was not particularly original, as the term was already being spoken of by the reformist clergy in the bazaar Islamic societies in the early 1960s.

Like many of the *'ulama* Mutahhari was suspicious of nationalism, because of a belief that the system of nation-states had divided the

Islamic community, introducing differentiation on, for example, the basis of language and ethnic culture that was alien and irrelevant to Islam. Nation-states are also, of course, founded on secular law. He was responding to the contemporary Pahlavi nationalist anti-Islamic tendency, with its emphasis on the glories of the pre-Islamic past. Mutahhari argued the case against nationalism particularly strongly in *Khadamat-i mutaqabil-i Iran va Islam (The Mutual Service of Iran and Islam)*, published in 1970, in which he declared that whereas Islam unites Muslims, nationalism divides them.<sup>64</sup> These divisions had in particular been created by governments and politicians for their own purposes. Islam, by contrast, had been for centuries a force of unity and represented the higher ideals of religion and knowledge.<sup>65</sup> Islam, or Islamic culture, can provide an identity just as effectively as nationality. While nationalism may, up to a point, be beneficial or of service to the people of a country, it can also be negative in introducing prejudiced and faulty judgement. There is a higher level than national sentiment, which is that of knowledge, philosophy and religion. Mutahhari believed nationalism to be based on a flawed concept of man, to be a kind of vacuum in which there is no unique purpose and divine primordial nature as envisaged by Islam.<sup>66</sup> Since it does not accord with man's primordial mission it is foreign to him, and a kind of deformation of his real identity.

Iran is perceived as having a true identity derived from her link to Shi'i Islam; therefore, implicitly, any political theory which is not bound up with Shi'ism is contrary to the real identity of Iran. On the other hand there is also the implication that Iran does have an identity – one indissolubly linked to Shi'ism. Although not interested in the nation-state as such, Mutahhari, like many 'ulama before him – for example Sayyid Muhammad Tabataba'i at the time of the Constitutional Revolution – saw Islam and Iran as being indissolubly linked, and he had a way of making Islam Iranian, in particular by referring to prominent Muslim writers, such as Ibn al-Muqaffa', as Persian.<sup>67</sup>

Always a reformer, Mutahhari placed emphasis on activism and struggle. Responsibility for reform took two main forms: the first was ensuring that certain specific duties such as prayer were carried out; the second was to encourage the defence of Islam, jihad (struggle), and decide when and how it should be initiated.<sup>68</sup> In particular, however, he stressed the need to target the young, saying they could not be led by old means and tactics, and that the particular difficulties of each generation

had to be understood.<sup>69</sup> With the current generation one of the problems was the pace of change. They saw new doors opening up, the chance of progress, of economic, political and military power, of scientific development, and queried why they should remain behind. Further, the young were nowadays much more prone to doubt and question the existing order, and their questions had to be met by enabling them to reach a new understanding of Islam. Such an understanding had to be conveyed in the logic and language of the time. Mourning ceremonies, for example, could be changed, and the philosophy of the Husain uprising could be imparted to the people in such a way as to have greater relevance to them and increase their feeling for the truth.<sup>70</sup> Religion as a whole had to be reformed in terms of contemporary concerns and world trends.

There was also not just a question of meeting the preoccupations of the young, but of arousing the conservatives to understand the necessity of adapting to change.<sup>71</sup> Though reform depended on leaders, those who looked deeper knew that greater importance and influence lay with institutions.<sup>72</sup> If they were reformed, then the elite and leadership would automatically change. The corporatism of this view is clearly evident when contrasted with the approach of Plato and al-Farabi, who placed such emphasis on the reforming individual and the qualities he should have. The real issue, Mutahhari argued, was how institutions could be changed so that they did not produce a leader who acted to the detriment of society.

In his endeavours to emphasize struggle and activism, Mutahhari, like Shari'ati, drew upon the concepts of martyrdom and its paradigm at Karbala, and jihad. He opposed any religious expression associated with Karbala that did not generate a sense of heroism, sacrifice and commitment to take one's destiny into one's own hands.<sup>73</sup> In his reconstructed Islamic theory emphasis was placed upon Islam as a religion of action rather than a religion of piety. At the same time he endeavoured as far as he could by implication to undermine the legitimacy of the established regime, particularly in his construction of authority based on the Shi'i concept of justice and righteousness as legitimizing government and leadership.<sup>74</sup> Leadership was firmly associated with right conduct, self-discipline and knowledge. The oblique discrediting of the regime's legitimacy was set out in a series of lectures between 1965 and 1971 in the *Irshad*, published in 1974 under the title *Sairi dar nahj al-balagha* (*An Exploration of the Nahj al-Balagha*).<sup>75</sup> One aim of the lectures was to make the *Nahj al-balagha* (the sayings of the Imam 'Ali) seem more

pertinent to current realities. The faith is presented in a new ideological language through the condemnation of the more recent past and the glorification of the early days of Islam in a manner common to Islamic reformers.

In particular, apolitical piety is condemned, as it was also being condemned by Khomeini. Mutahhari attempted to redefine the concept of *taqva* (piety) to show it did not imply merely devout observance and abstinence from involvement in worldly matters; rather, it meant activism for the satisfaction of man's spiritual needs, to enable him to carry out his duties in society and as an affirmation of his independent conscience. To struggle against injustice and make the new Islamic vision possible, both activism and self-sacrifice were needed. In this way Mutahhari hoped to galvanize the pious Shi'a and the 'ulama and prepare them for further struggle. Mutahhari especially laid emphasis on justice and the performance of duties, and acknowledgment of rights by both subject and ruler in Shi'i terms. The insurrectionary activist element in his argument came in the assumption that to secure justice was a sacred Shi'i duty, and that no believer could remain passive in the face of injustice. Justice was the principal manifestation of righteous rule, and so it followed that injustice was the foremost sign of unrighteous rule and usurpation. Justice here had a strong social implication, in that it involved the eradication of the differences between the haves and the have nots. The shah was only a custodian of the people's trust, not the owner of their livelihoods. So Mutahhari implied that the shah's regime, by failing to demonstrate its responsibility to the people, was illegitimate and oppressive.

A further concept which Mutahhari, like Taliqani and Shari'ati, attempted to use for activism and mobilization was jihad (struggle, holy war). In classical Islam jihad was limited to defensive policy only, and on the whole Mutahhari took this line. However, he applied to defensive jihad as wide as possible an interpretation. Jihad meant war against aggression, not only against an individual but also against another society which may or may not be Muslim.<sup>76</sup> In other words, it could mean a stance against imperialism in other areas, for example Palestine. A further cause for jihad was struggle against an unequal order.

### **The Refutation of Marxism and Iltiqat**

So far we have looked at how Mutahhari tried to construct an Islamic ideology which was in harmony with the modern age, and would give

guidance on its problems and provide an alternative to both Marxism and Shari'ati's philosophy of Islam. Now we turn firstly to the ways in which Mutahhari sought to combat Marxism by direct criticism and refutation; and secondly, to how he attacked what is known as *iltiqat*, the addition of non-religious thought to religious thought, or more precisely, essentially Western ideas presented as being integral to Islam.

To Shari'ati the imperialists and capitalists were enemies, and the Marxists were competitors. To Mutahhari, all were enemies. In private he had the support of Khomeini, although the latter would not publicly condemn collaboration with the Marxists, being concerned with unity against the regime.<sup>77</sup> Of all the 'ulama Mutahhari launched the most effective attacks against Marxism and materialism, addressing not only the Marxist element in Shari'ati's thought, but also the militant Marxist Fada'iyan-i Khalq and Guruh-i Furqan organizations, of which the former in particular had influence over the young.

In attacking Marxism Mutahhari targeted the weakest point of a religious society, its materialism. He played constantly upon the theme of the inability of Marxism to fulfil certain requirements of human nature. Quoting William James, he said, 'It is true that the origins of many of our inner desires are matters of material nature, but many of them arise also from a world that is beyond this world.'<sup>78</sup> He argued that there had always been religion because it was a primary human need, and in particular it had always appeared among the weak, poor and oppressed, from among whom prophets emerged as champions against the powerful. There was in his view something in human nature which sought to leave its own limited existence and reach the divine. He attacked the Marxist assumption that there was a choice to be made between religion and science, that a person either believed in divine wisdom and denied science, or championed industry and invention and rejected religion; he argued that a Muslim could be both pious and scientifically progressive. The pious Muslim, in his view, enjoyed greater spiritual and mental harmony than the alienated, angst-ridden Marxist.

Mutahhari further propounded that Marxism belittled man. In Islamic philosophy man had a grand destiny as the chosen of creation, God's own caliph on earth, half divine, with a nature capable of knowing the ineffable.<sup>79</sup> In Marxism, however, man had a meagre role in being denied a conscience of his own and an interior being. This in turn robbed him of individual choice, and as a consequence he became a mere

tool or product of society and its means of production.<sup>80</sup> His power to progress, to improve and indeed to perfect himself is thus lost. Marxist pessimism could be contrasted with Qur'anic optimism, and man's noble destiny under the one compared to his role as the instrument of blind determinism under the other.

Mutahhari also attacked materialism from another angle. To undermine the perception that Marxism was modern and therefore rooted in and sustained by scientific advances (by contrast, in the Marxist view, with religion), he argued that Marxist materialism was not new, and that the materialists were inventing a history for themselves.<sup>81</sup> He further endeavoured to discredit materialism by casting aspersions on its roots in Western philosophy, contesting that Western philosophers such as Hegel and Spencer had failed to establish a validity for the metaphysical realm.<sup>82</sup>

Mutahhari also criticized the Marxist use of class, by which they sought to justify their revolutionary programme – and which had a considerable appeal for the young. Like Shari'ati, Mutahhari used class not in the Marxist sense of being linked to the means of production but in the sense of degree of possession of political power, social status, education, religious conviction and cultural tendency.<sup>83</sup> However, as discussed, Shari'ati, like the Marxists, saw society as being engaged in class struggle, whereas Mutahhari perceived it as being united in class terms but consumed by a battle to protect Islam. To Mutahhari, therefore, class harmony was vital, and he was concerned to refute any notion of class conflict. To his mind injustice came not from a wealthier class but from imperialism, secularism and Pahlavi oppression.

Mutahhari had a pressing need to ensure that class struggle be discredited as a means and a legitimizing factor in revolutionary action. The notion of class struggle could crack the foundations of Nahzat support in both the traditional propertied bazaar class and the poor. It was in fact the latter who had the weaker allegiance to the Nahzat but who would need, because of their very numbers, to be mobilized in any challenge to the state. At the same time he needed to retain the support of the middle class, especially as they were the major source of funding. Finally, he had to demonstrate to the young that classless struggle could be revolutionary. He therefore took issue with the notion that revolution can only arise from class action by the deprived.<sup>84</sup> Committed and responsible revolutionaries also emerged from other groups, he argued, because these qualities arose not so much from deprivation as from

affinity with God and a communal conscience. Islam, being not materially concerned, was not oriented towards benefiting the oppressed but towards justice and equality, an automatic effect of which would be justice for the deprived.<sup>85</sup> He refuted Shari'ati's view that religion (what Shari'ati termed Safavid Shi'ism, that segment of Shi'ism which collaborated with the state) was concerned only with the interests of the ruling class, on the grounds that it was a distortion, and a Marxist and materialist interpretation of religion.<sup>86</sup> He denied as spurious the Marxist view that there was a powerful link between the class-based origin of a perception and its orientation.

Mutahhari also took issue with the way Marxism worked in practice. In societies where private ownership was abolished, he pointed out, oppression was pronounced.<sup>87</sup> One of the main causes of human deviation was the way privileges emerged in a communist system. Mutahhari therefore supported the notion of property, though not as a pluralist or a partisan of the individualist concept of the word.<sup>88</sup> In addition, he did not, in the Marxist sense, condone all the legal, cultural and political arrangements connected with the capitalist mode of production. He saw ownership to be to some extent restricted, though he did not elaborate on the matter.<sup>89</sup> He thus trod a careful path between the *laissez-faire* government policy desirable to the bazaaris and the notion of state-guided social justice which might be of greater benefit to the poor.

Mutahhari asked why it was that Marxism had such an attraction for the young. Rejecting the view that it had arisen in part as a result of the weaknesses and obscurantism of religion, he came to the conclusion that its attraction lay in its association with heroic rebellion against exploitation, particularly at the present time.<sup>90</sup> The current problem with religion, by contrast, was its association with accommodation and quietism. Materialism, however, had taken undue credit, for the true representatives of struggle were the prophets, and there were references to jihad and martyrdom in the Qur'an. He demanded of the 'ulama a more activist role: they should represent religious concepts as being both logical and rational to religious groups; and they must highlight the role of religion in other sections of society, and provide the people with a new religious doctrine. Above all, they must practise jihad.

In the battle against non-Islamic ideas masquerading as Islam, one of the crucial issues was the challenge by the laity to the control of knowledge and monopoly claimed by the clergy of authority over the sacred texts. 'Nowadays', Mutahhari complained, 'everyone thinks they have

the right to give an opinion of their own on religion.<sup>91</sup> He emphasized the need for knowledge in the interpretation of the religious sources. He expounded that matters of religion, especially theology and oneness, are among the most complicated fields of knowledge and therefore not everyone was capable of giving an opinion. To some extent, he acknowledged, ordinary people had simple duties in understanding Islam (which was in conformity with the lectures and classes being given in the bazaar societies), but study and research on the attributes and names of the truth were not for everyone. Frequently a person without understanding on such matters as divine government, justice, power and judgement was to be found expounding his view, which his listeners accepted as profound teaching and religion.

Mutahhari considered Shari'ati's views as no more than a summary of the preoccupations of his teachers at the Sorbonne. They mixed elements of foreign philosophy, such as Marxism and existentialism, with some Eastern philosophy and then disguised the result with a veneer of Islam.<sup>92</sup> Mutahhari demanded a return to Islamic texts, for, as a result of such practice, irreligion had spread along with a greater tendency to materialism. A particular example of the importance of knowledge, training and skill was to be found in jurisprudence.<sup>93</sup> Its principles involve the profound and precise deduction of the Islamic precepts from the relevant sources, and such skill is only acquired through long years of study. If the sources are not properly used, it is sure to lead to erroneous deductions. The same is true of *usul* (principles), where the correct method of deduction is also of vital importance. Behind these arguments lay concern that laymen were interpreting the Islamic texts according to their own purposes and reading into them ideas derived from Western thought which, in Mutahhari's view, did not exist in such sources.

In *Polarization around the Character of 'Ali ibn Abi Talah*, Mutahhari identified three main sets of enemies: the money-worshippers, presumably meaning the Pahlavi regime and its adherents; the seditious and double-dealing, Shari'ati and his kind; and the fanatical, sanctimonious and ignorant, in other words the traditionalist 'ulama and their adherents.<sup>94</sup> He considered those who were in favour of the regime to be hypocrites using the fortress of Islam itself in the interests of the great powers.<sup>95</sup> Then there were those who held themselves aloof, characterized principally by pretension and sanctimony.<sup>96</sup> They had not the virtue of courage and self-sacrifice, but simulated piety



and assumed a manner of external saintliness and discipline misleading to the faithful.<sup>97</sup> 'Ali, encountering their kind in the early days of Islam, recognized that if they gained a foothold in Islam it would become inflexible, adhering to external aspects, superficial and fossilized.

Mutahhari's most sustained animosity was directed at arguably the most dangerous of his enemies, Shari'ati and other Islamic socialists. Shari'ati had attacked institutionalized religion and the position of the clergy at four interconnected levels:<sup>98</sup> their theoretical position in Islam; the type of Islam they created and supported; how contemporary Islam varied from its original character; and whether it was possible to reconcile these two types. Shari'ati advocated a form of Islamic Protestantism and saw no special place for a mediator between God and man. He argued that Islam was not hierarchical, and therefore the performance of religious rituals did not require close supervision. Religious interpretation might be carried out by Muslims other than the clergy, though the clergy's expertise had some role to play. Instead of a mechanical, accommodating, quietist Islam, essentially subservient to the interests of the state, there could be a new problem-solving Islam accepted by the young and led by the intelligentsia.

Mutahhari was, of course, in some respects in agreement with Shari'ati. He too criticized the conservative 'ulama, though not too fiercely or too openly, so as to avoid divisions. He too wanted a socially aware and problem-solving Islam, so he could hardly attack Shari'ati on these points. Instead he questioned the motives and authority of his lay opponents, and argued that their policies would undermine and destroy Islam rather than reform it. The laity, he implied, had no profound knowledge of religion and no insight into prudent action. He noted that among his examples in early Islam was the Khawarij, a heterodox group, who were 'extinct but alive in spirit'. They were pretenders to piety, outwardly peaceable, but inwardly intent on revolution. Their leader called them to enjoining the good in the name of martyrdom, and with the promise of paradise, while being in reality intent on sedition and the sabotaging of public security.<sup>99</sup> Mutahhari argued effectively for the authority of the 'ulama, stating that the people should first of all be instructed and guided in Islamic behaviour and how to live as true Muslims. A guardian should rule over them to take them by the hand, so they may not be left free to unsheath their swords at will and voice opinions of their own on Islam.<sup>100</sup> If the uninformed (in other words the

laity) put on a show of sanctity and piety and people take them to be a symbol of practising Muslims, they become an excellent tool for unscrupulous schemers who use the people for their own ends. Their presence becomes a strong hinderance to the objectives of real reformers. It is quite common to see anti-Islamic elements openly making use of these tactics and causing Islam to weaken itself, said Mutahhari.<sup>101</sup> The struggle against such cunning persons who use the stupid as a weapon is harder than the struggle against unbelief; it is in reality concealed unbelief, which is difficult for ordinary people to detect.<sup>102</sup> Elsewhere he wrote that the enemies of Islam were constantly trying to replace valid authority with invalid, creating divisions among Muslims.<sup>103</sup>

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Mutahhari was in effect Khomeini's emissary among the middle-class young, whom he sought to win away from Western ideologies, particularly Marxism, and from Shari'ati's charismatic Islamic socialism. He tried to present an alternative ideology of Islam based on faith, but also on philosophy, science and knowledge. In this vision man was an assertive, empowered individual, unique in his ability to create his own destiny. His evolution, however, took place within an Islamic framework, under Islamic guidance, and true and mature understanding of his nature and place in the universe would lead him to devote himself to the needs of society and to serve Islam. The powerful ethical and philosophical element in Mutahhari's vision, where the individual is released from the petty restrictions of orthodox observance, derives from the *'irfani* influences mentioned in Chapter II, whereby man has personal choices and responsibilities, and the potential for divine inspiration.

Mutahhari encouraged his followers to radicalism and change, though being in disposition essentially moderate, he did not advocate revolution until the later 1970s. He was, however, strongly opposed to the conservative 'ulama, whom he designated sanctimonious hypocrites, and was critical of their reluctance to engage in politics and challenge the existing order. He perceived that unless further change could be made in Islamic institutions, particularly in education, Islam would succumb to the twin thrusts of the modernizing state and new ideologies perceived as more relevant to the present age. Part of his struggle

was to demonstrate the modernity of Islam, and in his lectures he constantly either produced examples to show how Islam was compatible with modernity, how Islam had influenced modernity, or how Islam was in advance of modernity. He reinforced his arguments with frequent references to and examples from Western philosophy.

Before 1979 he did not, however, produce a clear concept of the nature of the Islamic state which might replace the existing regime. It was to be in accordance with the shari'a; it would have a democratic element; it was to be socially just; there would at the very least be supervision of legislation by the 'ulama. Questions of the precise nature of institutions and their mutual relations went unanswered, and indeed in the climate of repression seemingly unasked.

One of Mutahhari's principal concerns was to undermine the influence of Marxism and refute its criticisms of religion. He attacked the materialist world view, saying that its perception of human nature was limited and mechanical, and that it could never offer fulfilment of man's destiny and more noble desires. Some of his fiercest polemic, however, was reserved for *iltiqat*: non-Islamic ideas masquerading as Islam. He was in particular concerned by attacks by influential lay intellectuals, especially Shari'ati, upon the authority of the 'ulama over the holy texts. He also deprecated their claims to offer an opinion of their own as equally valid to that of the clerics. He had a real concern that Islam was, under their influence, in danger of evolving into Western thought behind an Islamic facade, and that it would, through what he termed the gullibility of some believers, lose its integrity and no longer know itself.

Mutahhari essentially lost his battle to win the support of the new middle class, and his share of influence over the young, even those of religious inclination, remained considerably less than that of Shari'ati and the left. He was driven after 1972 to return to Qum, where his views found a welcome among the seminary students, and he continued to have great influence in religious society among the Islamic associations. It was left to Khomeini, with his carefully general objectives, his emphasis on oppression, social justice, foreign intrusion and, reinforced by the power of the *mujtahid* in Shi'ism, his influence over the mosque networks, to win the war and ultimately to protect clerical authority over the holy texts from the intrusion of the brilliant laity. So it was that control of political Islam in Iran was won by the 'ulama.

# Chapter V: Visions of the Islamic State I – The Khomeini Version

Khomeini's thought on the Islamic state emerged from a debate that had been in progress since the nineteenth century. Its principal preoccupations were with the reconciliation of Islam, Islamic values, culture and identity with Western modernity, and with the means by which Islam might be strengthened in the face of the onslaught of the West. The debate focused not simply on Islam as a religion but on Islamic law, Islamic institutions, particularly those of education, and Islam as a political ideology in the sense that it had served to legitimize both the Ottoman and Iranian empires. The problems presented by modernity had to be both integrated into and confronted by Islamic jurisprudence and theology. Islam had to be reconciled with new kinds of organization, particularly the modern state, which in turn implied a revolutionary reconstruction of the Islamic community and its identity, and of the personal political and social conscience of individual Muslims. As Islam does not acknowledge the division of religion and politics, religion, along with other areas of life, had to be brought into the realm of modernity. At the same time it had to be fortified to resist Western political, economic, social and cultural intrusion.

## **The Modernization of Islam - Some Earlier Views**

The first person to present a comprehensive theory of a modernized Islam able to withstand Western imperialism was Jamal al-Din Asadabadi (1838–1897), generally known as al-Afghani. An ascetic with a background in theology, jurisprudence, mysticism and philosophy, he made it his mission to exhort Muslims to unite against imperialism, and to be politically strong and assertive.<sup>1</sup> He perceived Islam not just as a religion but as an entire civilization, in need of radical change to fortify

it. It should be divested of its particular political divisions, and should unite in one pan-Islamic movement against the West. Al-Afghani in particular saw Muslim rulers as weak, corrupt and susceptible to foreign manipulation, and sought to inspire movements to reform and strengthen the political institutions of Islam; he did not, however, present a detailed programme of institutional change. He recognized the unity of the Muslim community and the responsibility of each individual Muslim to the community. Islam, he argued, should be liberated from the corrupt and debilitating accretions of the past centuries and return to the purity and strength of its early years. It should provide the community with moral guidance. Al-Afghani identified philosophy with prophecy, and believed that what the prophet received through inspiration, the philosopher could attain through reason. He emphasized the importance of knowledge for man's progress, particularly in the understanding of science, to which the great advance of the West was undeniably connected. He argued, however, that Islam should find a balance between the acquisition of Western science and technology and Muslim religion and culture. In his approach to religion there was also a rational element, in that he perceived it as an all-embracing ideology which would provide the community with an identity, a sense of purpose and moral guidance. He saw it as a force which stood on the side of the people, challenging the ruling factions.<sup>2</sup> To al-Afghani, Islam was profoundly activist, influencing believers to struggle against colonialism and despotism; thus Islam was presented as a religion of science, action, hard work, struggle and reform, and of accepting difficult responsibilities. Al-Afghani also argued for a reasoned faith, not one that accepted conjecture, blind following or supersitition.<sup>3</sup>

Al-Afghani's endeavour to reconcile Islam and modernity was pursued by his collaborator, Muhammad 'Abduh<sup>4</sup> (1849–1905), particularly in a search for compatability between Islam and science. He revitalized the juristic concept of *ijtihad* (independent judgement) in Sunnism to reform the legal and educational systems of Egypt so that they might meet modern needs. Like al-Afghani, he believed Islam had the potential to be a school of thought and guiding ideology for Islamic society as a whole. He also depended on an element of rationalism in religion – he believed that Islam could be understood by logical reasoning and not mere blind following.<sup>5</sup> He emphasized revival by contrast with ossified and desiccated dogmatism. By concentrating on educational and legal institutions, 'Abduh, who was by nature a

moderate, hoped to bring about gradual change in Egypt and also the Islamic world.

A Muslim thinker much influenced by al-Afghani and 'Abduh was 'Abd al-Rahman al-Kawakibi (1849–1902), born in Syria, who wrote *Taba'i al-istibdad* (*The Characterization of Tyranny*), which was translated into Persian and had some influence on the intelligentsia, particularly Sayyid Muhammad Tabataba'i, at the time of the Constitutional Revolution.<sup>6</sup> Like al-Afghani he sought to awaken the people to the ills of despotism and activate and mobilize them, arguing for a high degree of political and religious consciousness to resist tyranny. He also believed in the indissoluble link between religion and politics in Islam, and argued for a religious ruler as caliph for the Islamic lands, supported by a system of consultation. Such a system would be created by a just state in which individuals fulfilled themselves by free service to the community.

Another disciple of al-Afghani and 'Abduh, Rashid Rida (1865–1935), took a different path, arguing that the reason for backwardness was that Muslims had permitted the debilitation and pollution of their religion, and needed to strive for the dynamism that existed in Europe. He was much influenced by the strictly Hanbali school of Islamic law and by the works of Ibn Taymiyya (1262–1328), as well as by the contemporary renascent Wahhabi purism in Arabia. As a result he increasingly tended to be anti-Shi'i, in view of the emphasis in Shi'ism on the authority of the Imams. Nevertheless, his adherence to orthodoxy and the strict letter of the shari'a was to have a profound influence on Shi'i as well as Sunni Islamism. He distinguished, however, between what was essential to Islam and what was not: the former was laid down in the Qur'an and the Traditions; the latter was a mere accumulation of often-superstitious practice. Moreover, there were many areas not specifically covered by the shari'a in which human reason might provide a solution, enabling rulers of the Islamic community to have not only executive and judicial powers but also legislative authority. There could thus be a body of law which was valid as long as it was compatible with the shari'a. Responsibility for creating such law rested with those who had the power to loose and bind – those who had authority in the community.

Laws should be made after consultation, but in a deliberative, modern and organized fashion. Here Rashid Rida is introducing the Islamic concept of *ijma'* (consensus) in a modern form, and as a legislative rather than a judicial principle working by a kind of parliamentary process.<sup>7</sup> The

ruler and caliph, represented as the supreme practitioner of *ijtihād* and a great *mujtahid*, must make the laws and supervise their application. He has special qualities of intellect and training which enable him, with the assistance of the 'ulama, to apply the principles of Islam to the exigencies of the age and its changing needs. It is the mission of such a ruler to establish true Islamic government, restore Islamic civilization and integrate it with modernity in the form of technological advances which will bring strength and prosperity. It should be pointed out, however, that Rashid Rida's perception of *ijtihād* is not that of the judgement of the *mujtahid* eliciting the law from the sacred texts, but of a council of individual pious Muslims using independent reasoning. Although the ruler was supposed to exercise *ijtihād*, in practice he was a just prince, a figure of very different antecedents to Khomeini's *faqih* (jurist).<sup>8</sup> The use of independent reasoning for those other than the 'ulama in the interpretation of the holy texts was to be repudiated in Khomeini's work *The Revealing of Secrets*,<sup>9</sup> and denounced on other occasions.

These then were the principal contributors to the line of debate which was to influence Khomeini and provide a framework on which, at various times, he was to fashion his own ideas on the Islamic state. That he was influenced by al-Afghani cannot be doubted. As to whether he had read the works of the other thinkers, it cannot be certain, but they contributed to an intellectual milieu in the Islamic world in which Islam is seen as a divinely inspired totality, and the application of the shari'a as both its manifestation and its legitimization. Islam is also seen as an all-embracing ideology which guides and shapes individual and community in both religious and political terms, the Islamic totalism, which reflects the concept of unity – *tauhid* – mentioned in the Introduction.

### **Khomeini's Ideas on the Islamic State in *The Revealing of Secrets***

In Chapter II it was explained that Khomeini's background in *'irfan* led him to see the state as being embodied in one wise and virtuous figure, in the tradition of Plato's philosopher ruler. It is one of the contentions of this work that Khomeini had not one vision of the Islamic state but several, and that each intermeshed with the others in a flexible entirety. His ideas on the subject are discernible in his first work to touch upon the problems of religion and state, *The Revealing of Secrets*, published in 1943–44.<sup>10</sup> This work was written primarily in refutation of attacks upon the 'ulama by writers in the press during the Reza Shah

period, and to rectify misconceptions that had arisen among the public as a result of the dissemination of these views.<sup>11</sup> It was, however, mainly a refutation of one work, *Asar-i hizar sala* (*The Secrets of a Thousand Years*) by 'Ali Akbar Hakamizadeh, published 1943.<sup>12</sup> Hakamizadeh had accused the 'ulama of encouraging superstitious practices to perpetuate their own power, and being the main cause of the country's backwardness. He challenged them to respond to specific questions on, for example, the precise nature of the authority of the *mujtahids* and the legitimacy of man-made laws. According to one report, during a visit to Tehran Khomeini was requested by a group of bazaar merchants to give a comprehensive answer to Hakamizadeh.<sup>13</sup> According to another, as Hakamizadeh originated from Qum, his work came immediately to the attention of the Qum seminary, and Khomeini sat down and wrote a refutation, taking one or two months off to do so.<sup>14</sup> Khomeini does not mention Hakamizadeh and the latter's mentor, the rationalist political thinker and historian Ahmad Kasravi, an outstanding intellectual figure of his time, but the ideas of both are recognizable in his work. He accuses them of undermining religion and thereby destroying the basis of the country's independence.<sup>15</sup> He infers that these attacks took place under the patronage of Reza Shah, and claims the 'ulama were singled out as a special target because they alone could oppose policies detrimental to the country.<sup>16</sup>

In *The Revealing of Secrets* there is evidence of two other thinkers on the subject of religion and state, both of them Iranian *mujtahids*. The first is Shaikh Fazlullah Nuri, who demanded constitutionalism according to the laws of Islam at the time of the Constitutional Revolution, and then argued that parliamentary legislation would undermine the shari'a. The second is Mirza Muhammad Husain Na'ini (1860–1936), who put forward a proposal for constitutional government under the supervision of the 'ulama. It is to be noted that the ideas of these two *mujtahids* emerged largely from the Iranian political context, rather than from the Islamic theoretical background discussed earlier. Both, however, like al-Afghani, were concerned to resist Western intrusion into Iran, and that government should at least be in accordance with the spirit of the shari'a.

In *The Revealing of Secrets* we may detect Khomeini's mind working on a number of possibilities for government in general, and an Islamic state in particular. By the latter is meant a state in which government is defined in one way or another by Islamic values, and is responsible to a



greater or lesser degree to the law of Islam. One possibility considered by Khomeini is monarchical government, and indeed some accounts of *The Revealing of Secrets* have commented on it being mildly pro-monarchical.<sup>17</sup> Others have noted that Khomeini does not declare monarchy to be by its nature illegitimate, but that he takes the negative view that cooperation with unjust government was better than living with no government at all.<sup>18</sup> The issue is most consistently explored in the section on *hukumat va vilayat* (government and guardianship).<sup>19</sup> It is evident here that monarchy was to Khomeini an unsatisfactory arrangement with which the 'ulama had had to find accommodation in the past in default of preferable or ideal alternatives, particularly as there must be some sort of government in Islam.<sup>20</sup> That there must be a state, Khomeini does not doubt. He follows traditional Islamic thinkers in the opinion that man needs government for his well-being and the establishment of good order, as well as for the protection of Islam. Khomeini gives examples of the Shi'i 'ulama providing assistance to the early Islamic state even though they know it to be oppressive. In the past the clergy had acquiesced to the rule of many shahs to ensure, at the very least, the semi-application of the laws of Islam. He states that:

They [the *fuqaha*] have not opposed the existing unsatisfactory arrangements and they have not wished to undermine the government. Up till now, if the 'ulama have opposed a particular sultan, their dissatisfaction has been with that person on the grounds that they have found his existence contrary to the interests of the country. Till now this group has not opposed the fundamental principle of the sultanate. On the contrary many of the great 'ulama cooperated with the government in the administration of the country ... and however much the state or sultan acted badly towards them, or brought pressure upon them, they did not oppose them.<sup>21</sup>

At the present time, he continues, the clergy are accused of wanting to make government seem evil, but if a difficulty arose for the country the mujtahids would recognize it as their duty to combat it and cooperate with the government, however unjust, in dangerous times.<sup>22</sup> He refers to Shaikh Murtaza Ansari, the leading authority of Shi'ism in the mid-nineteenth century, as saying it is permitted to be a *vali* (agent) to a *zalim* (oppressor) to further the well-being of the servants of God and assist those seeking to attain their rights.<sup>23</sup> Khomeini thus envisaged

accommodation in alliance with some form of absolutist monarchy to be permissible but hardly desirable.

His views on the role of the 'ulama in constitutional government were more complex. The advantage of absolutist government was that it produced regulations but not laws with a legitimate basis on which to challenge the authority of the shari'a. The problem with constitutional government was that it provided legislation based on the will of the people in parliament which did indeed stand against the shari'a in terms of legitimacy. In parts of *The Revealing of Secrets* Khomeini appears to echo Shaikh Fazlullah in his most fundamentalist phase, believing that there can be no law other than the law of God. He said:

Any sovereignty except the sovereignty of God is against the well-being of the people and is tyranny [*jaur*], and except for the laws of God, all laws are void and useless.<sup>24</sup>

Khomeini's argument against legislation (and implicitly Western-style constitutionalism) is effectively three-pronged: it introduces defective law; it is not suitable to Iran; and it will bring to Iran all the evils of Europe. Of these three, Khomeini argues the first most strongly. Legislation is defective because it does not accept spiritual supervision, and this leads, in the absence of what God has ordained, to unjust or self-interested government.<sup>25</sup> The result is that the government acts against the interests of the people and the country, bypassing laws according to their own flawed judgement. At his most fundamentalist, he argued at one point against the view that the shari'a covered only some subjects, saying God had provided for all contingencies.

Khomeini also had more practical reservations about constitutional government and how it might work in a country such as Iran. One of these concerned the way in which elective arrangements could be controlled by the ruling elite and made to serve their interests – reservations which were to be shared by Nasser. He wrote:

Look at this country and see what infamy is perpetrated in the name of ministry and representation, and what intrigues and illegalities are carried out in the supposed cause of service to the country and law.<sup>26</sup>

He went on to argue that constitutionalism, dictatorship and communism differ only in name, and are all equally exploitative of the governed

and equally self-interested.<sup>27</sup> His arguments against representation as a pillar of the constitutional system carry similar criticisms, as he maintained that representatives were elected either by force or through bribery, and that they used their office to plunder the country at will.<sup>28</sup> A further problem was that the majority of the people of Iran did not understand representation and election, and the rights and duties of representatives:

The majority of the people know nothing of representation and its duties and the limits of authority. For this reason, in those provinces which have populations of more than 200,000 not more than 10,000–12,000 forms for elections are distributed, and in that case representation is oppression, and its precepts injustice, and therefore cannot be justified. Secondly, there have been 14 elections in Iran, and everybody has seen that, whether in the period before the dictatorship, or during that disgraceful time, or afterwards, that is the present, representation has not been a means of spreading justice and freedom.<sup>29</sup>

At the same time, legislation, representation and the whole constitutional system are identified with the laws of Europe, and are a possible means for the penetration of Iran by the West. Khomeini points out the misfortunes brought down on other countries by Europe and its ambitions, and by its own disturbed state at the time, mentioning the injustice of dictatorship and the illegal conquests of Hitler. 'If Islam went to Europe', he said, 'these problems would not occur.'<sup>30</sup>

What, however, if constitutional government, and in particular its legislation, were under the supervision of the clergy in the manner proposed by Na'ini? There are traces of Khomeini's thinking on this question in *The Revealing of Secrets*. He looks firstly at the question of guardianship, pointing out that the *fuqaha* (jurists) had already debated the guardianship of the *mujtahid*, whether it should exist and what the limits of its authority were.<sup>31</sup> He envisages it to be possible that the 'ulama may give permission to another or others to rule, providing they did not infringe the divine laws, and as long as the customary law of the land was the divine law, not laws brought in from Europe.<sup>32</sup> On the whole, however, Khomeini's concerns over the control of the elective apparatus seem to imply that mere supervision of the conformity of legislation to the shari'a by the 'ulama would not be sufficient. In this he

shows himself as having less faith in constitutionalism and the representational system than either Na'ini or Mudarris.

