

decade aware of their peril. To harness this awareness to a constructive scheme that reduces the insecurity of the age while it renews our reputation for what Chancellor Schmidt calls "calculability" — that is the task that awaits the next president of the United States.

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"THIS WORLD IS POLITICAL!!" THE ISLAMIC REVIVAL OF THE SEVENTIES*

by Daniel Pipes

The success of the movement led by the Ayatollah Khomeini against the shah in early 1979 culminated a decade of increasing political activity undertaken in the name of Islam.¹ Islam has never ceased to be a key political force through modern history, but hardly ever has it appeared as the stated concern of political movements. Instead, modern "isms" predominated: liberalism, first, then nationalism (including Arabism) and socialism. So little did Islam impact on the international scene in the sixties that experts writing in the middle of that decade could state that "in the contemporary Arab world Islam has simply been bypassed" and "at least with respect to 'neutrality,' . . . Islam has had little, if any, noticeable influence upon the reasoning, planning, decision-making, or expression of Muslim policy makers."²

Then, starting about 1970, in widely dispersed areas and in entirely different circumstances, Muslims have been increasingly engaged for Islam. Some better known cases include the application of Islamic law in Libya and Pakistan, the rise of extremist groups in Egypt and Turkey, a rebellion against the Marxist governments of Afghanistan, and a war of secession on the Philippine island of Mindanao. The question arises: Are these activities related, or is

* The quotation in the title comes from Ruhollah Khomeini, *al-Hukūma al-Islāmiya* [Islamic Government] (Beirut: 1970), p. 22.

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¹ This article deals with activities in the name of Islam; the many underlying causes that find expression in Islam are hardly discussed here.

² Hisham Sharabi, "Islam and Modernization in the Arab World," in J. H. Thompson and R. D. Reischauer, eds., *Modernization of the Arab World* (New York: Van Nostrand, 1966), p. 26; Fayez A. Sayegh, "Islam and Neutrality," in J. Harris Proctor, ed., *Islam and International Relations* (London: Pall Mall, 1965), p. 61.

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their proliferation coincidental? I shall show in this essay (1) that a real increase in Islamic political activities has taken place through the 1970s and (2) that one development — the great oil boom — is primarily responsible for this surge.

Islamic Movements

Islamic political activities in the 1970s fall into three categories: the use of Islam to facilitate policies ("governmental Islam"); attempts to make Islam a way of life ("neo-orthodox movements"); and Muslim action to be free of non-Muslim political control ("autonomist movements").

Governmental Islam

Not strictly speaking a movement, "governmental Islam" refers to the use of Islamic symbols and ideology imposed from above by the government, usually to facilitate policy but without affecting the nature of that policy. Governments seeking support for their actions clothe these in Islamic garb in order to move the populace; whether or not the political leaders are sincere believers is irrelevant here. Since a suitable quotation or precedent can be found to justify almost any act, Islam (like any religion) can sponsor a wide range of government policies; and because Muslims tend to identify very closely with their religion, the government hopes to find in Islam a strong bond with its citizens.

The prime example of governmental Islam in recent years has been Egypt, where Anwar al-Sadat has successfully given an Islamic hue to nearly all his major activities, from making war on Israel in 1973 to making peace with the same state four years later. Increasingly, Egyptian policies are suffused with Islam — without Islamic considerations in any way determining policy. Indeed, Cairo pushed through a divorce bill in July 1979 that goes directly against the tenets of the *Shari'a* (Islamic sacred law). Saudi Arabia has always used Islam to buttress its policies, but even more so in the past decade as the scope of its activities has widened. In Morocco, King Hasan II has made greater use of Islamic symbols in recent years: most spectacular was the "Green March" of November 5-9, 1975 (green being the color of Islam), when the government dispatched up to 350,000 unarmed civilians brandishing the *Quran* to take over the Spanish Sahara. This echo of a major event in the early years of Islam did not win any territory, but it did fulfill its true purpose: to gain the king popularity within Morocco. As recently as 1975, ten

Muslim leaders were executed in Somalia for disagreeing with government decrees; now others are serving as public officials, the re-establishment of the *Shari'a* is being considered, newspapers carry religious pages in Arabic, and rebel tribesmen have taken on an Islamic aura (the Mijerteyn tribal alliance has changed its name from Somali Democratic Action Front to Somali Salvation Front). Even the ruling *Ba'ath* Party in Iraq has made use of Islam: early in 1978, Saddam Hussain, the strongman of the regime and a *Sunni*, visited *Shi'i* [Shiite] holy places in Iraq and prayed in the *Shi'i* fashion; he then had pictures of these deeds reproduced throughout the Iraqi press.

Neo-orthodoxy

Muslims who wish to make Islam a way of life by strengthening its hold over society either advocate a return to the pure ways of the Prophet Muhammad and his companions in the seventh century or they foresee an imminent end to the world. The backward-looking movements may be characterized as neo-orthodox (or, more accurately, neo-orthoprax); they hope to imitate the correct actions of the early Muslim community. The forward-looking movements promise divine retribution to those not adhering closely to the Islamic way. In general, the latter, chiliastic movements predominated until modern times, when the challenge of the West engendered neo-orthodox responses. Starting with the *Wahhabiya* in eighteenth-century Arabia, almost every part of the Islamic world has experienced shattering neo-orthodox movements, all of which ended in eventual failure or dilution. Only in Saudi Arabia did neo-orthodoxy succeed politically and maintain itself in full force until the present. In the 1970s, neo-orthodox movements have re-emerged in striking numbers in many places.

The first country to come under the influence of neo-orthodoxy was Libya. On September 1, 1969, a brash new regime came to power under Mu'ammad al-Qadhafi, fervently eager to promote Arabism and Islam. In the ensuing years, Libya became a major force for advancing Muslim causes, and its activities will be discussed in greater detail below. In Egypt, the organization known as the Muslim Brethren was a major political force from the 1930s until 1954. The Muslim Brethren advocated a return to the spirit of early Islam, although it did allow the use of modern technology and its members were commonly skilled in modern ways. Suppressed for fifteen years, the organization re-emerged as a political force in

about 1970; since then, it has steadily gained strength and has acquired a prominent place in the political spectrum, pressuring the government to adopt a more Muslim outlook. Egypt has also witnessed the emergence of fanatical Muslim groups that, in behalf of Islam, have engaged in kidnapping, bombing, and other terrorist activities.

Turkey, the only Muslim country to try to separate religion from politics in the Western sense, experienced a big revival of Islamic sentiment in the mid-1970s. The National Salvation Party, junior partner in three coalition governments between 1974 and 1977, advocated, with some success, a greater role for religion in Turkish life and a closer identification with Muslim, rather than Western, states. Several of the Persian Gulf states have passed new legislation based on the *Shari'a*, and the extraordinary success of neo-orthodox Islam in the rebellion against the shah of Iran in 1978-1979 is well known. The Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini led a combination of religious, liberal, and leftist forces to power from his exile in Iraq and France. Once in authority, he immediately began to impose his strict interpretation of Islam on Iran. Moreover, a major revolt has been mounted in Afghanistan against the Marxist and pro-Soviet government that came to power in May 1978. As in Iran, a multiplicity of groups, there largely tribal, have united under an Islamic banner and advocate a return to Islamic values. The largest rebel group, the National Front for the Islamic Revolution, fields about 70,000 fighters. Secularizing policies of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto met with the determined resistance of the *Jama'at-i Islami*, a neo-orthodox group whose ideas derive from the writings of 'Abu'l-A'la al-Maududi, and sedition in the army helped lead to the coup against Bhutto in July 1977; the officers who took over, led by Zia ul-Haqq, have reversed Bhutto's policies and have moved toward an Islamic public order, instituting, for example, public flogging for adultery. Zia ul-Haqq may be an affiliate of *Jama'at-i Islami*. Bangladesh followed a rather similar pattern, as a military government sympathetic to neo-orthodoxy replaced secularist government in November 1975. The Muslim Youth Movement of Malaysia emerged in the 1970s advocating full adherence to Islamic laws and posing a threat to the ruling United Malays National Organization. Indonesia, too, has experienced a widespread revival of Islamic feeling and a similar effort by organized groups to deepen its hold over the lives of believers. The construction of mosques has most tangibly expressed this feeling.

Neo-orthodox movements share three important points:

(1) Devotion to the *Shari'a*

All neo-orthodox movements, without exception, are deeply committed to living by the *Shari'a*, and their foremost goal is to apply it. The *Shari'a*, like the Jewish *Halakha* and unlike anything in Christianity, is a sacred law covering nearly every aspect of human life, including prayer ritual, eating habits, family relations, financial transactions, criminal punishments, and political ideals. It derives from four sources: passages in the *Quran*, reports about the life of Muhammad, reasoning by analogy from these two writings, and the consensus of the learned in the Muslim community.³ The elaboration of this legal system was completed by about A.D. 1000. Until the nineteenth century, Muslim governments generally tried to enforce the *Shari'a*, although it has always been impractical, even impossible, to apply the whole of it, since its stipulations often do not correspond to real situations. Throughout history, new Muslim governments have come to power intending to enforce the *Shari'a* fully, but they have invariably failed to do so.⁴ Despite this difficulty, the *Shari'a* remains a permanent ideal; Muslims of all eras believe that a society that follows the *Shari'a* closely will be just.

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, European pressures on and, later, control over Muslim territories marked a drastic decline in the application and prestige of the *Shari'a*. The Europeans enacted their own codes, usually leaving to the *Shari'a* jurisdiction only in matters of personal status — and there only when compatible with European notions. Bans on alcohol and interest charges were relaxed. Islamic punishments (e.g., hand amputation for stealing) were discarded both in theory and practice; slavery was abolished, polygamy died out, and women acquired new rights and public roles.

Neo-orthodox Muslims want to eliminate these European influences and apply the *Shari'a* fully: no alcohol, no interest on money, women apart from men (e.g., no coeducation) and out of the public eye, Islamic punishments reinstated. They want to punish those who break the Ramadan fast, impose the *zakat* (a charitable tax), prohibit images, and execute those who apostatize from Islam. In Kenya, there have been calls for polygamy; and rumor has it that some groups in West Africa favor the reintroduction of slavery (on the grounds that the *Quran* permits it). The neo-orthodox are un-

³ Some neo-orthodox Muslims, including both the *Wahhabis* and the *Sanusis*, accept only the *Quran* and the reports about Muhammad.

⁴ This is the central argument of my study *Slave Soldiers and Islam*, forthcoming from Yale University Press.

willing to consider that changes since early medieval times might require changes in the laws: what was best then is best now, too. They are also unaware of the repeated failure to apply the *Sharia* through history and are convinced that, given a chance, they can succeed in creating a just order.

(2) Omnipresent Islam

Islam should not just determine regulations, its spirit should saturate life; hence, the Muslim neo-orthodox promote Islam everywhere. They suffuse the media with Islamic themes in stories, music, and news broadcasts; education includes strong doses of religious instruction; they build mosques, transform all charitable organizations into religious (i.e., *zakat*) institutions; and, among Muslims who are not native Arabic speakers, the Arabic language acquires a vaunted place, taught in the schools, printed in books, spoken in sermons.

(3) Muslim Solidarity and Hostility to Non-Muslims

For the neo-orthodox believer, the only really important dividing line between persons is that separating Muslim from non-Muslim. Other units — geographic, cultural, linguistic — are irrelevant or even harmful (although the Arabs are sometimes granted a special, distinct status because they literally speak the language of God, the language He used in the *Quran*). Pious Muslims are usually unconcerned with national boundaries and ethnic differences; for them, the bond of Islam unites all believers and distinguishes them from non-Muslims. This attitude has two consequences: support for Muslims and aversion to non-Muslims, both on the local and the international level. We shall concentrate here on the international implications.

Neo-orthodox movements support Muslims everywhere. Even before reaching power, they establish contact with like-minded groups elsewhere. For example, the Egyptian Muslim Brethren and the Iranian *Fida'iyyan-i Islami* had contacts during the period 1943-1955 and recently re-established relations in 1979. When such groups come to power, their potential assistance vastly increases, as they can offer haven, recognition, publicity, money, and arms to other movements. The converse, hostility to non-Muslims, is expressed culturally and politically. With regard to the West, the neo-orthodox especially dislike the Latin script, open sexuality, rock music, and tourists; though eager to benefit from Western technology, they avoid the spirit behind it. Politically, the neo-orthodox

Muslims damn both communist atheism and Western "materialism," totalitarianism and liberalism, tyranny and democracy. So long as the neo-orthodox are out of power, these aversions can be indulged fully; but when confronted with the realities of world politics, a choice must be made. Khomeini has not yet chosen; Saudi Arabia long ago opted for a Western connection; and Libya has sided since 1975 with the Soviet Union. In each case, a basic aversion had to be overcome before an alliance with non-Muslims could be made. Muslim solidarity often leads to indiscriminate support for Muslims fighting against non-Muslims: the Palestinians, Pakistan against India, the central Sudanese government against the southern rebels, the Turkish Cypriots against the Greeks, and so forth.

Autonomist Movements

The preceding movements occur where Muslims rule. Either they use Islamic symbols as political tools, or they try genuinely to make society follow Islamic ways. Where Muslims lack political control, their efforts are directed almost entirely toward achieving political autonomy. The bond of Islam is so strong that Muslims almost always rally together in the face of non-Muslims.

Islam emphatically urges its adherents to rule themselves and others, and they have done so with conspicuous success from Muhammad's time to the present. Muslim communities have consistently fought for their own autonomy first; then, following the command to make holy war (*jihad*) they have battled to rule others. It is important to note here that *jihad*, contrary to widespread belief, aims not to convert non-Muslims but to control them. Muslims may go to war only to subjugate non-Muslims politically, not to coerce them religiously.⁵ The goal is always political control of territory.

In today's world, Muslims cannot expand through conquest, and nationalism has largely changed the notions of community; yet, as ever, Muslims are uneasily ruled by non-Muslims and are apt to seek autonomy. Whether they share an ethnic identity and language with the non-Muslims (as in Lebanon or in parts of India) or do not (as in the Soviet Union or Nigeria) makes little difference. Autonomist movements do not distinguish among types of non-Muslim rulers. Recently they have fought against Christian, Jewish, Hindu, and Buddhist governments and, in the none too distant past, also against a Confucian.

⁵ Conversion is a likely and desirable consequence of political control, but not a necessary one. Muslims ruled large parts of Europe, Africa, and India without making many conversions; note Greece, which remained almost entirely Christian through centuries of Ottoman rule.

In the 1970s, Muslims have fought for autonomy in ten areas, listed here from west to east. Morocco, Algeria, and Libya became involved in the *Spanish Sahara* while it was still a colony, having worked to end European rule there. In *Chad*, although Muslims make up 90 per cent of the population, Christians and animists have dominated the government since independence in 1960. In 1966, however, Muslims, belonging mostly to the Tubu tribe of cattle herders in the north, formed a liberation front (FROLINAT) and have since waged war against the state. Occasional attempts to bring Muslim leaders into the Chad government have not met with lasting success. Eritrea and Ogaden are two heavily Muslim parts of *Ethiopia*, another country that has always been ruled by non-Muslims. Eritrea was administered separately by the Italians and was incorporated into Ethiopia only in 1962. The Eritrean Liberation Front became a threat in 1969, and was on the verge of taking over the whole province in 1977 when Soviet intervention on the Ethiopian side overwhelmed the Eritrean autonomist forces. Similarly, the Somali Muslims in Ogaden came close to separating from Ethiopia, but Soviet and Cuban aid brought the territory back under control of the central government.

In *Lebanon*, the civil war of 1975-1976 had many causes and involved many groups, but it pitted a predominantly Christian force against a predominantly Muslim one. The issues included the social and political order within Lebanon, Arabism, Palestinian activities, relations with Syria, and others; but, when all was said and done, Muslims fought Christians to gain a larger, if not dominant, voice in Lebanese affairs.

In *Cyprus*, the Greek-Turkish conflict, which began decades ago, came to a head in July 1974, when the Muslim Turks achieved autonomy, though this hardly seems related to an increase in Islamic spirit. Two other long-standing conflicts took on a more Islamic aura in the 1970s. One, the Muslim struggle to rule *Palestine*, was given impetus by the Israeli control of Jerusalem, the emergence of the PLO, and the attempt to involve non-Arab Muslim states; moreover, the Israeli Arabs, quiescent through the first two decades of Israel's existence, have from the mid-1970s expressed their increased autonomist feelings by turning to Islam. Mosque attendance, for example, is noticeably higher than it has been in many years. Similarly, on the *Indian subcontinent*, fighting between Muslim and Hindu, between Pakistani and Indian forces, has occurred frequently since 1947; but Muslims viewed the war that broke out in December 1971 in a much more religious light than they did previous encounters.

Muslim Arakanese have been in conflict with the government of *Burma* since that state's independence; in 1978, this problem flared up again when many Muslims were expelled to Bangladesh. The Patani Liberation Front of southern *Thailand* has likewise been fighting the central government for decades; here again, a surge of autonomist activity took place in the late 1970s. In the *Philippines*, the Moro National Liberation Front, representing the Muslims of the southern island of Mindanao, has resurrected a centuries-old conflict with the central government, fighting both for the autonomy of the Muslims and against the settlement of Christians in their territories.

Circumstances vary widely in each of the three types of Islamic political movements: governments use Islam to effect policy; pious groups seek a truly Islamic society; and nonautonomous communities seek to free themselves from non-Muslim rule. In light of these differences, it is striking that all three blossomed in the 1970s. I propose that the great changes in the oil market that took place in the seventies lie behind most of these activities.