It is clear from parts of *The Revealing of Secrets* that Khomeini, even at this stage, was contemplating the possibility, seemingly remote, of establishing a better mode of actual government: a form of consultative system under the control of the 'ulama. The key to this vision of just government was above all the law, the shari'a, the implementation of which would be the first principle of the structure of the state. To achieve the only just rule, the rule of God, the government must be skilled in jurisprudence and its administration should be carried out for the benefit of both people and country – a state which in effect is under strong supervision by the 'ulama, though not under their actual government. This supervision may be attained by:

The establishment of a council [*majlis*] to set up a government or change a regime. The council would consist of the exalted and just *fuqaha* and mullahs, who, with fairness and cooperation and piety, and without motives of personal interest and appetite, would deliberate on the election of a sultan for the benefit of the country and the people, and then will choose a just sultan who will respect the laws of Islam, the laws of the land, which are based on the divine law. We do not say, and we have not said that the shah should be a *faqih*, or that he be militarily strong, but that he must not transgress *fiqh*, which is the customary law of the country.<sup>33</sup>

He then proceeds to elaborate upon the role of the *fuqaha*:

We, who say that government and guardianship [*hukumat va vilayat*] must be in this time with the jurists do not mean that a *faqih* should be shah or vizier, or a military man or a dustman. Instead we say that, just as elective assembly may be established by the people of a country, and the same assembly may establish a government and change a monarchy and choose someone as a ruler, and just as a consultative assembly may be established by a group of dubious persons, and they may impose the laws of Europe, or the laws of their own making on a country of which not one thing is suited to the conditions of Europe ... similarly an assembly could be set up of pious *mujtahids* who both know the laws of God and are just and free of selfish motives, and who have no aim nor worldly

ambition except the good of the people and the execution of the law of God, and who would choose someone as a just sultan who could not infringe the laws of God and who would hold back from oppression and transgression against life and property – in that case what would be wrong with the order of the country?<sup>34</sup>

The concept or supervision of the government by the *fuqaha* possibly derives from Article II of the Supplementary Fundamental Law of 1907, originally proposed by Shaikh Fazlullah Nuri with the purpose of ensuring that the newly elected assembly did not pass legislation contrary to the shari'a.<sup>35</sup> But Fazlullah's Council of Guardians, proposed in that Article, was conceived of as taking a largely passive role, whereas the council envisaged by Khomeini is intended actively to supervise the government. This does not, however, represent the assumption of legal, administrative and executive power to which Khomeini exhorted the *fuqaha* in *Islamic Government*. The guardianship of *The Revealing of Secrets* appears to be no more than the generally recognized functions of the *fuqaha* as representatives of the Imam of the Age. Their participation in government stems from the advice they are able to give from their knowledge of the shari'a.

In sum, Khomeini had made some advance on both Shaikh Fazlullah's Article II of the Fundamental Law and Na'ini's role of supervisory participation for the *fuqaha*, but had yet to reach the stage of their assumption of power. Another view of the state thus emerges as a form of consultative government with a sultan, with a pronounced role for the 'ulama and a possible elective element, though that is uncertain. The similarities with Rashid Rida may be noted, as well as the significant difference that it is the 'ulama alone, rather than in combination with the pious laity, who are likely to take a prominent role.

Yet another model of the state, however, had unfolded for Khomeini in the years of Reza Shah's rule: that of a strong centralized state, the advantages of which were not lost upon him. He pointed out that the foundations of government must be based on strength, and that there was strong justification within both the Qur'an and the Traditions for executive power, a full treasury and a balanced budget, and for protecting the country from intrusion by foreigners through jihad.<sup>36</sup> One important object of expenditure in Khomeini's Islamic state is an effective army. He noted the strong army of the Pahlavi state and remarked that:

There should be an army, but organized on an Islamic basis. It should protect the country when it is threatened and should propagate the Islamic message in time of peace.<sup>37</sup>

In short, an Islamic government must do all in its power and all that its budget will permit to strive to protect the country and intimidate foreigners both at the frontiers and elsewhere. The organization and provision of the army must be carried out in a just manner and financed by Islamic taxation. Money will thus be spent in the path of God (and not Pahlavi nationalism), for the benefit of the Islamic state, so that the state may prosper and the army becomes the means of greatness of the country, not the means of oppression of others nor the encroachment of foreigners.<sup>38</sup> The army, however, is to have duties beyond the usual call of Islamic armies, for its function will also be to propagate religion, which is the best form of propagation.<sup>39</sup> This duty will be carried out from an office of propaganda and will, it is asserted, have such influence that the problem of compulsion in military service will be resolved by the people volunteering. All the people, men and women, will belong to the office of propaganda, and their duty will be set out in a public code which will be widely published so that all will act in accordance with it. The word concerning the Islamic way will spread through propaganda on the radio and the striving of individual Islamic soldiers, so that the existing Pahlavi organization will be replaced. It is worth noting that Hasan al-Banna had also advocated a strong army and the use of modern propaganda in Egypt at this period.

Economic prosperity can be achieved by just taxation, for which Islam makes a number of provisions.<sup>40</sup> Khomeini expounds at length on the various Islamic taxes, some compulsory and some voluntary, some having regular purposes and some being raised to meet extraordinary expenses, in which case they must be levied in as just a manner as possible. On the expenditure of the budget, Khomeini demonstrates his strong sense of social justice in giving precedence to meeting the needs of the poor, who should be granted an allowance administered from special outlets.<sup>41</sup> The remainder of the budget is to be spent on the army, the administration and the maintenance of the infrastructure. He denies that Islamic taxes are intended only for the religious classes, asserting that they are meant for the well-being of the people as a whole. Comparison may be made with *Islamic Government*, where Khomeini also advocates Islamic taxes,<sup>42</sup> although once the Islamic Republic was established

the idea proved impracticable. Overall an Islamic order that is just and serves the oppressed, the people and the country is contrasted in Khomeini's mind with the current order, which he describes as injustice and oppression by a band of robbers and swindlers who have taken the opportunity to oppress the people and build expensive edifices for their own use.<sup>43</sup> On the subject of Reza Shah's educational and religious policies, particularly the sale of religious endowments, Khomeini's objections appear to rest not so much on the act of selling as on the misappropriation of the proceeds. At least previously, he claims, money had been spent on religious ceremonies and on the poor, whereas, now, contrary to the wishes of the bequeather, the proceeds were expended to the benefit of the expropriator.<sup>44</sup> Khomeini's principal invective, however is reserved for Reza Shah's attempts to reform the clergy. Admitting that the 'ulama were indeed much in need of reform, Khomeini says such measures needed to be carried out by a person of learning, not one whom he considers a virtual illiterate.<sup>45</sup> In one passage, railing against the injustice of the Pahlavi regime, Khomeini warns:

You all know that if the mullahs ever found moral influence among the people, they would remove your pernicious officials and install pious elements in place of you – perhaps God will want it, and one day the slumbering people of Iran will awaken so that you will get your just deserts.<sup>46</sup>

Indeed, it was felt by his associates and those who knew him that Khomeini was already envisaging the possibility of government by the *fajaha* at the time of the writing of *The Revealing of Secrets*,<sup>47</sup> although at that point this seemed remote.

In sum, in *The Revealing of Secrets* Khomeini was already looking towards the possibility of a more truly Islamic and modern government, though his ideas were not fully formulated. He intended the execution of the shari'a and the organization of a government, but saw problems with an elective and legislative assembly, a mistrust created by the perceived example of the Constitutional Revolution.<sup>48</sup> The projected role for the clergy is much more positive than that envisaged by Na'ini, but supervisory rather than actual government. They are also perceived to be participating as a body. Most innovative, however, is the perception of the possible Islamic state as a strong state, and in this the principal influence on Khomeini would appear to be Reza Shah, although Hasan al-Banna was

also arguing for a powerful Islamic state. It shows also in his awareness of the significance of the role of propaganda and his arguments that education in particular should be imbued with a devotion to Islam, which functions in his mind, albeit not precisely, as not only a religion but also an ideology.

### **Khomeini's Concept of the Islamic State in the 1960s**

No other sustained discussion of the Islamic state on the part of Khomeini has yet emerged from the years before 1963, but he gradually developed his purpose of realizing the divine wish to establish a moral and sacred community on earth. From that time there are both oblique and direct references to this in his speeches and correspondence. He came out much more strongly for 'ulama influence than in *The Revealing of Secrets*, arguing that if the government consulted Islam, and prepared an Islamic programme and executed it according to the views of the 'ulama, the whole country would benefit.<sup>49</sup> Quite what constituted an Islamic programme was not made manifest. The role of the shari'a, so crucial at the time of the establishment of the Islamic Republic, is little mentioned. In a speech in 1965, which was essentially about cultural imperialism, he stated that places of corruption, such as cinemas and theatres, were obliged to open on Fridays, whereas public places were closed, leading to ill effects on the young.<sup>50</sup> He suggested that places of recreation should be regulated according to the shari'a so that people continued to follow the right path. An example of how this works is perhaps the manner in which funfairs in the present Islamic Republic have a place for prayer and guardians to ensure correct apparel. In a letter to the prime minister, Amir 'Abbas Hoveyda, written in 1967, Khomeini complains that his exile is illegal according to both the shari'a and the Fundamental Law.<sup>51</sup> The implementation of the shari'a was thus not emphasized as a major point in his programme at that time, nor is it likely that it would have won much support outside traditional religious society.

Khomeini does, however, frequently return to the responsibility of the clergy to engage in politics and the duty of the government to consult them. He fought government policy to reduce the influence of the clergy, propounding that if their role was greater then the country would not fall under the influence of the British and latterly the Americans.<sup>52</sup> He pointed to the example of the way Mudarris withstood Russian encroachment.<sup>53</sup> Khomeini also enjoined the 'ulama to win over the young to Islam, and to teach morals and knowledge. He added,



however, that knowledge itself was not enough, and character training was also necessary.<sup>54</sup> Propounding ideas essentially taken from the ethics of *'irfan*, he stressed the need for purification of thought and conduct to become open to the light of God; to attain this light required effort and self-discipline. The clergy had thus to take spiritual leadership of a town, country and a people, and use it to serve Islam. In so doing they had to demonstrate the highest standards of ethical conduct, thus creating a direct relationship between the public and private virtues of the clergy as vanguard and those of society.<sup>55</sup>

Khomeini did also on occasion make clear that he envisaged Islam as an ideology, in the sense of a programme for life as well as government. He said:

Islamic government has great responsibilities. It should protect Islam, including the unity of Islam, and its precepts, and make it understood in developed countries so they do not think it is like Christianity, merely a personal matter between the individual and God. Islam is a programme for life and for government. It has provided government for about 1500 years and more ... It is more than a few words on morality ... It regulates life from before birth, family life and life in society. It does not just involve prayer and pilgrimage ... Islam has a political agenda and provides for the administration of a country.<sup>56</sup>

This was one of the few occasions in this period that Khomeini made it clear that he saw Islam as a totalist, all-embracing system. He went on to elucidate that the whole world should be put under one word, *tauhid* (unity), but the interests of the rulers prevented this, as did in his view the interests of Zionism and imperialism.<sup>57</sup>

Here Khomeini was emphasizing not just the internal unity of Iran, but the unity of all Muslims. He was anxious to stress that Islam was a programme of progress and that the 'ulama were not reactionary. 'When they all came to Tehran recently, did they travel by donkey?'<sup>58</sup>

Some indications of society and economy under Islamic government are given. Issues relating to social justice are regularly raised. He complained of governmental squander when parts of the country had no fresh water, doctors or medicines.<sup>59</sup> Governments, he said, belonged to the people, the country's budget came from their pockets, and the government should be answerable to them for expenditure and not waste

money on its own indulgences.<sup>60</sup> He lambasted the regime over poverty, backwardness and neglect.<sup>61</sup>

Thus the Islamic state, it may be inferred, was to be one which concentrated upon the needs of the people and devoted the budget to their welfare and health. This is supported by certain remarks on taxes; similar to his views in *The Revealing of Secrets*, these should be Islamic taxes collected 'by the means that Islam collected them, by the sword, and do you think you will see a poor person left?'.<sup>62</sup> The economy drew few references from Khomeini, possibly because it was potentially such a divisive topic. He opposed what he saw as the dominance of imperialist influence, and deplored the mismanagement which had led to the importation of 'everything' from abroad.<sup>63</sup> With regard to society, he occasionally made references to the difficulties of the group which essentially supported him, the merchants and guilds of the bazaar.<sup>64</sup>

During this period his principal grounds for attacking the shah's regime were not so much its un-Islamic nature as that it acted in contravention of the constitution, the Fundamental Law. Of course, mention of the Fundamental Law meant that he could draw on more lay and secular support for his cause than mention of Islam alone could bring. At the time of the local councils laws he stated that they were contrary to the Fundamental Law and the laws of the assembly as well as those of Islam.<sup>65</sup> In 1964 he attacked the manner of the establishment of the Iran Novin Party, saying that it bore no relation to the proper constitution of political parties as envisaged by the Fundamental Law, particularly as the deputies were not correctly elected and the prime minister had not been appointed by either the representatives of the party or the people.<sup>66</sup> In 1970 he attacked agreements with capitalists and imperialists as being against the interests of the nation and ratified by an assembly not elected by the people, which was contrary to the constitution.<sup>67</sup> It may be recalled, however, from *The Revealing of Secrets* that Khomeini had no particular faith in the existing Fundamental Law because of its secular nature.

Khomeini was otherwise much concerned about foreign influence in Iran, and in the Muslim world as a whole, with which he became more preoccupied from the time of his residence in Najaf. Many of his views fit in, as Abrahamian has indicated, with third worldism. They included the conviction that the economy was subordinated to the interests of the West, rather than those of Iran. He felt Western influence as a form of

cultural imperialism, for example disliking the kind of music being played on the radio, and complained that not enough was done to promote Iran's independent Muslim culture.<sup>68</sup> He attacked Western dominance through compliant regimes, and saw the answer as Muslim unity as advocated by al-Afghani. In particular Sunnis and Shi'a should unite and forget their differences.<sup>69</sup>

Thus Khomeini gave little indication of the alternative he sought to secular monarchy in this period, beyond the fact that it was to be a politically, culturally and economically independent Islamic state.

### ***Islamic Government and the Government of the Jurist***

Khomeini's main political treatise, *Islamic Government*, began as a series of lectures delivered in Najaf in 1969–70, which, after corrections to the text by Khomeini, were published in the autumn of 1970 as a book in Persian,<sup>70</sup> and 1976 in Arabic in Beirut as part of a five-volume work of *fiqh* entitled *Kitab al-ba'i* (*The Book of Purchases*). The text was also disseminated in the form of tapes. It appeared again in various editions from 1973 under the title of *Nama'i az Imam Musavi Kashf al-Ghita*.<sup>71</sup> Its principal purpose was to demonstrate a legitimate base in Islamic jurisprudence for the assumption of power by the 'ulama (and correspondingly show the illegitimate nature of the incumbent regime). It was also an exhortation to the clergy, many of whom were still reluctant to take on a political role, to become actively involved in politics. Khomeini found validation for government by the 'ulama in the juristic tradition which saw them as the one remaining rightful authority. But, whereas according to classical Shi'ism their authority was confined to matters of the shari'a, Khomeini drew upon traditions within the Shi'i canon which suggested they might rightfully rule, as well as on previous, principally nineteenth-century, interpretations of those traditions. The concept of the government of the jurist was not entirely new: it derived from a body of ideas which had been debated by the 'ulama since the nineteenth century, and possibly even went back to at least the Safavid period. As has been previously indicated, it was touched upon in *The Revealing of Secrets* and considered by Khomeini's classes in Qum in the 1940s and 1950s. It was also referred to in the early 1960s by Sayyid Muhammad Husain Tabataba'i.<sup>72</sup>

According to the Shi'i juristic theory of authority, the rightful ruler is the absent 12th Imam. During his occultation the question arises of who has authority over the community. His place is considered to have been

taken by usurpers, and all actual power is illegitimate. The Shi'i community, however, is in need of rightful guidance, and while the Imam is absent it is provided by the 'ulama. The basis on which they lay claim to authority is a delegation from the Sixth Imam, Ja'far al-Sadiq, and it is conferred on them because of their knowledge of the Shi'i Traditions. Initially the theory of the general delegation (*niyabat-i 'amm*), which evolved first in the tenth and eleventh centuries, referred only to juridical authority: the executive functions of the Imams were considered lapsed. In the period between the eleventh and sixteenth centuries the 'ulama assumed most of the executive duties of the Imams.

The guidance of the community is in particular provided by the *mujtahids* through their power to exercise their own judgement (*ijtihad*); other believers should follow their personal example. They are thus pre-eminent in the knowledge of the roots of the law, which entitles them to give rulings. The obligation of the Twelver Shi'a to follow the direction of a *mujtahid* is also based on the duty of obedience to the Hidden Imam. Apart from his learning, the *mujtahid* is an ordinary believer and has no claim to the infallibility of the Imams. The *mujtahid* should be exemplary in conduct, the protector of the weak against the strong. There are also particular areas of general affairs, sometimes called the affairs of the *hisbah*, which the shari'a cannot abandon, but which have been described as matters on which the views of the shari'a have been neglected.<sup>73</sup> An oft-cited example is the responsibility for the care of minors. There was, however, according to some 'ulama, no permissible reason to interfere in what they termed non-*hisbah* matters<sup>74</sup> (i.e. government).

With regard to the state, the 'ulama held a variety of positions. In the pre-Safavid period, under Sunni government, they were largely quietist. The ascension of the Safavids brought a new cooperation between state and Shi'i Islam, with each reinforcing the other to their mutual benefit. Most 'ulama found accommodation with the state: some were appointed to powerful positions by the shah, and thus became allied to the regime; others distanced themselves from worldly power in their religious institutions.

When the Qajars came to power at the end of the eighteenth century they were faced with the problem of lack of legitimacy, not being able to claim, as the Safavids had, descent from the Imams. Although their rule was based on power (in the specific sense of might), they also found it necessary to seek alliance with the 'ulama, who had in the meantime reinforced their position by strengthening their doctrine on the subject

of independent judgement (*ijtihad*). Concomitantly, they were strengthening the significance of their learning ('*alamiyya*'), to the point where it approached the superior level of knowledge ('*ilm*') of the imams.

Both shah and 'ulama equivocated on the subject of the legitimate ruler. Mirza Qummi (d. 1815–16), addressed the shah as 'Shadow of God' while carefully qualifying the term.<sup>75</sup> Others, such as Shaikh Ja'far Najafi (d. 1821), were willing to confer a limited legitimacy on the shah as defender of Islam acting as an agent of the 'ulama.<sup>76</sup> An important theory developed by Sayyid Ja'far ibn Abu Ishaq Kashfi (d. 1850)<sup>77</sup> and also by Shaikh Fazlullah Nuri (d. 1909) was that of a division of authority between the shah and the 'ulama, the responsibility of the first being for good order and defence, and of the second for interpretation in matters of religion.

Khomeini, however, was primarily influenced by Mulla Ahmad Naraqi, (d. 1831–32), who was the first *mujtahid* to put forward an exposition, albeit brief, of the government of the jurist. Naraqi argued that only a qualified jurist could be the legitimate ruler in the absence of the Imam, and that government by the jurist was the only legitimate kind. Naraqi benefited from the above-mentioned strong trend in the reformulation of *ijtihad* and '*ilm*'; before Naraqi the idea of the guardianship of the jurist had not received independent attention in works of jurisprudence,<sup>78</sup> and his originality lay in dealing with the guardianship of the jurist in such a way. Naraqi discovered traditions to confirm the 'ulama's rights and duties in the matter of guardianship. In his work concerning the rules of jurisprudence, *Al-'Awa'id al-ayyam*, he drew a distinction between governance (*vilayat-i 'amma*) and special cases of trusteeship (*vilayat-i khassa*), and emphasized the rights of the jurist in both.<sup>79</sup> In sum, he argued that the *fukah* had authority in all the same matters as the Prophet and Imams, except in a few instances specifically excluded by the shari'a on the grounds of consensus or established texts. More specifically he said that the *fukah* had authority in two areas: firstly, where the Prophet and Imams had formerly had authority but this had lapsed;<sup>80</sup> and secondly, where there was some connection to religion and the shari'a which could be dealt with rationally, and where the *fukah* were perceived as having an agreed and substantiated view. Naraqi also justified his view on the basis of self-evidency and rational reasoning, that when the Prophet and his deputies (the Imams) were absent, someone had to take their place and this could only be the 'ulama as the most excellent after the Imams.<sup>81</sup> It would seem

that Naraqi's discussion emerged from a heated contemporary debate, most particularly as to whether these matters were part of general affairs or the responsibility of the 'ulama.<sup>82</sup>

The debate went on after Naraqi, and the subject was taken up by his former student Shaikh Murtaza Ansari (d. 1864), the leading authority of his time. He basically asked the question that, if the *fuqaha* had the authority to govern in the absence of the Imam, on the basis of what evidence could such a right be claimed?<sup>83</sup> He considered the matter of the boundaries of 'ulama authority in detail in his work on the guardianship of disposal of mosques and properties, and discussed guardianship as possibly taking one of two forms. The first, where the guardian might act independently on the basis of his own discretion, was, in Ansari's view, the prerogative of the Prophet and the imams, constituting as it did absolute authority over the people. In the second type of guardianship, which is not independent but based on permission (that is to say involves statutory and discretionary measures), then responsibility could be perceived as delegated to the *fuqaha*. Therefore, in Ansari's view, the *fuqaha* have residual guardianship in the sense that they could only exercise certain kinds of power in the affairs of the *hisbah*,<sup>84</sup> and then only with regard to those Muslims, like minors, who were unable to administer their own affairs.<sup>85</sup> From another point of view, that of Shaikh Muhammad Hasan Najafi (d. 1849–50), there was a question of why the authority of the jurist should have priority over that of ordinary Muslims (laymen), who were also considered to have a share in responsibility for matters of the *hisbah*. Had God created an authority for the jurist in these matters, or was he appointed (as a deputy) through the sayings of the Imams, or was he an agent of the Imams?<sup>86</sup>

These questions were a continued subject of debate among the 'ulama from this time, and broadly there were two views: that the jurists' authority in general affairs was confined to shari'a matters, and that, on the contrary, it could cover government as well. It is hardly surprising that, given the pressure of Britain and Russia on Iran at this time, the 'ulama were concerned with clarifying and possibly extending the limits of their authority.

The subject was touched upon by Burujirdi<sup>87</sup> himself, on the basis of the authority of 'Umar bin Hanzala, who argued that in every society there are duties related to such matters as war, peace and taxation which are not the business of the ordinary people but of the government. In Islam there is a chain of political and social laws, such as the *hudud*,

collection and disbursement of taxes, which must be performed by spiritual leaders. When the Imam is absent it is not clear from the sources what should be done. However, it is certain that the Imams would appoint someone to act in their place, and he could only be a just *faqih*.<sup>88</sup>

Khomeini first took up the matter in a work of *fiqh*, *Al-Rasa'il* (*The Treatises*), published 1332/1953, where he discussed *vilayat-i faqih* in the context of *ijtihad* and *taqlid*. He argued that God, the Prophet and the Imams had wished the community to have leadership in political and social affairs, its most important needs.<sup>89</sup> It was not necessary to refer to oppressive governors and judges who were in effect *taghut* – idolatrous – for the jurist also had *vilayat* in such matters.<sup>90</sup> In another work, *Qa'ida la-zarar* (*Methods without Harm*), he also mentioned the precepts of government as part of the duties of the *faqih*.<sup>91</sup> Here he said that the Prophet had three main duties: spreading the divine message, judgement and leadership. He alone could perform the first duty, but the second two were not confined to him, and the jurist at the time of the occultation had all the authority over these that the Prophet had had. In 1964–65, in *Tahrir al-vasila* (*The Means of Solving the Problem*), written when he was in Turkey, Khomeini argued that in the time of the greater occultation, the general agents (*navvab-i 'amm*) of the Imam were his successors in political matters. These views found full expression in *Islamic Government* (1969–70).

As in his speeches and *The Revealing of Secrets*, Khomeini points to the necessity of government in Islam to ensure that its ordinances are implemented, the weak are protected and foreign influence is excluded. He argues that the shari'a is reluctant for the affairs of the *hisbah* to be neglected, and that someone must be responsible for overseeing them. In particular, matters that are clearly the responsibility of the Imam should in his absence devolve on the *fuyaha*.<sup>92</sup> By contrast with the acceptance of monarchy in *The Revealing of Secrets*, government must be truly Islamic government. Gone are the accommodation with monarchy and the equivocation over constitutionalism. He insists that the Imam forbids all recourse to illegitimate government, including both its executive and judicial branches.<sup>93</sup> By refusing cooperation with 'non-Islamic repressive regimes', Muslims may bring about their downfall. Monarchy is in any case an un-Islamic institution which has survived since the Umayyad usurpation of 'Ali's rightful rule.<sup>94</sup> Khomeini refers to it as *kufi* and *taghut*, infidelity and idolatry (illegitimate power). It is not possible for a pious individual to flourish in a society which is under

corrupt government, and it is a duty incumbent on all Muslims to overthrow such a government.

Constitutionalism, on the other hand, is tarred with the brush of foreign origin, being based in the case of Iran upon Belgian arrangements with borrowings from the French and Belgian legal codes, and therefore alien<sup>95</sup> (an argument which had previously been used by Shaikh Fazlullah). In fact, the whole constitutional movement was a conspiracy instigated in Iran by the British as a means of eradicating Russian interference;<sup>96</sup> another purpose was to introduce Western laws.

The current unjust state of affairs must be ended by political engagement by the 'ulama, who should mobilize the people through propaganda for their cause. They must act as the vanguard in the struggle against oppression and corruption, and should organize a movement of committed and pious people to rise up and establish Islamic government, thus ensuring Islamic laws and institutions.<sup>97</sup>

Who should govern and what should be the qualifications of the ruler? General qualities such as intelligence and administrative ability are important, but two specific qualities are essential: knowledge of the law and justice. The ruler must therefore be the most learned in the law, and since a ruler of the ordinary kind does not have such knowledge, the *fuqaha* themselves should rule.<sup>98</sup> A just ruler is one who grants Muslims their rights and is fair in the imposition of taxes, which he spends rightfully, and in the implementation of the law. However, not all officials need to be *fuqaha*, as they will need only to know such laws as pertain to their duties. Although no individual can be expected to have the virtues of the Prophet, the ruler should be untainted by major sin, as well as having the necessary knowledge.<sup>99</sup> The jurist does not have the spiritual status of the Imams – that is to say he is not infallible – but he has the same authority.

Should there be one *faqih* or many? If a single person is capable of performing the task, it is his responsibility to carry it out; otherwise it devolves on the *fuqaha* as a group.<sup>100</sup> Here it may be noted that the tradition in Islamic law was towards the consensus of all the 'ulama, or at least the *mujtahids*, and despite the tendency from the mid-nineteenth century to search for a single *marja'*, the position was not well established, there being, except in a few cases, contemporary disputes as to who the *marja'* was.

To find justification in terms of jurisprudence for his theory of government, Khomeini produced traditions including some from



Naraqi. Much debate goes on among the 'ulama as to the strength and weakness of these traditions, their interpretation and whether in fact they do justify assumption of government. Ayatollah Khu'i, regarded by many as the leading jurist of his time, was one who never endorsed *vilayat-i faqih*. In Iran, Khomeini's revolutionary notions were opposed by a section of religious society, and by the Hujjatiyya group.<sup>101</sup> Khomeini believed that legitimate Islamic government could be established under a *faqih* or the *fuqaha*. The Hujjatiyya, on the other hand, believed that such a government would pre-empt the right of the Mahdi, the 12th Imam and the only possible legitimate ruler, to return and govern the Shi'i state when he so pleased.

The powers of the jurist are as great as those of the Prophet, but exist only as a relative and external (*i'tibari*) matter. This may be contrasted with the spiritual pre-eminence of the Imams, which is intrinsic – that is to say it derives from their personal qualities, especially their infallibility. As a result they may exercise not only government over men but over all creation – cosmic government (*vilayat-i takvini*). This classification is significant for, while the term *vilayat* enhances the status of the 'ulama, any impression that they may aspire to supernatural status, higher than that of ordinary human beings, is dispelled.<sup>102</sup>

In Islam there exist at all times ultimate holders of authority (*ulu'l-amr*), with the role of completing the Prophet's mission and the right to command obedience. This includes the duty to ensure that man does not stray from the divinely ordered path laid out for him. The holders of authority must also protect religion and prevent its corruption by discord and heresy.<sup>103</sup> In Shi'ism these holders of authority were classically the prophets and the Imams. In *Islamic Government*, Khomeini does not refer to the 'ulama by this title, but he implies they hold such a position, not as the result of divine delegation like the Imams, but because of their role as agents of the Imams. He also explains that the term 'imam' may be used to refer to the jurist, but only in the sense of his being a leader or guide with the necessary knowledge.

The Islamic state is really defined and given concrete substance by the law, the shari'a, which in effect the state exists to implement. It is the shari'a that ensures that the Muslim citizen is upright and virtuous; it is a complete social system which meets all of man's needs and covers all human relations.<sup>104</sup> It is not limited to time and place, a point Khomeini also made in *The Revealing of Secrets*, and it may not remain in abeyance or be restricted at any period.<sup>105</sup> The law is actually the ruler, and

ensures the security of all subjects – the people are free within the limits it sets.<sup>106</sup> The law is also the instrument of justice in society. To Khomeini the position of the jurist is inextricably bound up with the shari'a. His assumption of power is justified by the need to enforce it. His authority is validated by his knowledge of it. His role is to execute it and to ensure a just society for Muslims. His power is defined and bound by it. Since it is all-embracing it abrogates the liberal constitutional notion of the separation of religion and politics. Khomeini refines upon the nature of Islamic government by differentiation, and explains that:

It is not a tyranny. It is not constitutional in the current sense, that of being based on approval of laws in accordance with the opinion of the majority. It is constitutional in the sense that the ruler is subject to a set of conditions in the governing and administering of the country, conditions set forth in the Qur'an and the Sunna.<sup>107</sup>

In other words, the shari'a is the constitution. He continues:

The fundamental difference between Islamic government and constitutional monarchies and republics is this: whereas the representatives of the people or the monarch in such regimes engage in legislation, in Islam the legislative power and competence to establish laws belong exclusively to God ... [Therefore] in an Islamic government a simple planning body takes the place of the legislative assembly that is one of the three branches of government. This body draws up programmes for the different ministries in the light of the ordinances of Islam.<sup>108</sup>

Khomeini deals with the issue of consent by saying that since the shari'a is automatically accepted by Muslims who acknowledge their duty of obedience to it, then they consent to its rule. As a result, government really does belong to the people, by contrast with a secular system, where those claiming to be the representatives of the majority of the people, he argues, will impose whatever they wish.

In these passages Khomeini's long-contained doubts about legislation and representation find their fullest expression. The principle of authority derived from above, noted in his concept of the state emanating from the *'irfan* tradition, is again manifest. Here the state is a

jurisprudential organization with the task of executing the law, but not creating it. In many ways his priorities were reflected in those of his bazaar following, to whom justice, in the form of a virtuous leader administering a fair law and fair taxation, came higher in priority than the notions of individual liberty and freedom of choice.

In the event, Khomeini was to accept an elected assembly and the principle of popular will, providing that the state was Islamic (in other words, it implemented the shari'a). The question arises as to why he did not propose such an arrangement in *Islamic Government*. Rashid Rida and Mawdudi were, after all, willing to make way for some secular legislation. Problems of consistency, identified by Shaikh Fazaulah Nuri and never adequately refuted by either lay or religious opponents, may offer one explanation. It is also possible that Khomeini felt that by introducing the concept of popular elections he might obscure the issue of the legitimacy of the claim of the 'ulama to govern.

The mobilization of the community to bring Islamic justice and ensure that government and society continue to conform to the shari'a is carried out under the injunction to enjoin good and prohibit evil (*amr-i bi ma'ruf va nahy az munkar* – a prescribed duty for Muslims in general affairs). Khomeini argues that if this duty was correctly performed, all others would fall into place.<sup>109</sup> To him it means security for Islam and struggling against oppression and exploitation, ensuring fair distribution of wealth and protection of the rights of the weak. It ensures community interests, and thus solidarity. It is made mandatory under conditions where it is not normally obligatory to challenge an unjust state. The concept of enjoining the good is used for similar purposes in the bazaar societies and in the writing of Mutahhari.

Khomeini also argues strongly at several points for social justice, particularly against the 'oppressors' who sought to monopolize the sources of wealth and make illicit use of them. The people must not be allowed to remain hungry and deprived while their wealth is plundered.<sup>110</sup> He quotes the Prophet as enjoining the 'ulama not to remain silent and idle in the face of social injustice. The implementation of the shari'a will also ensure a just social system.<sup>111</sup> Taxation should perform the same purpose, and must further meet the expenses of government in providing services such as health, education and defence.<sup>112</sup> Under the Islamic system, usury, on the other hand, is forbidden.

At the international level, Islam was not to be divided by nationalism, which was the doctrine of imperialists and self-serving rulers who had

introduced artificial states which divided Muslims.<sup>113</sup> Khomeini thus continues the pan-Islamic arguments of his speeches. Muslims must struggle to overthrow the rule of imperialists and their collaborators.

### **The Islamic State in Khomeini's Speeches and Leaflets, 1971- 78**

In the years that followed the publication and dissemination of *Islamic Government*, Khomeini made little in the way of public reference to its programme. The subject was touched upon in some of his speeches, as when he argued that human selfishness prevented a true government from being established after the Prophet, and that without it there would be Islamic government now.<sup>114</sup> In 1976 he referred to the importance of spreading the shari'a and the rights of Islam,<sup>115</sup> but did not expound at length openly and in detail till 1977. Then he pointed out that Islamic government was not like other governments, which endeavoured to ensure that one person did not oppress another but left people to their own devices in the privacy of their own homes. He said that Islam and divine government are not like that: they have rules for everybody in all places and in all conditions. If somebody wants to do something wrong in his own house then it is still the business of the government; even though they do not come to inspect him, it is still forbidden. Islam concerns itself with all affairs of humankind, from the lowest level upwards.<sup>116</sup>

Here we see a totalitarian vision of Islam, more so in fact than the one propounded by Mutahhari, who allowed for individual privacy and placed less emphasis on the letter of the shari'a. Khomeini also introduces the concept of *tauhid* as one of the founding principles of Islam, and one which will provide an all-embracing ethos for state and society.<sup>117</sup> Like Mutahhari, Khomeini puts forward briefly a vision of the Islamic system providing guidance for the individual. He argues that man has understanding and is therefore capable of education; on the other hand, Islam can develop all aspects of a human being, nature, intellect, soul and understanding.<sup>118</sup>

In the establishment of such a utopia the 'ulama have a very important role, as is expounded in *Islamic Government*. They are reminded of predecessors who took an active and a notable part in politics in the Constitutional Revolution, or individually, such as Mudarris.<sup>119</sup> Khomeini enjoins unity and warns them not to alienate the university students from themselves, for the destiny of the country will be in their

hands. 'You will not be a minister and nor will I.'<sup>120</sup> The lay intelligentsia in particular are admonished not to reject the 'ulama:

Those who say we want Islam but we do not want the mullahs speak contrary to reason. Is Islam possible without mullahs? Can you accomplish anything without mullahs? ... There are mullahs in prison too ... They have much more influence than you among the ordinary people ... Each mullah has influence in his own quarter ... Don't say we want Islam but we don't want mullahs – say we want Islam and we want mullahs as well ... Unite, work together.<sup>121</sup>

Thus by the late 1970s Khomeini was publicly suggesting an Islamic government with a totalist ideology, particularly in the form of the implementation of the shari'a, and strong participation by the 'ulama but no overall rule.

Correspondingly, references to the Fundamental Law were fewer and less emphatic. He mentioned it in 1975 with regard to the creation of the Rastakhiz Party, which is described as contrary to the constitution,<sup>122</sup> and again referred to the government acting unlawfully in 1977. His anti-monarchial tone had become increasingly more strident. In 1971 at the time of the 2500-year celebration, he thundered that kings had made the history of Iran black from ancient times to the present. They had built castles, killed the people and extorted money from the bazaar for their ceremonies.<sup>123</sup> 'To the Prophet', he said, 'the most detested word was shahanshah.' Khomeini also kept up the attack on secularism, which he blamed on Reza Shah and his 'foreign supporters' who tried 'with bayonets to turn the people from Islam'.<sup>124</sup>

Social justice continued to be an issue, and Khomeini complained of the lack of welfare in Iran and called for the government to provide it.<sup>125</sup> He observed that huge modern buildings had been erected in Tehran, although the villages were still without water and basic facilities.<sup>126</sup> He noted at the same point that agriculture was in decline, that it lacked self-sufficiency and served the interests of foreigners, and that there was no sign of independent industry. Wealth should be distributed in an equitable fashion.