Confirmation of Islam

The Oil Boom

After peaking at \$2.08 a barrel (Arabian light) in 1958, oil declined to \$1.80 in 1961 and stayed there through the rest of the decade. The Organization of Petroleum-Exporting Countries, founded in 1960 to halt further price erosion, was successful in that effort, but it was powerless to increase prices so long as the oil companies controlled the market. Around 1970, however, a variety of factors combined to transform the situation and give the oil-producing countries new strengths: (1) United States and Venezuelan production peaked in 1970; (2) earlier pressures on the oil companies to train local personnel paid off, for many of the exporting countries had by 1970 a skilled corps of engineers, managers, and economists, able to meet the oil companies on their own terms; (3) the entry of the "independents," smaller companies eager for a share of the Middle Eastern and North African market and willing to offer better terms, gave the producing countries a leverage that they never had over the "majors"; (4) European and Japanese industry increasingly converted to oil during the decades when it was so inexpensive, adding to the demand; (5) Europe experienced a

marked economic upsurge in 1970; (6) the Libyan government under al-Qadhafi became the first exporter willing to cut production and exacerbate a shortage; and (7) temporary factors, in particular explosions damaging several supertankers and damage to Tapline, a pipeline carrying Saudi oil to the Mediterranean, worsened the shortage of oil in early 1970. This confluence of events turned the market around in 1970; and by the end of that year, government revenues per barrel increased for the first time in many years, from \$0.91 to \$0.99.

From this modest start, government revenues quickly jumped, so that by September 1973 they had doubled to \$2.01 per barrel. After the price rises of October 1973 and January 1974, government revenues per barrel more than quadrupled, to \$9.27. Several years of price stability followed, but when the shah's government fell, a tight market pushed prices up rapidly to \$24-\$34 per barrel by the end of 1979. Simultaneously, many countries also increased their production. Saudi Arabian output soared from 3.55 million barrels per day in 1970 to 7.34 in 1973 and about 9.5 in 1979. The oil boom — a combination of vastly higher prices and sometimes of higher production, too — brought staggering riches to some of the oil countries: Saudi Arabia received \$1.2 billion in 1970, \$29 billion in 1974, and about \$70 billion in 1979.

This unprecedented transfer of wealth has had far-reaching implications for the world economy, and we are only beginning to sort out the consequences in other spheres. A hitherto unnoticed ramification of the oil boom is that, more than anything else, it has caused the recent increase in Islamic political movements. It has done this (1) by improving the worldly standing of Muslims, thus changing their attitudes toward Islam; (2) by providing Saudi Arabia and Libya with the means to establish networks of Islamic influences; and (3) by disrupting Iranian society, thus leading to Khomeini's phenomenal rise to power. Through wealth, power, and dislocation, then, the oil boom has in three distinct ways turned Muslims toward Islam.

The Plight of Modern Islam

From about A.D. 1500 until World War I, the steady expansion of European power and influence was the primary event of world history. Especially since 1800, European technology, political ideals, military organization, economic structures, and cultural forms have prevailed almost everywhere. Non-Europeans have faced the problem of how to cope with this enormous and threatening force,

and their responses constitute the main theme of their history during the past several hundred years.

Among non-Europeans, Muslims have had the most difficult experience in the face of the European challenge, for two reasons. In the first place, Muslims have a long record of enmity with Christian Europeans and it has been particularly galling for Muslims to have to submit to the greater power of Europe and to learn Western ways. Other civilizations confronted Europeans as exotic new peoples when contact was first made in the sixteenth century. Japanese and Chinese, Hindus and Buddhists, sub-Saharan Africans, and American Indians had no preconceptions about Europeans (and vice versa); thus, their initial contacts were often good. Muslims and Christians knew each other and had a long heritage of mutual antagonism. As a result, Muslims were much more reluctant to acknowledge European supremacy, and they acquired Western skills belatedly and with greater reservation.⁶

A second difficulty derived from the long-standing connection between Islam and worldly success. From its beginnings, Islam had enjoyed extraordinary fortune. Muhammad left Mecca as a fugitive in A.D. 622, and by 630 he returned in triumph to rule the city; within a century, the Arabian conquests brought a vast stretch of territory between the Atlantic Ocean and China under Muslim control. During the Middle Ages, the Muslim heartland in the Middle East was more wealthy and powerful than all its neighbors, including Europe, sub-Saharan Africa, and Hindu India. Muslim expansion, both military and religious, continued until the seventeenth century. Muslims were almost everywhere dominant; hardly anywhere were they persecuted. Prosperous and powerful, the Muslim community perceived worldly success as a sign of God's favor. Religion and success confirmed one another, creating an important psychological link between the two. As a result of this link, the many defeats and humiliations that Muslims have endured since the eighteenth century have been sorely trying. As country after country fell to Christian European control and influence, Muslims faced a unique dilemma: if God indicates his favor through worldly success, why then were the Europeans supreme? Anguished self-examination followed, and serious Muslims set out either to explain why God's favor had shifted or to disassociate religious faith from worldly success. Yet, until now, Muslims had not answered this question, and per-

⁶ Some clear examples of this phenomenon come from areas with mixed Muslim and non-Muslim populations, such as Nigeria, India, and Malaysia.

sistent poverty and powerlessness has been the source of great spiritual torment.⁷

Oil and Islam

In the 1970s came the oil boom, and suddenly Muslims could stand up to their Christian nemesis. The long slide downward stopped, as some Muslims again enjoyed the wealth and power that was their due as God's community. The oil boom marked a turning point in Muslim consciousness: more than anything else, it prepared the way for widespread Islamic political activity. The psychological importance of this event for Muslims cannot be overestimated, as even those suffering from the oil price jump take heart in this shift of wealth and power away from the Western world.

Oil and Islam are associated on three levels: (1) Of the thirteen OPEC members, all but two (Ecuador and Venezuela) are Muslim. Eight Middle Eastern states, North Africa, and Indonesia are overwhelmingly Muslim; in Nigeria Muslims make up half the population; and the ruler of Gabon converted to Islam in 1973, just as the oil prices took off. OPEC policymaking is tantamount to Muslim decisionmaking; its power is Muslim power. (2) All the countries with large oil deposits and small populations speak the language of God: Kuwait, Libya, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates enjoy revenues that far exceed the daily needs of their peoples. These states can dispose of revenues in more elaborate ways: fashionable foreign estates, ultramodern medical facilities, and imported icebergs for drinking water are a few of the favorite schemes for soaking up revenues. The fact that Arabs are most closely associated with Islam heightens the perceived connection between that religion and oil wealth. (3) Among the rich Arab states, Saudi Arabia stands out by virtue of its large reserves and its closeness to Islam. Saudi Arabia's petroleum reserves far exceed those of any other country; the esteem of its Islam also has no peer. As the only Muslim government never to deviate from a strict Islamic ideology in modern times, as rulers of the land of Muhammad, as keepers of the Holy Places (Mecca and Medina), and as the only country with a 100 per cent Muslim citizenry by law, Saudi Arabia symbolizes Islam in power. The OPEC-wealth-superwealth sequence would seem to indicate that one must be Muslim to export oil, Arab to live well because of oil, and Arabian to become fabulously rich. Besides this

⁷ This argument derives from a brilliant and still timely book by Wilfred Cantwell Smith: *Islam in Modern History* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1957).

threefold connection between oil and Islam, the largest price increases occurred at the time of the October 1973 Arab-Israeli war, when the Arabic-speaking Muslims felt they had finally stood up to the hitherto invincible Israeli enemy. Though the war and the price rises were not directly related, their simultaneous occurrence gave many Muslims a feeling of exultation, a rediscovered sense of their own strength. As a result, Islam is for many inextricably bound to the oil boom: the wealth and power conferred by oil has Islamic implications, confirming God's favor and heralding the return to a world more correctly ordered.

The oil-exporting countries have two types of power: they can draw in staggering amounts of money, and they can dispense that money howsoever they please. The power to acquire and spend is particularly significant vis-a-vis the West, although the non-Western countries, including many Muslims, are adversely affected even more than the rich countries.⁸ Today, for the first time in modern history, Muslims have power over the West: they can raise or lower prices, buy their telephone systems or helicopters from this company or that country. The power of OPEC and the wealth of the Arabs answer a deep need among Muslims for a sign of God's favor and the continued validity of their faith. Moreover, it is appropriate that Arabs benefit most from the oil boom: just as they were the first Muslims in the seventh century, today they lead the way out of poverty and away from Western domination. The expectation exists, if only vaguely, that the benefits will spread and that all Muslims will again participate in wealth and power. The 1970s mark a turning point in Muslim consciousness. Islamic civilization is now felt to be on the rebound.

These sentiments may surprise the non-Muslim reader, for they ignore entirely the fortuitous nature of the oil wealth and the Western role in creating it. That fossilized organic deposits abound in the areas where Muslims live is to non-Muslims a matter of chance;⁹ that they are worth so much is only because Christian European civilization created a need for them, the means to extract them, and the wealth to pay for them. The Arabs are merely consuming, living off free money, doing almost nothing to earn their riches. Yet, Arabs and Muslims often do not acknowledge these facts; they

⁸ To help remedy this problem, the OPEC Special Fund, founded in 1976, had lent out \$200 million by 1977.

⁹ The abundance of petroleum deposits is indeed accidental, but the fact that so much oil is available for export reflects the low level of industrialization in Muslim countries. Until now, no Muslim state has consumed much fuel oil itself, so most of it has been exported.

take the wealth as a sign of God's bounty and of the re-emergence of an Islamic global presence. This is not surprising really, for how else might they explain this good fortune; and, in the face of the world's poor, how else can they justify it?

The effect of the oil boom as a confirmation of Islam is extensive but unmeasurable. It is not possible to explain Islamic movements by it, yet many have been encouraged by the new wealth, power, and prestige of oil-rich Muslims. Many Muslims who earlier would have shied away from their religion — associating it with poverty and backwardness — now embrace a new image: that of the Arabian sheik with his uncounted wealth and his steady devotion to Islam. The oil boom has shown the vulnerability of the West more dramatically than anything in the past five centuries. By confirming Islam in the eyes of many, it prepared the way for the Islamic movements in the 1970s; two countries in particular played an important role in furthering those movements.

The Saudi and Libyan Networks

Two major currents of influence — one Western, one communist — dominate international relations since 1945. Each has its own centers (the United States and Western Europe, the Soviet Union and China) and a wide network of allies and supporters (e.g., Iran under the shah, Cuba). Their global struggle is conducted on several levels and through various means: military (large armies, foreign bases, arms sales); economic (foreign aid, use of major currencies); and cultural (language studies, foreign students, books, movies). In the effort to further its aims, each side gathers allies, some of which do not share basic views but are nonetheless tactically useful (e.g., Soviet support for Egypt).

On a smaller scale, the oil boom has enabled Saudi Arabia and Libya to become the power centers of a new international current, Islam.¹⁰ Since about 1970, they have possessed the wealth to advance Islamic interests with the same means that the Western and communist powers use: military aid, economic pressure, cultural presence. Standing back from the struggle between the West and communism, and moving toward different goals, this new locus of influence goes largely unnoticed, even though Saudi Arabia and Libya during the seventies established networks reaching into dozens of countries and had a major impact on a sizable number of

them. This new source of power is already important and still expanding; before we analyze it in detail, let us take a closer look at the character of Saudi Arabia and Libya.

Wahhabiya and Neo-Sanusiya

In contrast to the other Muslim countries with large disposable financial reserves (e.g., Kuwait and Algeria), Saudi Arabia and Libya share a heritage of neo-orthodox activism that reflects the harshness of the desert. Their regimes echo doctrines developed in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, respectively.

The *Wahhabi* movement in Arabia was founded in the eastern part of the peninsula in 1745, when Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab, a religious figure, allied with Ibn Sa'ud, a tribal leader. In combination, *Wahhabi* doctrine and Saudi rule have dominated three successive polities based in eastern Arabia; the latest of these, the modern Saudi state, came into being between 1902 and 1925 when another Ibn Sa'ud, a descendant of the first, consolidated a hold over both eastern and western Arabia. Harsh, uncompromising legalism characterizes *Wahhabi* doctrine. Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab stripped away twelve centuries of accretions that had filled out Islam to make it a great and diverse religion. Calling for a strict return to the religion of Muhammad the Prophet, he rejected almost everything else as illegitimate innovation. He even went so far as to enforce mosque attendance, something previously unheard of. Tombstone prayers were the *Wahhabi* *bête-noire*, for they implied intervention between man and his God, something felt to be contrary to the basic spirit of Islam; the early *Wahhabis* aroused enormous enmity by destroying tombs and sacred enclosures wherever they could — even in Mecca itself (1803). *Wahhabi* doctrine softened very little over time, and the Saudis still maintain the harshest religious regime in the Muslim world. The insistence on the *Quran* as the constitution of the Saudi state illustrates the centrality of *Wahhabi* doctrine. No other Muslim state makes such a claim, for the good reason that the *Quran* espouses no political theory and is insufficient by itself as a law code. *Wahhabi* doctrine provides the *raison d'être* of the Saudi state: Saudi leaders must adhere exactly to it, just as Soviet leaders must subscribe to Marxist-Leninist doctrine, whether they believe it or not and whether or not they personally follow its prescriptions. (This situation has led to some astonishing hypocrisy, especially in the years of the oil billions.)

The *Wahhabis* initially tried to spread their vision of Islam through military action; now they use financial means. In the first

¹⁰ I owe much in the following discussion to Detlev H. Khalid's insightful "Das Phänomen der Re-Islamisierung," *Aussenpolitik*, 29 (1978), pp. 430-451.

Saudi polity, they attacked sanctuaries in Iraq, conquered Mecca and Medina, and aspired to control Syria; since 1925, they have forgone military expansion. When they were poor or only moderately rich, they had actually to convince other Muslims of their views, which they could rarely do; oil wealth, by immeasurably strengthening their powers of persuasion, has changed this.

Libya is the home of the *Sanusi Sufi* mystical order, founded in 1837 near Mecca by Muhammad ibn 'Ali al-Sanusi. Like the *Wahhabiya*, it too has been associated with the desert, for al-Sanusi eventually settled in Cyrenaica, and his order spread widely among eastern Libyan desert tribes and oasis folk. Al-Sanusi and his descendants ruled much of Libya (except during the Italian occupation, 1911-1943) until the last of them was overthrown by al-Qadhdhafi in 1969.

Doctrinally more moderate than the *Wahhabis* to begin with, the *Sanusi* movement has also become diluted over time. It was the mainstay of the resistance against Turkish and European attempts to control Libya, but during the course of the twentieth century, it has been toned down. After independence, the Libyan government settled into a comfortable pro-Western stance and tended to stand off from Arab and Islamic affairs. Al-Qadhdhafi's coup in 1969 marked an emphatic return to the earlier *Sanusi* spirit. Although al-Qadhdhafi overthrew *Sanusi* rule, denounced the *Sanusis* as non-Muslims, banned the *Sanusi* order, and totally reoriented Libyan politics, he in fact espoused many of the original *Sanusi* ideals, proclaiming

a "purified" version of the main *Sanussi* principles (without so naming them): *Ijtihād* [individual initiative to understand Islam], return to pristine Islam as a way of life for all the people, spreading Islam, holy war (*jihād*) (conferring religious justification for his military build-up) and manual work ("Islam is the religion of power and work"). Like the *Sanusis*, Qadhdhafi considers his regime as having a pan-Islamic mission: "The Libyan revolution is a revolution to reform Islam . . . and acts to reform Islamic religion."¹¹

Today's heirs of the *Wahhabi* and *Sanusi* movements share important characteristics: both are passionately neo-orthodox, stressing the *Shari'a* and the need to cleanse Islam of false accretions¹²; both have international aspirations and take seriously the duty to spread their messages.

¹¹ [Shiloah Center], *The Islamic Factor in Arab Politics* (Tel Aviv: Shiloah Center, 1979), p. 66.

¹² Khalid ("Das Phänomen," p. 447) points out that this can be seen as a legacy of the pattern that Ibn Khaldun (d. A.D. 1406) described — desert purists coming to cleanse civilization — although then by military force and today by financial pressure.

A Division of Labor

Although the governments of Saudi Arabia and Libya both promote neo-orthodox Islam, their policies and temperaments are very different. To begin with, they line up on opposite sides of the world order. Saudi Arabia has an American connection that dates back several decades, and the Saudis do not have diplomatic relations with any communist state. Libya, on the other hand, has aligned itself with the Soviet Union since 1975; although al-Qadhdhafi certainly has no sympathy for communism, only the Soviet Union will sell him virtually unlimited weapons without asking questions. Libya and the Soviet Union, moreover, cooperate in Africa, and a Soviet presence in Libya serves to deter any possibility of Egyptian expansion there.

More profound are the differences in temperament between the two governments. The Saudis are eminently respectable in speech and deed; cautious and conservative, they seek only a quiet, safe world in which to enjoy their riches. Al-Qadhdhafi, however, is a firebrand — prone to tantrums, whimsical, delighting in revolutionary turmoil. The paranoid Saudi government uses Islam instrumentally, as a means to protect itself and its fragile wealth from a hostile world of communism and Zionism (interchangeable offenses for some of the ruling elite); it therefore works to make Muslim regimes sympathetic to its viewpoint and amenable to its influence. Al-Qadhdhafi's Libya, to the contrary, is on the offensive more interested in changing the world than in defending its oil fields, and becomes involved in remote causes (Rhodesia, South-West Africa, the Canary Islands, Northern Ireland) because al-Qadhdhafi really cares. Where the Saudis use Islam as a tool against the Left, al-Qadhdhafi promotes it for itself. In Saudi Arabia, it is government Islam; in Libya, neo-orthodoxy.