With regard to society, the subject of women did not receive much attention during this phase, though it was to do so in the months leading to the revolution. At the beginning of 1978, Khomeini stated that Islam had never been against their rights, and that they were as free in their

choices as men and as equal.<sup>127</sup> Khomeini, however, continued to target the young, indeed increasingly so, and, following a general trend from the time he took up residence in Najaf, he also concentrated on those resident abroad. He worried about their being drawn into the deviant groups (socialism and Marxism) as well as being over-influenced by corruptive 'colonial culture'.<sup>128</sup> He linked Marxism to foreign influence, and said groups of both Eastern and Western influence open up countries to plunder. He was careful to guard against *iltiqat*, though by contrast with Muthahari he raised the matter rarely. At one point he complained about those who discussed *fiqh* without understanding what it was.<sup>129</sup> Invited to comment on the death of Shari'ati, his response implied praise but was essentially non-committal.<sup>130</sup> His student and biographer, Ruhani, accused Shari'ati of being an Islamic Protestant, who tried to take over Khomeini's movement and alienate the young from the 'ulama.<sup>131</sup>

As in previous decades, however, in the 1970s Khomeini was mainly preoccupied with protecting Islam from foreign and secular encroachment. He used the Prophet as a radical political example, thus legitimizing his own programme of change by drawing upon commonly held symbols and memories.<sup>132</sup> He accused the shah of being dependent on foreigners through foreign loans and the influence of foreign companies, and complained of the baneful effect of the consequent cultural imperialism.<sup>133</sup> He saw the whole Pahlavi system as being permeated by cultural imperialism, and felt the need to replace this with Islamic culture.<sup>134</sup> He exhorted the young in particular to unite under the banner of *tauhid* – here perceived as meaning the unity of Muslims to defeat the imperialists.<sup>135</sup> He worried about the arms build-up, essentially in the service of foreigners.<sup>136</sup> He also attempted to build up international networks of students in support of Islam and against imperialism in its various manifestations.<sup>137</sup>

Khomeini was much aware of the problems facing other Muslim countries, particularly Palestine and Lebanon, and of the damage to life and property, especially that of the Shi'a, by foreign influence.<sup>138</sup> Muslims from all countries were exhorted to help each other, and his language was carefully chosen to appeal to both Sunnis and Shi'a, not just to the Shi'a.<sup>139</sup> He emphasized the Islamic nature of Iran: 'This country is an Islamic country, though Iran is one with it.'<sup>140</sup> One point to note is that Khomeini's language, which could be complex and erudite in his intellectual works, became simpler and clearer over time in his speeches, but apart from the occasional reference, for example the

unusual use of a term such as neocolonialism,<sup>141</sup> did not radically alter or come to suggest a major shift in ideological viewpoint. His approach remained essentially practical: to attack the regime for its foreign connections, corruption and lack of social justice, all unifying complaints.

Khomeini was not specific about institutions, which appears to have been a deliberate policy rather than lack of forethought. At the time of the 1963 uprising, asked if he wanted constitutionalism, he equivocated, saying some things could not be decided at present:

If we support constitutionalism now, we will be attacked by pious imbeciles who will render us unfortunate. If we oppose constitutionalism, we will be attacked by intellectuals who will brand us as being against freedom and democracy ... It is not in our interests to talk of constitutionalism at present. We will approach the matter little by little and speak and act at the right moment.<sup>142</sup>

This speech demonstrates both the problems Khomeini had in ensuring his movement survived state repression and his continuing concern that constitutionalism was likely to be secularly dominated.

\* \* \*

In conclusion, Khomeini did not have a specific vision of the Islamic state, even by the time of the revolution. However, his objective was a state governed by the shari'a and permeated by Islam in such a way that it functioned like an ideology, a concept already present in *The Revealing of Secrets*, though not fully worked out in the fashion of Sayyid Qutb. In such a state, divinely guided by the shari'a, the individual Muslim could lead a moral life in a good community. In his thought over the period from the writing of *The Revealing of Secrets* to 1978, the most notable development is the gradual increase in the role of the 'ulama in the state from one where it should be supervisory to one of actual government. The possibility of government by the 'ulama is, however, already present in *The Revealing of Secrets*. Despite the cogency of the arguments for clerical rule in *Islamic Government*, Khomeini referred only occasionally to it in his other writings and speeches, with the result that it was little understood by the laity in the period just before the revolution.

Khomeini retained flexibility in his vision of the Islamic state partly to maintain the unity of his popular support and partly to protect his movement from regime suppression. He saw the state in different ways, as being embodied in a person, as being a strong state to protect Islam, as a juristic administration ensuring and protecting all the prerequisites of a good and moral community, and possibly as having a consultative element. He did not oppose the idea of an elected assembly, but he had doubts about a constitutional assembly and elected representatives. These doubts were partly theoretical – how could they be reconciled with the sovereignty of God? – and partly practical, arising from the concern that elections could be manipulated in the interests of particular individuals or groups, especially those inimical to the interests of Islam.

On economic policies he was equally vague. When it came to class, Khomeini avoided demonstrating a preference for one class and attacking another, and confined his invective to the Pahlavi elite. In this manner he was able to draw a larger number of social and political groups into his movement.



# Chapter VI: Visions of the Islamic State II – Other Islamist Movements

Khomeini's movement has not been the only one to express Islamic totalist ideals, and this chapter considers its resemblances firstly with another notable Iranian movement, that of the Fada'iyan-i Islam, and then with Islamism elsewhere, particularly Mawdudi's organization in the sub-continent and the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt. The issues examined include, among others, the goals of the proposed Islamic state and the issues of sovereignty and legitimacy, including the conflict between divine sovereignty and that of the people. The chapter also looks at the question of the relationship of the individual to the united community, and what rights the individual might expect. A further topic is the perceived need for a strong state to resist the West and its secularism. Finally, the chapter discusses the questions of the roles of ideology, propaganda, organization and leadership in mobilizing the people in the world view of Islamic totalists.

## **The Fada'iyan-i Islam**

The Fada'iyan-i Islam, it will be remembered, were an Islamist movement founded in 1945 and led by Navvab Safavi, the son of a cleric, born in Tehran in 1924 and executed there in 1956. Their leaders were from the religious intelligentsia, tending, to come from long-established families. Most of their followers were small tradesmen from the bazaar, pedlars and unemployed craftsmen; some were merchants.<sup>1</sup> Two questions are initially addressed: firstly what was their programme; and secondly, what influence did they have on Khomeini's movement?

Navvab Safavi was the first to use in a Shi'i work the term *hukumat-i islami* – Islamic government.<sup>2</sup> He put forward in 1950 a detailed programme for such government, which shows the influence of the works of Hasan al-Banna. It argues for a strong state with much wider opportunities for public policy, and the making and development of market relations.<sup>3</sup> Its most noteworthy feature, however, is an all-embracing vision of Islam as the ideology of the state. Following Hasan al-Banna, Navvab Safavi advocates a systematic, organized and totalist programme of Islamization in government and its departments. The programme is set out in fine detail and addresses the problems of secularism, foreign influence and corruption. It requires specifically the implementation of the *hudud* (the prescribed penalties, for example the stoning of women for adultery). Navvab Safavi takes a negative view of constitutionalism as undermining the shari'a; he does not, however, advocate a theocratic state. He sees the 'ulama as being active in encouraging the spread of Islam and as having a supervisory role in politics.<sup>4</sup> Unlike Khomeini in *The Revealing of Secrets*, he introduces a freely elected assembly, but does not envisage legislative powers, as the law is the shari'a. The state is to be a monarchy, but limited by the shari'a, 'ulama supervision and arrangements for consultation.

Navvab Safavi was also concerned about the influence of foreigners on Iran. He believed that the souls, property and religion of Muslims were under attack from foreigners.<sup>5</sup> The attack took the form of plunder of natural resources, the undermining of the shari'a by secularist views and the marginalization of the economic, social and political precepts of Islam. He and the Fada'iyān considered it obligatory to defend Islam and Muslims in jihad, as, if no action was taken, the situation would deteriorate further. They adopted the course of political violence, believing it was legitimized by the concept of defensive jihad.

Navvab Safavi argued powerfully for Islam to embrace all aspects of life in a detailed programme so that Iran might become a totally Islamic country. He had a utopian vision of Iran as a moral state governed by Islam, in which good would replace evil, people would meet their moral obligations and spurn lust, women would conduct themselves according to Islamic notions of decorum, alcohol would be forbidden, there would be no unseemly revelry or ornament and respect would be shown to all.<sup>6</sup> There would be no great divisions of wealth, but equality between all. He emphasized the need to promote Islamic culture, which would teach people human graces and lead them from crime and immorality. At the

same time, Islamic society would not be backward-looking, and there would be teaching of knowledge and the sciences as well as medicine and diet.<sup>7</sup> Government employees would be free of corruption and permeated with the new ethos so as to be able to carry out their duties. Like Khomeini, Navvab Safavi was concerned with social justice and wrote of the need to answer popular complaints of poverty, hunger and poor medical attention. The culture (*farhang*) which he advocated was intended to provide a sense of identity, self-worth and independence which would wean the country from every sort of dependence on the West.

The new ideology would be spread by a propaganda campaign from the pulpits, from which 'only suitable and qualified people' would speak. It could also be spread by use of the concept of enjoining good and prohibiting evil, under the supervision of the 'ulama and through the media.<sup>8</sup> Navvab Safavi thus provided an early example of an Islamist using this particular concept to mobilize and regulate the community, and ensure behaviour appropriate to the goals of the system.

Navvab proposed 12 ministries, each with a detailed agenda. With regard to the Ministry of Education, necessary classes beneficial to the general good were to be taught; unlawful classes such as music were to be dropped. In books for primary schools, instead of using unsuitable examples, such as 'Reza plays the *tar* well', Islamic and moral examples should be used.<sup>9</sup> Religious consciousness was to become universal through education. In secondary schools pupils would begin such necessary subjects as chemistry, physics and natural sciences, maths and medicine. Half the day was to be spent on academic lessons, and half on technical lessons. The programme of education suggested by Navvab Safavi was, at least for primary schools, adopted in its entirety in the years following the establishment of the Islamic Republic.

For university education he stressed the importance of science and technology, and complained of the way Iran had fallen behind.<sup>10</sup> With regard to radio, it was to promote thoughts on Islam, not to play inappropriate music, and to mark prayer time. The cinema was likewise to be under the supervision of Islam, related to Islamic concerns and free from unlawful melody.<sup>11</sup>

In the Ministry of Justice, current laws contrary to Islam were to be replaced and the shari'a implemented. The ministry was to be staffed by upstanding *fuqaha*. Friday prayer was to be revived as a significant political as well as religious event; the great men of the state as well as ordinary

people were to attend to hear just and reformist sermons by the 'ulama.<sup>12</sup> These measures resemble many adopted by the Islamic Republic.

It has been suggested that the Fada'iyan-i Islam had a connection with Khomeini as they were based at the Faiziyya school and Navvab Safavi occasionally visited him.<sup>13</sup> There are resemblances between the programme of the Fada'iyan and the contents of *The Revealing of Secrets*, but it is perhaps most appropriate to see them as belonging to the same milieu – traditional and religious society in Iran, the 'ulama and their bazaar connections – rather than to look specifically for the influence of the one over the other. In this context, debate focused on imperial aggression in Iran, especially at a time of foreign occupation, the need to strengthen Islam, the necessity of developing an independent identity to ensure resistance to foreign encroachment, and the perception that such a goal was best achieved by implementation of the shari'a. There was a continuing sense of the Pahlavi regime being corrupt, lacking in social justice and linked to the West.

The influence of the Fada'iyan-i Islam on Khomeini's movement was immense. Young, charismatic, articulate and brave, Navvab Safavi inspired seminary students and bazaaris alike, and the ability of the Fada'iyan to carry out their programme of assassination, which included in 1951 the prime minister, Ali Razmara, is a testimony to the support they received in their struggle with the state, as well as its comparative weakness at the time. Many of those who subsequently held office in the Islamic Republic had some connection with the Fada'iyan-i Islam in their youth, and Muthahari in particular was linked to them through the Faiziyya school.<sup>14</sup> Mahdi 'Iraqi, a bazaari of humble origins, joined them when he was 16 and was implicated in their assassinations.<sup>15</sup> Jalal al-Din Farsi was a young man in Mashhad when Navvab Safavi came there and inspired him to political engagement.<sup>16</sup> Rafsanjani was also an eager supporter of Navvab in his youth and unhappy at Burujirdi's rejection of him. Other admirers included Ayatollah Sadr and Muhammad Taqi Khvansari.<sup>17</sup> However, the subsequent conduct of the Fada'iyan and Kashani in alliance with the National Front damaged them in the eyes of many students in Qum,<sup>18</sup> although the influence of the Fada'iyan and their ideas on Islamic government spread among the bazaar societies.<sup>19</sup> Looking back, 'Iraqi considered the Fada'iyan as behind the times and not as well organized as the Muslim Brotherhood, who had acted as hosts when members of the Fada'iyan went to Cairo, especially Navvab Safavi.<sup>20</sup>

## **The Wider Islamist Debate and the Question of Influences**

This discussion concentrates on the Islamist movements, sometimes called fundamentalist, which have constructed theories of politics and society based on what they consider to be the principles of Islam and the divine word in the Qur'an and the Traditions. Their principal distinguishing quality is their insistence upon the application of the shari'a in government and society. The discussion focuses largely on the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, as there are considerable resemblances with the Iranian Islamist movement and some undoubted influences; it also focuses on Mawdudi's thought, which has influenced Middle Eastern Islamism.

The concepts of organization and ideology as a mobilizing and unifying force used by the Islamists, and indeed other secular movements in the Middle East, may be traced back by a variety of routes to Marxist-Leninist authoritarianism and its style of organization. Faced with the problems of generating political change through a small and relatively unaware working class, Lenin replaced the aim of achieving revolution through them with one of a party working as a vanguard to mobilize the people. Through the vanguard the working class would be able to develop political consciousness and become the foot-soldiers of the revolutionary movement. Lenin paid particular attention to organization, based on a principle of so-called democratic centralization. Obedience, conformity to the needs of the party and subordination to the judgement of the leadership were among its features, although some accountability was imposed upon the upper echelons of the party by the membership at periodic meetings. Decision-making was centralized and replicated throughout the organization. With organization came propaganda, which served firstly to recruit new members and then to infuse them with the spirit to struggle against the established order. Propaganda also inspired group solidarity, and enabled the party to depend upon loyal administrators and a network of cadres. Most important, however, was a vision of the new order setting out its values, its world view, its political and economic and social objectives, and its arrangements for government and its institutions. In such an order, individual interests and judgements were subordinated to that of the group.

The first Islamist movement to produce an Islamic ideology, an organized structure and means of propaganda was Mawdudi's Jama'at in India in 1932,<sup>21</sup> though Hasan al-Banna in Egypt was not far behind

him. Mawdudi developed an understanding of Islam in which religious piety was transformed into a structure of authority and faith became ideology, social works and social action.<sup>22</sup> The system thus created could be extended into all areas of life, and to all areas of Islamic thought and practice. Modern ideas and values were incorporated into the faith through the reinterpretation of concepts to form a consistent and systematic ideology. Mawdudi had a profound influence on Sayyid Qutb as his work was translated into Arabic, especially after 1951.<sup>23</sup> The same kind of influence came through Qutb's own reading of European sources, in particular the Arabic translation of the French *L'homme cet inconnu* by Alexis Carrel (1935).<sup>24</sup> Carrel was a scientist who retained his faith in religion and criticized Western materialism. He sought to demonstrate compatibility between the natural sciences and religious beliefs, proposed the leadership of society by a vanguard, and had conservative views on the role of women.

Leninist organizational influence was reinforced by concepts and traditions within Islam itself. In many ways it was incorporated much more easily than Western liberal individualism into the framework of the shari'a as being all-embracing and encompassing all aspects of life; as being a path carefully delineated to which the believer must conform in his own interests as well as those of the community. The shari'a emphasized that a rightful community providing the right precepts gave the best chance of a good life for the individual. Models of leadership were provided by the Prophet and imams.

More specific organizational examples were given to Mawdudi, Hasan al-Banna and Sayyid Qutb by the Sufi mystic orders (*tariqa*). These were hierarchically arranged so as to facilitate the ascent of the believer in a series of concentric circles, each supervised by a Sufi of higher spiritual level.<sup>25</sup> These circles finally culminate in a pyramidal structure. The organization serves not only to impart clear doctrinal understanding but also to create boundaries around the Sufi brotherhood, secluding it from the rest of society and eliminating outside influence. This characteristic of Sufism was to serve Islamist organizations as a means of maintaining the cohesion and identity of their movements, which, partly for reasons of protection and partly for those of flexibility, they did not wish to convert into political parties. Sufism also provided a model of an organization with one leader to whom ordinary members were required to declare total allegiance, or *bay'a*. The Muslim Brotherhood was more emphatically hierarchical than the Iranian Islamist

movement, with considerable emphasis on rank and title as incentives for promotion and on the need to maintain high standards in religious matters in order to advance.<sup>26</sup> The exceptional efficiency of the Muslim Brotherhood organization was to be imitated by Mawdudi.<sup>27</sup> These new models of organization replaced traditional forms which had been dominated by notables, and reflected in part new patterns of urban development in the Middle East.

Islamist vision begins with the divine will as the basis of sovereignty and law. To the divine will man must respond obediently, exclusively and with devotion. As with Khomeini's movement, and in particular with the vision articulated by Mutaḥhari, both Mawdudi and Sayyid Qutb see man as having a unique destiny and responsibility, through being endowed with free will and moral discernment.<sup>28</sup> Sayyid Qutb in particular develops this concept, arguing that man's purpose is to affirm the unity (*tauḥid*) of creation by both integrating his life into the whole and submitting to the divine wisdom. God has created the universe for the benefit of man, appointing him as his deputy.<sup>29</sup> Man thus acquires a unique position and a comprehensive obligation by which he is subordinate to God's purpose. Like Mawdudi, Sayyid Qutb considered that the sovereignty of God negated that of mankind.<sup>30</sup> Qutb developed Mawdudi's ideas to a more radical level. *Tauḥid*, he said, emanated from the Qur'an, and it was manifested in all areas of life. In the 1960s, under increasing pressure from the Nasserite state, Sayyid Qutb became more dogmatic on the subject of divine imperatives, considering that they required total allegiance and struggle from believers. Not only should Islam in the sense of *tauḥid* be implemented, but all other systems should be eradicated. Individual goals should be entirely subordinated to collective objectives. Persecution by Nasser's own increasingly authoritarian system in the 1960s thus produced a corresponding hardening in Sayyid Qutb's position.

Qutb also derived from Mawdudi a view of areas not under the influence of Islamic *tauḥid*, termed the *jahiliyya*, an expression which on the whole did not find its way into the Iranian debate. It denoted an erroneous attitude, the rejection of the authority of divine guidance, and a failure to adapt to the right principles which should regulate human existence.<sup>31</sup> It thus has some correlation with the Iranian expression *taghut*.

Islam as an ideology permeating government and society was in the Middle East first systematically argued by Hasan al-Banna, who, particularly from 1938, advocated the Islamization of the civil service

and the supervision of government workers accordingly,<sup>32</sup> on which particular points, as in others, he influenced Navvab Safavi.

In the view of all the Islamists the shari'a provided specific guidance for Muslims on the nature of the Islamic state and the basis of the constitution.<sup>33</sup> The first principle was the sovereignty of God, and there could be no human legislation outside his will. The state was the vice-regent of God. All laws should be in conformity with the shari'a – Muslim civilization was meaningless without the shari'a as its core of interpretation, and neglect of the shari'a meant a loss of identity and cultural direction. In some ways, however, Sayyid Qutb set out this argument in its most systematic and totalist form. He argued in effect that the shari'a was like a building to which each of its bricks was necessary. This was no less true of the *hudud* penalties (Qur'anic penalties for certain crimes), which Qutb argued were set for crimes against society, and made deliberately severe because cooperation can only be based on the protection of life, property and the sanctity of each individual in the Islamic world.<sup>34</sup> It was the duty of believers to ensure that the shari'a and no other law prevailed, and that miscreants were recalled from the *jahiliyya*. This inflexible literalism derived from an element in his vision that Islam provides for social solidarity in all its shapes and forms in accordance with the basic view of total unity.<sup>35</sup> Pragmatically, however, he perceived that some 'scientific' subjects fell outside the legal system of Islam (in fact came under certain matters on which the shari'a is largely silent), and were thus conveniently not subject to constant legal intervention. Expediently, Qutb also saw that historical circumstances necessitate some adaption of eternal law, under strong autocratic leadership.<sup>36</sup>

All the Islamists were aware of the need to modernize Islam, and in particular increase its appeal to the young. Mawdudi argued that the ideals and principles of Islam had to be expressed in a language understandable to contemporaries, which necessitated that non-Islamic concepts current at any one time had to be studied, analysed and criticized.<sup>37</sup> In essence there should always be an Islamic view on the preoccupations of the age which demonstrated the relevance and indeed the superiority of Islamic principles. The writings of Sayyid Qutb, Muthahari and indeed Shari'ati are all profoundly influenced by this same objective.

On the subject of the Islamic state the visions of all the Islamists changed over time, variations which may in many ways be accounted for by the practical problems presented by the political context. All agreed



in locating authority primarily in the leader, which was also in accordance with models of European origin influencing the Middle East in the middle decades of the century – for example, Atatürkism and Nasserism, ultimately influenced by the Soviet system. For Mawdudi, the supreme political authority was the leader, and he was entitled to unwavering obedience.<sup>38</sup> In accordance with the principle that government should be carried out by consultation, the ruler had to be selected, elected or appointed through a consultative process. His qualifications were that he should be of upright and pious character, and knowledgeable on the affairs of state. He was the real locus of power, acting as the representative of God on earth and as representative of the people; but he was limited by the shari'a.<sup>39</sup> The arrangements for the institutionalization of the consultative body were left to the community to decide.

Hasan al-Banna was always vague with regard to his intentions on Islamic government. He envisaged a leader to whom the rank and file owed strict obedience. The leader should have simplicity, dignity, manliness, honour, spiritual purity, justice and a noble character. His lifestyle should be simple and austere, devoid of all kinds of luxury, snobbery, haughtiness and wealth, a value system common with that of Khomeini and one which conferred great authority in pious society. The leader should also be held a worthy example of emulation to his followers and could be entitled 'imam'.<sup>40</sup> If he erred, he could be removed by the consultative council, who might be elected and should be composed of the leading figures in the community.<sup>41</sup> By the 1940s the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt was envisaging an Islamic state in which the Qur'an was the basis of the constitution, the government operated in principle on consultation, and the executive ruler was limited by the principles of Islam and the will of the people, expressed through consultation. The tenure of the leader was to be for life, though he could be removed for moral or physical reasons.

Sayyid Qutb also avoided being specific about the exact form of the Islamic state. Qutb's discussion of the power of the ruler demonstrates the competing claims of state, community and individual, and is undecided over the need of the ruler to have unlimited powers and the desirability that they be limited.<sup>42</sup> He envisaged a pact between the ruler and the ruled on the basis of the *bay'a* (oath of allegiance), which gave the people the right to revolt against unjust rule. Like Mawdudi he argued that since the shari'a did not specify a particular method of establishing a government, the matter might be decided by consensus according to the

exigencies of the time.<sup>43</sup> His views on the qualities of the ruler, the concept of obedience from the following, and the rights of consultation and revolt were similar to those of al-Banna.<sup>44</sup> The leader had also to establish institutions and laws which reflected both the eternal preoccupations of the shari'a and the specific needs of the time. His authority derived from observance of the shari'a and his rule had to be characterized by justice. If he departed from these principles he was no longer entitled to obedience.<sup>45</sup>

It is evident with these three Islamist thinkers that the leader is likely to be a layman. In fact, Sayyid Qutb believed that interpretation of the Qur'an need not be confined to the 'ulama, but might be exercised by any Muslim as long as his view did not contradict what the Qur'an and shari'a said.<sup>46</sup> This may be contrasted with Khomeini's government of the jurist and insistence on *'ilm* (knowledge of the law). Khomeini also envisaged both a single and a multiple leadership, the idea of the latter deriving from the normal role of the 'ulama in Islam. Despite the influences of *'irfan*, Khomeini does not demand absolute obedience to the leader, and the Muslim juristic concept of *ijma'* (consensus) and its companion, debate, played a stronger role in his vision of the Islamic state. In a way his view was closer to Plato's *Republic*, where there are guardians, as well as the philosopher ruler, responsible for the management of the state.

Like Khomeini and the Iranian Islamists, Mawdudi, Hasan al-Banna and Sayyid Qutb did not solve the problem of what to do about the sovereignty of the people in a state based on the vice-regency of God. Mawdudi believed the right to rule belonged to the community of believers, but, perceiving potential inconsistencies, declared that there was to be a popular vice-regency instead of popular sovereignty; it was, however, uncertain how such an arrangement might be reached.<sup>47</sup> Mawdudi's assembly might legislate in permissible affairs (*umur-i mubah*) on which the shari'a was silent,<sup>48</sup> a possibility suggested in Iran at the time of the Constitutional Revolution. There was limited popular sovereignty in that the people were entitled to depose the leader and express themselves. Members of the consultative assembly should be good, trustworthy Muslims with faith in the shari'a. The leader had a right of veto but could also be impeached by a majority of the council. In sum, Mawdudi believed in what he termed 'theo-democracy', the sovereignty of God and the caliphate of man. It was 'democratic' because every Muslim was an agent for the realization of God's will on earth.

There was constant consultation, as the people had the right to express themselves on every issue. In Mawdudi's view, as the people also had the right to depose the head of state, this amounted to limited popular sovereignty. The problem is, as Adams (1983) points out, that Mawdudi fails to distinguish between the locus of sovereignty at a theoretical level from sovereignty in the sense of who in practice wields power. Democracy implies a major role for the will of the people.<sup>49</sup>

Al-Banna considered that the representatives of the people in the consultative assembly were 'the true rulers of the Islamic state',<sup>50</sup> but did not investigate the problem of a possible conflict of authority. Sayyid Qutb also used the concept of power derived from the will of the governed, as well as that of leeway within permissible affairs. He was at pains to emphasize that consultation did not mean parliamentary democracy, as this latter was built on individual interests rather than the Islamist ideal of general welfare.<sup>51</sup> He recognized that there was a problem for the imam to exercise power without infringing on God's sovereignty, and that he must negotiate the establishment of institutions and laws that reflected the eternal shari'a as well as the exigencies of the age.

Like the Iranian Islamists, those in Egypt and on the sub-continent emphasized communal endeavour and unity, and were wary of the concepts of political parties and class divisions. The latter reservations, it must be said, have been shared by Middle Eastern secular politicians, Atatürk, Nasser and the Ba'th Party. Hasan al-Banna, like Nasser, considered that political parties had lost credibility through collaboration with the British in order to acquire power.<sup>52</sup> He believed them guided by personal greed, and as being a front for capitalism that neither reflected the will of the nation nor served its interests. Sayyid Qutb believed political parties to be the product of immediate needs and transitional conditions, where a greedy minority gains control of the majority.<sup>53</sup>

Suspicion of democracy is reflected in a tendency to subordinate the rights of the individual to those of the community, noted already in the writings of Mutahhari, though other Islamists did not make quite as much effort as he did to provide some allowance for individual choice. To Sayyid Qutb, as for Mutahhari, individual destiny was best fulfilled by service and responsibility to the community, and by solidarity with it. Individual faith was the building block of the community, and his ideal of a collection of reformed souls, each linked to the divine but forming a harmonious entity, represented an attempt to reconcile individualist and

communitarian values.<sup>54</sup> Liberation for the individual meant freedom from the domination of other human beings;<sup>55</sup> political liberty meant the right to be consulted on some decisions.<sup>56</sup> There was no perception of institutions as providing enduring individual political rights.

Like Khomeini in *The Revealing of Secrets*, Hasan al-Banna placed emphasis on the strong state. In common with the Young Egypt movement in the 1930s, the Muslim Brotherhood had observed the rise of authoritarian states in Europe and their apparent power against various kinds of foreign encroachment. Al-Banna argued that a nascent nation required strength and military spirit, and that force should be used to defend Islam and security.<sup>57</sup>

Al-Banna was also the first to understand the value of systematic and organized propaganda, as opposed to Mawdudi's vision of the propagating of the word. Already in the 1920s he had embarked on organized propaganda as a means of disseminating ideas, though the early focus was moral rather than political. By the mid-1930s he was consciously seeking to learn Western media techniques.<sup>58</sup> His creation of himself as an overall leader and model assisted by propaganda owed much to the European mass movements of the 1930s. He also came early to the understanding of the significance of a programme of publications with an effective distribution network. On the subject of propaganda he expounded at some length in *Our Mission*.

The propagandists of today are not like those of yesterday. They are educated, well-equipped and thoroughly trained specialists, especially in the Western countries, where there are trained corps specializing in every ideology, clarifying its abstruse points, displaying its good features and inventing means of dissemination and methods of propagandizing for it. On its behalf they feel out the most convenient ways to influence the minds of the people, leading to inner conviction and conversion.<sup>59</sup>

He noted that the propaganda in the contemporary world was much more diverse and effective than the mere verbal messages delivered at meetings of former times, and included the use of books, magazines, newspapers, films and radio. All these means had to be perfected for the successful propagation of Islam. Part of the message to be propagated was a message of moral regeneration which had its origins in the thinking of al-Afghani. To develop a true Islamic character it was necessary to

rebuild the moral fibre of the people, perceived as weakening under the onslaught of the West. True rebuilding was part of a programme of inducing them to strive and struggle for the Islamic ideal.

Hasan al-Banna was particularly practical in his determination to implement his vision. In his early years he began a programme of moral regeneration carried out through Islamic studies, lectures on Islamic observance in simplified terms, and the training of missionaries to go out to the poorer quarters of society and the villages, where he himself had begun.<sup>60</sup> He wrote:

Our duty as Muslim Brothers is to work for the reform of the selves [*nufus*], of hearts and souls by joining them to God the all-high, then to organize our society to be fit for the virtuous community which enjoins the good and forbids the evil; then from the community will rise the good state.<sup>61</sup>

He systematically attacked what he perceived as every form of corrupting influence, such as gambling, dancing, attendance at theatres and cinemas, the drinking of alcohol, unsuitable music, and moral and sexual laxity.<sup>62</sup> Sayyid Qutb likewise aimed to create a moral community which practises and preaches Islam.<sup>63</sup> Like Khomeini, Hasan al-Banna and Sayyid Qutb saw the liberation and self-assertion of the inward soul as being realized through contact with God.<sup>64</sup> They also preached a form of self-assertion against humiliation and servitude. With it came freedom from fear of death and freedom from poverty and degradation. A soul free of desire could rise above humiliating necessity and take control of its life and resist all that is debilitating.<sup>65</sup> Sayyid Qutb has been described as a militant Sufi – one who sought to convey harmony of the self to others and make them receptive to understanding God's commands.<sup>66</sup>

Sayyid Qutb's programme included the recruitment of a vanguard, also important to Mawdudi, the solidification of group identity and its segregation from society, and the enlargement of the group. Thence the movement might progress to the seizure of power and the changing of society.<sup>67</sup> He placed special emphasis on the particular character of the organization. By the late 1950s he was convinced that a mass organization was unsuited for the task of confronting a centralized state dominated by the army. He also believed the ordinary people were likely to be fickle. As a result, in the 1960s he sought a coherent arrangement for the

organization of a body of believers, serving one leader, which did not collaborate with other organizations and which endeavoured to preserve a distinct identity.<sup>68</sup> It will be remembered that Khomeini's movement, though not having the cohesion envisaged here, was determined to be free of outside influence and was developed round a core of 'ulama and bazaar networks. All the Islamist movements had a power base primarily in the traditional lower middle class. Like Muthahari, Mawdudi failed to persuade the higher and better-educated classes to support him.

In Sayyid Qutb's world view much emphasis was placed on the term 'social justice', a preoccupation which again originates in the writings of Hasan al-Banna. Sayyid Qutb used the term to mean the establishment of a political order infused with justice and morality that permeated all aspects of life, including those relating to social and economic equality. Not only did social justice mean a way forward that was neither capitalist nor communist, it also meant a society based on just – in other words, Qur'anic – premises, though the term 'social justice' is of Western origin. It implied a system of mutual responsibility, and obedience to a leader whose authority derives from conformity to the shari'a. He wrote:

Complete social justice will not be achieved and its implementation and its permanence will not be assured unless it can rely on a feeling within the soul that the individual deserves it and that the community needs it.<sup>69</sup>

His view may be related to a political context of great social inequality, poverty and exploitation, such as existed in Egypt, and is in effect part of an exhortation to the people to take matters into their own hands. In the event it was the army under the Free Officers who responded successfully; having been controlled by the British, they were relatively free of indoctrination, and the opening up of the officers' academy in the 1936 led to the rise of a new class in the military influenced by socialist ideas. The core element of the Pahlavi army had by contrast been indoctrinated with Pahlavi nationalism, though the army as a whole was sufficiently influenced by social and family networks not to be entirely loyal. Thus the battle moved to civilian society, where the Pahlavi regime, neglectful of social justice, lost.

Hasan al-Banna emphasized health and welfare, advocating a public health programme and declaring war against poverty, ignorance, disease

and crime.<sup>70</sup> A man of exceptionally strong social conscience, he attacked these issues at a time when the Wafdist government, allied to the British, was neglecting them. In 1931 the Brotherhood had three welfare branches, and by 1936 there were over a hundred.<sup>71</sup> The welfare societies were linked to the mosque networks.

Al-Banna considered modern education to be of great importance, and by the mid-1930s he was advocating the teaching of foreign languages as indispensable for the Islamic renaissance.<sup>72</sup> It was also important that education be infused with 'wise principles', as it trained the new generation and the leaders of the future. Al-Banna essentially believed that women should remain in the home caring for the family. He did envisage that they might work, but in segregated spheres and not in politics or government.<sup>73</sup> Sayyid Qutb confined women to the family and made them the guardians of morality.<sup>74</sup>

With regard to the economy, Mawdudi considered social justice was 'a stratagem conceived by Satan to intrigue human beings',<sup>75</sup> and believed in a capitalist economy. He considered the state to have no right to interfere with the property of the individual. He disliked, however, the secular derivation of capitalist ideology. Hasan al-Banna wanted industrialization, the development of agriculture and the end of foreign domination,<sup>76</sup> as did the Free Officers. Sayyid Qutb sought to stay between capitalism and communism, though he regarded the prevailing social conditions as representing the interests of capitalism.<sup>77</sup> He believed in the right of ownership of personal property, but that it should be tempered by the right of government to redistribute wealth according to the needs of the time,<sup>78</sup> and thus had a more socialist tendency. As in much else, his views, and their vagueness, resemble Nasser's when he first came to power.

From Mawdudi came originally the use of the term 'jihad' (struggle) as a concept to motivate fellow Muslims to action and initiative against prevailing conditions.<sup>79</sup> To Hasan al-Banna jihad was the struggle to better the conditions of the Islamic community and undermine unjust rule.<sup>80</sup> Qutb took much of his thinking on jihad from Mawdudi, seeing it as a notion of struggle to improve the lot of the community.<sup>81</sup> It was one of the primary obligations of Muslims to defend their religion. They should struggle for freedom from oppression and obstructions to its removal. In the 1940s and 1950s Qutb's position on struggle was relatively moderate, but by the 1960s he was advocating struggle as a revolution, aiming to destroy all existing systems and replace them with an Islamic order that provided welfare and dignity for the community.<sup>82</sup>

Islam thus became a revolutionary movement against injustice and political, economic, racial and religious prejudice. Struggle might justifiably become violent in the interests of Islam.<sup>83</sup> Like the Iranian Islamists, Sayyid Qutb was not only determined to be independent of East and West but also vigilant on the subject of Marxism in particular. His social justice was designed to win people from secular socialism by helping solve the problems which made it so attractive to the young and poor: the uneven distribution of wealth, low wages, and unemployment.<sup>84</sup>

With regard to whether the state should be a national or pan-Islamic one, Mawdudi had no definite agenda.<sup>85</sup> Hasan al-Banna appears to have been thinking of an Islamic state in Egypt, though he also advocated Islamic unity. Sayyid Qutb was likewise against secular nationalism and apparently wished for an Islamic state, but supported international Muslim unity.