These many differences have been the cause of bad relations between the two countries since al-Qadhdhafi's coup of 1969. Of all the Arab countries, only Saudi Arabia delayed recognition of the new Libyan regime. Subsequently, al-Qadhdhafi has called for the overthrow of the Saudi monarchy and is believed to have financed the March 1973 attack on the Saudi Embassy in Khartoum. In response, Saudi Arabia has gone out of its way to avoid al-Qadhdhafi, although a slight rapprochement began when Egypt and Israel signed the March 1979 treaty.

Though antagonistic in so many ways, Saudi Arabian and Libyan activities promoting Islam complement one another; their differences, in fact, are a source of strength. The two regimes use different methods to achieve similar Islamic goals, and they work hand in hand — tacitly and without intending it, but to great effect. Saudi Arabia pressures Muslim governments to apply the *Sharia* or to abandon ties with the Soviet bloc; it stands above disputes between Arabs, presides over the pilgrimage to Mecca with great ceremony, and sponsors Islamic conferences. Al-Qadhdhafi funds extremist Islamic movements, trains saboteurs, kidnaps enemies, and sponsors terrorism. Temperamentally, the Saudis prefer behind-the-scenes maneuvers, while al-Qadhdhafi tends toward dramatic action. Saudi Arabia provides economic aid to governments, and Libya runs guns; Arabia props up the friends of Islam, and Libya brings down its enemies (or else supports such friends as Idi Amin); one provides incentives, the other punishes.

Examples of how Saudi Arabia takes the high road and Libya the low road are many: (1) in Jordan, North Yemen, Pakistan, and Bangladesh, Saudi Arabia has given money with strings attached, urging the recipient to adopt a stance more favorable to neo-orthodox Islam; in most of these same countries, al-Qadhdhafi has supported extremist religious organizations, usually ones plotting to overthrow the government. The net effect of this dual action has been to pressure the government toward Islam from two sides. (2) In Egypt and Turkey, the situation has been similar, except that the Arabians support both the government and the leading (and legitimate) neo-orthodox parties, the Muslim Brethren and the National Salvation Party. Libya funds these and also the fanatics; moreover, al-Qadhdhafi encourages Turkey to act sympathetically to the Arab cause by placing large contracts in Turkey and by employing many Turks in Libya (where they have partially replaced the Egyptians, who in turn had replaced the Italians). (3) In the Philippines, Libya provides arms for the Moro National Liberation Front, and Saudi Arabia promises Manila assistance in solving the problem to Saudi satisfaction. (4) What is perhaps most striking, Saudi Arabia has helped finance elegant mosques in prominent sections of international capitals, while Libya found the one antiestablishment Muslim institution in the West — the Black Muslims — and lent it money to build a mosque in south-side Chicago. Of course, exceptions to this pattern exist too: Arabia long plotted against the Marxist government of South Yemen, and it is the Libyans who have been working

for peace in the Philippines since December 1976. Still, the two usually work in characteristically different ways.

Saudi Arabian Activities

The Saudis exert influence primarily through munificence to governments. To understand the scope of Saudi Arabian largess, note what the Saudi Fund disbursed in its first three years, 1975-1977:

<i>Recipient</i>	<i>\$ million</i>	<i>%</i>
Arab League members	2,924	53
non-Arab Muslims	1,308	24
non-Muslims	1,276	23
TOTAL	5,508	100

During this same period, Saudi Arabia contributed more than \$1 billion to the Islamic Development Bank and to other multinational funds. In 1973-1975, Saudi Arabia spent more than \$10 billion in foreign aid, of which all but 1 or 2 per cent went to Muslims.¹⁸

Two points may be deduced from this survey of Saudi financial activities. First, the sums involved are so enormous that willy-nilly the Saudis have formidable political leverage; recipient countries are prepared to go to considerable lengths to please their Saudi benefactors. The Saudis disburse this money with exquisite politeness and discreet diplomacy, relying on subtle hints to make their wishes known. Only rarely must they explicitly state conditions or threaten to cut off aid; and, even then, they are slow to react when displeased. Foreign aid has thus facilitated the strong but quiet influence that Saudi leaders prefer. Secondly, the bulk of these funds go to Muslim recipients. While Saudi Arabian aid extends around the globe, at least four-fifths of that aid is concentrated among Muslims. This reflects both the Saudi concern for their fellow Muslims worldwide (especially vivid for them because of the annual pilgrimage to Mecca) and the sense that they have more influence over Muslim governments.

Saudi involvements in Muslim affairs include the following. Morocco, which had played an active role in facilitating the contacts between Israel and Egypt that led to Sadat's 1977 Jerusalem visit, joined the other Arab countries in condemning the peace treaty only two years later. A Saudi hand lay behind this unexpected change. (Similar efforts to turn the Sudan against Egypt, however, have failed.) During the Lebanese Civil War, Saudi distress when

¹⁸ J. Law, *Arab Aid: Who Gets It, For What, and How* (New York: Chase Manhattan Bank, 1978), Appendix 4; *Middle East Economic Digest*, September 24, 1976.

Syrians joined Christians against the predominantly Muslim forces led to peace negotiations in October 1976 and an end to the carnage. Saudi blandishments likewise turned the North Yemeni government from a pro-Marxist stance to one of tame alignment with the West. Somalia signed a friendship treaty with the Soviet Union, yet tore it up in 1977: it could afford to snub the Russians because of Saudi aid. After Haile Selassie's ouster in 1974, Saudi Arabia began to support the Eritrean Liberation Front against the pro-Marxist Ethiopian government; as a result, the Eritreans for the first time came close to taking over Eritrea. The Saudis also gave active, but discreet, aid to the Ogaden rebels. Saudi promises of aid to Egypt made the expulsion of the Russians in July 1972 more feasible, and plans to make the Sudan the "breadbasket of the Arab world" have had a notable effect on al-Numairi's policies. Saudi influence over the statelets along its eastern edge has been immense, serving both to prevent outside interference and to promote Islam: for example, restrictions on alcohol and an increase in *Sharia* court cases have resulted from Saudi pressure. The four-month-long agitation that brought down Bhutto on July 5, 1977, may well have been funded by the Saudis. When Pakistan's new military rulers showed an inclination to apply the *Sharia*, King Khalid's personal adviser visited the country, expressing the king's pleasure and reportedly promising that "the Saudi gold coffers will be open to Pakistan once it has an Islamic government."¹⁴ Finally, the Philippine government received promises of financial aid in March 1974, conditional on the suitable settlement of Mindanao's Muslim problem.

The Saudis do indeed promote Islamic causes with "open coffers." They have sponsored the Islamic Conference, since 1969 an almost-annual meeting of Muslim heads of state or foreign ministers. Under Saudi patronage, the conference has initiated a news agency, a broadcasting organization, a bank, a "solidarity fund," and a clearing-house for Islamic cultural centers in non-Muslim countries. Saudi Arabia has founded a number of Islamic organizations, many of an unprecedented nature, such as the Islamic University in Medina, the Islamic Council of Europe, and the Islamic Institute on Defense Technology. Saudi Arabia, moreover, supports Islamic parties (e.g., the National Salvation Party of Turkey) in several countries. In Pakistan, Saudi prestige and careful diplomacy brought about a most surprising union of the *Jama'at-i Islami* with the *Jami'at al-Ulama* (the organization of non-neo-orthodox Muslim religious leaders) into the

¹⁴ *Los Angeles Times*, December 26, 1978.

Pakistan National Front. Similarly, in Indonesia, the Saudis brought together heterogeneous Muslim parties to form a united bloc. In the effort to win Saudi Arabian goodwill, the People's Republic of China in 1979 liberalized restrictions on the practice of Islam in China, lifted a ban on the printing of the *Quran*, and, for the first time since the Cultural Revolution, allowed a group of Muslims to make the pilgrimage to Mecca.

While these many political activities have a clear political purpose and fit quite neatly into the U.S.-Soviet dichotomy (on the U.S. side), they have a concurrent aim: the promotion of Islam. Saudi Arabia finds itself in the happy position where its perception of international affairs accords well with that of a great power: only on the issue of Israel does that perception diverge significantly. It would be a mistake, therefore, to see Saudi Arabian policy as merely pro-Western: it has Islamic goals that are no less important than anticommunism.

Libyan Activities

In striking contrast to bland Saudi pronouncements that disguise as much as they reveal, al-Qadhdhafi has frequently explained his ideas and recounted his activities in colorful detail. Libya's activities are thus much better known than Saudi activities. The public record alone shows activity in some fifty countries. Those unrelated to Islam will be ignored here; these include support for almost any "liberation movement," funds for radical and separatist groups in Western Europe — even tampering in Maltese elections. What is important for our purposes are Libyan aid to Muslim autonomist and neo-orthodox movements and Libya's work to spread Islam in non-Muslim areas.