It has been indicated throughout that influences passed freely in the Islamist debate from one country to another. Thus al-Banna and Mawdudi influenced each other, and Mawdudi influenced Qutb. Ideas from Europe, especially on the strong authoritarian-style state, came in constantly from different directions, including the Reza Shah model. Allowances must be made for parallel development in assessing such a matter, and for local intellectual tradition. There was interaction between Iran and the sub-continent, bringing in Mawdudi's ideas directly as well as indirectly through Egyptian thought. For example, Mawdudi met Khomeini in Mecca in 1963.<sup>86</sup> It would seem, however, that much of what happened in Egypt pre-dated what happened in Iran, usually by several years, and that the Muslim Brotherhood had a not-inconsiderable influence on the Iranian Islamist movement. This is in addition a common origin of many ideas in Sufism and the general Islamic intellectual tradition, as well as the need to respond to the pressures of similar problems, notably Western intrusion and social inequality. Al-Banna also appears to have had an influence on the organization and method of the Nahzat. More obviously there are strong similarities in general and in detail between Hasan al-Banna's programme for an Islamic order and that of Navvab Safavi, which in turn passed to some of Khomeini's most influential students and followers. Sayyid Qutb's ideas on social justice, as well as the role of man as the caliph of God with special responsibilities to the community, appear to have influenced the Iranian Islamists, particularly Mutaahhari. A number of his works were translated into Persian in the late 1960s and early 1970s, in particular as Khomeini's movement was



developing its ideas on the Islamic state.<sup>87</sup> During the same period there were also several translations of works by Mawdudi.<sup>88</sup>

\* \* \*

The vision of Khomeini and many of his movement resembled those of other Islamists on certain points. The first was in seeing Islam as a complete system which provided guidance, objectives, ethics and identity to the Muslim community. These qualities were in practical terms exemplified in the shari'a, which had to be implemented in its entirety. The individual found fulfilment in responsibility for the community, and liberty in what the shari'a permitted. Since authority derived from God, consultation was to take the place of legislation. This principle, however, was not to be applied literally, as there were some areas left vague by the shari'a or not covered by its primary precepts. Islam was activist in its rebuttal of imperialist domination and regimes allied with the Western powers. It was modernist in the way it engaged with the issues of the age, and in its compatibility with science and technology. It was a classless system, demanding unity, and with no room for political parties. Authority was on the whole vested in one leader, though there were provisions for making him accountable. In the Middle East, at least, the state was to be a strong state. In many of these characteristics Islamism resembles the secular ideologies current in the Middle East at this period, faced as it was with the same problems in the actual political context, and thus must be accounted modern.

In the use of propaganda and organization the Islamist movements were influenced, like some of their secular counterparts, by Marxist-Leninist doctrine and methods. The influence is to be noted in particular in the development of a vanguard to mobilize the people, in the demand for individual subordination to the needs of the party and the leadership, and in the use of propaganda both to inspire group solidarity and to recruit new adherents. As greater emphasis was placed on solidarity and unity, so Islam became perceived more as an ideology and system as well as a religion.

However, the Middle Eastern movements also drew upon Islamic traditions of organization, especially in the network of groups and pyramidal structure provided by the Sufi brotherhood, and in this respect, as

in other aspects of organization, Hasan al-Banna in particular seems to have provided inspiration. From Sufism also came character-building ethics which encouraged the will to struggle, and self-assertion. Taken as a whole, the movements perceive state, society and individual as infused by the values of Islam (including the enjoinder to consultation) as embodied in the shari'a, to which all are responsible in one totalist (*tauhid*) system.

Like the the Muslim Brotherhood, Khomeini's movement placed strong emphasis on social justice, meaning not only the fair distribution of resources, but the creation of a political system which ensured the development of the full potential of Muslims.

Khomeini's vision, like those of the other Islamists, was not worked out in detail, but the one major difference seems to be a much more powerful role for the 'ulama, particularly manifested in *Islamic Government*. In practice this feature was to introduce into the Islamic state elements of Shi'i juristic culture which were to render it more pluralistic and flexible than the systematic structure envisaged by Hasan al-Banna and Sayyid Qutb.

# Chapter VII: The Establishment of the Islamic State<sup>1</sup>

The previous discussion has demonstrated the development of Khomeini's ideas and the influences upon him, stressing the importance of organization in his movement. However, Khomeini was a realistic political leader, as well as an idealist, as can be seen from his timing in entering national politics after 1961 and his determination to remain flexible and adaptable in his political programme. This element of shrewdness was to become even more evident as he returned to the centre of the political arena in 1978–79.

This chapter continues the focus on the organization and ideology of Khomeini's movement, and thus in essence retains a conceptual rather than a chronological approach. The chapter falls into five sections: a short account of the political situation in 1978–79; Khomeini's movement in the period of the revolution; the struggle over the nature of the Islamic Republic; a discussion of the constitution itself; and a brief concluding section indicating the developments of the Bani Sadr period and beyond, which are outside the scope of this book.

## **The Political Situation, 1978-79**

Detailed accounts of the events of 1978 onwards are given in some of the works listed in the Bibliography, but the reader is reminded that in winning the allegiance of other sections of society, Khomeini was much assisted by the shah's policies. Political repression, the pervasive presence of SAVAK, the muzzling of the press and the failure to provide institutionalized political development, combined with the corruption of the regime and its perceived dependence on America and the favouring of American interests, were long-term causes of its unpopularity. But further unrest derived from the shah's conduct of the

economy. His agricultural policies had led to the displacement of the rural poor and their migration to the cities, where the regime did little to assist in the way of housing, welfare and employment. Most social groups were affected by the regime's inability to control the effects of the rise in the price of oil in 1973 and the consequent cycle of inflation and recession. The living conditions of the poor contrasted with those of the wealthy elite in particular, and raised the whole question of social justice. These points were articulated in the concept of the *mustazafin*, the disinherited, a term deriving from the political theory of Franz Fanon discussing the struggle for freedom in Algeria. It also acquired the meaning of 'oppressed' when Shari'ati and his adherents translated Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth* in the early 1960s,<sup>2</sup> and was much used in the polemic of the period leading up to the revolution. In fact, service to the oppressed from not just Iran but the world was seen as one of the goals of the revolution.<sup>3</sup>

Other groups also played an active part in bringing down the Pahlavi regime and each had their own political vision for the future of the country, more or less in competition with the others. The main ones included the secular liberal National Front, still retaining respect for its stand against Western influence at the time of Musaddiq but with little support beyond the secular middle class and elite; the Islamic liberal Liberation Movement of Iran, with its roots in middle-class bazaari families but active among the slum population of Tehran from 1965;<sup>4</sup> the Islamic socialist Mujahidin, a guerilla organization with a young, religious, middle-class membership, founded in the early 1960s and partly inspired by the thought of Shari'ati;<sup>5</sup> the well-organized and armed Marxist Fada'iyan-i Khalq, fully formed by 1971, with a base among university students; and the comparatively small Tudeh, or Communist Party, active in the universities and industrial sector but much repressed by the regime.<sup>6</sup>

It will have been noted that all these groups originated from the middle class and tended to focus on its perspectives and priorities. Their vision was partly a product of the lack of opportunities for wider political engagement provided by the Pahlavi state. By contrast, the clerics were in constant contact with the poorer social groups through their mosque networks and allied institutions and associations. They were much more familiar with their problems and preoccupations, and more likely to address them in terms which would motivate them to struggle: the Shi'i rhetoric of the Karbala paradigm and martyrdom in the battle

against an unjust state. It was thus the clerics and bazaar associations who were able to mobilize, speak for and retain the allegiance of the poorer groups to challenge and overthrow the Pahlavi state. Many committees (called *komitehs*) loyal to Khomeini and usually linked to a mosque sprang up in the various districts of Tehran, mainly from the latter part of 1978.

The protest movement against the regime began early in 1977 when the National Front and about 50 prominent lawyers circulated open letters against the shah complaining of repression and corruption; regime-inspired pro-shah rallies followed. In November 1977 the death of Khomeini's son Sayyid Mustafa, in suspicious circumstances, began a cycle of unrest among religious society. In January 1978 a xenophobic article in one of the Tehran newspapers stigmatized Khomeini as being the son of a trader of Indian origin and an agent of colonialism. Violence erupted in Qum, followed by an uprising in Tabriz. Protests spread, and the suppression of each was marked by a mourning ceremony every 40 days, thus maintaining the momentum. This was the beginning of the real mass mobilization, organized by the clergy but in alliance with the religious educated young. In August the shah took various unsuccessful measures to conciliate his critics. On 8 September a large number of people were killed in a demonstration in Jaleh Square, Tehran, and the opposition campaign gathered pace, culminating in a huge demonstration on 'Ashura in December. The regime began to crumble, with mutinies in some parts of the military. In an effort to conciliate the modern middle class the shah appointed Shahpour Bakhtiar, a member of the National Front, as prime minister. Reflecting public opinion, Bakhtiar demanded that the shah leave the country, in effect relinquishing his throne, which he did on 16 January 1979. Khomeini returned to Iran on February, obliging Bakhtiar himself to depart on 11 February.

There followed a period of confusion, in which it is important to realize that no one could be quite certain what would happen. A revolutionary council initially founded in December 1978 had already begun the task of devising a programme for implementation after Khomeini returned, and on 5 February Khomeini nominated a provisional government with Bazargan as prime minister. Within one week the shah's much-vaunted military had collapsed, facilitating the seizure of the government and its institutions by Khomeini's followers. The recriminations, arrests and executions of army officers, suspected SAVAK agents and leading members of the previous regime (including

the former prime minister, Amir 'Abbas Hoveyda, and Ni'matullah Nassiri, ex-head of SAVAK) continued for some weeks. It was in this period that differences of opinion between Khomeini and his supporters on the one hand, and on the other the moderate middle-class professionals who had given him grudging support, soon emerged.

A referendum held in March 1979 gave overwhelming approval to the proposal to form an Islamic government. In March Khomeini's followers, led by Muhammad Husain Beheshti and 'Ali Akbar Hashimi Rafsanjani, founded the Islamic Republican Party and in May they established a new military force to sustain the new regime, called the Revolutionary Guard. Disagreements mounted over the nature of the constitution, and it was finally left to a newly devised elected assembly, called the Assembly of Experts, to draw up the constitution of the Islamic state.

### **Khomeini's Movement During the Revolution**

By the autumn of 1978 Khomeini had two objectives. The first was to overthrow the shah's regime, which he designated as *taghut*, illegitimate, and thereby to eject foreign influence from Iran; the second was to create an Islamic state. In order to maintain particularly the first objective, his main priority was to sustain the unity of his support.

In pursuit of his goal of maintaining unity until the regime had been toppled and the structures of a new order were in place, Khomeini's principal tactic was not to be too specific. As Bakhtiar observed, in order to implement his policies Khomeini did not divulge his goals initially, so very few people understood the realities of his intentions.<sup>7</sup> In this way many people aggrieved at the Pahlavi regime's economic and foreign policies, and its repression, found themselves drawn into the creation of an Islamic state when their own preferences were for a secular, liberal or socialist one. By the same token Khomeini spoke of an Islamic state, not an Islamic republic, until the autumn of 1978, thus avoiding a term which was associated with secularism in the minds of some of religious society, and opening his following to charges of sedition before they were ready to meet them. Whilst allowing that the clerics should be activist and play an influential role, Khomeini did not dwell upon the concept of the government of the jurist and cleric dominance, as it would have antagonized not only the liberals and the left but also conservative groups such as the Hujjatiyya, which deplored any suggestion of encroachment on the rights of the absent Imam.

Khomeini also believed that if the clerics took power early on the people would suppose that to have been their real objective in leading the revolution, rather than the promotion of Islam and the removal of oppression and foreign interference.<sup>8</sup> This consideration was one reason why Khomeini chose Bazargan to form the first government of the Islamic Republic in February 1979. Another reason was that Bazargan was an Islamic liberal of some political experience and stature, whereas the clerics who later came to dominate the Islamic Republic were young, unknown, and still politically immature. Bazargan and Khomeini had long held different visions of an Islamic state, the one believing implicitly in the sovereignty of the people, and the other giving greater credence to the sovereignty of God. Their cooperation was thus always likely to be temporary, and part of a step-by-step policy by Khomeini. An additional problem in conferring the executive on the LMI was that Khomeini had a low opinion of political parties, and Bazargan was only invited to take office provided he did not behave like the usual leader of a political party, acting in their interest rather than that of the country.<sup>9</sup> In the meantime, Khomeini's departure from Tehran to Qum soon after his arrival was a way of divorcing himself from the state administration and dissociating himself from ill-advised policies, though popular ones tended to go to his credit.

The organization of the opposition movement demonstrated professionalism in planning and conception, in the dissemination of information, and in impact. However, Khomeini and his followers should not be seen as completely in control, as strikes were sometimes commanded to continue but did not, and at other times were ordered to end but failed to do so.<sup>10</sup> In giving direction to the movement both before and after the revolution, Khomeini made every endeavour to be fully informed. He always listened to the radio several times a day and read a number of newspapers, including those of opposition groups.<sup>11</sup> He also received special reports and many letters.

The series of demonstrations which signalled the mass mobilization of the people began in early September 1978 when 100,000 people took to the streets in the Qaitariyya district in Tehran. On 7 September a demonstration of half a million was organized, followed on 8 September by the Black Friday protest in Jaleh Square, during which many people were killed. By October the people had been organized to stand on their rooftops and shout 'Allah Akbar' ('God is great').

Khomeini's former students established the *Rahpama'i* (Demonstration) Committee, which was responsible for two huge demonstrations

on Tasu'a and 'Ashura (10 and 11 December). The committee arranged other large demonstrations, which usually began in the mosques of the various districts of Tehran, proceeded to the main street, and then marched to agreed destinations.<sup>12</sup> The slogans 'Death to the shah' and 'Death to America' began to be used. Khomeini was anxious to avoid violence, however, and dealt with the regime by relentless pressure rather than spectacular gestures.

The role of the bazaar in assisting the mosque was crucial. The main unit of organization was the *hayat* (small religious group or society), such as those mentioned earlier, the *hayatha-yi mi talifa*, of which the members were merchants, small business men, workers and porters, as well as clerics. Their experience in organizing processions, often in large groups and congressional prayer, was invaluable in mobilizing the people against the regime.<sup>13</sup> The ordinary people responded to calls for social justice, as well as to Khomeini's authority as a pious and charismatic leader. Unlike the middle classes they were not particularly moved by newly constructed ideologies. To invigorate the process and facilitate the demonstrations, the bazaars of Tehran and Qum closed frequently between January 1978 and January 1979, and on 16 December all bazaars throughout the country closed. In the course of the revolution there were around 2,500 demonstrations, two-thirds of which were organized by the bazaar-cleric alliance.<sup>14</sup>

After the departure of the shah the huge demonstrations continued to play a significant role in exerting political pressure. In January 1979 a demonstration of 1.5–2 million in Tehran endorsed the departure of the shah and the establishment of the Islamic Revolutionary Council. It also in effect declared illegal the interim government of Bakhtiar, established with the cooperation of elements of the army between the departure of the shah and the return of Khomeini.<sup>15</sup> Khomeini described the demonstrations throughout the country as 'a referendum for an Islamic republic', using them to force the army to back off and permit his return to establish an Islamic republic. There was a further demonstration in early February, and a special women's demonstration in March. In September 1979 the introduction of the principle of the government of the jurist, resisted by Bazargan, was supported by a number of rallies.<sup>16</sup> Thus a series of demonstrations, using both traditional networks and organizational methods of European political origin, facilitated the rise to power of the Islamic totalist regime.

The huge demonstrations were mobilized at the exhortation of Khomeini as leader, a frequent slogan being 'Allah Akbar Khomeini



Rahbar' ('God is great, Khomeini is the leader'). Khomeini, however, was most often referred to as the imam. The word 'imam' derives from the Arabic for 'leader' and thus originally had a straightforward meaning. It is also a word full of connotations. It suggests the absent Imam, the last of the 12 infallibles, and although Khomeini did not claim authority such as theirs, both he and his followers were aware of the charismatic and immaculate power it suggested to the ordinary people in a Shi'i culture. The term was linked to Khomeini's natural piety, which in press interviews, for example, together with an emphasis on the modesty of his abodes, was used to suggest his saintly attributes – very important for winning respect and authority among the pious poor. Imam was, in addition, the title that Mulla Sadra gave to the leader of his community, again a saintly figure who purged his soul of selfishness and evil, permitting him to make the journey to union with the divine and then return to bring the benefits of his knowledge, wisdom and asceticism to his community.

The influence of '*irfan*' on Khomeini shows in some of his speeches. For example, in July 1979 he said:

Islam sees another meaning in everything ... Anyone who refers to the Qur'an can see that. For all the spiritual aspects of the human sciences can be seen in the Qur'an, not in their natural aspects ... The injunction of the Prophet is to look at what is beyond this world. Those who see all the real world in reality see only part of it ... Islam is to take all perceptions and all the world back to the level of *tauhid* ... It is to return all nature and all oppressive shadows to that place of light which is finally the place of divinity ... What Islam wants is this – all science, natural or other, should be subjugated to the divine science and brought back to *tauhid*.<sup>17</sup>

Two weeks later he expounded on other aspects of his '*irfani*' vision with relation to individual and community:

Purification of the soul is higher than knowledge and wisdom ... If the people of a country are purified and trained, that people is in the vanguard. If the leaders are likewise purified, then there will be no problems either for the country or for themselves.<sup>18</sup>

And again in August:

The school of *tauhid* is distinct from all others because it trains people and brings them out of oppression and guides them to the light. Other schools which do not belong to the school of *tauhid* are materialistic and they bring people back from the light to the darkness of oppression.<sup>19</sup>

Thus Khomeini sought to guide his community to his objective through the creation of an ideological and institutional framework that allowed the development of the individual and the group in accordance with his view of the Islamic ideal.

The long-established traditions of authority implied in the term 'imam' were linked to a modern definition, in the sense of the leader of a political movement. It will be remembered that the Muslim Brotherhood used the term for the leader of their movement, which in its systematic organization and ideological cohesion, as well as its use of propaganda and slogans to mobilize, resembled and was influenced by Marxist-Leninist principles, and was thus very modern.

Women were mobilized to take their place in the revolutionary movement alongside men. The values expressed in Khomeini's speeches to women reveal both traditional and radically progressive preoccupations. On the one hand he placed great emphasis on decorum, particularly in dress, reflecting a need to control women in the interests of perpetrating and maintaining the Islamic moral order. In March 1979 he advised:

Just as men must avoid corruption, so must women. Women must not be toys in the hands of young profligates. Women must not degrade their position and God does not wish them to go out all made up and stir up sedition amongst the public.<sup>20</sup>

Women were also to continue in their traditional role as pillars of the family in the new order, as he said in May 1979:

Women have the responsibility of motherhood and raising the children. The mother is the child's first class, a good mother is a good class ... If you bring up a child correctly, and one day that child is a leader of society, then the country will be prosperous and yours will be the credit.<sup>21</sup>

But at this period Khomeini brought a new perspective to the role of women which had been absent from his vision in 1963, and which was in

line with his exhortations to men. Women were to pursue self-development and self-empowerment, as he said at the end of 1978:

From the point of view of human rights there is no difference between men and women for both are human beings, and women have the same control over their own destiny as men.<sup>22</sup>

And again:

'In the Islamic system a woman is a human being [*insan*] who can be equally active as a man in the building of a new society.'<sup>23</sup>

Further, in March 1979:

You can be certain that you are in the front line. You have proved you have a place with men. Men have taken a lesson from you ... You are honoured by Islam ... Islam wants to train you to be a perfect being so that you can bring up other perfect beings.<sup>24</sup>

In May he elaborated that women must bring up a human being aware of his religion, to withstand oppression and secure independence for the people and the country.<sup>25</sup> They should take themselves seriously and should not permit themselves to be degraded, as under the previous regime.<sup>26</sup>

Khomeini promised women improved rights under the shari'a, though they were not to be granted in the early stages of the Islamic state and were later still difficult to enforce.<sup>27</sup> The shari'a, as Khomeini told a group of women in October 1979, had given a firm way to grant divorce. At the time of the marriage contract, women could make the condition that they could be agents in divorce. They could stipulate the right to get a divorce whenever they wished, or make the husband's bad behaviour, or his taking of another wife, as grounds for initiating a divorce.<sup>28</sup>

But most striking in Khomeini's speeches at the time of the revolution is his emphasis on the activism of women, reflected in some of the graphic art of the period, and his encouragement of them to take their place in the political struggle beside men.

Women have been taking part fearlessly in demonstrations under fire ... They have been organizing political gatherings all over Iran. At what time or place have there been braver women?<sup>29</sup>

And in March 1979:

'God blesses you as the lion-hearted, and it is through your exalted efforts that Islam has been released from subjugation to foreigners.'<sup>30</sup>

Beyond that, however, Khomeini exhorted women to participate in the politics of the new order, and to shape and transform it:

One of the blessings of this movement is that women have become involved in the matters of the day and in political matters ... Now all the people, whether women or men, are involved in the destiny of their country.<sup>31</sup>

He welcomed women into the assembly, when it was elected, and said they must also fulfil their social and religious duties, and, along with everyone else, must supervise the affairs of the country.<sup>32</sup>

In the event, in the aftermath of the revolution, many women were to lose their position, and some at least deeply resented the compulsory imposition of Islamic dress, the *hijab*. As in other countries, war was to reverse the trend, as women were obliged to take responsibilities normally assumed by men. But the Islamic Republic has given attention to the education and development of women, and if emphasis on the shari'a still impedes their progress, Khomeini's stress on activism and self-development, and his exhortation to political engagement, have provided encouragement for them to play their part in changing politics and society.

## **The Struggle over the Nature of the Islamic Republic**

When Khomeini reached Paris his clerical followers in Tehran began to organize more systematically and with clearer ideas on the nature of the Islamic republic and how they might achieve it. A new paramount body, called the Revolutionary Council (Shura-yi Inqilab) and to which all other bodies referred, was created in about December 1978 (Azar 1957). Its core members were Mutahhari, Beheshti, Bahonar, Musavi Ardebili and Rafsanjani; later Mahdavi Kani, Taliqani and Khamene'i were added, and finally Bazargan and Sahabi. Mutahhari went to Paris to have it officially confirmed by Khomeini.<sup>33</sup> The existence of this council was kept secret before the revolution, but after Khomeini's return it was to

play a significant role in establishing new structures. At this time, also, Tehran was divided into several districts, and two representatives from each were elected to a central committee of the Ruhaniyyat-i Mubariz.<sup>34</sup> The Demonstration Committee also came under it.

On 11 February 1979 Khomeini issued a public endorsement of the establishment of the council, making it the supreme decision-making and legislative authority in the country. At that time Bazargan, and six of his associates who had been added to it, left to form a cabinet and were replaced by other laymen, including Bani Sadr and Sadiq Qotbzadeh. The radical clergy on the council were strengthened by the departure of Bazargan. In May 1979 Mutahhari, a moderating influence on policy, was assassinated by the Furqan group, which opposed the involvement of the clergy in politics.

From the time of his arrival in Paris Khomeini had made it clear that he wanted an Islamic republic, though he was not precise as to its institutions. As has been demonstrated, he distinguished between democracy, which he saw as a secular Western system, committed to the rights and interests of the individual; and Islamic government, in which there was no division of religion and state, but commitment to the Islamic community and the development of righteous individuals within it. He now declared he wanted a society where there was social justice and where landlords and the powerful could not use positions of authority wrongfully to amass wealth.<sup>35</sup> For the first time he spoke openly of an elected assembly. Under pressure from the Western press in Paris in November 1978, he had promised freedom of the press and of association, though adding rather vaguely that 'Islam has fixed the boundaries in these concerns'.<sup>36</sup> He was careful not to discuss *vilayat-i faqih*, nor the details and nature of the proposed Islamic state. Later, in Iran, he said that in the new order the duty of the clerics would be to act as the guides of the people and protect them from 'sedition'.<sup>37</sup> He stressed the need for Islamic government to be strong, as a weak government meant a weak Islam. Sovereignty would be of a dual nature, resting on both the divine and the popular will.<sup>38</sup> He did not refer to any possible conflict between the two, nor prioritize between them.

Acting on the basis of his public support and his knowledge of the shari'a, Khomeini introduced Bazargan as the leader of a provisional government, with the task of holding a referendum on an Islamic republic and arranging for elections for an assembly. Differences emerged immediately between Bazargan and the young clerics who were excluded from

the cabinet. Beheshti and Rafsanjani, in particular, felt the need for a powerful organization to represent the interests of Islam, especially in the face of the highly organized activities of the Mujahidin and the Fada'iyani Khalq.<sup>39</sup> Therefore, in March 1979 they founded the Islamic Republican Party (IRP). Attuned to the radical aspirations of the young from the poorer social groups, who dominated the revolutionary committees, they were able to use these and the bazaar networks against Bazargan. The new party proposed state control of large capital enterprises, the Islamization of the education system, and assistance for the 'dispossessed'.

In March 1979 the referendum on the creation of an Islamic republic produced a vote of 98.2 per cent in favour. In June the first draft of the new constitution appeared, abolishing the monarchy and creating a strong presidency on the Gaullist model.<sup>40</sup> The constitution granted limited individual rights and freedom, and stressed social welfare; it perceived the state as having an Islamic ethos but failed to mention the implementation of Islamic law and granted no specific role to the jurists, except on a Council of Guardians to ensure that legislation would conform to the shari'a. It was approved by the cabinet, the Revolutionary Council and, with two small alterations in part to exclude women from the presidency and judiciary, by Khomeini, who raised no objection to the remainder.<sup>41</sup> Probably mindful of the need to maintain unity within the country, especially in view of a revolt in Kurdistan, Khomeini wanted to submit the draft immediately to a referendum, and not directly to the proposed assembly. He also defended it against leftist and liberal criticisms.<sup>42</sup> Despite warnings that it would not be to their advantage, the laity, led by Bazargan and Bani Sadr, objected, demanding a full review of the constitution and failing to realize that the radical Islamists also intended revisions.<sup>43</sup> An Assembly of Experts was created to examine the constitution and elections to it took place in August 1979. Of the seats, 55 out of 73 went to the clergy, most of whom had direct links to the Islamic Republican Party. There were divisions among members of the assembly, however, over the sovereignty of the people and divine sovereignty, and the powers of the jurist; these divisions were to surface later.<sup>44</sup>

In June the demand emerged that the supreme authority should be a jurist (*faqih*) under the constitution (instead of an assembly and president). This was in accordance with Khomeini's *Islamic Government*, but largely instigated by his clerical supporters. They benefited from the creation of the Islamic Republican Party, from the growing control of

the revolutionary committees, from the establishment of the Revolutionary Guard in May 1979 and from a clarification of their objectives in a confused situation. They were also encouraged by the perception that though the middle-class laity objected to the idea of the government of the jurist, the mass of ordinary people did not.<sup>45</sup> The concept of the government of the jurist could be used not only to enhance Khomeini's powers as leader, but also to institutionalize the rule of the clerics. They therefore drafted a revised constitution. In November 1979 the taking of hostages at the American embassy, instigated by the radical clergy, brought down the government of Bazargan, who had been seeking rapprochement with the West. On 15 November 1979 the Assembly of Experts completed its debates on the constitution, transforming it into the fundamental law of a thoroughly Islamic state.

### **The Constitution of the Islamic Republic**

The constitution<sup>46</sup> expressed the ideological vision of Khomeini and the Nahzat that had sustained him and organized his rise to power. It is an eclectic document, professing to be Islamic but in fact retaining principles derived from Western democratic systems. The ideological vision developed from debates within Khomeini's movement is manifested in the introduction and in Article 2.6, which speak of it as being based on Islamic principles and precepts that reflect the aspirations of the Islamic community, the dignity of the human being and the noble values of humanity, together with responsibility before God. These provide for the establishment of justice, political, economic, social and cultural independence, and national integrity. A sentence in the preamble, stating that the purpose of government is to enable the manifestation of the divine dimensions of human beings to flourish, recalls Mutahhari.<sup>47</sup>

Islam is perceived as a total system, its values and vision characterizing in ideological uniformity all aspects of society and all laws. The constitution heralds a new order and a new mode of thinking, new arrangements for the political and social system and a new identity.

The preoccupation of Khomeini and his movement with social justice also pervades the constitution. It seeks to establish a just and balanced social system in which all are aware of their rights and duties. Article 3 sets out the duties of the state in providing welfare and taking responsibility for social and economic development, in a manner comparable to the state socialism then prevalent in the Middle East and elsewhere. The duties of the state are specifically given as providing welfare, education, security of

political and social freedom, physical development, military training and the encouragement of popular participation. The stated ideological objectives of the republic include creating prosperity, eradicating poverty and deprivation, and ensuring adequate food, housing, employment and health care. The state is further to plan a fair economic system according to Islamic principles. The influence of social justice and state socialism again appears in Article 46, which affirms the security of private property so long as the ownership of that property does not deprive others of opportunities.

The character of the republic is embodied in and protected by the leadership of a pious, just, courageous, capable and knowledgeable jurist, the nature of whose authority is set out in Article 5. He should be acquainted with the circumstances of the age, and recognized as leader by the majority. He is authorized to appoint jurists on the Council of Guardians, the chief officials of the judiciary, the chief of staff of the armed forces, the commander of the Revolutionary Guard, and the majority of members of the Supreme Defence Council. He may also declare war and peace. He must approve candidates for the office of president and may remove the president should he prove incompetent. The office of jurist was conferred on Khomeini for life.

The jurist is designated the ultimate source of authority (Article 5):

In the time of the occultation of the 12th Imam in the Islamic Republic of Iran the mandate to rule [*vilayat-i amr*] and leadership of the people [*imamat-i ummat*] are the responsibility of a just, pious jurist aware of the times, brave and with drive and initiative, whom the majority of the people know and accept as their leader.

In the preamble the wording on the nature of *vilayat-i faqih* is slightly different, and refers to the mandate to rule and the continuous leadership (*vilayat-i amr va imamat-i mustamiri*). This means that the jurist inherits the position of leadership from the Imams through the continual exercise of the knowledge and judgement of the holy texts. It is another way of stating Khomeini's argument in *Islamic Government* that the jurist is entitled to exercise all the executive powers of the Imams. It does not mean that his rule is the same as that of the Imams, who are infallible and possessed of divine light. As Khomeini himself phrased it:

There has been no one else like the Prophet, and in the succeeding eras there has had to be guidance for the people. Before the Prophet left the world he designated his successors till the time of



the occultation ... and after that the jurists were obliged [to take on the responsibility] of guarding the people.<sup>48</sup>

The concept of the government of the jurist and the criteria of authority, knowledge and piety permitted the domination of the state by the clerics as a group, although they were not united in desiring it. The importance of their role is in fact recognized in Article 2.6a, where the goals of the republic are seen as being realized under the continual exercise of the judgement (*ijtihad*) of the qualified jurists on the basis of their knowledge of the holy texts. In effect, it facilitated the rise to power of the young radical former students of Khomeini. They remained, however, dependent on the bazaar and mosque networks as their power base; thus it may be said that by contrast with many other countries in the Middle East, where the state with power based on the military more or less controlled society, an element in society (represented by modified traditional organizations) had in effect gained predominance over the state.

An intended result of this was the prevention of the emergence of another military dictatorship; this was one of the purposes of creating the office of the jurist. Khomeini was anxious to win the loyalty and control of the army, which he designated as part of the people, not separated from them.<sup>49</sup> His reasons for supporting the creation of the office of the jurist appear to have been pragmatic as well as idealistic. In September 1979 he said:

I assure all the people and the military that authority now resides in the government of the jurist, which is such that Islam prescribed and the imams appointed, no harm will come to anyone and there will be no dictatorship.<sup>50</sup>

And again in October:

Do not listen to those who are against the line of Islam and consider themselves enlightened persons, and who oppose the government of the jurist. If there is no government of the jurist there will be *taghut* [oppressive government] ... The people want an Islamic republic not a Western republic ... If the government of the jurist is a disaster, the people want this disaster.<sup>51</sup>

It must also be noted that the office of the jurist, with the powers conferred on it, was a means of ensuring that the republic retained its Islamic identity.

It was mentioned earlier that Khomeini had different concepts of the state, both juxtaposed and interactive, and two of them may be found in the office of the jurist. One is that of the state as an administrative arrangement which exists for the purpose of implementing the divine law; the second is that of the state governed by a person in the tradition of Plato's philosopher king and the ruler of al-Farabi's perfect city, who displays knowledge, a sense of justice and the best qualities of character, and who embodies all the authority of the state. In the designation of justice, courage and piety as desirable in the jurist may also be seen the influence of Khomeini's bazaari followers and their ideal of a just ruler. Their values are also expressed in Article 3.1, which enjoins the creation of a favourable environment for the growth of ethical values based on faith and piety and the struggle against vice and corruption, reminiscent of the vision of Navvab Safavi.

That the jurist should be aware of the problems of the age, however, reflects Mutahhari's view of the need for adaptability to the times, and sounds a note of modernist relativism. The modernizing, progressive nature of Islam envisaged by Khomeini and his movement is made explicit in the stated belief that the Islamic Republic is based on human dignity achieved through, among other matters, the use of science and technology (Article 2.6b). The point is reinforced in Article 3.4, which promises strengthening of the spirit of research, enterprise and invention in all areas of science, technology, culture and Islam.

The pivotal role of the shari'a is expressed in the foundation of the republic upon divine laws (Article 2.4). All laws passed must be in accordance with the shari'a, the Qur'an and the Traditions, which requires detailed juristic supervision (preamble) institutionalized in a Council of Guardians (Article 73), consisting of six qualified jurists and six lawyers qualified in various branches of the law (Article 91). The fact that the assembly is allowed to legislate, even if it must conform to the shari'a, is a relaxation of the more inflexible position on the matter at times expressed by Khomeini. Likewise, the provision for six qualified (i.e. lay Muslim) lawyers reflects a desire to include the religious laity among the ruling elite. Their role in the revolutionary movement and contribution to the establishment of the new order is recognized in the preamble. Thus the republic is not envisaged as being entirely clergy-dominated, and the restrictions placed on the office of president by comparison with the authority of the jurist could be read as assuming that the president is likely to be a layman.

The three sovereign powers in the republic are seen as the legislature, the executive and the judiciary, and are exercised under the supervision of the jurist with the president acting as a link (Article 57). In practice the interposition of the jurist was to complicate the functioning of the three divisions, creating complexities and uncertainties.<sup>52</sup> The judiciary is managed through a High Judicial Council which, among other functions, ensures that Islamic principles are observed.

The view of women presented by Khomeini, as both the pillar of the family and active participants in the revolution, is also reflected in the constitution. Their role in the struggle is acknowledged and their rights affirmed (preamble and Article 21), but the family is stated to be the fundamental unit in society, pivotal to the development of human beings and the area where women have the most serious responsibility. Worthy mothers may have guardianship of the children where there is no legal guardian (usually a not-always-worthy father).

In accordance with the aim of propagating Islam as an all-encompassing ideology, the mass media are to be employed in the service of spreading Islamic culture (preamble), this again being a long-standing aim of Khomeini's. The media must prevent the dissemination of sedition and anti-Islamic sentiments, and promote the building of a model Islamic society. There is freedom of publicity on the basis of Islamic principles (Article 175).

Khomeini's vision of a strong Islamic state also infuses the role of the defence forces, which are to be imbued with Islam as an ideology. They have the duty, as proposed in *The Revealing of Secrets*, not only to guard the country but also to spread the word through the struggle (jihad) for the sovereignty of God.

The constitution is ambivalent on the subject of sovereignty, which as stated belongs to God (Article 2), but is also based on the popular will. Thus the Islamic Republic had been accepted (i.e. legitimately established) by an affirmative popular vote of 98.2 per cent. Government which causes the people to grow towards the divine order and enables human talents to flourish cannot be achieved without active and widespread participation of all elements of society (preamble). The jurist owes his position not only to his qualities of character but also to the recognition of the majority of the people (Article 5). Article 3.8 ensures the participation of all the people in the determination of their political, economic, social and cultural destiny. Section 5 is entitled 'The Sovereignty of the People and the Powers thereby Conferred', and suggests

that though the popular will is a source of authority, it is limited by the divine will.

Although the constitution is Islamic, the structure of the state is of Western origin, and to some extent a continuation of the arrangements of the Constitutional Revolution. This is reflected in Articles 19 and 20 on equality before the law, though religion is missing. There is security of property (Article 22), and persecution of beliefs is forbidden (Article 23). Zoroastrians, Christians and Jews are recognized minority groups (Article 13), but not Baha'is. Freedom of opinion and association are granted within the boundaries of Islam (Article 26). In effect the freedoms normally recognized by a democratic constitution are present, but, as Khomeini specified, in accordance with Islam and limited by it.