Since 1973, Libyan arms went to the rebels fighting in the Spanish Sahara; and when the Spanish left, aid continued to the rebels — only then against Morocco. As did the *Sanusi* order before him, al-Qadhdhafi sees Chad as his most certain sphere of influence, and he has followed three different policies there, creating a confused and inconsistent policy: he has supported the central government, helped the Muslim rebels, and annexed a slice of Chad's territory. Relations with the Muslim rebels have been twisted by the land grab. The rebels derive nearly all their financing and arms from al-Qadhdhafi, yet they oppose Libyan encroachment on their territory even more strongly than the central government does.

In Eritrea, Libya changed sides in perfect step with the Soviet bloc. Until 1974, it was a straightforward case of radical Mus-

lims vs. pro-Western Christians; but when the Ethiopian government became yet more radical than the Eritreans and the Soviet Union switched sides, so did al-Qadhdhafi. Whether desired or not, support for Ethiopia has also meant fighting against Somali control of the Ogaden. In Chad and Ethiopia, then, al-Qadhdhafi has sometimes helped non-Muslims against Muslims.

Libyan support for the Palestinians has been fervent and unyielding. Al-Qadhdhafi is absolutely unwilling to accept the existence of Israel, and he is prepared to support any effort to harm that state, no matter how outrageous. He has sent Libyan soldiers to the front, pleaded with the PLO to unite and get on with the fighting, and financed countless acts of terror. All of Libyan foreign relations prominently displays this issue. Al-Qadhdhafi cuts diplomatic ties with Arab states that falter in their hostility to Israel, blatantly pressures non-Arab states to break relations with Israel, and insists on bringing this issue into inappropriate international forums. This is the cause about which he feels most passionately and which has earned him the most notoriety.

The Lebanese Civil War provided al-Qadhdhafi with fertile ground for mischief. He supported, of course, the Muslim-leftist-Palestinian faction, but he also aided the government in order to maintain influence with it. Farther east, some believe, al-Qadhdhafi is supporting extremist Muslims in India in their clashes with the Hindus. Libyan involvement in Thailand came to light when a Libyan national was arrested for exploding a bomb in October 1978. In the Philippines, during October 1971, al-Qadhdhafi began supplying arms to the Moro National Liberation Front; since December 1976, however, he has been involved in negotiations to settle the problem.

In countries already ruled by Muslims, Libya has helped a dozen groups dedicated to the overthrow of existing governments. The antimonarchy forces in Morocco appear to have a neo-orthodox tinge, but the groups al-Qadhdhafi has supported in Algeria and Tunisia are virtually unknown. He first sought union with Egypt. When this failed (partly because of Egyptian fears that in return for his money they would have to endure *Sharia* regulations), al-Qadhdhafi called for revolution in Egypt and put bite into his words by financing numerous subversive groups, many of them Muslim extremists. In the Sudan, he has helped Muslim and leftist groups working to overthrow al-Numairi. Al-Qadhdhafi has hated King Husain ever since the PLO was violently expelled from Jordan in September 1970; he has both called for Husain's ouster and made efforts to have him assassinated. Support for extremist Muslim

groups in Turkey has given way gradually to (since 1975) cooperation with the government; al-Qadhdhafi supported the Turkish invasion of Cyprus and the ensuing Muslim autonomy there. The Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman and the Arab [i.e., Persian] Gulf, operating in the Omani province of Dhofar, received aid from Libya starting in 1973. Assistance to the anti-shah forces in Iran was given both directly and via the PLO. Al-Qadhdhafi loathed the shah for being pro-Western, cooperating with Israel, taking over two small Persian Gulf islands from Qatar in 1971, and for helping Oman against the rebels in Dhofar. In 1979, he began sending money to the rebels fighting the Marxist government in Kabul, and in Indonesia, helped the fanatical *Kamando Jihad* during the late 1970s.

Bhutto came under Libyan pressure to make the Pakistani government more Islamic, and he often acceded in order to benefit from Libyan largess. Two examples of what this led to: (1) the Islamic provisions of the 1973 Constitution (that the president and prime minister of Pakistan must be Muslims, that printing errors in the *Quran* are punishable by law); (2) the unprecedented decision by the Pakistan National Assembly in September 1974 that the Ahmadis, a fringe sect deriving from Islam, are not Muslims. To no one's surprise, al-Qadhdhafi got along famously with Idi Amin — not only because they are kindred spirits but also because Amin was a Muslim ruler who promoted Islam and asserted Muslim control in a predominantly non-Muslim state. Financial aid began in April 1972; military help, including soldiers, in September 1972. When the Israelis raiding Entebbe on July 4, 1976, destroyed most of the Ugandan Air Force, al-Qadhdhafi immediately sent replacements; when Tanzania attacked in 1978-1979, more than 1,000 Libyan soldiers almost alone stood by Amin, who took refuge in a Tripoli hotel after his overthrow.

Libya has been engaged around the globe, tirelessly working against Israel and for Islam, synonymous activities for al-Qadhdhafi. In Malaysia, he has supported Muslim organizations that have a neo-orthodox bent. Most of the African countries have been offered some kind of aid in return for turning against Israel and looking more favorably upon Islam. Islamic centers have been set up in Gabon, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, Rwanda, Togo, and Uganda. Libyan bank offices have been opened up in Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Pakistan, Togo, and Uganda. When Jean Bokassa, ruler of the Central African Republic, converted to Islam in October 1976, al-Qadhdhafi was present at the ceremony in Bangui, and Libyan police, military advisers, and soldiers helped keep Bokassa in power until he was

finally overthrown in September 1979. Albert-Bernard Bongo, the ruler of Gabon, visited Libya on September 9-11, 1973, received promises of aid, and by September 29, had converted to Islam. The Imam Musa al-Sadr, leader of the Lebanese *Shi'is*, visited Libya in August 1978 to collect funds from al-Qadhdhafi. Two things, however, caused this visit to turn out badly: al-Qadhdhafi's suspicions about misuse of previous aid and a religious argument that ended with Musa al-Sadr casting aspersions on the validity of al-Qadhdhafi's marriage. True to his impetuous character, al-Qadhdhafi handed Musa al-Sadr over to the police for interrogation, in the course of which they broke his leg, leaving the Libyans no choice but to finish him off completely. Having already tortured and murdered a guest of state, one can only speculate about what al-Qadhdhafi might do next.

Iran: Disruption and Inspiration

The Revolution

Iran exemplifies the economic and social dislocation that the oil boom can cause. Other countries, too, will undoubtedly experience its ravages in the not-distant future.¹⁵ While the general standard of living in Iran rose enormously during the 1970s, some people landed fabulous riches and the boom caused deeply upsetting economic changes. For most Iranians, it brought the anxieties and stresses associated with inflation, rapidly changing patterns of life, and shifting power. Oil revenues allowed the government to carry out huge industrialization programs; these undermined much of traditional agriculture, emptied the countryside, and filled the cities with deracinated peasants. The shift from farmwork in a village to day-labor in Teheran brought too many changes too fast.

Oil wealth also had unfortunate effects for the shah, Mohammed Reza Pahlevi, and his government. The boom made it possible, for the first time in history, for governments not to tax their own citizens: oil revenues replaced taxes, ending the government's financial dependence on the people and making it easy for rulers to believe they might rule without regard for the populace and to lose all touch with the country.¹⁶ The shah, whose despotic tendencies

¹⁵ Oil prices also contribute to disruption in the Muslim countries that must pay mounting energy bills. High inflation and severe balance-of-payment deficits lead to economic distress and social unrest. In Turkey, these have sometimes been expressed in *Sunni-Shi'i* violence (e.g., in December 1978 and March 1979). The same problem might well develop elsewhere: for example, between Muslims and Hindus in India.

¹⁶ Power becomes concentrated in the hands of workers in the oil fields, however. Too little attention has been paid to the extraordinary potential these workers have to influence domestic and international politics.

had long been evident, succumbed to this temptation, carried away by soaring ambitions and a euphoric sense of power. He blithely ignored the domestic dissatisfaction with his regime that increased so dramatically through the 1970s. For example, the shah apparently did not realize that his grand self-celebration in 1971 for 2,500 years of alleged¹⁷ monarchy aroused not awe but scorn; nor that the people had grown so resistant to his actions that in 1976 they refused to adopt daylight-saving time, which had been instituted by the shah.

The combination of widespread economic tension and the shah's misguided plans, both made possible by the oil boom, precipitated a revolt that engulfed the entire society of Iran. It took an Islamic form for several reasons: Islam stands for traditional Iranian ways and contrasts most directly with the Western features of the shah's rule; it provides a haven for the distressed and a bond for the outraged; its autonomist strain supports antagonism toward foreigners (especially Americans in this case) in the country and non-Muslims in the government; and it provided the opposition movements with an existing network of religious institutions that could be forged into a base for national political action.