National sovereignty is affirmed under that of God, and acknowledged in the whole edifice of the state as well as in such terms as 'borders' and 'defence'. In Articles 15 to 18 the language, script, history and flag of Iran (presumably as a nation-state) are specified. These points must be highlighted because the constitution also contains in its preamble elements of the vision of a wider Muslim community. Its mission is said to be 'to prepare the ground for the continuation of the revolution', particularly in the development of international relations with other Islamic and popular movements to prepare the way for the advent of a unified world community.

The third-worldist character of the Nahzat is also evident at the point where reference is made to the combined need to win salvation for the deprived and oppressed people of the world. The constitution is a guarantor against any form of social or intellectual tyranny and economic monopoly. It emanates from a movement intent upon eradicating the political, cultural and economic dependence of Iran on world imperialism. Article 3.5 rejects colonialism and foreign influence. The clauses on the economy and financial affairs affirm the desire of Khomeini and his movement to be neither capitalist nor socialist and leaning neither East nor West. While state guidance is envisaged in the economy and exploitation of labour is disallowed, there is to be an active private sector alongside the public one. There is to be no class struggle.

All in all the constitution reflects the goals and values of Khomeini's Islamist movement and of Khomeini himself. Most of its elements are touched upon at one time or another in his writings or those of his adherents. The one main exception is the introduction of an elective assembly with legislative powers, but then Khomeini had equivocated

on the matter. Whatever his view, in practical terms the management of a republic in the twentieth century was not feasible without such an assembly, and popular expectation demanded it. Khomeini held his position as jurist from a popular revolution, not from the customary recognition of other ayatollahs.<sup>53</sup> Further, he himself openly acknowledged the will of the people in his position: 'The Islamic Republic is based on the will of the people and the precepts of Islam.'<sup>54</sup>

At the appointment of Bani Sadr as president he said:

On the basis that the people of Iran have by a large majority elected Mr Bani Sadr as president of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and on the basis that the lawfulness [*mashru'iyyat*] of that must be confirmed by a competent jurist, I, by this command, affirm the will of the people and appoint him to this position, but the affirmation of this person and the will of the people are limited by his not infringing the holy precepts of the shari'a, and his following the Islamic constitution of Iran.<sup>55</sup>

The constitution and its interpretation of *vilayat-i faqih* were not without critics amongst the 'ulama themselves. Many in Qum opposed the idea of the jurist as too close to the Sunni concept of the caliphate.<sup>56</sup> Some of the leading 'ulama also objected to Khomeini not working by the consensus of the 'ulama inherent in the juristic tradition. Even at the time of the revolution Khomeini was not regarded, as Burujirdi had been, as sole *marja'* of the Shi'a inside and outside Iran. The quietist Ayatollah Sayyid Abu'l Qasim Khu'i, resident in Iraq, was considered by many as the leading jurist. In Iran Ayatollahs Muhammad Reza Gulpaigani and Shahab al-Din Najafi Mar'ashi were held in great respect.

Ayatollah Kazim Shari'atmadari, whom many regarded as senior to Khomeini, had a large following, particularly in Azerbaijan. He was a moderate who supported the view that power and sovereignty derived from the people, and in March 1979 founded his own party – the Islamic People's Republican Party. At that time he expressed the opinion that the people should be asked what sort of government they wanted and that the influence of all views should in the future be felt on government.<sup>57</sup> In the autumn of 1979 Shari'atmadari criticized Khomeini's view of *vilayat-i faqih* on a number of occasions, arguing that it applied only in matters where the shari'a had not designated an authorized

agent, and then only as a way of coping with unavoidable problems. He also cast doubt on the validity of the concepts of *vilayat-i amr* (the mandate to rule) and *imamat-i ummat* (leadership of the people or community) used in Article 5 of the constitution, saying they had no precedence in Islamic jurisprudence. At the end of 1979 there were serious clashes between his followers and those of Khomeini in Tabriz, and in September 1982 his position was finally demolished when he was accused with Sadiq Qotbzadeh of plotting against Khomeini and was publically humiliated.

### **The Bani Sadr Period and Beyond**

Following the completion of the debate on the constitution in November 1979, elections were held in January 1980 for the office of president. Khomeini banned clerics from participating and encouraged the candidature of Bani Sadr, a religious intellectual who had written on Islamic government and economics. The Islamic Republican Party candidate, Jalal-al Din Farsi, was debarred as his father was an Afghan, and their substitute Hasan Habibi, a jurist long resident in France, was a virtual unknown. Admiral Madani represented the view of some of the secular middle class. Bani Sadr won by a huge majority, which was not, however, a true reflection of the distribution of power in the country. In February 1980 Bani Sadr was made chairman of the Revolutionary Council and Khomeini delegated to him the position of commander-in-chief of the armed forces.

Khomeini still had unity as his objective, but sought it within an Islamic consensus based on the constitution. He attacked not only the radical leftists, the Mujahidin and the Fada'iyān, but also the liberals. In addition, he tried to end strikes, and to disarm the revolutionary committees and courts and bring them under central control. Unity was particularly important in view of the uprising in Kurdistan and unrest in other provinces.

Khomeini's powerful clerical followers thought otherwise. Their power base lay in the revolutionary organizations and they did not want to see them dissolved, in part because they would be useful in securing electoral victory and preventing an increase of the influence of Bani Sadr and the religious laity. The elections in mid-1980 produced an IRP-dominated group in the assembly. Thus, while Bani Sadr was president, the programme of Islamization and the implementation of Islam as total ideological system accelerated. In accordance with the constitution,

Khomeini desired an Islamized judicial system. A committee under Beheshti began drawing up new criminal, civil and procedural codes based on the shari'a. Throughout Iran the clerics instigated purges despite the protests of Bani Sadr. Women were purged from the system at this time, in accordance with perceived Islamic principles, although they in fact suffered less than men of secular views and training.<sup>58</sup> In the event, however, practical problems meant that a fully Islamic system in the civil and commercial codes could not be implemented, and the shari'a penal code was only fitfully applied.

In his speeches Khomeini constantly reiterated his vision that Iran was now a fully Islamic country in all its dimensions. He enjoined the people to live by the precepts of Islam, and also to persuade others to do so (*amr bi ma'ruf va nahy az munkar*), such that not only individuals but the whole of society might be reformed and above all be strong enough to resist foreign interference.<sup>59</sup> Perhaps the greatest curtailments were felt in the restrictions put on the media and in the Islamization of the education system. In May 1979 Khomeini said:

The gentlemen who use the word 'freedom', whether in the press or others who raise the cry of freedom, do not truly explain it. In all countries freedom is limited by the law. People are not free to break the law ... Iran is an Islamic country and the laws of Islam are Islamic laws ... So when you talk about freedom in the sense of freedom of the press, it is not with the meaning that people are free to do what they want, i.e. to steal and to be obscene. This is the freedom of the West ... and cannot be in Iran where freedom must be in accordance with the law, the law of Islam.<sup>60</sup>

Already in early 1979 the views of the left and the liberals, secular and religious, had been curtailed in the media. August 1979 saw the introduction of restrictive press laws, in particular forbidding criticism of the Islamic Republic, closure of many publications, including *Ayandigan*, a moderate left-wing paper, and a law attempting to restrict the foreign press. Persian and Western music were banned in September 1979.<sup>61</sup> By 1981 the left-wing and liberal press were effectively silenced, with club-wielding Hizbullahis (members of the Party of God) being used to intimidate any protestors and demonstrators. The media was used as originally envisaged by Khomeini, to propagate Islamic ideology and mobilize opinion.

According to Khomeini's totalist system (*maktab-i tauhid*), it was the role of the education system, and particularly the universities, to train people to be Islamic, not Western, *insan* (human beings), for:

That which trains a correct people is totalist ideology [*maktab-i tauhid*] – if the people of a country are all correct and if the country is based on training in *tauhid*, if its people are brought up according to the training of Islamic *insan*, then they will work together peacefully.<sup>62</sup>

From these points it will be clear that the Islamization process was not simply about building more moral individuals, but also about creating a religious national identity, able to withstand in particular political and cultural imperialism. Already in 1978 Khomeini had made clear that he perceived the Western culture of the universities as leading the young astray. He said that the culture of Iran had become imperialist, and Iranians must have their own culture. He wished to go back to a true Islamic culture, but not be against progress.<sup>63</sup>

As part of the cultural revolution to substitute Islamism for secular Western influence, the curricula in both primary and secondary schools were transformed. Khomeini also encouraged the restoration of the Islamic practice of using prayer meetings for discussion of all affairs of the country, political, social and economic, and to extend public awareness of them. He designated Friday prayers especially as having an important role in advancing the revolution and maintaining unity.<sup>64</sup>

From the beginning Khomeini was aware of the importance of control of the military, which he described as 'the army of Islam', a *tauhidi* army in the sense of thinking and acting for God. He took care to ensure that control of the military remained ultimately in his own hands. Before the ratification of the constitution, which granted the right of appointing the commander-in-chief to the jurist, there was a power struggle over responsibility for the armed forces between the Revolutionary Council, the provisional government, Bani Sadr and Khomeini himself. Initially he conferred command on Jalal al-Din Farsi, who was an advocate of the view that control of the military should be with the jurist.<sup>65</sup> Afterwards he took overall control himself and then delegated the office to Bani Sadr once he became president, but under a Supreme Defence Council dominated by the clergy. After the fall of Bani Sadr, Khomeini resumed the responsibility in accordance with his constitutional rights as jurist.



Overall command of the armed forces has remained with the jurist under the Islamic Republic, providing a major bulwark for the structures established in 1979–81 and ensuring that no military leader, in the model of Reza Khan, should rise to challenge the new order.

The Islamic state is a national state, although Khomeini did express pan-Islamist sentiments in the sense of exhorting Muslims to unite to sustain each other against the encroachments of imperialism.<sup>66</sup> To some extent he resisted the concept of ethnic identity as being un-Islamic and creating divisions among Muslims,<sup>67</sup> and he also resisted secular nationalism. It was used, in his view, by those who wanted to keep Islamic countries weak and disunited. But in reality Khomeini was a religious patriot in the sense that he saw Iran as a state ruling a particular territory and having a particular history and culture, of which the distinguishing feature was the Shi'ite religion. He spoke of the need to 'protect our border now that we have our own Islamic country. This country belongs to the Imam of the Age and we are its guards and must protect it from foreigners.'<sup>68</sup>

Again:

This mentality we have now is a European or an Eastern mentality. We want to throw it off and have the mentality of a human being [*insan*], our own mentality, an Iranian one, an Islamic one.<sup>69</sup>

He also said there was a need for Islam to encompass all things in order to strengthen the country against outside interference.<sup>70</sup> Other Muslims were seen as belonging to their own Muslim nation-states and struggling to liberate their countries from Western control.<sup>71</sup>

The programme of Islamization was opposed by the liberals and the left, religious and secular. Their principal champion became the president, Bani Sadr, who struggled to resist the purging of non-Islamist sympathizers from the universities and the state system. Having resisted pressure from Khomeini to break with some of his leftist and liberal supporters, Bani Sadr fell from power in June 1981. The Mujahidin, seemingly, responded by blowing up the headquarters of the IRP, killing Beheshti and four cabinet ministers among others, and assassinating the new president, Muhammad 'Ali Raja'i, and Bahonar, the prime minister.<sup>72</sup> The regime, faced with a war with Iraq and rebellion in Kurdistan, retaliated ruthlessly and thousands of Mujahidin were executed. By 1983 suppression of the opposition began to abate and the

Islamist state, dominated by the radical clergy who had followed Khomeini and having its principal support in the bazaar and mosque networks and the Revolutionary Guard, was firmly established.

There was a further development of Khomeini's vision of the government of the jurist, however, in January 1988. The attempt to ensure the conformity of legislation with the shari'a had created much time-consuming argument. The president, Khamene'i, interpreted the state as having to work within the framework of the shari'a. Khomeini cut the Gordian knot in a letter to Khamene'i, in which he put the ordinances of the state above those of the shari'a and, in effect, introduced the concept of the absolute government of the jurist (*vilayat-i mutlaqayi faqih*).<sup>73</sup> Khomeini argued that government (*hukumat*), in the sense of the absolute guardianship (*vilayat-i mutlaqa*) which is given to the Prophet from God, was one of the primary precepts of Islam and took precedence over all secondary injunctions.<sup>74</sup> Thus Khomeini's jurist surpassed in authority the rulers discussed by the Sunni thinkers mentioned earlier, all of whom were limited by the shari'a.

At the same time, Khomeini as jurist was able to exercise power in the flexible manner envisaged by Mutahhari when he said that the implementation of the shari'a was subject to the exigencies of the age and thus to a degree of relativism. The ruling also implied the vision of Mulla Sadr that the leader of the righteous community has a wisdom derived from *ma'rifat*, knowledge of the divine, which is parallel to the shari'a and which may at times permit its overruling in response to both the high principles of Islam and the needs of the Islamic state and society. The ruling reflects Khomeini's vision, derived from Plato and al-Farabi, that the philosopher ruler is the state. In practice Khomeini was able to override the more traditionalist and literalist interpretations of some sections of society, as he had already begun to do in his fatwas concerning listening to music, playing chess and producing caviar (a valuable export).

Despite the seemingly traditional and repressive aspects of the Islamic Republic, by 1983 new political and cultural trends were at work. Not only did popular participation combined with the government of the jurist prevent the emergence of military dictatorship, but also features within the political culture of Shi'ism permitted a measure of pluralism (in terms of the open expression of a variety of opinion). The liberals and the left were silenced and forced to the periphery, but those willing to operate within the parameters of the Islamist system had some

freedom to express their views. This was most clearly demonstrated in the debates in the assembly, which enjoyed a liberty existing in few Middle Eastern countries and surpassed only by the parliaments of Israel and Turkey. The deputies openly and harshly criticized the policies of the incumbent government, and vigorously rejected proposed cabinet ministers.

In part this represented an Islamic tradition of consultation and debate; in part it reflected the culture of the discussions in the Qum seminary, mentioned in Chapter III, in which, depending on the teacher, freedom of choice and views, argument and refutation were encouraged. Such a culture had been particularly fostered in the classes of Khomeini. Further, the practice of the assembly was in the tradition of mainly urban Shi'ism, where the believers might encourage a particular *mujtahid* to represent their interests to the state, not only by becoming his followers but by paying to him their canonical dues. Thus the clerics were rarely united because they reflected different opinions within the urban population. In the parliamentary system different groups of clerics in particular came to represent different social and economic groups in society, be they poor, working class, traditional or modern middle class. The most obvious manifestation of lobbying and political pressure in the assembly was the fierce debates on the economy and the inconsistencies as between one government and the next and one assembly and the next – but then similar problems can arise in a Western democracy where socialists replace capitalists or conservatives, and vice versa. The system, however, encouraged less consistency and overall consensus, which both impeded economic rationalism in the implementation of fiscal policy and weakened executive government.<sup>75</sup>

The intense consciousness of the need for popular participation and legitimization through the votes of the people, reflected in the constitution, drew the poorer and less-educated groups into the political process, which provides a sharp contrast to conditions under the Pahlavi regime. Whatever doubts the people as a whole might have had about the new republic, they continued to participate in the political process, so that in effect it may be argued that one of Khomeini's achievements was to mobilize the ordinary people into involvement with the state.

Otherwise the state which Khomeini established retained in many ways the same character, institutions and objectives as the Pahlavi state. A highly centralized system became even more so, and control, often in the interests of improving facilities, advanced further at village level.

Kurdish aspirations to independence were no more tolerated under the Islamic Republic than under the Pahlavi monarchy. Many of the new institutions may be seen to resemble old ones, but deployed to serve and protect the interests of different groups and in the name of a different ideology. The most obvious example is the conversion of the Pahlavi Foundation to the Foundation for the Deprived. Established to work alongside the government, this foundation became largely unaccountable to the assembly and so powerful it was able to act autonomously;<sup>76</sup> thus while enforcing the power of the state, it also paradoxically undermined it.

Looked at another way, the Islamic Republic possesses some of the characteristics considered desirable in the tradition of al-Afghani, Abduh and Rashid Rida. It rejects the concept of the separation of religion and state. The ruler has final effective executive authority, although he must not be a despot. He must be pious and knowledgeable, but need not possess infallibility. He is, however, chosen by an Assembly of Experts rather than elected by universal suffrage, either for a number of years or for life, depending on popular decision, though he may be removed if he ceases to be just or act rightfully. Succession cannot be hereditary. The prime minister/president are little more than functionaries responsible for other functionaries. The shari'a must be implemented, but with flexibility. The Islamic injunction to consultation is fulfilled by the elective process based on universal suffrage in an assembly. This institution may legislate, as long as it does not infringe the shari'a. Finally, the Shi'a state has joined the Sunni one in being legitimate in theory as well as in practice.

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The Islamic state that Khomeini inaugurated incorporated three main influences on his vision: that of a moral community in which the powers of the state repose mainly in a leader of outstanding qualities, including knowledge, wisdom and integrity, conforming to the ideal of Plato's *Republic* and al-Farabi's *Virtuous City*; that of a legal state defined by the laws that represent the divine will and bound to implement them both to secure legitimacy and to guide society; and that of the modern strong state, highly organized, well defended and centralized in power and

authority. But being based also on popular support, and further partially legitimized by it, the state had the political institutions to represent the will of the people. In effect there was a compromise that represented pragmatism as well as idealism, relativism as well as absolutism, adaptability as well as rigidity, and thus complexity and contradiction, particularly over the locus of sovereignty. The divine will, that eternal source of authority, became linked to modern concepts of unity and totalism, to an all-embracing ideology. In turn totalism, based on the concept of *tauhid*, facilitated solidarity and mobilization. The potential rigidity and total control of such a system had in the end to negotiate with principles of consensus, consultation and government according to the law, at once both democratic and Islamic. At the same time, the Iranian nation-state was reborn, phoenix-like, out of the Shi'i or Islamic *ummat* (community) and the ashes of Pahlavism; with some institutional variation, the structures established by the Constitutional Revolution and fortified under the Pahlavis survived and even expanded under the Islamic Republic. The government of the jurist and the networks most devoted to it provided a power base besides the military. Thus tradition met modernity, and continuity met innovation.

## Chapter VIII: The Western Media and the Iranian Revolution<sup>1</sup>

The Western press in general have been criticized for the way they perceive and represent Islam. Edward Said, in particular, has argued that the media produce a misleading and oversimplified representation of Islam which is subjective, inaccurate and based on ignorant prejudices.<sup>2</sup> Under the pretence of balanced coverage, Islam is characterized by repeated and denigrating cliches. He criticized especially the reporting of the Iranian revolution as superficial and mostly based on the same scanty information, referring to the prevalence of a proprietary, recriminatory attitude, and the fact that the Western press refused to believe that the revolution was a lasting event. He accused them of reporting a proportionally high number of stories on atrocities and executions,<sup>3</sup> and noted the negative nature of much of the coverage and the failure to represent the positive side or follow up Khomeini's references to the oppressed and consider their implications.

These ideas have since been followed through by Sreberny-Mohammadi, who noted the frequency of the terms 'fanaticism', 'terrorism' and 'crisis' with regard to Islamism in contrast to the 'freedom-fighting' and 'commitment' referred to in other contexts, as well as incessant descriptions of 'black-robed mullahs', 'the turbaned Khomeini' and 'black-robed women'.<sup>4</sup> Local custom and religious practices are thus represented as bizarre, alien and reactionary. Sreberny-Mohammadi commented in particular that no effort was made to understand Shi'ism as the religion and custom of most Iranians. Iran was perceived as 'lost' rather than as an independent but different country undergoing highly complex and radical change. Indeed, the press perceptions formed at the time gave the revolution an irrational image it never lost.<sup>5</sup>

Another aspect of Western media coverage of the non-Western world, which has been highlighted by Herman and Chomsky, is the way some of

the press serve in mobilizing support for the financial and commercial interests of the state and the powerful private sector.<sup>6</sup> The particular choices made by the press in purveying information and comment, their emphases and omissions, can only be fully understood with reference to these issues. Thus the media uphold and defend the economic, social and political interests of influential groups which dominate state and society. That said, it is also to be expected that the press will examine foreign issues from the point of view of national interest. Naturally, their readers are often most concerned in following foreign coverage with personal interests in mind as well as the strategic and commercial concerns of the country as a whole, particularly if the economy is likely to be affected in any way by events abroad. Newspaper reports, however, need to be examined to detect whether a negative viewpoint is expressed in the clear understanding that the country is likely to experience loss, or whether negative attitudes arising from financial detriment are presented as moral concerns. Of course, this whole debate also impinges on the enormous issue of Western investments abroad and the way Western nations interpret their strategic interests in other countries – what is called informal empire. Such matters must be left to the reader's own judgement, as there is not the space to explore them here.

Special attention has been given to the problems of representing Islam itself in a study by the Runnymede Trust entitled *Islamophobia - a Challenge for Us All*.<sup>7</sup> Islamophobia is defined as 'unfounded hostility towards Islam', and refers also to the practical consequences of unfair discrimination against Muslims. Islamophobia has been dissected as being composed of certain prejudices, including a tendency to see Islam as monolithic and static, intolerant of internal pluralism and debate. Its diversity and dynamism, and the important differences within the world of Islam, taken for granted in discussion among non-Muslims, are ignored in the perceptions of Muslims. Secondly, Islam is viewed as other and separate, as having little or no common human experience, shared concepts or moral values with the non-Islamic world. It is perceived as hermetically sealed from the Christian world with no interaction and influence. The third problem is the representation of Islam as being inferior, rather than different but equal. The Western 'we', sophisticated, progressive, civilized, rational, efficient and non-sexist, is naturally superior to the primitive, unreasonable, chaotic and violent world of Islam. Further, Islam is static, rigid and impervious to change, by contrast with other religions and cultural traditions with their

internal debates and variety. Fourthly, Islam is seen as an aggressive enemy, the religion of war, committed to violence and barbarism, and as relentlessly hostile to the West as in the days of the Crusades – in which much of this view has its roots.

Fifthly, the real threat arises when Islam emerges from the aforementioned ossified barbarism to challenge the hegemony of the West in the form of fundamentalism, which since it is religious and, worse, Islamic cannot be modern. The Islamic Republic is correspondingly seen as bloody, intolerant and incompetent. Finally, Islam is not just a religion but a tool in the hands of vengeful ayatollahs, manipulated for strategic, political and military advantage to control Iran and threaten Western interests.

Before considering how far these attitudes were reflected in the British press at the time of the revolution, it is as well to recollect that the press have certain preoccupations, which, for better or worse, they bring to any situation. There is not the space here to deal with some of the more obvious ones, such as circulation wars and the need to attract readers by dramatization, but it is necessary to examine the media's values and conceptual approach.<sup>8</sup> One of the most important concerns is the perceived need to protect the rights and freedom of the individual against the encroachment of state and collectivity. The individual participates in society, but on his own terms and acting according to the public interest as he sees it. Thus the press are vigilant and fearful of anything they perceive as threatening the rights of the individual. By the same token, they are anxious to preserve the notion of variety against any pressures towards conformity.

As part of the same value system, they are particularly preoccupied with the freedom of the press and suspicious and watchful in its support in the interests of human rights and accountability of government in both Western and non-Western worlds. They also tend to resent all forms of extremism as demonstrating dogma and irrationality instead of the compromise, tolerance and moderation which facilitate civil liberties.

One of the most serious issues confronting the media is that of sources. Journalists gather news from the sources they follow and interview. Often they become overdependent on them, and consequently less guarded about the information they receive. Since journalists must meet deadlines, convenience is another factor leading many to pursue the same small number of sources, whom they may further pass on to each other. Journalists can become oblivious of the fact that the sources may have interests of their own, which they will not unnaturally take the



opportunity to promote. They may be selective in the information they provide and anxious to publicize their own ideological viewpoint.

The question of sources is related to that of class. Readers of the more discursive papers tend to be middle class in their political outlooks and interests. Journalists frequently have a similar status and viewpoint to many of their readers, the more especially so on foreign affairs. When they are abroad on an assignment they not unexpectedly find the most eloquent and available viewpoint among the middle class, people with values in many ways similar to their own. It can be time-consuming and aggravating as well as linguistically problematic to reach those of different, poorer social backgrounds, and leaders with views remote from liberal and socialist secular democracy. There is thus some tendency for foreign news to be reported not only from the point of view of Western financial interests, but also from what is ultimately a Western middle-class perspective. This makes it important for the historian, with more time and hindsight, to endeavour to present the perspective of other groups as well.

With these observations in mind it should also be noted that the different phases of the revolution varied in their depiction by the Western press. For example, in early 1978 there was a tendency to represent Khomeini and other clergy in a more friendly light in comparison with the shah, given the latter's human rights record. By mid-1979, with the growing imposition of censorship, reports had become much more negative. This discussion of the press coverage is thus divided into four phases: the months leading up to the revolution (January to August 1978); the prelude (September to December 1978); the revolution itself, with the departure of the shah and return of Khomeini (January to February 1979); and the early months of the Islamic Republic (March to November 1979). After the seizure of the American embassy in November 1979 the press became uniformly negative towards Khomeini's regime in response to its anti-Western polemic and in sympathy with the US personnel taken as hostages.

Non-British readers may wish to note the political angle of the various national papers mentioned: *The Guardian* – liberal; *The Observer* – Sunday, liberal; *The Times* – centre right (not published for much of the period because of a strike); *The Telegraph* – right, conservative; *The Economist* – weekly addressed largely to the business world; *The Daily Express* and *The Daily Mail* – popular conservative dailies; *The Sun* and *The Daily Mirror* – tabloids.

### Phase I: The Months Leading up to the Revolution

The reporting of the events in the first phase was overall evenly balanced, though with not a great deal of coverage on Khomeini, then in Najaf. For example, the *Guardian* in April mentioned Shar'iatmadari, Bazargan and Foruhar as the leaders of the opposition.<sup>9</sup> Although the reports made some distinction between Shari'atmadari and Khomeini, there was an overall tendency to see the clergy as one interest group or bloc, referred to as 'the mullahs'. Journalists were a little disconcerted at their initial encounter with these bearded, turbaned people, the *Observer* in May describing Shari'atmadari as looking like 'a Baptist of Jehovah'.<sup>10</sup> The *Observer* was also startled that religion should have any role in politics: 'A sermon, of all things, is fuelling the protest that has engulfed Iran this year.'<sup>11</sup> It went on to note that the opposition to the shah was inchoate and disorganized, and later expressed middle-class concern over 'the mullahs' control of the mob', perceiving the protest as originating in a challenge to secularism.<sup>12</sup>

The *Sunday Times*, in August opined that the opposition arose from 'traditional and social beliefs represented by the "black" element, which have always opposed the Shah's programme'.<sup>13</sup> It quoted 'most observers' as agreeing that the effects of Western technology and decadence were the root cause. Other papers, however, noted that social problems in both rural and urban areas were the cause of the demonstrations; they were an expression of discontent most of which had little to do with religion, and had been aggravated by too-rapid modernization.<sup>14</sup> In a rare awareness of the role of the West in the discontent, the *Times* commented that among the shah's unpopular policies were ignoring the constitution and selling the country's birthright to the West.<sup>15</sup> The *Observer* had some cogent points to make about the liberal predicament. Anti-secularism, it said, 'is deeply worrying to the moderately liberal Iranian. Despite the fact that he has never had it so good – which usually explains why he is a liberal and not a radical – he knows there is a lot wrong with Iran.'<sup>16</sup>

### Phase II: September - December 1978

Media attention to Iran began to mount after the bloody repression of the demonstration in Jaleh Square on 8 September. The right-wing press discovered that two of their demons had joined forces. 'Thoughtful Persians,' said the *Telegraph*, 'are worried. They fear religiously motivated mullahs are leading a strongly leftist movement that

they may not be able to control.'<sup>17</sup> It later lamented that the modernization of Iran had brought about a revival of the Shi'a church,<sup>18</sup> but also noted the effects of corruption and social dislocation.

The *Mirror* in November set out the problems of the religious radical alliance rather more forcefully: 'The fate of the shah of Iran and his peacock throne is locked in the hands of a bearded religious old man and tens of thousands of rioting students.'<sup>19</sup> The report then described how the students, backed by left-wing interests, were demanding full democracy, while the 'mullah Khomeini urges on the right wing'.

In the autumn the papers still on the whole referred to 'the mullahs' as one group, confused their views, and fastened on Shari'atmadari as the leading figure.<sup>20</sup> By November, after Khomeini had reached Paris, they began to make distinctions and to recognize that Khomeini was the more influential, the *Economist* commenting that he provided no alternative to the shah.<sup>21</sup> The *Times* set out the divisions among the 'ulama, reporting 'moderate' clerical opinion of Khomeini as:

The view at Qum, however, seems to be that his prolonged exile may have sharpened his political rhetoric but has isolated him from the practicalities of everyday life in Iran.<sup>22</sup>

It reported that Khomeini had called for 'holy war' against the shah 'without observing the convention that this position must be cleared and confirmed by all the other Ayatollahs'.

The press was now making more of an effort to understand the religious and social background to events in Iran. The *Times* ran a long article by Edward Mortimer as an expert on Islam, explaining the Sunni and Shi'i doctrinal position and the problems Islam presented to the Western secular perspective.<sup>23</sup> Charles Douglas Home endeavoured to explain the matter in more British terms:

The mosque in an ordinary Iranian's life is like a cross between a non-conformist chapel and a working man's club. It is often the only form of social gathering; it provides superior welfare services than the state.<sup>24</sup>

The press were naturally aware of the economic implications of a possible revolution, and generally expressed fears over the commercial ramifications. The *Economist*, in a classic example of vested interests masquerading as moral arguments, commented:

How can the survival of an undemocratic autocrat further the course of freedom? Hard answer: if he is the Shah of Iran. There is no doubt in this newspaper's view that it will be in the best interests of Iran and the Western world to which that country is so important, if the Shah with all his brilliance and all his flaws, survives as master of Persia.<sup>25</sup>

By December the British press were advising the shah to be 'a great patriot' and, in deference to 'paramount Western interests', make way for his son.<sup>26</sup> *Punch* (a satirical magazine) threw light on the troubles. It announced that the revelation that the Cambridge *Omar Khayyam* was a fake had been followed by the discovery of a genuine modern manuscript, and quoted:

Awake, for Doctor David-None-Too-Bright [Owen, the Labour  
Foreign Secretary]  
Has joined with Eldon Griffiths and the Right,  
And Lo! the Shah appears to have become  
A Freedom Loving Fellow overnight.

Dreaming of Teheran where Bullets fly  
They heard an urgent Voice from Millbank cry:  
Awake for there are Chieftain Tanks to Sell,  
And One, thank God, who is prepared to buy.<sup>27</sup>

The second major preoccupation of the press was, of course, strategic. The *Telegraph* was relieved to note that 'Khomeini was not Russia's natural ally'.<sup>28</sup> The *Guardian* commented that both the West and the communist bloc had little influence in Iran, and that the Soviet Union was disturbed by having 'semi-religious fanaticism' next door.<sup>29</sup> It added:

As in Northern Ireland the terms Catholic and Protestant are little more than shorthand to describe the two communities, so in the Islamic world at present the name of Muhammad is made to stand duty in political, cultural and ethnic conflicts of all kinds.

The *Economist* commented that a 'regime of mullahs to the right' would 'make of a country the America and Russia desperately need to see stable, a wildly unpredictable economic and political crackerjack

sitting on a diminishing barrel of oil'.<sup>30</sup> Concern over oil and Western interests was also voiced in the *Express*, which put some of the problem down to rapid industrialization and hoped the shah would get 'the Muslim majority' back on his side.<sup>31</sup>

The *Telegraph* reported Dr Luns, secretary general of NATO, as saying:

The upheavals in Persia – which shares a common border with Turkey – could ... 'undercut Turkey's partnership with the West and Nato'. In SHAPE (Supreme Headquarters Allied Forces in Europe) the officers express even greater anxiety over the establishment of a republic in Persia.

This is not only because it could jeopardize the supply of crude oil to Europe and Japan. Even more importantly it could give the Soviet Union control of the land belt from north to south of Europe and Asia, and – equally damaging to the West – the use of warm sea ports on the Indian Ocean.<sup>32</sup>

At the same time commentators of left and right attacked each other. In a letter to the *Times* in October, Fred Halliday complained of the right-wing Lord Chalfont's efforts to discredit left-wing views, and of insinuations:

that by criticizing Iran and his new-found friends in Peking one is simply acting as the agent of Moscow.

However, the real issue is that the great majority ... of Iranians are implacably opposed to the Shah. They have made a mockery of the craven lucubrations on Iran that Lord Chalfont has been publishing for years in *The Times*.<sup>33</sup>

### **Phase III: January - February 1979**

With the revolution itself, Khomeini finally came to the fore in British press reports. The *Mail* referred to him as 'the voice of the masses' but worried about his xenophobia.<sup>34</sup> The *Guardian* was not optimistic: 'The old man, who has been out of Iran for 14 years and is even more old-fashioned than that would suggest – he never uses the telephone for

instance – is at the centre of events.<sup>35</sup> It then reported his 'lack of realism, arrogance and authoritarianism' and added:

It is also true that most of Khomeini's fellow religious leaders, some of whom are cooperating with the Bakhtiar government, are jealous of his status. But the inevitable erosion of Khomeini cannot take place till he has exercised power.

Which begs questions about their correspondent's sources. However, evident delving produced a more perspicacious analysis a few days later:

It is partly the lack of interest of westernized Iranians in that whole side of their national life represented by the mosque, with its own educational institutions and intellectual evolution, that has made Khomeini into the totally shadowy figure he still is in the world of North Tehran ... Khomeini's thinking is the product of a long tradition of the mosque in defending Iran and Islam against foreign encroachment. 'He is,' said a diplomat, 'both a very traditional and a very modern figure.'<sup>36</sup>

It went on to report his emphasis on social justice, a question that was to be referred to rarely in the British press reports. The paper added perceptively that Khomeini has abandoned the essential Shi'ite conception of the state, as one which created conditions for citizens to be good Muslims, to follow a much more activist and totalist goal.

In a later number the *Guardian* drew attention to the problems of Khomeini's interpreters in mediating between him and 'a largely Christian-oriented press'.<sup>37</sup> It also observed that many of Khomeini's supporters had come to him through Shari'ati.<sup>38</sup> Although the paper's sympathies lay implicitly with Bakhtiar, alone of the British press it showed persistent awareness of other views besides those of the Pahlavi elite and the Westernized middle class. In January it spoke of the 'ordinary folk simply following their leader'.<sup>39</sup> In February, reporting the concern of the modern middle class, it pointed out that 'For the immense crowd, working and middle class, who lined Khomeini's route from the airport there was no such doubts.'<sup>40</sup> And shortly afterwards: 'Khomeini pushed over the battered structure of government and military authority in one great thrust of popular power.'<sup>41</sup>

In the same edition it carried an article by Altaf Gauhar which endeavoured to explain third worldism to its readers. 'What is

happening in the Muslim world today is really no different from the struggle for change in the rest of the Third World.' Gauhar went on to say that Khomeini's movement showed:

an unerring ability to articulate the inner Islamic feelings of the people roused not by theological debate but by the injustices of the previous regime and a conviction that an Islamic Republic would bring independence, justice and equality ... Unfortunately the whole movement in Iran has been seen in the western media in terms of its effects on the political and commercial interests of Britain and the USA, not in terms of the human beings involved in the struggle.

The *Telegraph* also had some insights to offer. Designating the fall of Bakhtiar as the most shattering defeat for Western influence and prestige in the Middle East since Suez, it looked at the causes:

What the Ayatollah symbolized and eventually unleashed was the grass roots rejection by the Shi'ite Moslem peasantry newly uprooted and transferred to the cities of Western culture. The Shah's modernization and liberalization programmes were seen by them as Westernization, a debasing of their own Islamic values ... The inflation, the over-ambitious schemes and the corruption that were part and parcel of the new Iran all contributed to the downfall of the Shah ... Western embassies in Tehran were badly informed about the developing situation not so much because they did not wish to see it ... The importance of corruption as a factor in creating anti-Western – and anti-Shah – feeling was too often dismissed.<sup>42</sup>

In other words to neglect dispassionate evaluation of an issue from different perspectives is to neglect the interest of the country served, just as a failure to explore different views is to fall short of the task of the historian.

Meanwhile Islamophobia was thriving in the *Mail*. Comparing Khomeini and Pope John Paul II, it aired its anxieties about the growth of fundamentalist Islam. 'Chartered jumbo jets convey tens of millions of Muslim pilgrims to Mecca and other holy places from which they return zealous fundamentalists.'<sup>43</sup> It continued:

Iranian Moslems are mainly Shi'ites. They constitute the oppressed minority within Islam. They bring to their faith a spirit of non-conformity, of destructive opposition, of holy zealotry and ferocious doctrinaire squabbling. They are millenarian ecstasies who await a mysterious second coming. The Ayatollah Khomeini is a Shi'ite extremist. He believes the spirit of Allah moves through the mobs and gives divine authority to his actions.

The *Economist* looked down on the proceedings with increasing exasperation. Commenting that Khomeini's great strength was his refusal to compromise (but failing to point out that there was some justification for it in his popular support), it observed: 'There are advantages to dealing directly with the aged divine, however mortifying, rather than his agents.'<sup>44</sup> The publication continued to put faith in the power of the army to suppress popular revolt, and regarded with dapper disdain Bazargan's installation as prime minister in 'a school assembly hall in one of Tehran's more seedy almost slummy areas. The streets around overflowed with torrents of black-robed women singing political songs.'<sup>45</sup>

On the strategic issue the *Observer* investigated US policy and reported that the government's public support of the shah had been constant if a little ambiguous. It recorded a press briefing with President Carter: "'Does that mean you want the shah to remain a monarch?'" asked a reporter. "I am not going to go through theology with you," replied Carter.'<sup>46</sup>

## Phase IV: March - November 1979

During this phase the press became more aware of Khomeini's anti-Western views, and tended to sympathize with the Bazargan government. They criticized the referendum over whether or not there should be an Islamic republic as being phrased in simplistic terms. In April the *Telegraph* reported rather wishfully that Khomeini and his 'zealots' were becoming isolated from the Bazargan government and other ayatollahs, and an increasingly disenchanted number of people.<sup>47</sup> The paper, however, also noted Khomeini's attempts to regularize the situation and control the virtually autonomous popular 'committees'. Press sources continued to be clearly from the mainly secular opposition, a fact which was indeed stated in a *Guardian* report in June which quotes 'secular leaders' as saying 'with justification that the Mosque is blinkered and increasingly short on religious tolerance'.<sup>48</sup> The *Telegraph* represented



Khomeini and his Revolutionary Council as making arbitrary decisions that were binding, often at gunpoint but at least juxtaposed it with an article in which Iran accuses Britain of not supplying tanks in fact delivered.<sup>49</sup> It also announced that Khalkhali had put a price on the shah's head but promised to lift the death sentence on Farah if she carried it out.

By way of comparison from the USA, *Time* magazine in March piled into one report lashings for adultery, executions for homosexuality, fervent Shi'ites grabbing for power, women forced into veiling and various other negative points.<sup>50</sup> On the other hand, in July it provided an unusually discerning and well-informed account of Khomeini's background and views, in particular his preoccupation with social justice and basic amenities for the poor, as well as his aversion to foreign interference; the report was based on interviews with his former students Javad Bahonar and Mahdi Ha'iri.<sup>51</sup>

The *Telegraph* occasionally followed the women issue. In March it reported Khomeini's address to several thousand women in Qum and his reassurance that women had the right to initiate divorce under Islamic law. It also mentioned the steps he proposed to take to dismantle Western cultural influence, and noted that this would mean an end to co-education and mixed doubles in tennis.<sup>52</sup> It was back on the subject in October when it relayed Khomeini's view that Iranian women who wanted to divorce their husbands could do so only if they announced before the marriage that they retained the right to initiate proceedings.

In April the *Observer* carried a long and unusually discriminating article on women written by Katherine Whitehorn. She pointed out that women were in some ways more correctly treated under the Islamic Republic than under the shah; they were very much part of the Iranian revolution, and confident of their role. She discussed the anti-veil view, but also gave the alternative opinion that the chador was a symbol seen as conferring natural dignity. In a point rarely made by the British press at the time, she said the revolution was as much about national identity as about political theory: 'Women see themselves as being at the heart of Islam. They loathe the West and hate being judged on looks.'<sup>53</sup>

On the first draft of the constitution issued in June the British press were sceptical, the *Economist* opining that its single chamber would be just as subject to manipulation as in the past.<sup>54</sup> From August, following the establishment of the Revolutionary Guard and with the introduction of increasingly stringent censorship rules, the British newspapers obviously became preoccupied with freedom of expression and even more

sympathetic to secular and liberal opinion, the *Guardian* comparing 'the new cultural revolution' to that of the shah. It did, however, note the high turnout in the elections for the Assembly of Experts and that 'the widely predicted absenteeism and apathy' had not been apparent, nor had major irregularities.<sup>55</sup> The *Telegraph* also reported that, despite the suppression of the left, 'There is little doubt that as far as the Iranian public is concerned the Islamic Revolution still enjoys unquestionably massive support.'<sup>56</sup>

The *Mail*, by contrast, published a cartoon of Khomeini clutching a rifle, standing by a cemetery full of crosses (*sic*) and saying, 'I bring my people closer to God'.<sup>57</sup> The *Economist* remarked that 'As an Ayatollah, a reflection of Allah, he cannot, like any workaday politician, resort to rigging elections without losing his halo.'<sup>58</sup> It remained critical of the rigid rule of 'a small group of obscurantist clergymen' who had neither the knowledge nor the experience to govern the country. When the final draft of the constitution became available in October the British press greeted it with dismay, the *Telegraph* opining that:

In short, the Ayatollah and his successors, whether they be individual theologians or clerical councils, will be able to do exactly what they like with no constitutional check at all.<sup>59</sup>

Despite the almost uniform note of criticism, in the autumn of 1979 the British press preserved some measure of detachment towards the regime until the seizure of the American embassy and the taking of the hostages. From that point they became not unexpectedly entirely strident and negative. When a group of Iranian students demonstrated in sympathy with the hostage-takers outside the US embassy in London, the *Sun*, which apart from a few mainly factual reports had largely ignored the revolution, lobbed a stone. 'Send them home', it said.

This is a free and tolerant country. However, liberty is not license. These students are guests of Britain and here to benefit from the facilities of our great educational institutions.<sup>60</sup>

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Do Said's criticisms stand up to examination? The answer must be that to a large extent they do. As some of the foregoing examples show, much

reporting was subjective, inaccurate, prejudiced and superficial. There was a tendency to see Khomeini as only temporarily in power, there was a proprietary and recriminatory attitude, and above all a great deal of negativism. As Sreberny-Mohammadi points out, there were frequent references to turbans and beards, as well as to black-robed women turning Shi'ism into a fanatical other. Those papers with readers with major business interests were particularly critical of the revolution and more sympathetic to the shah at the time of his departure and to the Pahlavi system, confirming Herman and Chomsky's view.

Islamophobia was indeed evident in Islam and 'the mullahs' being represented as monolithic and static, though the more experienced journalists built up an expertise and endeavoured to differentiate between the various Islamist views as time went on. There are many examples of the Islamic other being seen as inferior, primitive, violent and aggressive.

On the other hand the press were reporting to a readership in a country whose major economic and strategic interests (in the Gulf) were threatened. They were confronted with a movement which was inherently hostile to such interests and could well be interpreted as threatening them; a movement, what is more, that did not place the same value on freedom of the press and the rights of the individual as that given to them in a Western polity. In addition, the legacy of the enlightenment is a lasting suspicion of politically active religion. The reporting also varied, with the liberal press making more of an effort to note different perspectives, and all the better papers at one time or another carrying well-informed articles.

In fact the press placed far too much emphasis on the Islamic clothing of the situation. Having analysed some of the political, social and economic problems early on, they failed to bear them in mind as events unfolded. They observed tradition but failed to detect modernity. Above all they were far too dependent on sources essentially Western and middle class, on the Pahlavist elite and the Western intelligentsia. They failed to reflect Islamic views, the views of other social groups, and even of both the religious and secular left. As a result, a negative impression of a descent into chaos led by fanatical, bearded old mullahs remains common to this day. Iran, then and now, was and is a country going forward according to its own complex political values and agenda.

# Chapter IX: The Contemporary Muslim Perspective on the Iranian Revolution

The response of contemporary Muslims outside Iran to the revolution has been covered in J. Esposito (ed.), *The Iranian Revolution: its Global Impact*, which looks at the event in the context of the wider resurgence of Islam and considers Iran's goal of exporting its achievement.<sup>1</sup> Ramazani has examined the effect of the revolution on regional politics in *Revolutionary Iran: Challenge and Response in the Middle East*.<sup>2</sup> This brief chapter will look at how Muslims perceived the revolution and at the main effects of its influence in the years immediately following it. The views of *Impact International*, a Muslim fortnightly periodical based in London, are also reported, as well as those of the Islamist discursive periodical *The Crescent International*, based in Canada.

Studies of the effect of the revolution from around the Muslim world indicate that it provided a boost of confidence to Muslims, both Sunni and Shi'i, especially where either was a minority group. Its influence was felt most strongly among the Shi'a of neighbouring countries: Iraq, the Gulf states, Afghanistan and Lebanon.

Thoughtful Islamists commented that the Islamic revolution would help to counter the sense of inferiority engendered by the colonial legacy, providing an example of the mass mobilization of Muslims in the struggle for liberation from imperialist influences. The latter's failure to control the situation in Iran was noted with satisfaction, and the revolution's global impact was believed to be incalculable.<sup>3</sup>

Focusing on Pakistan in particular, *Crescent International* commented:

Pakistan needs a truly dynamic and revolutionary Islamic movement. The present set up in Pakistan is an extension of the British

Raj. A new movement for true independence must be the primary goal of an Islamic movement ... Periodic revolts are no substitute for a dynamic Islamic revolution. The Pakistan army may have to suffer the same fate as the Shah's army.<sup>4</sup>

Further, some Sunnis took no exception to *vilayat-i faqih*, which they understood to be a new version of the Sunni caliphate of early Islam that established the spiritual over the temporal authority in the Islamic state.<sup>5</sup> To some it represented an elected caliphate, and thus a convergence of the two schools of Islam.<sup>6</sup> In an interview, Muntaziri was asked why Islam and not just Shi'i Islam could not be the state religion; he replied that it was not practical to have all five schools of law.<sup>7</sup>

At the same time the Western media was seen as having constructed a solid wall of propaganda against the revolution and its achievements. *Impact International*, under the headline 'A Thumping Yes to the Islamic Republic', opined:

Very early on in the agitation it had become manifest that the Iranian movement was not just a negative movement protesting against the tyrannies of the Pahlavi monarchy. It represented a profound and vehement assertion of the long denied Islamic urges of the Iranian people.<sup>8</sup>

It continued that there were:

some dissenters representing the motley of secular, left-wing, monarchist and Westernized interest groups ... The Western media did its best to project and magnify these groups under various garbs, especially Kate Millet and her liberated sisters from the northern Tehran suburbs marching in front of the Western media.

A day before the referendum the BBC resurrected the fugitive prime minister, Shahpour Bakhtiar, and broadcast a taped message appealing to Iranians to boycott the referendum because the establishment of an Islamic republic 'will be contrary to social progress and economic improvement'.

By contrast with the Western media, *Impact International* saw the seizure of the American embassy in a positive light. It identified the real target as not the shah but 'the kind of imperialist and vicarious hegemony'

which successive US regimes had tried to impose on Iran. It observed that the real objective appeared to be to cut down the moral credibility of the US administration to the point where it could no longer interfere in Iranian affairs.<sup>9</sup>

Overall Sunni reaction varied. In Egypt, the Muslim Brotherhood was quick to see implications in the struggle between Islam and non-Islam. Their press depicted Iranian Muslims as escaping from misery, impiety, depravity and an enforced secular identity.<sup>10</sup> The Muslim Brotherhood tended to idealize the new regime and blame its weakness on the enemies of Islam; they also criticized the portrayal of the Islamic revolution in the Western press, as well as attacking some of the Arab press as representing it as reactionary and obscurantist.<sup>11</sup> This initial enthusiasm gradually waned, however, as a result of the reports of Iran's internal difficulties. Finally, there was disenchantment following the emergence of the Iran-Syria alliance because of its regional implications.

In the Gulf, the Sunnis were not overenthusiastic as a result of the spectre of Shi'i dominance and the lack of appeal of an 'ulama-led movement.<sup>12</sup> In Algeria, more remote from potential control, the impact was a marked increase in the Islamic emphasis in politics. A new Islamist party quickly found a following amongst anti-regime elements discontented over unemployment, housing and jobs.<sup>13</sup> Likewise, student protests in Morocco were entwined with strikes due to economic problems and indignation at royal profligacy.<sup>14</sup>

Generally the revolution was often publicized in Africa, its leaders quoted and its fighters taken as models, but interest subsided in some places with the war with Iraq, for fear of offending wealthy Arab states, and also as a result of Iran's connections with the Shi'a.<sup>15</sup> Coverage in some of the press, however, indicates how the revolution could be seen in a positive light. The *Muslim News* (South Africa) reported:

Most people's conception of Iran under the Shah was of a land awash with money and its people enjoying the benefits of this prosperity. Nothing can be further from this propaganda perpetuated by the leading arms merchants ... One has only to go a few miles south from central Tehran to witness the poverty and the squalor. If one ventures further afield it becomes rapidly clear that scarcely any benefit had ensued to the vast majority of people. This indeed was one of the main causes of participation in the Revolution. The masses had no stake in the Shah's scheme of things.<sup>16</sup>

An interview with Imam Azal Nagdee of Carltonville Masjid in the Transvaal following his visit to Iran elicited the following:

When I got to Iran I realized that most of the things we are told concerning the beliefs of the Shi'as are unfounded. Many a time I went to a mosque and picked up a Qur'an and it was the same Qur'an that we read.<sup>17</sup>

Asked about importing the revolution in a country where Muslims were a minority, he replied that this was not the issue; the question was to learn from the Iranians how to become better Muslims and to implement 'what we call Islam in its entirety'. Muslims could be educated to accept Islam as a total way of life, but as soon as anyone talked of oppression and other factors causing hardships, the elite who controlled the mosque appointments would ensure such protestors had no position.

Among the Persian-speaking Tajiks of Central Asia, apprehension over Iranian influence followed early enthusiasm.<sup>18</sup> Further afield, some Malaysian Islamists were elusive on the subject of the Islamic Republic as a model for an Islamic state; others saw the republic, even if only symbolically, as a triumphal realization of the Islamic ideal, a means to true Islamic identity, and the revolution occasioned considerable interest among the young.<sup>19</sup> Youthful enthusiasm was also the case in Bangladesh.<sup>20</sup> In Indonesia, where there had been Islamic resurgence since the Second World War, events in Iran incited intense interest, and a pamphlet on the revolution by a journalist who had been to interview Khomeini was outstandingly successful.<sup>21</sup>

It is notable, however, that the revolution had a particular impact among very poor Sunnis. In northern Nigeria the Maitatsine movement was already under way at the time of the revolution. It had a following among the poor and destitute of Kano, who were separated from their families after being driven from the villages to the towns by poverty. Their leader, Maitatsine, fought corruption, conspicuous consumption and the disparities in the standard of living in Kano. Awareness of the Iranian revolution made his movement more militant, and there was an uprising in which 4000 were killed.<sup>22</sup>

The Taliban movement in Afghanistan resembles the Iranian movement in raising a mass following among those oppressed by relatively powerful and wealthy elites. They have been joined by radical young of uncompromising piety, and their leader, Mullah Omar, lives in a simple

fashion. He is not a member of the 'ulama, though they continue to provide guidance on the shari'a.<sup>23</sup> Khomeini was also the inspiration for the seizure of the Grand Mosque in Mecca in November 1979 by Sunni Islamists resentful of the tribal and religious policies of the Saudi regime.<sup>24</sup> The latter favours tribes affiliated to the al-Saud, while neglecting the areas of those who are not.

Ultimately enthusiasm for the revolution subsided in the Sunni world as a whole, due to remoteness, the spectacle of internal turmoil and the long-standing theological divide between the two sects. An additional problem was regime control. In Egypt the government told the press not to publish anything in praise of the Islamic revolution and *al-Akhbar* referred to Khomeini as 'the sign of Satan'.<sup>25</sup> In Libya Ghaddafi enthusiastically associated himself with the revolution while keeping local Islamists firmly under control. The Iranian regime agreed to the establishment of diplomatic relations with Libya in November 1979 as an ally against the West, despite their continued concern over the disappearance of the Lebanese Shi'a leader, Musa al-Sadr, while on a visit to Ghaddafi.<sup>26</sup>

The respective governments tried to restrict news coming from Iran to temper local excitement in Bahrain and Malaysia.<sup>27</sup> In Syria, Asad's support of the revolution and alliance with Iran had nothing to do with his being an Alawite from a heterodox branch of Shi'ism – his action was prompted by a number of considerations, including pre-empting Iranian support for his own (Sunni) Muslim Brotherhood, gaining an ally against the Ba'thist regime in Iraq and undermining US policy in the Middle East. The revolution also provided a means of challenging Sunni hegemony in the Arab world. Finally, Iran was a useful though potentially dangerous ally in controlling the Shi'a in Lebanon in the course of Syria's struggle with Israel.<sup>28</sup>

The Islamic revolution not unexpectedly had its greatest impact among the Shi'a, but it should be noted that their response was not united, and secondly that the revolution only had any sort of lasting impact on politics in countries where the state was weak, such as Lebanon and Afghanistan. Strong government was able to control the disturbances, as in Iraq and the Gulf states, though the revolution was influential in terms of ideas.

Iraq viewed the Islamic revolution with some trepidation, as around 55 per cent of its population is Shi'i, with the government coming from the Arab Sunni minority. In the mid-twentieth century any Shi'i discontent with the government manifested itself through support of secular



parties. However, Shi'i resurgence emerged in the 1960s largely due to the activities of younger reformist clergy, of whom the most notable was Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr. Resentment at underrepresentation in the state increased in the 1970s, with a corresponding rise in Shi'i radicalism. Domination by the Ba'thist secular government was partly perceived as threatening Shi'i identity. However, the radical Shi'a were opposed by conservative clergy, and though they had a popular following it was not a radical one. Following the revolution there was still no widespread support for the Iranian brand of revolutionary Shi'ism, partly because it was clear to many Shi'a, lay and clerical, that their Sunni countrymen would not accept the government of the jurist, and partly because of ancient differences between Persian and Arab culture. Meanwhile, in 1979 the powerful and vigilant regime of Saddam Hussein cracked down on any Shi'i manifestations of support for the Islamic revolution and arrested and executed Baqir al-Sadr. Other Shi'i activists were expelled. At the same time Saddam Hussein attacked some of the economic causes of the discontent, and in 1979 a large sum was spent on Shi'i religious buildings and 'Ali's birthday was declared a national holiday.<sup>29</sup> Shi'i reception of the Iranian revolution in Iraq was thus divided, and only part of the community, more radical in its views, 'ulama-led, and to some extent having connections with Iran, responded affirmatively.

It was in Lebanon that Khomeini's revolution had its profoundest effect, even though its influence was limited by internal divisions among the Shi'a, as in Iraq. The Shi'a are the most economically deprived group in Lebanon and constitute 30 per cent of the population. The revolution had the most support among poor urban dwellers, especially in west Beirut and the Bekaa Valley. Iran provided an inspiring example of what a pious, well-organized community could achieve. However, there had already been a growth in Shi'a activism in the 1960s and 1970s, particularly in the form of the Amal movement led by Musa al-Sadr, a cleric of Iranian origin with much the same reformist vision as Khomeini himself. After Musa al-Sadr's disappearance in Libya in 1978, his movement came under the leadership of a more conciliatory layman – Nabih Berri – and the radical torch passed to Hizbullah, a loose confederation of militant groups which had close links with Iran, where the regime was seeking to rescue both deprived Lebanese Shi'a and deprived Palestinians.

However, an influential sector of the Shi'a 'ulama rejected the government of the jurist as unsuitable for sectarian Lebanon, and sought to enhance the lot of the Shi'a through the existing Lebanese system. Their

view was most strongly represented by Muhammad Jawad Mughniyya, who refuted the rule that jurists had the right to rule.<sup>30</sup> It would seem, however, that the Iranian revolution gave hope and respect to the hitherto submissive though increasingly active Shi'a. Hizbullah, in particular, has grown into a tightly structured political organization with a large popular following, and has succeeded in securing better representation for the Shi'a.

The Shi'a of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf had to face not only the insecurity of incumbent regimes but the vigilance of the West over its oil supplies. In Saudi Arabia this was particularly so, as skilled Shi'a workers had sensitive positions in the oil installations and the oil is largely located in the Shi'i Eastern Province. The Iranian revolution influenced existing discontent over government neglect of the Shi'i community. Leaflets appeared in Shi'i towns and villages calling for non-cooperation, and there were demonstrations demanding that Saudi Arabia cease selling oil to the USA and support the Iranian revolution.

In Kuwait the deeply felt resentment at Sunni domination in alliance with the West, especially the USA, produced discontent which manifested itself in a series of explosions in 1983. The Shi'a of Bahrain, forming 72 per cent of the citizens, had on the whole been treated better than in other areas of the Gulf; there was nevertheless a demonstration in 1979 and there has been recurrent unrest since then, compounded by elite frustration at not having a larger share of government responsibilities. Overall the social and political grievances of the Shi'a in the generally affluent Gulf states have not been of sufficient consequence to build up a popular following and generate revolution. There is the additional problem that some of the more radical leaders are perceived to be supported and manipulated by Iran.<sup>31</sup>

The Iranian revolution not only exacerbated Shi'i-Sunni divisions in Afghanistan but, as in Iraq and Lebanon, accentuated differences among the Shi'a themselves. As a group the Shi'a in Afghanistan have a tendency to look to Iran as a model, so Khomeini's portrait simply replaced that of the shah in many places of public display. Iranian influence was strongest among quite different groups, namely the traditionalist clergy, many of them educated in Iran, and the young, both lay and secular. Their differences were further compounded by secularism, leftism and social divisions. When a shura (council) was formed in 1979, it was seen as too much under the control of notables perceived as corrupt and nepotistic. The Iranian regime exacerbated these differences by forming Nasir, a political organization made up of young, ideological

Shi'a to whom money and logistical backing were supplied. In 1982 the situation became further complicated by the creation of a Revolutionary Guard (Sipah-i Pasdaran) as a result of dissatisfaction with Nasir's use of money and weaponry. The new organization had Afghan personnel but was directly under Iranian command, and supported the young radicals against the religious and secular establishment. They introduced change in traditional society by the establishment of schools and libraries in the villages under their control, a policy which contrasted with that of the more conservative shura. One commentator<sup>32</sup> observes three phases in Iran's involvement in Afghanistan after the revolution: support of the Shi'i community as a whole; support of groups who recognized Khomeini's leadership; and support of those who participated in the Revolutionary Guard. The essential Iranian policy has been to strengthen Shi'i control of the Shi'a minority, and thus augment Iranian influence in the area – a Shi'i Iranian nationalist goal.

In Pakistan Khomeini became *marja'* to many of the Shi'a who had previously been followers of Burujirdi. They sympathized with the Islamic revolution, as did many of the Sunnis. However, sectarian differences soon made their impression. The Shi'i goal was not to establish an Islamic republic, perceived, as in Lebanon, to be a non-feasible goal, but to ensure Shi'i liberation from Sunni coercion. Sunnis, on the other hand, became disillusioned with Iran's implicitly Shi'i bias in its relationship with other Muslims, as happened in other areas.<sup>33</sup>

Finally, the role of women in the Iranian revolution did not go unremarked. An increasing number of women continuing to adopt the *hijab* in the wake of the revolution was noted, and the involvement of women in the revolution was perceived as an inspiration:

These women, despised under the Shah's regime, and who had to do away with all traces of Islam if they wanted to study or pursue a career, who had to parade themselves as objects of desire and lust, ... who had no independent status as human beings, these women discovered liberalism and revolutionary potential in Islamic doctrine. The false gods of feminism, consumerism, fashion and women's liberation were dethroned and the chador-clad gun-wielding Muslim women came to the fore.<sup>34</sup>

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Initially the Islamic revolution was greeted with enthusiasm amongst Muslims. Iran was seen as withstanding neocolonial interference, and comfort and confidence grew from the challenge to erstwhile colonial masters. But as events unfolded Muslims became more sceptical, and there was a Sunni-Shi'a divide in opinion. Among Sunnis there were also differences between regimes, and between elites and more disadvantaged social groups. The revolution had a more lasting effect in the Shi'a areas where the state was weak, and even so there were divisions between the middle class and the poor, the clergy and the laity, radicals and conservatives. Iranian irredentism also created problems, but the Shi'a of Lebanon seemed to have gained some advantages, mostly through organization, in asserting their political and economic rights. Further, Khomeini himself has remained an inspiration to many Muslims, both Sunni and Shi'i, for upholding Islam against the power of the West.

# Conclusion

At the beginning of this book the attention of the reader was drawn to the impact of Western penetration on Iran and other areas of the Middle East. Iran's geographical location was and is of particular significance for both strategic and commercial reasons. A state comparatively little touched by modernity, technological, political or economic, during the nineteenth century had to endure much foreign interference. As with other societies at this period, Iranians began to organize to protect their land and independence. A trend towards reform and centralization of government began. Political theories, such as constitutionalism and more latterly various forms of socialism, played their part in providing a programme for change. In particular the realization grew that in order to resist the West and protect independence, culture and identity, it was necessary to create a strong state with powerful new institutions of central authority and control, and based on a strong army. The state had to have a cohesive identity, a role in public life, and solutions to the problems of state and society, so weakness and division did not arise to provide opportunities for intervention.

For the purposes of this study two forms of movements to achieve these goals may be mentioned, secular and religious. The secular versions adopted nationalism, be it liberal socialist or merely statist (such as Kemalism). The religious versions, while being unquestionably pious in their world view and responsive to the concept of the Muslim community as a whole, also used religion as an ideology functioning like nationalism to maintain independence, identity and cultural tradition, though tending to avoid more secular concepts such as ethnicity and language, in themselves also potentially divisive. The Iranian Islamist movement led by Khomeini falls into this category, along with other Islamist movements in the Middle East, including the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt. The issues that have preoccupied these movements are very similar to those addressed by their secular counterparts, namely the

extension of state control, the development of the economy, particularly industry, the need to steer a course between East and West, capitalism and communism, the problems of health, welfare and education, the necessity for technological advancement and so on. Both secular and religious movements are dominated by the middle class: in the secular version rising through the army and often originating from petty officialdom; in the religious version arising from religious society and the traditional middle class, from whom the officer corps is largely recruited, and through the modernized seminaries, which perform in many ways the functions of universities.

Like secular independence movements, Islamists have had to approach the task of achieving their objectives in two different ways: by constructing a new ideology in pursuit of perceived goals, and by building up the organization to attain those goals. Both means have been directed at the overthrow of existing regimes and the creation of new institutions and structures. Necessarily, to deal with the complex political problems of societies in the process of change, struggling with the pressures of tradition and modernity, the ideological position as it finally evolves may be complicated and contradictory, and subject to dispute. This is no less true of various forms of Islamism than it is of, for example, Ba'thism.

To turn then to Islamism as an ideology, it was noted in Chapter VI that Khomeini's *Nahzat* shared many characteristics with other Islamist movements, and indeed with secular movements. One of the most important of these is the emphasis on unity. This involves a determination to eliminate the notion of class conflict as likely to undermine the overall effort to drive the country forward and resist outside interference. Thus the elite may be removed and dissenting minorities suppressed or excluded, while some form of consensus is sought among the majority. The national interest is placed first and political parties, representing not just a variety of views but a variety of conflicting interests, are prohibited or discouraged. In the Islamist case a concept such as the injunction to enjoin good and prohibit evil is reinterpreted to ensure not just its original moral purpose but the political one of no deviation from communal or national solidarity, no velleity in the struggle for improvement, and against the enemies of state and society.

Islamists such as Khomeini and Mutahhari sought the answer to the problems of constructing a culture and identity that will preserve the independence of their religion and country in the reinterpretation of

religion itself. In that process, clerical Islamists have been both challenged and influenced by the religious laity. The pivotal concept in the construction of Islam as an ideology has been *tauhid*. To Khomeini totalist ideology (*maktab-i tauhid*) meant the permeation of all aspects of state and society by the moral values of Islam so as to create a righteous society, full of moral individuals, able to resist the encroachments of all forms of foreign influence and to fortify Islam. Mutahhari, like Sayyid Qutb, turned *tauhid* into a more comprehensive and systematic political and social theory. To Mutahhari it provided an activist mission to create a noble alternative to the desiccated materialism of Marxism. It empowers man, giving him a superior role because of his knowledge and insight. This includes acquiring scientific knowledge, as well as philosophical and religious knowledge. It provides fulfilment to the individual through the path of service to the community. The emphasis on man's individual moral responsibility and freedom of choice is partly intended as an answer to the problems posed by the influence of Western liberalism with its emphasis on the rights of the individual. While elements of Islamic totalism bear the influence of European authoritarianism, Islamists are in effect arguing that the individual is valued by Islamist ideology, providing he uses his abilities in the service of the community.

The principal manifestation of the differences between the secular and religious systems lies in the implementation of the shari'a. Theoretically indivisible, immutable and eternal, it must supposedly be enacted in its entirety to ensure the legitimacy of the Islamic state. Further, Islamists face the problem that without visible enforcement of the shari'a their political ideology may become nebulous and thus fail in one of its main purposes of providing cohesive identity. The need to implement the shari'a in turn dictates the nature of rule and the location of sovereignty, as well as the development of institutions. It places considerable impediments in the way of rational legislation and regulation, and, for example, in the devising of a consistent and coherent economic policy, while at the same time mollifying attempts at systematic state control in ways that are also not conducive to efficiency. The emphasis on moral values provided by the enforcement of the shari'a may lead to improved interpersonal relations, but also to the loss of private freedoms which are permitted by secular totalist systems.

Believing implicitly in the shari'a as the divine will, Khomeini nevertheless saw the need for adaptability and flexibility; this was

demonstrated, for example, in the accommodation made in the constitution between the sovereignty of the people and the sovereignty of God, as well as in more minor ways, such as his fatwa on music. Mutahhari, like Sayyid Qutb, argued for adaption and indeed for a relativist approach to the problems of the age, and for interpretation of the shari'a according to current exigencies. Pragmatism contributed to Khomeini's success, a point on which he is comparable to other Middle Eastern leaders, such as Ibn Saud, Ataturk, Nasser and Asad, who also set aside the dictates of ideology if and when circumstances demanded. In the same vein, Khomeini, for all his ideals, was not a utopian like Shari'ati, but as the events leading to the revolution, the establishment of the Islamic Republic and the constitution itself show, a political leader willing to adapt his vision to the current context. As he strove in his speeches to mobilize Muslims to unite and resist imperialist encroachment worldwide, he was also deeply involved in the progress of establishing the new Iranian state, its security and its institutional arrangements, including the designation of the jurist as its political leader (as opposed to the leader of the Shi'i community). Religion thus compromised with nationalism. Although like many Muslims Khomeini regretted the lack of an order where Muslims lived as one community, he recognized the constraints of the international system, as well as the legal and administrative problems that required the creation of an Iranian state.

There is no doubt that a religious ideology provides more continuity from the past in terms of cultural values and political practice, but it also brings constraints, as Khomeini indicated in his struggle to mobilize the clergy, and as Mutahhari comprehensively argued in his quest to find financial resources independent of traditional society. Reluctance to accept innovation, xenophobia, failure to understand the implications of technological development, unwillingness to adjust to economic change, the belief that culture can be hermetically sealed – all have provided barriers to political and economic evolution. The countervailing advantages have come in unswerving loyalty and sacrifice, extensive financial and organizational support and resistance to outside manipulation, all of which were invaluable in Khomeini's movement and in his rise to power.

Such support was also crucial in the struggle between clergy and laity for the control of political Islam. In reality Marxism had a greater appeal than radical Islam for the educated young, and was thus a grave challenge to Mutahhari. As the Nahzat's chief polemicist in the devising of



an activist and modernist programme, he propounded an Islamic and religious view of a just order to challenge what he saw as the Marxist materialistic and distributive view. The roles of religious paragons were reinterpreted and used to provide Islamic models of rebellion against exploitation. Mutaahhari was also at the head of the struggle to prevent the laity from interpreting Islamic concepts in the light of modern Western theories, and to protect clerical control over interpretation of the holy texts. In the end he failed to convince a large proportion of both the religious and secular educated young, leaving the clergy still dependent on traditional religious society.

Religious society was, however, much better organized for confrontation with the state by 1962 than it had been in the early Pahlavi period. Change had arisen from a reformist movement within the Qum seminary in particular, of which Khomeini was part of the radical wing. The installation of Burujirdi as sole *marja'* did much to centralize funding, and its advantages were accentuated by his administrative reforms. Changes in the curriculum in line with the times produced a new generation of clergy, well informed on politics and well versed in the advantages of science and technology. A religious propaganda network covering the villages helped to extend clerical influence to parts of the country previously too remote.

Most important in terms of organization were the bazaar societies engaged in religious ceremonies, the propagation of Islam and various welfare activities. Since the nineteenth century there had been some modernization of existing organizations to be more systematic, with clear membership, programmes and methods of donation, so Khomeini's movement was able to benefit from changes already taking place. These ran parallel to similar organizational developments by the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt. Both movements took full advantage of new technologies in, for example, publishing, copying and distribution. The mosque and the bazaar societies were used in the period of the revolution to mobilize the poorer social groups who formed the mass of Khomeini's support in such numbers that it became impossible for the state to suppress them. The level of support among the poor was fuelled by migration to the cities, but appears to have fluctuated according to the state of the economy. Once Khomeini came to power these extensive networks brought pressure on the opponents of the regime by organizing demonstrations by members of Hizbullah (the Party of God), who were usually of working-class origin. In addition, the bazaar with

its piety provided a bedrock of support for the theory of the government of the jurist, and potentially one counterbalance to possible military intervention.

Modern organization interacted with older forms in the way the Marxist system of interlinked cells to some extent replicated the arrangements of the Sufi orders. Sufi organization, though it was part of the cultural tradition in Iran, does not seem to have exerted a direct influence on Khomeini's *Nahzat*, as it did on Hassan al-Banna. However, the Sufi consciousness of being secluded from the rest of society is reflected in both movements, and in their perceived need to eliminate outside influence to retain their identity.

The *'irfan* tradition infused Khomeini's movement, as it has other Islamic revolutionary movements over the centuries in various parts of the Muslim world. Khomeini used it to create an activist vision in which each individual empowers himself through the quest for union with the divine and the use of self-knowledge to build character and eliminate failings and weakness. He followed the example of his mentor, Shahabadi, in providing the guilds with guidance on *'irfan*, specifically in the form of its ethics, and thus imbuing them with his vision of activism and self-assertion. His beliefs were developed by Mutahhari, and also by Beheshti and Bahonar, into a more comprehensive theory of man having a divine mission, a special role and responsibility in the universe. In the divine system every creature is the shadow of God, the sole truth, but only man has the chance to gain perfection through return to him. The universe constitutes two systems, that which is visible and that which is unseen. Those who endeavour to do so may gain personal experience of the divine and ultimately become fulfilled as human beings (*insan*), *'arif*, persons with knowledge of God, and at the highest level a perfect man (*insan-i kamil*). Those who followed Khomeini's guidance most closely became the vanguard of his movement, with the task of mobilizing faith among others as well as being most active in pursuit of his political objectives.

It was in concepts of leadership that *'irfan* had its most powerful influence, exerting a subtle unseen authority behind the visible jurisprudential one. Khomeini's following played upon the mystical connotations of the word 'imam' to imply perfection, sainthood and imbuelement with the divine. Just as the leader had *'ilm*, knowledge of the holy texts and their exegesis, so also he had *ma'rifat*, knowledge acquired through familiarity with the divine presence. The hidden

structure of authority was parallel to the manifest one, which it reinforced. It carried the implication that the leader might, if necessary, through his wisdom and in the interests of the state set aside the shari'a. At the same time the leader's designated qualities of wisdom, knowledge, justice and righteousness in his guidance of the community reflect a tradition of authority and community going back to Plato's philosopher ruler, and demonstrating the importance of the influence of Greek philosophy – usually thought of in the West as its own – on the politics of Islam.

The official version of the jurist's authority has remained the orthodox one – that is to say such authority is based on jurisprudence plus the necessary qualities of character for leadership (rather than *marifat* specifically). The jurist or jurists lead the community as a result of their knowledge and training in the holy texts, and must assume responsibility for government in the absence of the 12th imam and according to the requirements of the Muslim community. They are thus not only jurists but successors, caliphs (*khulafā*) of the Prophet like the Sunni lay rulers. Thus the ultimate authority in government in Shi'ism, as in Sunnism, has become divested of the qualification of infallibility (*isma*), a significant change from traditional Shi'ism.

The concept of the government of the jurist, whereby the state is largely an administrative arrangement to implement the shari'a, was only one element in Khomeini's understanding of the nature of the state. He also saw it as vested personally in the just leader, in the model of the philosopher ruler, with a wisdom and knowledge that is higher than the law. At the same time Khomeini believed in a strong state, defined by an all-encompassing ideology which encouraged loyalty, and with the power to resist threats from within and without.