This last point requires emphasis. Iran differs from most other Muslim states in having a strong and independent religious establishment. Elsewhere, the state has long co-opted the religious leadership, treating them well in return for political quiescence (though they do have some independence in Pakistan and Indonesia). *Shi'i* leaders perform religious functions absent among their *Sunni* counterparts; they also have a long tradition of opposition to political authority. Consequently, the Iranian mullahs receive money directly from the populace and remain independent of the government. This has allowed them to be politically involved and to figure centrally in nearly all of Iran's political crises over the past century. More than elsewhere, the Muslim leaders of Iran are popular spokesmen and political actors.

Khomeini as Inspiration

The Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini's example stirs Muslims outside Iran. Khomeini personifies Muslim activism, both neo-orthodox and autonomist, and the drama of his rise to power cap-

¹⁷ Nothing of note occurred in 529 B.C. Further, after long periods of domination from outside Iran (e.g., under Alexander the Great and his successors, as well as under the Arabians and the Mongols), the modern monarchy was established less than five hundred years ago, in 1501.

tivates their imagination. Khomeini's fundamentalist views are perhaps the starkest of any leader's since 1800; his modest personal habits, evident piety, utter determination, honesty, high religious stature, and advanced age all contribute to make him a paragon of Islamic neo-orthodoxy. Since attaining power, he has consistently carried out the neo-orthodox vision—scorning economics and Western influences and imposing on the country what he understands as untainted Islam.

No less important, Khomeini also stands for Muslim autonomism. He portrayed the shah as a puppet of the United States, and the shah's government as a vehicle for American control over Iran. However distorted this view, it played a crucial role in Khomeini's struggle with the shah—justifying his utter hatred of the regime, giving his battle religious sanction, turning his movement into a religious undertaking. A bad king can be tolerated, but not when dominated by non-Muslims.

The spectacle of Khomeini's ascent to power has enormous appeal. Long a voice in the wilderness, Khomeini spent fifteen years in exile; a slow turn to him began as anti-shah feelings grew; millions acclaimed him as they marched in the streets for a full year from early 1978; elation surged as massive support for Khomeini destroyed the shah's power; and, finally, frenzy swept Iran on Khomeini's return to the country in February 1979. Calling him imam since that time has eschatological overtones, implying that the end of the world is near. Khomeini had no armaments or oil revenues, no official position—only Muslim determination. The shah's ostentation, power, and international connections were of no use in the face of Islamic power. The drama of this historical episode resonates among discontented Muslims everywhere, particularly since it recalls the Prophet Muhammad's rise to power. If Khomeini could do it, then other Muslims are inspired to think they can too.

Yet, the new Iranian government has taken few concrete steps to help them. While Iran cut off oil exports to two governments engaged in fighting Muslims—Israel and the Philippines—the handful of Iranian volunteers who reached southern Lebanon to fight the Zionists have caused more trouble for the Lebanese and the Syrians than for the Israelis. Rather than in these concrete actions (à la Saudi Arabia and Libya), Iran's significance for the Islamic revival lies in its role as spark and lightning rod for Muslim passion. Khomeini's suggestion of an American role in the November 1979 mosque takeover in Mecca led to rampages by Muslims in the Philippines, Thailand, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, and Libya. As the

most significant attempt in centuries to assert Islamic values, the Iranian Revolution is watched closely by Muslims everywhere. Those who wish Khomeini well are emotionally attached to developments in Iran, much as leftists worldwide pinned their hopes on Castro's Cuba some twenty years earlier.

Khomeini's inspiration has had a marked impact on neo-orthodox and autonomist movements throughout the Muslim world. Anwar Ibrahim, leader of the new neo-orthodox Muslim Youth Movement of Malaysia, visited Iran shortly after the revolution and left with encouragement, and perhaps more, from its leaders. In Bahrain, bloody riots erupted in September 1979, and demands for an Islamic government led to arrests, travel restrictions, and press censorship. In Egypt, the government induced the religious leaders to condemn the Ayatollah Khomeini; but his message nonetheless meets with wide sympathy in the country, and many believe this poses a serious threat to al-Sadat's regime. In March 1979, thousands of students marched through the streets of Khartoum chanting support for Khomeini and warning al-Numairi that he would soon go the way of the shah. In Senegal, notable for its tolerant, syncretic Islamic practices, a new journal, *Allahou Akbar*, has recently appeared on the scene to promote neo-orthodox views.

While the Iranian government has provided the Afghan rebels with surprisingly little material aid, Khomeini's self-proclaimed success in ousting one superpower from Iran has undoubtedly inspired them in their desperate struggle against the other one in Afghanistan. The PLO helped Khomeini in his early days and later received his lavish good will; Palestinian Arabs within Israel use Khomeini's name as a symbol of anti-Zionist sentiment. Thus it was, for example, that in January 1980 his name was shouted during riots in Gaza and during a Jewish-Arab soccer game. Muslims in Yugoslavia have asserted their identity with talk of a "pan-Islamic brotherhood"; the mufti of Belgrade was accused of spreading "Khomeini ideology"; and Tito called for "severe measures" to stop any attempts to associate religion with nationality.¹⁸

The Iranian Revolution has stirred *Shi'i* sentiments against *Sunnis* in various areas of the Persian Gulf region (Iraq, Bahrain, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia), leading to disorder and government repression. Similar communal conflicts have increased in Turkey, though these are perhaps less connected to events in Iran. The full effects of the Iranian Revolution are still to come. While sure to be

¹⁸ *Christian Science Monitor*, December 28, 1979.

widely felt, it seems unlikely that any other Muslim country will soon follow Iran in giving political authority to a religious figure, for Iran's unique religious establishment provided a source of strength not found elsewhere.

Other Explanations

Although the oil boom alone does satisfactorily account for the surge in Islam during the 1970s, other developments also contributed to the shift from modern ideology toward Islam. After a brief look at three general trends, I shall examine in greater depth another specific factor: the effects of the 1967 Arab-Israeli war.

Most general of all, there has been a worldwide turn toward religion as a result of the growing perception, spearheaded by the richest and most advanced world cultures, that science cannot solve basic human problems and that progress is illusory. Muslims who have always had misgivings about modernity now find support coming from the West itself. This confirms their skepticism of Western political ideologies and structures, as well. Secondly, the demise of West European empires after World War II set off a series of economic changes that led to increased reliance on religious bonds. In contrast to colonial administrations, which encouraged production of raw materials, the newly independent governments built up industry, both to reduce their dependence on the West and to build up their prestige. Industrialization harmed agriculture in many of the poorer countries, causing a flight of peasants to the cities and creating mammoth populations of poor, isolated individuals. In the Muslim world, megalopolises such as Casablanca, Cairo, Istanbul, Teheran, Lahore, Dacca, Kuala Lumpur, and Djakarta have recently become home for millions of dislocated Muslim peasants who, thrust out of their familiar surroundings, have often sought a world outlook and social bonds in Islam.¹⁹

Also associated with the decline of West European empires, education has changed since independence. All the non-Muslim colonial powers (including Russia, China, Japan, and Ethiopia) had a deep fear of Islam, correctly sensing that it represented an implacable enemy. Colonial education ignored Islam and, instead, drew students into the orbit of imperial culture. With independence, this was reversed and religion again became a primary topic of instruction. The case of Algeria has been especially dramatic: Algerians now older than 35 know French language and culture far bet-

¹⁹ I am indebted to William H. McNeill for this idea.

ter than they do Arabic and Islam, but the younger generations have been immersed in their own heritage and are again acutely aware of Islam.²⁰

The 1967 Arab-Israeli War

The crushing defeat suffered in the Six Day War of June 5-11, 1967, politically traumatized Arabic-speaking Muslims in a variety of ways. Its consequences included an increase of political activity in the name of Islam. Rarely in history has a defeat been so swift, so complete, and so ignominious; and this unmitigated disaster marked a turning point in the political life of many Arab (as distinct from Muslim) states. It gave the ensuing conflict with Israel a more religious character; it helped activate communal bonds in Lebanon; it made the political atmosphere, by discrediting leftist radicalism, more conducive to Islam; and it contributed to the coup by al-Qadhdhafi.