The Shi'i understanding of authority has also had to come to terms with modern understandings derived from the West. The result has been a constitution which gives predominance to the shari'a and authority based on the divine will, but also incorporates the will of the people and their sovereignty. This mixture has produced contradictions, particularly in terms of parliamentary legislation conflicting with the shari'a and of the authority of the jurist overriding legitimate constitutional structures and organizations. There has correspondingly been contradiction on rights, duties and obligations. Khomeini's promised freedom in conformity with Islam has been subject to varying degrees of limitation. Deliberation and consultation have survived more as a result

of Shi'i Islamic practice than of democratic influence, as has a measure of consensus.

One of the main goals of Khomeini's movement was social justice, where each member of a group enjoys an equal amount of benefits or burdens, or at least relatively so, and in this issue his movement was assisted by the shah's neglect. Social justice, which in practice implies a mixed economy with some state initiative and distribution of benefits and burdens, may be distinguished from socialism in the sense of total state control and equality of wealth. Indeed, it forms part of Khomeini's vision of Iran as following a course, like other third world countries, that leaned neither to East nor to West, neither to communism nor capitalism, and was thus integral to Iran's independence. In reality, in the Middle East a perceived relatively equitable distribution of resources has secured for the state in practical terms a measure of consensus and legitimacy that is more significant than the theoretical arguments and merits of rival ideologies. The effect has also been that political considerations related to social justice, as well as group interests, have deterred the development of consistent and rational economic policies.

However, grave inequalities remain, often through the association of the ruling elite with the West. With the demise of the influence of communism and socialism, the only alternatives of those oppressed and excluded has been to turn to Islamism and to organizations like al-Qa'ida to assert their rights and demand a more just international or internal order. The Islamists of today are also well-organized, and well-educated, and above all familiar with new technology. They have a confident view of what they can do to challenge Western interest. The West is coming to realize that, with the problems bred by neglect, its domination of the world order cannot continue as securely as before.

Khomeini succeeded in his major objectives of overthrowing the Pahlavi state and extirpating foreign influence from Iran. He also succeeded in creating a new Islamic order with a new value system, new identity, new social system and to some extent new institutional arrangements, all of which had the purpose of fortifying Islam. In the course of mobilizing the people to overthrow the regime, he politicized them and gave them a sense that their participation and activism were important to the new state. Thus he created a foundation for the state in popular support, but on the basis of two conflicting principles of sovereignty.

# Notes

## Notes to Chapter I

- 1 For a more detailed account of the historical background the reader may refer, among other works, to E. Abrahamian, *Iran between Two Revolutions* (Princeton 1992); S. Akhavi, *Religion and Politics in Contemporary Iran* (New York 1980); A. Amanat, *The Pivot of the Universe*, (London 1997); S. Arjomand, *The Turban for the Crown* (Oxford 1988); S. Bakhash, *The Reign of the Ayatollahs* (London 1985); S. Cronin, *The Army and the Creation of the Pahlavi State in Iran 1910-1926* (London 1997); J. P. Digard, B. Hourcade and Y. Richard, *L'Iran au XXe Siecle* (Fayard 1996); M. H. Faghfoory, 'The Impact of Modernization on the 'Ulama in Iran 1925-1941', *Iranian Studies*, Vol. 26, Nos. 3-4, 1993, pp. 277-312, and 'Ulama-State Relations in Iran: 1921-1941', *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 19, No. 4, 1987, pp. 413-32; M. Fischer, *Iran: from Religion Dispute to Revolution* (Cambridge, Mass. 1980); R. Graham, *Iran: the Illusion of Power* (London 1978); F. Halliday, *Iran: Dictatorship and Development* (New York 1979); N. R. Keddie, *Iran and the Muslim World* (Basingstoke 1995); M. Milani, *The Making of Iran's Islamic Revolution* (Westview 1994); A. Rahnema and F. Nomani, *The Secular Miracle* (London 1990); D. Wilbur, *Reza Shah Pahlavi* (New York 1975); M. E. Yapp, *The Making of the Modern Near East* (London 1987), and *The Near East since the First World War* (London 1991).

## Notes to Chapter II

- 1 For details of Khomeini's life see M. Pasandideh, *Khatirat-i Ayatullah Pasandideh*, ed. M. J. Muradi Nia (Tehran 1375/1996); S. H. Ruhani, *Barasi va tahlili az nahzat-i Imam Khumaini*, Vol. I (Tehran 1356/1977), Vol. II (Tehran 1376/1997); M. H. Rajabi, *Zindigi-yi siyasi-yi Imam Khumaini* Vol. I (Tehran 1370/1991); H. Ansari, *Le recit de l'aveil* (Tehran 1996); B. Moin, *Khomeini: Life of the Ayatollah* (London 1999).
- 2 Interview with Mr 'Ali Davani, Tehran, July 1998. Khomeini was much in the habit of reading newspapers. I am most grateful to Mr Davani for his time.
- 3 Rajabi, *Zindigi*, Vol. I, p. 127.
- 4 H. Algar, 'Imam Khomeini 1902-1962: the Pre-Revolutionary Years' in E. Burke and I. M. Lapidus (eds), *Islam, Politics and Social Movements* (Berkeley 1988), pp. 273-4.

- 5 Interview with Mr Davani, Tehran, July 1998; *Sahifa-yi Nur*, Vol. III, pp. 34, 158, quoted in Rajabi, *Zindigi*, Vol. I, p. 127.
- 6 For the life and times of Mudarris see for example A. Mudarrisi, *Mudarris* (Tehran 1366/1987); H. Makki, *Mudarris qahriman-i azadi* (Tehran 1358/1979); A. Mahrddad, *Iran auf dem Weg zum Diktatur* (Hanover 1976); Mahdi Quli Hidayat, Mukhbhir al-Saltana, *Khatirat va khatarat* (Tehran 1361/1982); V. A. Martin, 'Mudarris, Republicanism and the Rise to Power of Riza Khan Sardar-i Sipah', *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 21, No. 2, 1994, pp. 200–10.
- 7 The terms Islamic gnosticism and mystical philosophy (in the sense of love of divine wisdom) will be used for '*irfan*' in the recognition that, although they are not adequate to convey the complexities of the term, they are the translations best suited to this work. This chapter is largely based on my article 'Khumaini, Knowledge and the Political Process', *The Muslim World*, Vol. 87, No. 1, 1997. For further discussion on '*irfan*' see for example S. H. Nasr, 'The Metaphysics of Sadr al-Din Shirazi and Islamic Philosophy in Qajar Iran' in C. E. Bosworth and C. Hillenbrand (eds), *Qajar Iran* (Edinburgh 1983), pp. 191–2; C. Bonaud, *L'Imam Khomeyni, un gnostique meconnu du XXe siecle* (Beirut 1997), esp. pp. 70ff.; Moin, *Khomeini*, ch. 3.
- 8 Nasr, 'The Metaphysics', pp. 191–2.
- 9 Algar, 'Khomeini', p. 268.
- 10 *Ibid.*, p. 268.
- 11 For Shahabadi's influence on Khomeini see Ruhani, *Nahzat*, Vol. I, p. 27; Pasandideh, *Khatirat*, p. 51; Algar, 'Khumaini', p. 268; M. T. Haj Bushihri, 'Ruhullah Musavi Khumaini', *Chishmandaz*, No. 13, 1373/1994, pp. 32–41.
- 12 Ruhani, *Nahzat*, Vol. I, p. 28; N. Shahabadi 'Shaikh-i Buzurgvar Ayatullah Muhammad Ali Shahabadi', *Tarikh va farhang-i mu'asir*, No. 5, Autumn 1371/1992, pp. 180–92; talk given by Sajjad Rizvi on Muhammad Riza Qumsha'i at conference in Oxford on Religion and Society in Qajar Iran, 3 September 1998.
- 13 Ustad Riza Ustadi 'Kitabha va athar-i ilmi-yi Imam Khumaini', *Huzur*, 1370/1991, p. 57.
- 14 Bonaud, *Khomeyni*, p. 77.
- 15 R. Khomeini, *Misbah al-hidaya* (Tehran 1360/1981 edition), pp. 40, 116, 117, 143. Knysh argues very strongly for the influence of Ibn 'Arabi on the formation of the '*irfan*' ideas adopted by Khomeini, particularly in theology, terminology and intellectual models; see A. Knysh, 'Irfan Revisited: Khomeini and the Legacy of Islamic Mystical Philosophy', *Middle Eastern Journal*, Vol. 46, No. 4, 1992, esp. pp. 635–6, 653.
- 16 R. Khomeini, *Kashf al-asrar* (n.p., n.d.) p. 33. It may be recalled that the *Timaeus* is concerned with the themes of the one and the many, with being and becoming, and with how knowledge of the real world is the true

knowledge. Khomeini says Plato was known for oneness (*tauhid*) and divine wisdom and influenced Mulla Sadra.

- 17 R. Khomeini, *Misbah*, p. 143; A. K. Zia'i, *Naqsh-i Imam Khomeini dar ihya'-i tafakkur-i falsafi* (Tehran 1372/1993), pp. 34–5, quoting from Khomeini's *Adab al-salat*.
- 18 Ustadi, 'Athar', p. 57.
- 19 Shahabadi, 'Shaikh', pp. 185–8.
- 20 Bonaud dismisses al-Afghani as an influence on Shahabadi (*Khomeyni*, p. 84), but given the enormous impression made by al-Afghani, even indirectly, on Muslim thought in Iran and the Middle East at this time, such denial would seem precipitous. Bonaud, however, also believes that there were more traditional influences on Shahabadi in the form of *futuvvat* or *javanmardi* (bravery, manliness, generosity).
- 21 S. H. Quraishi Sabzavari, *Haj Mulla Hadi Sabzavari* (Sazman-i Tablighat-i Islami 1372/1993), p. 45.
- 22 Ruhani, *Nahzat*, Vol. I, p. 38.
- 23 Algar, 'Khomeini', pp. 269–270
- 24 M. Vijdani, ed., *Sarguzashtha-yi vizha az zindigi-yi hazrat Imam Khumaini*, (Tehran 1371/1992), Vol. V, pp. 152–3.
- 25 *Ibid.*, Vol. V, pp. 153–4
- 26 M.M. Fischer, *Iran*, p. 242. See also G. Rose, 'Velayat-e Faqih and the Recovery of Islamic Identity in the Thought of Ayatollah Khomeini', in N. Keddie, ed., *Religion and Politics in Iran*, (New Haven 1983), pp. 185–6
- 27 M. Takeshita, *Ibn 'Arabi's Theory of the Perfect Man and its Place in the History of Islamic Thought* (Tokyo 1987), pp. 49–50.
- 28 J. W. Morris, *The Wisdom of the Throne* (Princeton 1981), p. 16.
- 29 Khomeini was familiar with Plato's *Republic* (interview with Mr 'Ali Davani), and indeed discusses Plato in *Kashf al-asrar*, p. 33. In an interview with Khomeini's former students Javad Bamonar and Mahdi Ha'iri Yazdi in 1979, the influence of Plato's *Republic* on Khomeini's thought was acknowledged. See *Time*, 16 July 1979.
- 30 *Misbah*, pp. 149, 150. For discussion of the influence of Ibn 'Arabi on Khomeini see Bonaud, *Khomeyni*. He notes that Khomeini's work is permeated with the teaching of Ibn 'Arabi, particularly on the harmony of the shari'a and the *'irfan* tradition, and in the perception of the closeness of the prophets and saints to God. Ibn 'Arabi's terms are precisely discussed and interpreted by Khomeini (p. 262). The doctrines of Mulla Sadra used by Khomeini mostly had their origins in Ibn 'Arabi, even if there is some difference in the philosophical formulation and argumentation (pp. 75–6). Ibn 'Arabi is directly quoted in Khomeini's work, for example *Misbah*, pp. 40, 106, 117, *Sharh-i du'a-yi sahar* (Tehran 1370/1991), pp. 138, 148. Khomeini was of course also subject to other influences – above all, as mentioned, Mulla Sadra. It is beyond the scope of this work to discuss how he interpreted these different views.

- 31 M. Y. Hairi, *A Treatise on Knowledge by Presence* (Toronto 1979).
- 32 *Ibid.*, pp. 187, 201.
- 33 Takeshita, *Ibn 'Arabi*, pp. 49–50.
- 34 W. Chittick, *The Sufi Path of Knowledge* (New York 1989), p. 29.
- 35 Khomeini, *Misbah*, p. 27.
- 36 Chittick, *Sufi*, p. 29.
- 37 *Ibid.*, pp. 29–30.
- 38 Since the words for sainthood and guardianship are in origin the same, the Arabic transliteration (*wilaya*) has been used for sainthood and the Persian (*vilayat*) for guardianship, in an endeavour to assist in avoiding confusion.
- 39 Takeshita, *Ibn 'Arabi*, pp. 160–2.
- 40 *Ibid.*, pp. 120–1.
- 41 Khomeini, *Misbah*, p. 61.
- 42 *Ibid.*, pp. 87–8.
- 43 Takeshita, *Ibn 'Arabi*, p. 122.
- 44 For a discussion of this point see Sharaf al-Din Khurasani, 'Ibn 'Arabi' in *The Great Islamic Encyclopaedia*, Vol. 4 (Tehran 1991), p. 275.
- 45 Takeshita, *Ibn 'Arabi*, pp. 124–5.
- 46 Khomeini, *Misbah*, p. 213.
- 47 *Ibid.*, pp. 161–2.
- 48 Bonaud, *Khomeyni*, p. 80.
- 49 Khomeini, *Misbah*, pp. 61–3.
- 50 *Ibid.*, pp. 27, 32.
- 51 *Ibid.*, p. 205; see also Surat al-Fatiha in H. Algar, *Islam and Revolution* (Berkeley 1981), pp. 382–3.
- 52 Khomeini, *Misbah*, p. 208.
- 53 *Ibid.*, pp. 206–7.
- 54 Morris, *Wisdom*, pp. 16–17.
- 55 Khomeini, *Misbah*, p. 210.
- 56 *Ibid.*, pp. 17–18.
- 57 *Ibid.*, p. 20.
- 58 Mulla Sadra was in this much influenced by the sun-line-cave section of Plato's *Republic*. See Morris, *Wisdom*, pp. 84–5.
- 59 *Ibid.*, p. 83.
- 60 See Khomeini, *Misbah*, pp. 60, 61, 69.
- 61 *Ibid.*, p. 205.
- 62 *Ibid.*, p. 192.
- 63 Algar, *Islam*, p. 382. Algar considers the Khomeini's identification of himself with this group should not be taken literally, being an expression of humility and of identification with his audience (p. 439). It may be pointed out that, whatever his private views, he could not publicly claim to 'see all things as coming from God' without endangering his political position.
- 64 Khomeini, *Misbah*, pp. 95, 205.



- 65 *Ibid.*, p. 27.
- 66 *Ibid.*, p. 32.
- 67 *Ibid.*, p. 211.
- 68 *Ibid.*, p. 208.
- 69 S. H. Nasr, *Sadr al-Din Shirazi and His Transcendent Philosophy* (Tehran 1978), p. 87.
- 70 Khomeini, *Kashf*, p. 36. According to his student, Sayyid Ahmad Fihri, who edited the *Commentary on the Dawn Prayer*, Khomeini was held to have demonstrated in his commentary the conformity between the logic of *'irfan* and that of the shari'a. See Moin, *Khomeini*, p. 44.
- 71 M. Chodkiewicz, 'The Estoric Foundations of Political Legitimacy in Ibn 'Arabi' in S. Hirtenstein and M. Tiernan (eds), *Muhyiddin Ibn 'Arabi* (Element Books 1993) pp. 193–4
- 72 S. Bakhash, *Ayatollahs*, p. 20.
- 73 Algar, 'Khomeini', p. 28.
- 74 Khomeini, *Misbah*, p. 81.
- 75 *Ibid.*, p. 112.
- 76 *Ibid.*, pp. 82–3.
- 77 T. Izutsu, *Sufism and Taoism: a Comparative Study of Key Philosophical Concepts* (Berkeley 1984), p. 259.
- 78 Vijdani, *Sarguzashtha*, Vol. V, pp. 128, 153–5.
- 79 R. Khomeini, *Pithy Aphorisms* (Tehran 1994), pp. 53–4.
- 80 Ruhani, *Nahzat*, Vol. I, pp. 39–40.
- 81 M. Mutahhari, *The Human Being in the Qur'an*, trans. H. V. Dastjerdi (Tehran 1984), p. 34.
- 82 *Ibid.*, pp. 41–3.
- 83 R. Khomeini, *Arba' in hadith* (Tehran 1368/1989), Vol. I, p. 12; Vijdani, *Sarguzashtha*, Vol. VI, p. 20.
- 84 H. Dabashi, *Theology of Discontent* (New York 1993), pp. 459–60.
- 85 E. Burke, *Struggle and Survival in the Middle East* (London 1993), pp. 164–78.
- 86 The operation of such a corps of doctrinally committed elect within a larger movement may be compared to similar organizational methods in other ideologies of the modern period.
- 87 C. J. Adams, 'Mawdudi and the Islamic State' in J. Esposito (ed.), *Voices of Resurgent Islam* (Oxford 1983), p. 121.
- 88 Y. Choueiri, *Islamic Fundamentalism* (London 1990), pp. 125–6.
- 89 Morris, *Wisdom*, p. 20.
- 90 Rajabi, *Zindigi*, Vol. I, p. 130.
- 91 For the chronology of his works see Ustadi, 'Athar', pp. 56–61. He worked mainly on *'irfan* from 1925–36, on *akhlaq* from 1936–41 and on *fiqh* from 1941 onwards.
- 92 Fischer, *Iran*, p. 242.

- 93 Khomeini, *Misbah*, pp. 213–14.
- 94 W. Montgomery Watt, *Islamic Philosophy and Theology* (Edinburgh 1964), p. 141.

### Notes to Chapter III

- 1 S. M. Razavi, *Hashimi va inqilab* (Tehran 1376/1997), p. 92.
- 2 H. Basirat Manesh, *Ulama va rizhim-i Riza Shah* (Tehran 1376/1997), pp. 523–4.
- 3 Ruhani, *Nahzat*, Vol. I, p. 82.
- 4 Rajabi, *Zindigi*, Vol. I, p. 227.
- 5 For elaboration on this point see V. A. Martin, *Islam and Modernism: the Iranian Revolution of 1906* (London 1989), p. 14.
- 6 A. Davani, *Ayatullah Burujirdi* (Tehran 1372/1993), pp. 93– 101.
- 7 H. Ruhani, A. Davani, M. Rajabi and M. H. Rajabi (eds), *Khatirat va mubarizat-i Hujjat al-Islam Falsafi* (Tehran 1376/1997), pp. 171–2.
- 8 Falsafi, *Khatirat*, p. 206.
- 9 Ruhani, *Nahzat*, Vol. I, p. 98.
- 10 Davani, *Burujirdi*, p. 120.
- 11 Falsafi, *Khatirat*, p. 176.
- 12 Davani, *Burujirdi*, p. 121.
- 13 *Ibid.*, p. 125.
- 14 Akhavi, *Religion*, p. 125; H. Algar, 'Borujerdi' in *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, Vol. IV (London/New York 1990), p. 377.
- 15 Davani, *Burujirdi*, p. 130.
- 16 Falsafi, *Khatirat*, p. 203.
- 17 Davani, *Burujirdi*, p. 137.
- 18 *Ibid.*, p. 129.
- 19 *Ibid.*, p. 135.
- 20 Falsafi, *Khatirat*, p. 180; Ruhani, *Nahzat*, Vol. I, p. 99.
- 21 Akhavi, *Religion*, p. 91.
- 22 Falsafi, *Khatirat*, p. 172.
- 23 Razavi, *Hashimi*, pp. 94–5.
- 24 Rajabi, *Zindigi*, Vol. I, pp. 227–8.
- 25 S. Mahallati, *Khatirat-i Shahid Mahallati* (Tehran 1376/1997), p. 27.
- 26 Ruhani, *Nahzat*, Vol. I, p. 96; H. Rafsanjani, *Dauran-i mubariza*, ed.M. Hashimi (Tehran 1376/1997), Vol. I, p. 105.
- 27 Davani, *Burujirdi*, p. 315.
- 28 Rajabi, *Zindigi*, pp. 230–1; see also Abrahamian, *Iran*, pp. 249–50.
- 29 Rajabi, *Zindigi*, Vol. I, pp. 228–9.
- 30 *Ibid.*, pp. 233–4.
- 31 Ruhani, *Nahzat*, Vol. I, 100.
- 32 Davani, *Burujirdi*, pp. 315, 317; Vijdani, *Sarguzashtha*, Vol. II, p. 45.

- 33 A. A. Muhtashami, *Khatirat-i Sayyid Ali Akbar Muhtashami* (Tehran 1376/1997), p. 78; Arjomand, *Turban*, p. 157. The original founders of the Hujjatiyya were wealthy merchants as well as clergy, opposed to government interference in property and the economy; see. M. Moslem, *Factionalism in the Islamic Republic of Iran*, PhD thesis, University of Oxford, 1998, p. 95.
- 34 Ruhani, *Nahzat*, Vol. I, pp. 96–7.
- 35 Davani, *Burujirdi*, p. 325–6.
- 36 *Ibid.*, pp. 322–3.
- 37 Vijdani, *Sarguzashtha*, Vol. VI, p. 67.
- 38 *Ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 181.
- 39 Ruhani, *Nahzat*, Vol. I, p. 31.
- 40 Razavi, *Hashimi*, Vol. I, p. 67.
- 41 Vijdani, *Sarguzashtha*, Vol. VI, p. 11.
- 42 Mahallati, *Khatirat*, p. 35.
- 43 *Ibid.*, Vol. V, p. 90.
- 44 A. R. Sutudeh, ed., *Pa bi pa-yi aftar*, Vol. I (Tehran 1372/1993), p. 49; S. Mahallati, *Khatirat*, p. 40.
- 45 Vijdani, *Sarguzashtha*, Vol. V, p. 90.
- 46 Sutudeh, *Aftar*, Vol. III, p. 262.
- 47 Vijdani, *Sarguzashtha*, Vol. II, p. 25.
- 48 *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 32; Vol. VI, p. 108.
- 49 Mahallati, *Khatirat*, p. 38.
- 50 Rafsanjani, *Mubariza*, Vol. I, p. 95.
- 51 Razavi, *Hashimi*, p. 108; Rafsanjani, *Mubariza*, Vol. I, p. 104.
- 52 Razavi, *Hashimi*, p. 100.
- 53 Rafsanjani, *Mubariza*, Vol. I, p. 90.
- 54 *Ibid.*, p. 127.
- 55 A. Badamchian and A. Bana'i, *Hayatha-yi mu' talifa-i Islami* (Tehran 1362/1983), pp. 175–6, 256, 264.
- 56 Rafsanjani, *Mubariza*, Vol. I, p. 26.
- 57 Vijdani, *Sarguzashtha*, Vol. IV, p. 82.
- 58 R. Khomeini, *Sahifa-yi nur*, Vol. I (Tehran 1370/1991) p. 47.
- 59 *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 3.
- 60 *Ibid.*, Vol. I, pp. 57.
- 61 Vijdani, *Sarguzashtha*, Vol. IV, p. 83.
- 62 See for example A. Baqiri (ed.), *Khatirat-i 15 Khurdad - bazaar* (Tehran 1375/1996), p. 74.
- 63 Recollections of Khadija Thaqafi in Sutudeh, *Aftar*, Vol. I, p. 51. According to Bani Sadr, Khomeini was more enlightened on women than some. He decided that women could be deputies and ministers, and also supported the view that if the woman spent life in the home, the family income should nevertheless be shared by both spouses. His daughter was

- a graduate. A. H. Bani Sadr, *My Turn to Speak* (Washington 1991), p. 128.
- 64 Khomeini, *Sahifa*, Vol. I, p. 47.
- 65 *Ibid.*, p. 49.
- 66 Bakhash, *Ayatollahs*, p. 26.
- 67 Khomeini, *Sahifa*, Vol. I, p. 50.
- 68 Bakhash, *Ayatollahs*, p. 28.
- 69 Khomeini, *Sahifa*, Vol. I, p. 52.
- 70 Bakhash, *Ayatollahs*, p. 29.
- 71 Khomeini, *Sahifa*, Vol. I, p. 97.
- 72 Baqiri, *Bazaar*, pp. 44–8, 199.
- 73 Interview with Mr A. Sabut, Tehran, August 1998. I am most grateful to Mr Sabut for his insights.
- 74 Badamchian, *Mu'talifa*, p. 39–40.
- 75 *Ibid.*, p. 138.
- 76 *Ibid.*, p. 139.
- 77 *Ibid.*, p. 148.
- 78 *Ibid.*, p. 151–3.
- 79 Interview with Mr Sabut, Tehran, August 1998.
- 80 H. E. Chehabi, *Iranian Politics and Religious Modernism* (London 1990), pp. 117–39.
- 81 Interview with Mr Bujnurdi, Tehran, August 1998.
- 82 Badamchian, *Mu'talifa*, p. 121.
- 83 M. 'Iraqi, *Naghtaha, khatirat-i Shahid Mahdi 'Iraqi*, ed. M. Muqaddasi (Tehran 1370/1991), p. 151.
- 84 Unpublished recollections of Mr Mahdavi Kani, Session 5, 24.3.1375, p. 9. I am grateful to the Markaz-i Asnad-i Islami for permitting me to see the text.
- 85 'Iraqi, *Naghtaha*, p. 169.
- 86 Abrahamian, *Khomeinism*, p. 49.
- 87 H. Y. Ashkivari, *Dar takapu-yi azadi* (Tehran 1376/1997), p. 349.
- 88 Badamchian, *Mu'talifa*, p. 35.
- 89 *Ibid.*, pp. 139–42.
- 90 *Ibid.*, p. 145–6.
- 91 Baqiri, *Bazaar*, p. 73.
- 92 Interview with Mr Sabut, Tehran, August 1998.
- 93 Badamchian, *Mu'talifa*, p. 160.
- 94 *Ibid.*, pp. 204–5.
- 95 'Iraqi *Naghtaha*, p. 170.
- 96 *Ibid.*, pp. 256, 263–4.
- 97 Badamchian, *Mu'talifa*, p. 275.
- 98 *Ibid.*, pp. 279–80, 283.
- 99 Interview with Mr Sabut, Tehran, August 1998.

- 100 Moslem, *Factionalism*, p. 90.
- 101 Interview with Sayyid Kazim Musavi Bujnardi, Tehran, August 1998. I am most grateful to Mr Bujnardi for the information he provided.
- 102 *Ibid.*
- 103 Badamchian, *Mu'talifa*, p. 191; Baqiri, *Bazaar*, p. 110; Arjomand, *Turban*, p. 95.
- 104 On the armed struggle issue see especially Rafsanjani, *Mubariza*, Vol. I, pp. 239–49; and Ruhani, *Nahzat* (1372/1993 edition), p. 403. Interview with Mr Davani, Tehran, July 1998, who is adamant that Khomeini opposed it.
- 105 Rafsanjani, *Mubariza*, Vol. I, pp. 245–9.
- 106 Razavi, *Hashimi*, pp. 5–6.
- 107 *Ibid.*, p. 125.
- 108 Rafsanjani, *Mubariza*, Vol. I, p. 235.
- 109 Interview with Mr A.A. Muhtashami, Tehran, August 1998. I am grateful to Mr Muhtashami for his insights.
- 110 Rafsanjani, *Mubariza*, Vol. I, p. 195.
- 111 Razavi, *Hashimi*, p. 111.
- 112 Rafsanjani, *Mubariza*, Vol. I, p. 233.
- 113 *Ibid.*, p. 235.
- 114 Dabashi, *Theology*, pp. 435–6; Bakhash, *Ayatollahs*, p. 44.
- 115 Interview with Mr Muhtashami, Tehran, August 1998.
- 116 *Ibid.*
- 117 Jalal al-Din Farsi, *Zavaya-yi Tarikh* (Tehran 1373/1994), p. 139.
- 118 *Ibid.*, p. 141.
- 119 *Ibid.*, p. 215.
- 120 Interview with Mr Muhtashami, Tehran, August 1998.
- 121 *Ibid.*
- 122 *Ibid.*

## Notes to Chapter IV

- 1 H. Algar, 'Introduction' in M. Mutahhari, *Fundamentals of Islamic Thought*, trans. R. Campbell (Berkeley 1985), pp. 9–22.
- 2 A. Rahnema and F. Nomani, *The Secular Miracle* (London 1990), pp. 38–51.
- 3 Dabashi, *Theology*, pp. 147–215.
- 4 M. Taqizadih-Davari, *Social-political Philosophy in the Works of Murtaza Mutahhari (1920- 1979)*, PhD thesis, University of Manchester, 1996.
- 5 Please refer to the aforementioned sources for details of Mutahhari's life.
- 6 Dabashi, *Theology*, p. 149.
- 7 Algar in Mutahhari, *Fundamentals*, p. 11.
- 8 Taqizadih-Davari, *Mutahhari*, p. 48.
- 9 *Ibid.*, pp. 77–8.

- 10 A. Rahnema, *An Islamic Utopian* (London 1998), p. 226.
- 11 *Dah guftar*, including lectures from 1962–63. Other lectures broadcast on the radio from 1959 to 1961 were published as *Bist guftar*, Taqizadih-Davari, *Mutahhari*, pp. 76–8.
- 12 Vijdani, *Sarguzshtha*, Vol. VI, pp. 93–4.
- 13 Dabashi, *Theology*, p. 150.
- 14 Rahnema and Nomani, *Miracle*, p. 240.
- 15 *Ibid.*, p. 354.
- 16 Taqizadih-Davari, *Mutahhari*, pp. 158–9.
- 17 M. Mutahhari, *Dah guftar* (Qum 1981), pp. 196–200; see also A. K. S. Lambton, 'A Reconsideration of the Position of the *Marja' al-Taqlid* and the Religious Institution', *Studia Islamica*, No. XX, 1964, pp. 115–35.
- 18 *Ibid.*, p. 200–2.
- 19 *Ibid.*, pp. 206–7.
- 20 Dabashi, *Theology*, p. 165.
- 21 Algar in Mutahhari, *Fundamentals*, p. 12.
- 22 Dabashi, *Theology*, p. 154.
- 23 M. Mutahhari, *Le vrai et le faux*, trans. Islamic Propagation Organisation (Tehran 1983), p. 42.
- 24 M. Mutahhari, *The Goal of Life*, trans. A. Pazargadi, ed. M. K. 'Ali (Tehran 1984), pp. 56.
- 25 M. Mutahhari, *Social and Historical Change* (Berkeley 1986), p. 117.
- 26 M. Mutahhari, *The Rights of Women in Islam*, Nizam-i huquq-i zan dar Islam (Tehran 1981), p. 99.
- 27 Mutahhari, *Fundamentals*, p. 37.
- 28 *Ibid.*, pp. 50–1.
- 29 *Ibid.*, p. 74.
- 30 Taqizadih-Davari, *Mutahhari*, p. 135.
- 31 Mutahhari, *Goal*, pp. 49–50.
- 32 Mutahhari, *Fundamentals*, pp. 68–75.
- 33 A. Rahnema, *Utopian*, p. 289.
- 34 *Ibid.*, p. 243.
- 35 Mutahhari, *Change*, pp. 105ff.
- 36 M. Mutahhari, *Islam va muqtaziyat-i zaman* (Tehran 1370/1991), Vol. I, pp. 156ff.
- 37 *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 162.
- 38 *Ibid.*, Vol. I, pp. 163–6; Rahnema and Nomani, *Miracle*, p. 50.
- 39 See V. A. Martin, *Islam and Modernism* (London 1989), pp. 130–1.
- 40 M. Mutahhari, *Imamat va rahbari* (Qum 1370/1991), p. 33.
- 41 Mutahhari, *Women*, p. 108.
- 42 M. H. Na'ini, *Tanbih al-umma wa tanzih al-milla* (*The Admonition and Refinement of the People*), written Najaf, 1909, and discussed in A. H. Hairi, *Shi'ism and Constitutionalism in Iran* (Leiden 1977).

- 43 Rahnema and Nomani, *Miracle*, p. 43.
- 44 Mutahhari, *Imamat*, pp. 23–46.
- 45 *Ibid.*, pp. 55–9.
- 46 *Ibid.*, p. 69–70.
- 47 Taqizadih-Davari, *Mutahhari*, pp. 314–15.
- 48 Mutahhari, *Imamat*, p. 29.
- 49 M. Mutahhari, 'Ilal-i girayish bi maddigari' in *Majmū'a-yi athar* (Tehran 1370/1991), Vol. I, p. 554.
- 50 Taqizadih-Davari, *Mutahhari*, p. 91. Mutahhari believed that stories were one of the principal means of changing people's attitudes, for which reason he published *Dastan-i rastan*, named UNESCO Book of the Year 1964–65.
- 51 Dabashi, *Theology*, pp. 192–3.
- 52 M. Mutahhari, *Polarization around the Character of 'Ali ibn Abi Talib*, Jaziba va difa' 'Ali 'alayhi-'s salam (Tehran 1981), pp. xxiii, 11–15.
- 53 *Ibid.*, pp. 21–2.
- 54 *Ibid.*, p. 47.
- 55 *Ibid.*, pp. 32–3.
- 56 *Ibid.*, pp. 53–4.
- 57 Rahnema and Nomani, *Miracle*, p. 44.
- 58 *Ibid.*, p. 18; Mutahhari, *Dah guftar*, pp. 45–9.
- 59 *Ibid.*, p. 61.
- 60 Rahnema, *Utopian*, p. 236.
- 61 *Ibid.*, pp. 196–7.
- 62 *Ibid.*, pp. 287–9, 291–2.
- 63 *Ibid.*, p. 306.
- 64 M. Mutahhari, *Khadamat-i mutaqabil-i Iran va Islam* (Tehran 1349/1970), pp. 6–7.
- 65 *Ibid.*, p. 9.
- 66 Mutahhari, *Change*, pp. 31–2.
- 67 Dabashi, *Theology*, pp. 195–6.
- 68 *Ibid.*, pp. 130–1.
- 69 *Ibid.*, pp. 139–44.
- 70 *Ibid.*, pp. 174–5.
- 71 *Ibid.*, pp. 175–7.
- 72 *Ibid.*, p. 191.
- 73 *Ibid.*, pp. 175–6.
- 74 *Ibid.*, pp. 179–82.
- 75 *Ibid.*, pp. 188–92.
- 76 M. Adebí and G. Legenhausen (eds), *Jihad and Shahadat: Struggle and Martyrdom in Islam* (Houston 1986), pp. 103, 105–6, 129, 131.
- 77 Taqizadih-Davari, *Mutahhari*, pp. 128–9.
- 78 M. Mutahhari, 'Khurshid-i din hargiz ghurub namishavad' in *Majmū'a*, Vol. III, p. 393.

- 79 Mutahhari, *Human Being*, pp. 13–19.
- 80 Mutahhari, *Vrai*, pp. 31–3.
- 81 Dabashi, *Theology*, pp. 183–4.
- 82 *Ibid.*, pp. 185–6.
- 83 Rahnema and Nomani, *Miracle*, p. 58.
- 84 Mutahhari, *Change*, pp. 16–19.
- 85 *Ibid.*, p. 119.
- 86 *Ibid.*, p. 121.
- 87 Mutahhari, *Goal*, pp. 25–7.
- 88 Rahnema and Nomani, *Miracle*, p. 43.
- 89 *Ibid.*, p. 49.
- 90 Taqizadih-Davari, *Mutahhari*, pp. 130–3.
- 91 M. Mutahhari, 'Maddigari' in *Majmu'a*, Vol. I, p. 557–8.
- 92 Taqizadih-Davari, *Mutahhari*, p. 98.
- 93 M. Mutahhari, *Jurisprudence and Its Principles*, trans. M. S. Tawheed (New York 1981), pp. 11–14.
- 94 Mutahhari, 'Ali', pp. 82–3.
- 95 *Ibid.*, p. 122.
- 96 *Ibid.*, pp. 114–15.
- 97 *Ibid.*, pp. 111–12.
- 98 Rahnema and Nomani, *Miracle*, pp. 62–4.
- 99 Mutahhari, 'Ali', pp. 106–7.
- 100 *Ibid.*, p. 114.
- 101 *Ibid.*, p. 121.
- 102 *Ibid.*, pp. 125, 127.
- 103 M. Mutahhari, 'Vila'-ha va vilayat-ha' in *Majmu'a*, Vol. III, p. 266.

## Notes to Chapter V

- 1 For al-Afghani see N. Keddie, *Sayyid Jamal al-Din 'al- Afghani'* (California 1972); A. Hourani, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age 1798-1939* (Cambridge 1983), pp. 103–29; S. Haim, *Arab Nationalism* (London 1976) pp. 16–19; M. Mutahhari, *Nahzatha-yi Islami* (Tehran 1370/1991), pp. 13ff.; A. Amin, *Pishgaman-i musalman tajaddudgara'i dar 'asr-i jadid*, trans. H. Ashkivari (Tehran 1376/1997), pp. 39–104.
- 2 Mutahhari, *Nahzatha*, p. 16.
- 3 *Ibid.*, p. 22.
- 4 Hourani, *Thought*, pp. 130–160; Haim, *Nationalism*.
- 5 Mutahhari, *Nahzatha*, p. 39.
- 6 Martin, *Islam*, p. 69.
- 7 Hourani, *Thought*, p. 234.
- 8 S. Zubaida, *Islam the People and the State* (London 1989), p. 16.
- 9 Khomeini, *Kashf*, p. 7.



- 10 This section is based partly on my article 'Religion and State in Khumaini's *Kashf al-asrar*', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, Vol. LVI, Part 1, 1993, pp. 34–45. The publication dates of *Kashf al-asrar* are given variously as 1941 to 1945. It is usually taken to have come out soon after the publication of *Asrar-i hizar sala* in 1943 but the subject is in need of more detailed research.
- 11 Khomeini, *Kashf*, pp. 8–9.
- 12 Y. Richard, 'Shari'at Sangalaji: a reformist theologian of the Rida Shah Period' in S. A. Arjomand (ed.), *Authority and Political Culture in Shi'ism* (New York 1988), pp. 106–10.
- 13 *Ibid.*
- 14 Vijdani, *Sarguzashtha*, Vol. I, p. 130.
- 15 Khomeini, *Kashf*, pp. 1–2.
- 16 *Ibid.*, p. 9.
- 17 See for example S. Akhavi, *Religion and Politics in Contemporary Iran* (New York 1980), p. 163, where he notes that Khomeini undertook a mild defence of the monarchical system; M. M. Fischer, *Iran*, p. 152, who considers that Khomeini formulated a theory of ethical opposition not far removed from the opinions of those who would interpret *ulu'l-amr* as referring to the sultan or king; and G. Rose's view that Khomeini accepts the shari'a permissibility of monarchy, "'Velayat-e faqih" and the recovery of Islamic identity in the thought of Ayatollah Khomeini', in N. R. Keddie (ed.), *Religion and Politics in Iran* (New Haven 1983), p. 186.
- 18 Bakhsh, *Ayatollahs*, p. 23.
- 19 Khomeini, *Kashf*, 179ff.
- 20 *Ibid.*, pp. 181, 226. While Islamic views on the legitimacy of the established power have varied, the necessity of the state is acknowledged. See A. K. S. Lambton, *State and Government in Medieval Islam* (Oxford 1981), especially pp. 219–63.
- 21 Khomeini, *Kashf*, pp. 186–7.
- 22 *Ibid.*, pp. 189, 226–8.
- 23 *Ibid.*, p. 227.
- 24 *Ibid.*, p. 186.
- 25 *Ibid.*, pp. 182, 222.
- 26 *Ibid.*, p. 290.
- 27 *Ibid.*, pp. 209–10.
- 28 *Ibid.*, p. 180.
- 29 *Ibid.*, pp. 180–1.
- 30 *Ibid.*, p. 272.
- 31 *Ibid.*, p. 185.
- 32 *Ibid.*, p. 189.
- 33 *Ibid.*, p. 233.
- 34 *Ibid.*, p. 185.

- 35 For Shaikh Fazlallah Nuri's role in the drafting of Article II see Martin, *Islam*, pp. 117–20.
- 36 Khomeini, *Kashf*, p. 237.
- 37 *Ibid.*, p. 245.
- 38 *Ibid.*, pp. 245–6.
- 39 This may refer to the radio station opened in April 1940 and used chiefly for instruction on citizenship and other doctrines of Reza Shah's New Order, as well as to the Department of National Guidance formed to direct inculcation of a patriotism in which respect for Reza Shah was a strong element; see P. Avery, *Modern Iran* (London 1965), p. 306.
- 40 Khomeini, *Kashf*, p. 255ff.
- 41 *Ibid.*, pp. 258–9.
- 42 Algar, *Khomeini*, p. 42.
- 43 *Ibid.*, p. 242.
- 44 *Ibid.*, p. 282.
- 45 *Ibid.*, p. 201.
- 46 *Ibid.*, p. 240.
- 47 Vijdani, *Sarguzashtha*, Vol. I, pp. 135, 138; Vol. IV, p. 83.
- 48 Ruhani, *Nahzat*, Vol. I, pp. 93–4.
- 49 Khomeini, *Sahifa*, Vol. I, p. 52.
- 50 *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 136.
- 51 *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 231.
- 52 *Ibid.*, Vol. I, pp. 140–1.
- 53 *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 144.
- 54 *Ibid.*, Vol. I, pp. 202–3.
- 55 Dabashi, *Theology*, p. 461.
- 56 Khomeini, *Sahifa*, Vol. I, p. 198.
- 57 *Ibid.*, Vol. I, pp. 199–200; Khomeini, *Kausar*, Vol. I (Tehran 1374/1995), p. 188.
- 58 Khomeini, *Sahifa*, Vol. I, p. 113.
- 59 *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 100.
- 60 *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 110.
- 61 *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 231.
- 62 *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 134.
- 63 *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 115.
- 64 *Ibid.*, Vol. I, pp. 136, 295.
- 65 *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 43.
- 66 *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 105.
- 67 *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 281.
- 68 *Ibid.*, Vol. I, pp. 130–1.
- 69 *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 112.
- 70 R. Khomeini, *Vilayat-i faqih* (Tehran, 1374/1995), corrected by scholars close to the imam, p. i; Farsi, *Zavaya*, p. 141.

- 71 Dabashi, *Theology*, p. 438.
- 72 *Ibid.*, p. 321.
- 73 A. Zanjani, *Fiqh-i siyasi* (Tehran 1373/1994), Vol. II, p. 94.
- 74 M. Kadivar, *Nazariyyaha-yi daulat dar fiqh-i Shi'a* (Tehran 1376/1997), p. 35.
- 75 A. K. S. Lambton, 'Some Trends in Islamic Political Thought in Late 18th Century and Early 19th Century Persia', *Studia Islamica*, No. XXXIX, 1974, pp. 114–18.
- 76 A. K. S. Lambton 'A Nineteenth Century View of Jihad', *Studia Islamica*, No. XXXII, 1970, pp. 180–92; A. H. Hairi, 'The Legitimacy of Early Qajar Rule as Viewed by the Shi'i Religious Leaders', *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 24, No. 3, 1988, pp. 275–7.
- 77 S. Arjomand, *The Shadow of God and the Hidden Imam* (Chicago 1984), p. 226.
- 78 A. K. Moussavi, 'The Establishment of the Position of the Marja'yyat-i Taqlid in the Twelver Shi'i Community', *Iranian Studies*, Vol. XVIII, No. 1, 1985, pp. 35–51.
- 79 *Ibid.*, p. 41.
- 80 M. Hasani, *Vilayat-i faqih* (Tehran 1376/1997), pp. 93–4.
- 81 Moussavi, 'Marja'yyat', p. 43.
- 82 Kadivar, *Daulat*, p. 18.
- 83 A. Arjomand, *Shadow*, p. 226; A. H. Ha'iri, 'Legitimacy', p. 283.
- 84 Sometimes also referred to as general affairs. The original term refers to the duty to enjoin good and prohibit evil. In its most practical sense it meant regulation of the marketplace and usually, though not always, came under a *faqih*. In Iran after the Safavid period the functions of the *muhtasib*, the official in charge of the *hisbah*, became increasingly secularized. Functions concerned with the shari'a came to be administered by the *maraji*. They included, for example, collection of the canonical taxes, administration of inheritances and responsibility for the affairs of minors; see A.K. Lambton 'Hisbah' in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Vol. III (Leiden 1971), pp. 485–92. In effect the demarcation of spheres of authority in the affairs of the *hisbah* was not clear, though some functions were regarded as specifically controlled by the 'ulama. Naraqi was attempting to extend 'ulama authority in areas where it was hitherto little recognized, or not recognized, or believed not to exist.
- 85 H. Enayat, 'Iran: Khomeyni's Concept of the Guardianship of the Juris-consult' in J. Piscatori (ed.), *Islam in the Political Process* (Cambridge 1983), p. 162.
- 86 Kadivar, *Daulat*, pp. 18–19.
- 87 Taqizadih-Davari, *Mutahhari*, p. 254. Burujirdi rejected the jurisprudential arguments for the theory but accepted its theological basis.
- 88 H. Tahiri, *Tahqiqi-yi piramun-i vilayat-i faqih* (Tehran 1364/1985), pp. 214–16.

- 89 Hasani, *Vilayat*, p. 102.
- 90 *Ibid.*
- 91 *Ibid.*, pp. 102–3.
- 92 Algar, *Islam*, p. 54; R. Khomeini, *Shu'un va ikhtiyarat-i vali-yi faqih* (Tehran 1374/1995) p. 79.
- 93 *Ibid.*, p. 94.
- 94 *Ibid.*, pp. 47–8.
- 95 *Ibid.*, pp. 30–1.
- 96 *Ibid.*, p. 32.
- 97 *Ibid.*, pp. 126–7.
- 98 *Ibid.*, p. 59.
- 99 *Ibid.*, p. 60.
- 100 *Ibid.*, p. 64.
- 101 Ruhani, *Nahzat*, Vol. III, p. 133; Muhtashami, *Khatirat*, pp. 77–8.
- 102 Enayat, 'Iran', pp. 163–4.
- 103 Algar, *Islam*, p. 91.
- 104 *Ibid.*, pp. 43–4.
- 105 *Ibid.*, p. 41.
- 106 *Ibid.*, pp. 79–80.
- 107 *Ibid.*, p. 55.
- 108 *Ibid.*, pp. 55–6.
- 109 *Ibid.*, p. 118.
- 110 *Ibid.*, p. 50.
- 111 *Ibid.*, p. 43.
- 112 *Ibid.*, pp. 44–5.
- 113 *Ibid.*, pp. 48–9.
- 114 Khomeini, *Sahifa*, Vol. I, pp. 304–5.
- 115 *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 370.
- 116 *Ibid.*, Vol. I, pp. 396–7.
- 117 *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 459.
- 118 *Ibid.*, Vol. II, pp. 31–2.
- 119 *Ibid.*, Vol. I, 433–4.
- 120 *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 436.
- 121 *Ibid.*, Vol. I, pp. 434–5.
- 122 *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 355.
- 123 *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 307.
- 124 *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 338.
- 125 *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 308.
- 126 *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 356.
- 127 *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 500.
- 128 *Ibid.*, Vol. I, pp. 300–1.
- 129 *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 404.
- 130 *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 379.

- 131 Ruhani, *Nahzat*, Vol. III, pp. 324–5.
- 132 Dabashi, *Theology*, p. 427.
- 133 Khomeini, *Sahifa*, Vol. I, p. 332.
- 134 *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 4.
- 135 *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 347.
- 136 *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 362.
- 137 *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 363.
- 138 *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 373, 411–12.
- 139 Dabashi, *Theology*, p. 426.
- 140 Khomeini, *Sahifa*, Vol. I, p. 437.
- 141 Dabashi, *Theology*, p. 457.
- 142 'Iraqi, *Naguftaha* (Tehran 1370/1991), p. 167.

## Notes to Chapter VI

- 1 S. Behrdad, 'Islamic Utopia in Pre-Revolutionary Iran: Navab Safavi and the Fada'ian-e Islam', *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 33, No. 1, 1997, pp. 40–65.
- 2 Kadivar, *Daulat*, p. 21.
- 3 Behrdad, 'Utopia', p. 52.
- 4 S. H. Khusraushahi, *Fada'iyan-i Islam* (Tehran 1375/1996), pp. 282–4.
- 5 *Ibid.*, pp. 88–9.
- 6 *Ibid.*, p. 201.
- 7 *Ibid.*, pp. 202–3.
- 8 *Ibid.*, pp. 218–19.
- 9 *Ibid.*, p. 220.
- 10 *Ibid.*, p. 223.
- 11 *Ibid.*, pp. 224–5.
- 12 *Ibid.*, p. 235.
- 13 Algar, 'Khomeini', p. 279.
- 14 Behrdad, 'Utopia', p. 40.
- 15 'Iraqi, *Naguftaha*, pp. 15–16.
- 16 Farsi, *Zavaya*, p. 13.
- 17 Rafsanjani, *Mubariza*, Vol. I, p. 109.
- 18 *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 110.
- 19 Badamchian, *Mu talifa*, p. 40.
- 20 'Iraqi, *Naguftaha*, pp. 125, 145.
- 21 S. V. R. Nasr, *The Vanguard of the Islamic Revolution* (London 1994), p. xiv.
- 22 *Ibid.*, p. 7.
- 23 Y. Haddad, 'Sayyid Qutb: Ideologue of Islamic Revolution' in J. Esposito (ed.), *Voices of Resurgent Islam* (Oxford 1983), p. 84; O. Carre, *Mystique et politique* (Paris 1984), p. 20.
- 24 Y. Choueiri, *Islamic Fundamentalism* (London 1990), p. 142.

- 25 Nasr, *Vanguard*, p. 11.
- 26 B. Lia, *The Society of Muslim Brothers in Egypt* (Reading 1998), p. 104.
- 27 Nasr, *Vanguard*, p. 64.
- 28 K. Ahmad and Z. Ansari, 'Mawlana Sayyid Abul A'la Mawdudi' in K. Ahmad and Z. Ansari (eds), *Islamic Perspectives* (London 1979), pp. 356–7. Carré has noted what he terms Qutb's political mysticism – the view that an imam will emerge to bring just government and God's rule on earth. See Carre, *Mystique et Politique*, pp. 145–8.
- 29 Choueiri, *Fundamentalism*, p. 121.
- 30 *Ibid.*, p. 123.
- 31 Ahmad and Ansari, 'Mawdudi', p. 367; Haddad, 'Qutb', p. 85.
- 32 C. P. Harris, *Nationalism and Revolution in Egypt* (Stanford 1964), p. 171.
- 33 Adams, 'Mawdudi', pp. 114–16; R. Mitchell, *The Society of Muslim Brothers* (Oxford 1993), pp. 236–45; Haddad, 'Qutb', p. 89.
- 34 W. Shepard, *Sayyid Qutb and Islamic Activism* (Leiden 1996), p. 80.
- 35 *Ibid.*, p. 82.
- 36 P. D. Lee, *Overcoming Tradition and Modernity* (Westview 1997), p. 108.
- 37 Ahmad and Ansari, 'Mawdudi', p. 375.
- 38 Nasr, *Vanguard*, p. 53.
- 39 Adams, 'Mawdudi', p. 123.
- 40 Mitchell, *Society*, p. 246.
- 41 *Ibid.*
- 42 C. Tripp, 'Sayyid Qutb: the Political Vision' in A. Rahnema (ed.), *Pioneers of Islamic Revival* (London 1994), p. 168.
- 43 Haddad, 'Qutb', pp. 91–2.
- 44 See Lee, *Tradition*, p. 102.
- 45 A. A. Musallam, *The Formative Years of Sayyid Qutb's Intellectual Career* (Michigan 1983), pp. 199, 207.
- 46 A. S. Moussalli, *Radical Islamic Fundamentalism* (Beirut 1992), p. 224.
- 47 Adams, 'Mawdudi', pp. 116, 119.
- 48 *Ibid.*, pp. 125–6.
- 49 *Ibid.*, pp. 117–19.
- 50 Mitchell, *Society*, p. 248.
- 51 Lee, *Tradition*, p. 110.
- 52 Lia, *Society*, p. 204.
- 53 Choueiri, *Fundamentalism*, p. 112.
- 54 Tripp, 'Qutb', p. 174.
- 55 Shepard, *Qutb*, pp. 75, 113–14.
- 56 Lee, *Tradition*, p. 110.
- 57 C. Wendell, *Five Tracts of Hasan al-Banna 1906- 1949* (California 1978), pp. 110, 113.
- 58 Lia, *Society*, p. 78.
- 59 Wendell, *Tracts*, p. 45.

- 60 Lia, *Society*, pp. 37, 118.
- 61 Hasan al Banna quoted in S. Zubaida, *Islam the People and the State* (London 1989), p. 33.
- 62 Harris, *Nationalism*, p. 171.
- 63 S. Qutb, *In the Shade of the Qur'an* (London 1979), p. xi.
- 64 Wendell, *Tracts*, pp. 36–7; Shepard, *Qutb*, p. 46.
- 65 *Ibid.*, pp. 53–4.
- 66 Tripp, 'Qutb', p. 173.
- 67 Lee, *Tradition*, p. 104.
- 68 Choueiri, *Fundamentalism*, pp. 135–6.
- 69 Shepard, *Qutb*, p. 41.
- 70 Harris, *Nationalism*, p. 172; Wendell, *Tracts*, pp. 31, 114.
- 71 Lia, *Society*, pp. 53–5.
- 72 *Ibid.*, p. 78.
- 73 Harris, *Nationalism*, p. 167.
- 74 Choueiri, *Fundamentalism*, pp. 128–9.
- 75 *Ibid.*, p. 116.
- 76 Lia, *Society*, p. 210.
- 77 Musallam, *Qutb*, pp. 213–14.
- 78 Haddad, 'Qutb', p. 92.
- 79 Choueiri, *Fundamentalism*, pp. 137–8.
- 80 Lia, *Society*, p. 83.
- 81 Haddad, 'Qutb', p. 84.
- 82 *Ibid.*, p. 93.
- 83 Lee, *Tradition*, pp. 88–91.
- 84 Haddad, 'Qutb', p. 70.
- 85 Nasr, *Vanguard*, pp. 78ff.
- 86 *Ibid.*, p. 154.
- 87 They include *Ayanda dar qalamru-yi islam* (Tehran 1345/1966), translated with an introduction by 'Ali Khamene'i, who emphasizes the need to enlighten the young on the fact that Islam is a programme for life, and action according to only a part of its provisions is insufficient. He also draws attention to its importance in conferring identity, and the need for struggle and collaboration, including, through *amr bi ma'ruf va nahy az munkar*, struggle against the enemies of Islam. The book had hardly been printed when nearly all copies were seized, and it remained on the list of forbidden works until the end of the Pahlavi era. Other works by Qutb translated were *Islam: A'in-i fitrat* (1348/1969); *Durnama-yi rastakhiz dar adyan-i pishin va Qur'an* (1349/1970); *'Adalat-i ijma'i dar islam* (1349/1970); *Dar saya-yi Qur'an* was translated in 1334/1955. I am grateful to the National Library of Tehran for this information, and that in the following note with regard to Mawdudi.
- 88 They included *Qanun-i asasi dar islam* (1343/1964); *Mabadi-yi islam va falsafa-yi ahkam* (1343/1964); *Marzha-yi 'aqida* (1348/1969); *Islam va*

*tamaddun-i gharb* (1348/1969); *Islam dar dunya-yi imruz* (1349/1970); and *Binish-i akhlaqi az nazar-i islam* (1350/1971).

## Notes to Chapter VII

- 1 I am indebted to discussions with Michael Saward and Hasan Ashkivari for some of the ideas in this chapter.
- 2 Abrahamian, *Khomeinism*, p. 47.
- 3 M. Bazargan, *Inqilab-i Iran dar du harikat* (Tehran 1363/1984), p. 111.
- 4 On the LMI see H. Chehabi, *Iranian Politics and Religious Modernism* (London 1990).
- 5 On the Mujahidin see E. Abrahamian, *Radical Islam*, (London 1989).
- 6 On the socialists see S. Zabih, *The Left in Contemporary Iran* (London 1986).
- 7 C. Bakhtiar, *Ma fidelité* (Paris 1982), p. 176.
- 8 Falsafi, *Khatirat*, p. 424.
- 9 Rafsanjani, *Mubariza*, Vol. I, p. 334.
- 10 D. Harney, *The Priest and the King* (London 1998), p. 151.
- 11 Vijdani, *Sarguzashtha*, Vol. II, pp. 63–70.
- 12 Rafsanjani, *Mubariza*, Vol. I, p. 326.
- 13 A. Ashraf, 'Bazaar III' in *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, Vol. IV (New York 1990), pp. 31–2.
- 14 *Ibid.*, p. 41.
- 15 *The Guardian*, 20 January 1979.
- 16 *The Guardian*, 22 September 1979.
- 17 Khomeini, *Sahifa*, Vol. V, pp. 32–3.
- 18 *Ibid.*, Vol. V, p. 203.
- 19 *Ibid.*, Vol. V, p. 289.
- 20 *Ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 373.
- 21 *Ibid.*, Vol. IV, p. 156–7.
- 22 *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 250.
- 23 *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 298.
- 24 *Ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 410.
- 25 *Ibid.*, Vol. IV, p. 315.
- 26 *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 298.
- 27 I am grateful for this point to Mehranguiz Kaar, attorney at law, June 1997.
- 28 Khomeini, *Sahifa*, Vol. VI, p. 146.
- 29 *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 310.
- 30 *Ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 372.
- 31 *Ibid.*, Vol. V, pp. 7–8.
- 32 *Ibid.*, Vol. VII, p. 512.
- 33 Rafsanjani, *Mubariza*, Vol. I, p. 322–3.
- 34 *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 362.



- 35 Khomeini, *Sahifa*, Vol. II, p. 186.
- 36 *Ibid.*
- 37 *Ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 217.
- 38 *Ibid.*, Vol. II, pp. 313, 351, 482, 503.
- 39 Razavi, *Hashimi*, p. 164.
- 40 Bakhash, *Ayatollahs*, p. 74.
- 41 *Ibid.*
- 42 Razavi, *Hashimi*, p. 186, quoting Kayhan 24. 3. 1357, June 1979.
- 43 Bakhash, *Ayatollahs*, pp. 74–5.
- 44 Moslem, *Factionalism*, pp. 40–5.
- 45 Bakhash, *Ayatollahs*, p. 82.
- 46 The constitution has been translated by H. Algar, *The Constitution of the Islamic Republic*, 1980, and the Iranian Islamic Propaganda Organization, Tehran 1980. I have also used the Persian version. The constitution is discussed by S. A. Arjomand under 'The Constitution of the Islamic Republic' in *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, Vol. VI (California 1993), pp. 150–158; by A. Schirazi, *The Constitution of Iran* (London 1997); in Bakhash, *Ayatollahs*, pp. 71–91; in Milani, *Making*, pp. 158ff. Some of the ideas in these texts are reflected in the following discussion.
- 47 The influence of Mutahhari on the constitution is noted in Taqizadih-Davari, *Mutahhari*, pp. 274–5.
- 48 Khomeini, *Sahifa*, Vol. VI, p. 253.
- 49 *Ibid.*, Vol. IV, p. 44.
- 50 *Ibid.*, Vol. V, p. 522.
- 51 *Ibid.*, Vol. VI, pp. 34, 36.
- 52 C. Mallat, *The Renewal of Islamic Law* (Cambridge 1993), p. 74.
- 53 Digard, Hourcade and Richard, *Iran*, p. 172.
- 54 Khomeini, *Sahifa*, Vol. IV, p. 517.
- 55 *Ibid.*, Vol. VI, p. 84.
- 56 Digard, Hourcade and Richard, *Iran*, pp. 172–3.
- 57 Razavi, *Hashimi*, pp. 164, 167.
- 58 Conversation with Mehranguiz Kaar, June 1997.
- 59 Khomeini, *Sahifa*, Vol. VI, p. 74.
- 60 *Ibid.*, Vol. IV, pp. 318–9.
- 61 *The Guardian*, 20 February 1979, 9 August 1979, 13 August 1979, 14 August 1979; *The Economist*, 8 September 1979.
- 62 Khomeini, *Sahifa*, Vol. IV, p. 39; see also Vol. VI, p. 522.
- 63 *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 4.
- 64 *Ibid.*, Vol. V, pp. 322, 441.
- 65 Farsi, *Zavaya*, pp. 502–5.
- 66 See, for example, Khomeini, *Sahifa*, Vol. V, p. 334; Vol. VI, pp. 309, 416–17.
- 67 *Ibid.*, Vol. VI, pp. 411–12.

- 68 *Ibid.*, Vol. IV, p. 288.
- 69 *Ibid.*, Vol. V, p. 519.
- 70 *Ibid.*, Vol. V, p. 536.
- 71 *Ibid.*, Vol. V, p. 334; Vol. VI, p. 309.
- 72 There is no clear evidence that the Mujahidin blew up the IRP headquarters, but though they have never claimed credit, they have also not denied that they did it.
- 73 Schirazi, *Constitution*, pp. 206, 213–14, 230–1; Milani, *Making*, p. 199; Arjomand, *Turban*, p. 183; Kadivar, *Daulat*, pp. 107–10.
- 74 Khomeini, *Sahifa*, Vol. XX, pp. 170–1.
- 75 See A. Saeidi, *Sociological Obstacles to the Development of a Market Economy in Iran*, PhD thesis, University of London, 1999.
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## Notes to Chapter VIII

- 1 I am grateful for the advice of Khizar H. Ansari on the literature and ideas in this section. Charlotte Edwardes was immensely helpful in the gathering of material. I made considerable use of Manijeh Kia-Nazhand's collection of newspaper cuttings in the Library for Iranian Studies in Acton, as well as the national collection of periodicals in the British Library at Collindale, and the Islamic Studies Library at Selyoak College, Birmingham. The assistance of the staff in the libraries mentioned was much appreciated.
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- 3 *Ibid.*, pp. 105–6.
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- 5 Y. Richard, in Digard, Hourcade and Richard, *Iran*, p. 155.
- 6 E. S. Herman and N. Chomsky, *Manufacturing Consent* (New York, 1988).
- 7 The Runnymede Trust, *Islamophobia - a Challenge for Us All* (London 1997); see in particular pp. 5–6.
- 8 For a balanced discussion of these see H. J. Gans, *Deciding What's News* (London 1980).
- 9 *The Guardian*, 5 April 1978.
- 10 *The Observer*, 28 May 1978.
- 11 *The Observer*, 16 April 1978.
- 12 *The Observer*, 28 May 1978.
- 13 *The Sunday Times*, 13 August 1978.
- 14 *The Times*, 11 May 1978; *The Observer*, 16 April 1978.
- 15 *The Times*, 11 May 1978.
- 16 *The Observer*, 11 May 1978.
- 17 *Daily Telegraph*, 8 September 1978.

- 18 *Daily Telegraph*, 9th September 1978.
- 19 *Daily Mirror*, 7 November 1978.
- 20 See for example *Daily Telegraph*, 9 September 1978, 14 September 1978.
- 21 *The Economist*, 11 November 1978.
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- 27 *Punch*, 15 January 1979.
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- 33 *The Times*, 26 October 1978.
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- 36 *The Guardian*, 30 January 1979.
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- 38 *The Guardian*, 30 January 1979.
- 39 *The Guardian*, 20 January 1979.
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- 43 *Daily Mail*, 8 February 1979.
- 44 *The Economist*, 3 February 1979.
- 45 *The Economist*, 10 February 1979.
- 46 *The Observer*, 7 January 1979.
- 47 *Daily Telegraph*, 16 April 1979.
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- 49 *Daily Telegraph*, 8 June 1979.
- 50 *Time*, 13 March 1979.
- 51 *Time*, 16 July 1979.
- 52 *Daily Telegraph*, 7 March 1979.
- 53 *The Observer*, 22 April 1979.
- 54 *The Economist*, 22 June 1979.
- 55 *The Guardian*, 4 August 1979.
- 56 *Daily Telegraph*, 26 September 1979.
- 57 *Daily Mail*, 20 August 1979.
- 58 *The Economist*, 8 August 1979.
- 59 *Daily Telegraph*, 16 October 1979.
- 60 *The Sun*, 8 November 1979.

## Notes to Chapter IX

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- 3 See K. Siddiqui, *Issues from the Islamic Movement 1980- 81* (London 1981), containing reports from *Crescent International*, pp. 52, 63-4.
- 4 *Ibid.*, p. 240.
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- 6 *Impact International*, 12-25 December 1979.
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- 20 J. Pipes, *The Path of God: Islam and Power* (New York 1983), p. 325.
- 21 O. Carré, *Islam, and the State in the World Today* (Manohar 1987); see also von Mehden, 'Malaysian', pp. 233-54.
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- 25 Siddiqui, *Issues*, pp. 48–9.
- 26 L. Anderson, 'Tunisia and Libya: Responses to the Islamic Impulse' in Esposito, *Revolution*, pp. 157–75; E. Mortimer, *Faith and Power: the Politics of Islam* (London 1982), p. 372.
- 27 Pipes, *Path*, p. 325.
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- 29 For the Shi'a of Iraq see Y. Nakhash, *The Shi'is of Iraq* (Princeton 1994), esp. pp. 137–8; J. N. Wiley, *The Islamic Movement of the Iraqi Shi'as* (Boulder 1992), esp. pp. 445–55; H. Batatu, 'Shi'a Organisation in Iraq: al-Dawah al-Islamiyya and al-Mujahidin' in J. R. Cole and N. R. Keddie, *Shi'ism and Social Protest* (New Haven 1986) esp. pp. 180, 184, 196–7; P. Robins, 'Iraq: Revolutionary Theology and Regime Responses', in Esposito, *Revolution*, esp. pp. 86–7; C. Mallat, 'Iraq', in S. T. Hunter, ed., *The Politics of Islamic Revivalism* (Washington 1988), esp. pp. 80–2.
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- 33 M. D. Ahmed, 'The Shi'is of Pakistan' in Kramer, *Shi'ism*, pp. 284–5.
- 34 Siddiqui, *Issues*, p. 121

# Glossary

<i>akhlaq</i>	ethics
' <i>alim</i>	learned person
<i>amr-i bi ma'ruf va nahy az munkar</i>	command to enjoin good and prohibit evil
' <i>arif</i>	gnostic, one who has achieved knowledge of the divine
' <i>Ashura</i>	tenth day of Muharram; day of the martyrdom of Imam Husain and mourning for him
' <i>Atabat</i>	Shi'i holy cities in Iraq: Najaf, Karbala, Samarra and Kazimain
<i>a'zam</i>	greatest
<i>bay'a</i>	oath of allegiance
<i>daulat</i>	government, state
<i>din</i>	religion
<i>fana</i>	state of union with the divine
<i>farhang</i>	culture
<i>faqih</i>	jurist
<i>fiqh</i>	religious jurisprudence
<i>fuqaha</i>	jurists, plural of <i>faqih</i>
<i>furū'</i>	specific provisions of Islamic law
<i>hadd</i>	penalty prescribed by Islamic law
<i>hadith</i>	traditions concerning the Prophet, his companions and successors which form the basic evidence of Islamic law
<i>haqq</i>	right
<i>haram</i>	forbidden
<i>hayat</i>	group
<i>hijab</i>	Islamic dress
<i>hisbah</i>	general affairs

<i>hudud</i>	Islamic penalties, plural of <i>hadd</i>
<i>hukumat</i>	government, state
<i>husainiyya</i>	place where religious dramas and ceremonies are performed
<i>ijaza</i>	permission to practise as a mujtahid
<i>ijma'</i>	consensus
<i>iltiqat</i>	addition of non-religious thought to religious thought
<i>ijtihad</i>	independent judgement (of a <i>mujtahid</i> pronouncing a legal ruling)
<i>'ilm</i>	knowledge acquired by learning, used particularly of religious knowledge
<i>imam</i>	leader, usually in a religious sense;
<i>Imam</i>	one of the 12 infallible successors to the Prophet in Shi'ism, the last of whom is held to be in hiding
<i>imam jum'a</i>	leader of Friday prayers
<i>imamat-i mustamirr</i>	continuous imamate
<i>imamat-i ummat</i>	leadership of the people
<i>inba' 'amma</i>	general transmission of prophecy
<i>insan-i kamil</i>	perfect man
<i>'irfan</i>	Islamic gnosticism, mystical philosophy
<i>iqamat-i hudud</i>	application of the prescribed penalties
<i>'isma</i>	infallibility
<i>jahil</i>	ignorant
<i>jaur</i>	injustice, tyranny
<i>jihad</i>	struggle, holy war
<i>jumhur</i>	republic
<i>khalifa</i>	caliph, vice-regent, who receives divine authority
<i>kharaj</i>	Islamic tax
<i>kufri</i>	infidelity
<i>khilafat</i>	rightly guided succession
<i>khulafa</i>	plural of caliph
<i>khums</i>	one-fifth of a person's surplus income, levied as a canonical tax

<i>kitab</i>	book
<i>madrasa</i>	theological school
<i>majlis</i>	assembly
<i>maktab-i tauhid</i>	school, ideology, of unity, oneness
<i>ma'rifat</i>	knowledge by presence of the divine, mystical knowledge
<i>marja' -i taqlid</i>	source of emulation, may refer to any <i>mujtahid</i> or to one <i>mujtahid</i> acknowledged as the most prominent of his time
<i>mashru' a</i>	in accordance with the shari'a
<i>muhtasib</i>	official with responsibility for control of the <i>hisbah</i>
<i>mujahid/mujahidin</i>	warrior/warriors in a holy cause
<i>mujtahid</i>	one who may use his own judgement ( <i>ijtihad</i> ) in interpreting the religious law, therefore one of the highest ranking of the religious body
<i>muqallid</i>	ordinary believer, follower of a <i>mujtahid</i>
<i>mushavarat</i>	consultation
<i>mustazafin</i>	deprived, disinherited
<i>nabi</i>	prophet
<i>nafs</i>	soul, usually carnal soul
<i>nahzat</i>	movement
<i>na'ib-i' amm</i>	general agent
<i>na'ib-i khass</i>	special agent
<i>niyabat</i>	deputyship, agency
<i>niyabat-i' amm</i>	general agency
<i>nubuvvat</i>	prophethood
<i>al-nubuwwa al-'amma</i>	general prophethood
<i>al-nubuwwa al-tashri'</i>	prophethood of legislation
<i>nufus</i>	pl. of <i>nafs</i>
<i>pir</i>	master (of a Sufi order)
<i>qanun</i>	law
<i>qaza</i>	office and function of applying Islamic law
<i>qazi</i>	judge
<i>qutb</i>	lit. pole; master of a Sufi order



<i>rauza khvan</i>	clerical figure, usually quite lowly, who calls prayers and invokes memories of early Shi'i martyrs at religious ceremonies
<i>rahbar</i>	leader
<i>sahm-i imam</i>	portion of the canonical taxes spent in various ways on religious persons and institutions
<i>saltanat</i>	power, authority, worldly rule, sovereignty, monarchy
<i>sarraf</i>	money-changer
<i>sayyid</i>	one claiming descent from the Prophet
<i>sazman</i>	organization
<i>shahid</i>	martyr
<i>shar', shari'a</i>	sacred law of Islam
<i>shaur</i>	deliberation
<i>shirk</i>	association, meaning also polytheism, or the association of the divinity with another, which is heresy in Islam
<i>siyasi</i>	political
<i>Sufi</i>	Islamic mystic
<i>tallaba</i>	theological student
<i>tafsir</i>	exegesis of the Qur'an
<i>taghut</i>	idolatry, oppression, misgovernment
<i>takfir</i>	excommunication
<i>takiyya</i>	place in which religious dramas are performed
<i>taqva</i>	piety
<i>taqiyya</i>	dissimulation for religious reasons
<i>taqlid</i>	imitation (of a <i>mujtahid</i> by an ordinary believer)
<i>tariqat</i>	way or path, term usually used by Sufis
<i>tauhid</i>	unity, oneness
<i>ta'ziyya</i>	religious drama
<i>tullab</i>	theological students, plural of <i>tallaba</i>
<i>'ulama</i>	religious scholars of Islam, clergy, plural of <i>'alim</i>
<i>ulu'l-amr</i>	ultimate source of authority
<i>ummat</i>	community
<i>umur-i hisbah</i>	general affairs

<i>umur-i mubah</i>	permissible affairs
<i>ustad</i>	teacher, master
<i>usul</i>	principles, roots, essentials
<i>va'iz</i>	preacher
<i>vakil</i>	representative, agent
<i>vali</i>	guardian, deputy, governor
<i>vaqf</i>	religious endowment
<i>vatan</i>	homeland
<i>vikalat</i>	agency, representation
<i>vilayat</i>	guardianship, agency, government
<i>vilayat-i faqih</i>	guardianship of the jurist
<i>vilayat-i 'amma</i>	general guardianship, governance
<i>vilayat-i khassa</i>	special guardianship, trusteeship
<i>vilayat-i amr</i>	mandate to rule
<i>vilayat-i mutlaqa-i faqih</i>	absolute guardianship of the jurist
<i>vilayat-i takvini</i>	governance over creation
<i>wahdat al-wujud</i>	unity of existence
<i>wali</i>	saint
<i>wilaya</i>	sainthood
<i>zuhd</i>	piety
<i>zakat</i>	alms, canonical tax
<i>zulm</i>	oppression

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