For the Arabs, then, the conflict with Israel has become more religious since 1967. The Israeli conquest of Jerusalem added a new Islamic twist: what was an Arab cause now has implications for the entire Muslim world; because Jerusalem has significance for Islam, Jewish control is disturbing to some Muslims. Saudi leaders, in particular, have stressed this point. The partial burning of al-Aqsa mosque in August 1969 provided the springboard for Saudi Arabia to convene a long-desired summit meeting of Muslim heads of state the following month in Rabat; and "support of the struggle of the people of Palestine" is one of the fundamental aims of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, which grew out of the summit.²¹

Since 1967, the Arabs have sought to win back politically the territories they lost militarily; and to accomplish this, they have for the first time seriously courted international political support. Among the non-Arab Muslims in sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East, South Asia, and Southeast Asia, this campaign to gain the ear of world opinion has stressed the Islamic character of the struggle with Israel: How can fellow Muslims truck with the foremost enemy of Islam? This is the question al-Qadhdhafi put to the governments of Chad, Iran, Niger, Senegal, and Turkey in March 1970 at the Islamic Foreign Ministers Conference. Three months later, while visiting Malaysia and Indonesia, King Faisal of Saudi Arabia referred to

²⁰ G. H. Jansen notes the role of education in his article "Militant Islam: The Historic Whirlwind," *New York Times Magazine*, January 6, 1980.

²¹ *The Middle East and North Africa, 1979-80*, 26th ed. (London: Europa, 1979), p. 166.

Palestine as a problem for Muslims everywhere.²² At the close of the 1970s, Turkey alone among the Muslim countries still maintained official diplomatic relations with Israel — together with Egypt, of course, which has just established them.

It was the Arab states that suffered the loss in 1967. Consequently, it was a nonstate entity, the Palestine Liberation Organization that emerged in the aftermath as a significant force. Its principal constituent, al-Fatah, uses Islamic motifs and symbols far more than any of Israel's neighbors. From its inception in the 1920s, the autonomist drive of the Palestinian Arabs has had strong religious ties. Indeed, it was the Supreme Islamic Council of Jerusalem under the Mufti al-Husaini that spearheaded most of the actions against Jewish settlers in Palestine before World War II. Many leaders of al-Fatah had previously been involved with the Muslim Brethren. The Arabic word *al-Fath* means a Muslim conquest over non-Muslims, and Palestine Liberation Army brigades dubbed *Qadisiya*, *Hittin*, and *ʿAyn Jalut* recall famous Muslim victories over non-Muslims. Put together, moreover, the pseudonym (Yasir ʿArafat) and the nom de guerre (Abu ʿAmmar) of al-Fatah's leader refer to a renowned fighter of non-Muslims from the time of the Prophet Muhammad. (ʿArafat's real name is ʿAbd al-Rahman ʿAbd al-Raʿuf ʿArafat al-Qudwa al-Husaini.) In 1978, ʿArafat led the Palestinians to the pilgrimage in Mecca, where he called for a *jihad* against Israel.

The Six Day War and the emergence of the PLO led indirectly to the strengthening of Muslim bonds in Lebanon. When the PLO conducted military operations, Israeli policy was to strike back at the states from which it operated. This strategy worked perfectly in Jordan, where Israeli retaliation pushed the government to evict the PLO in a bloody war during September 1970; but it failed dismally in Lebanon, for no authority there could coerce the PLO. The Israeli incursions into Lebanon deepened the division between pro- and anti-PLO factions, and their conflict sparked the civil war of 1975-1976 that pitted predominantly Christian forces against Muslims, Palestinians, and leftists. Beginning as an argument over the PLO, then, the war expanded into a general struggle over the social order in Lebanon. While this case cannot be cited as an example of a true Islamic movement, it did have the effect of increasing Muslim consciousness and solidarity in the country, particularly among the *Shiʿis*, who, under the Imam Musa al-Sadr, emerged for the first time as a power in Lebanese politics.

The calamity of 1967 dealt a final blow to the already

²² *Arab Report and Record*, 1970, pp. 199, 329.

waning fortunes of Nasser-inspired radicalism. Begun in the fifties to assert Arab sentiment against the West, radicalism briefly attained wide popularity until its economic and political drawbacks became apparent. The 1967 Arab-Israeli war dramatically exposed the weaknesses of the ideology, further discrediting it for the masses and sending them elsewhere for solace. Many turned to the familiar symbols and ideals of Islam, and the radical Arab regimes have responded to this change by relying more on Islam to effect policy. This holds true for nearly all the radical states of old: Algeria, Egypt, Sudan, Syria, Iraq, Yemen.

The sobering effects of the Six Day War have been especially visible in Syria and Iraq, two countries that before 1967 changed regimes almost annually but that, since the end of the 1960s, have enjoyed stability. In both cases, the fact that recent governments have shown themselves to be more than fleeting has led to an increase in communal tension, for both countries are ruled by minorities (ʿAlawis in Syria, *Sunnis* in Iraq). As the years go by, the *Sunnis* in Syria have taken to opposing the regime by assassinating ʿAlawis (leading political figures in 1977, the Aleppo cadets in June 1979, the Latakia riots in September 1979). In Iraq, the *Shiʿi* majority is growing steadily and, with it, resentment of *Sunni* rule; this was manifested in the *Shiʿi* disturbances of 1977 in Najaf and Karbala in which about a dozen persons died. Finally, the 1967 war catalyzed al-Qadhdhafi's coup two years later. Arab, especially Egyptian, losses deeply distressed some Libyan officers who despised their own government for not joining in the fight against Israel. For these officers, the war marked a turning point: after 1967, identification with the Palestinians and participation against Israel became synonymous with their struggle against the monarchy; Palestine came to symbolize an alternate Libyan identity; away from the United States and Britain, back to the Arab and Muslim fold. Israel represents all that is anti-Arab and anti-Islamic. Once in power, as we have seen, the officers made Libya a major source for fomenting Islamic political activities.

Conclusion: Here for a While

The potential scope of political activity in the name of Islam is enormous, as we have seen, for Muslims constitute some 700 million persons distributed in a wide band from the Atlantic to the Pacific oceans. In twenty-seven countries, they form an overwhelming majority of the population (more than 90%); in seventeen countries, 25 to 89 per cent; in thirty countries, 4 to 24 per cent; and in

sixteen states, less than 4 per cent. Large Muslim minority groups live in China (18 million), Nigeria (35 million), the Soviet Union (45 million), and India (70 million); furthermore, Muslim workers and their families number about 2 million in France and in West Germany. Altogether, Islamic neo-orthodox and autonomist movements can affect *internal* political developments in 90 countries containing three-fourths of the world's population.²³

Neo-orthodox movements will probably flourish widely (e.g., in Egypt, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Malaysia) without anywhere scoring a success comparable to Iran's, for no other country has a religious establishment capable of supporting a comparable drive to power. Someone like al-Qadhafi, of course, is always possible and entirely unpredictable. Autonomist movements have greater potential. In India, the possibility of communal violence is ever below the surface, and provocations can bring about a repetition of the Hindu-Muslim conflagration that marked the birth of Pakistan. Muslims in Nigeria constitute a geographically distinct and numerically large group; they might try for autonomy, although the Biafran experience argues against such an attempt.

Communist countries provide potentially fertile ground for Islamic movements; again, autonomist ones have a better chance of success. Communists of Muslim origin rule two countries (Albania and South Yemen), but both of these states can surely suppress any attempt to reinstate Islam. In Afghanistan, the Muslim rebels have attained the signal distinction of forcing the Soviet Union to send its army to fight them, their first foray outside the communist bloc since World War II. Autonomist movements against communist governments could occur in three states: Yugoslavia, the Soviet Union, and China. In the expected struggle following Tito's death, the Muslims could exploit a Serbo-Croatian conflict to assert their own autonomy. Most of the many Muslims in the USSR and China, the last two great multinational empires, occupy compact regions closer to independent Muslim states than to Moscow or Beijing. Should the Iranian government wish to stir up trouble, particularly in the Caucasus and Central Asia, the effects could be startling. The Turkic Muslims in China are outnumbered by Han Chinese even in their own provinces, so no autonomist movement is likely to go far there.

The evidence suggests that the oil boom is primarily responsible for the surge in Islamic political activities during the seventies. It brought to Muslims three things missing in their modern history: a sign of Islam's validity; centers of Islamic power; and a

²³ Richard V. Weekes, ed., *Muslim Peoples: A World Ethnographic Survey* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 1978), Appendix 1.

charismatic leader. Oil thus increased receptivity to Islam, provided the means to further it, and produced a model Muslim movement to inspire others. So long as Muslims continue to receive fabulous oil revenues, and so long as the present regimes in Saudi Arabia, Libya, and Iran retain power, Islamic movements will multiply. While any one of these governments can collapse overnight, massive consumption of expensive imported oil by the West seems assured for at least fifteen years, by which time Islamic self-confidence could well become self-sustaining, more enduring, and less vulnerable to reversal.

Further growth of Islamic political consciousness is almost certain. Three events in November and December 1979 — the seizure of the U.S. Embassy in Teheran, the violence at the Great Mosque in Mecca, and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan — evoked Islamic reactions among Muslims. Suddenly, for the first time in modern history, the Muslim world emerged as a unit in international relations. Attempts to forge it into a bloc appear doomed to failure, but Muslim countries can still cooperate on numerous issues with real effectiveness. Prompted by their new power and wealth, encouraged by Saudi Arabia and Libya, inspired by Khomeini, Muslims will continue to act for Islam.

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