

ISLAM

The Concept of State and Law in Islam, by Farooq Hassan. Washington DC: University Press of America, 1981. x + 263 pages. Notes to p. 284. Index to p. 305. Koranic citations to p. 310. \$11.75 paper.

L'Islam et l'état dans le monde d'aujourd'hui, ed. by Olivier Carré. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1982. 269 pages. Map. n.p.

Reviewed by Daniel Pipes

No brief review can do justice to Farooq Hassan's astonishing book; rarely has this reviewer seen a study so poorly conceived and written, so badly argued, and so incompetently edited. To the extent that one can understand Mr. Hassan's argument, it seems to be a restatement of well-known Islamic fundamentalist ideas, somewhat modified for a Western audience. Mr. Hassan believes the solution to modern problems lies in the Qur'an. Anyone curious to pursue the reasoning and implications of this approach should read Sayyid Qutb, Abū al-'Alā' al-Mawdūdī, Ayatullāh Khomeynī, or any of the other serious fundamentalist thinkers (many of whose writings are available in English), rather than Mr. Hassan's work.

What makes this book perversely intriguing is its inept execution. Not a page goes by without an inelegant, illogical, or erroneous statement, and many pages have multiple examples. Looking at just the front matter, what does one make of acknowledgments which begin with this strange expression of gratitude: "All of the major quotations in this book are taken from the Qur'an and, as such, no formal acknowledgment is necessary" (p. v)? Or the meaningless Biblical quote which serves as an epigraph: ". . . When one rules over men in righteousness, when he rules in the fear of God," and which is improperly cited? Or, at the back of the book, the biography of the author which quotes extensively from a letter to him from the White House (p. 311)? Or the citation to "Hegel, *Philosophic des Rechts*, 349," which misspells the title and tells nothing about the

edition Mr. Hassan used, so that "349" refers to nothing to all? Or a writing style exemplified by this sort of sentence: "In the context of the present discussion, having discussed the role of Islam in communist countries, it is now pertinent to examine the relationship of the United States, which may be taken to be the main protagonist of the non-communist world, and Islam" (p. 161)?

The author is in the first place accountable for this appalling book, of course, but the University Press of America also bears responsibility for editing, publishing and distributing it. Or is this someone's idea of a way to discredit Islamic fundamentalism?

It is a relief to turn to the volume of 13 essays edited by Olivier Carré and covering, from West to East, these regions: the Maghrib, Senegal and Niger, Southeast Europe, two on Turkey, Egypt and Syria, Lebanon, Iran, the Soviet Union, Pakistan, India, China, and Southeast Asia. Salim Nasr provides an excellent review of confessional arrangements in Lebanon, Jean-François Bayart reviews the abundant recent literature on the Alevis of Turkey, and Alexandere Popovic condenses his scattered writings on the Muslims of the Balkans. Jean-Louis Triaud's discussion of Islam in Niger is the most comprehensive on this subject anywhere.

While these and other chapters are useful in themselves, one wonders why they have been collected in book form. They lack cohesion and the scope of their coverage appears random. Why cover Niger and ignore Nigeria? Why two articles on Turkey and no mention of Libya or Saudi Arabia? Why Pakistan and India but not Bangladesh?

More fundamentally, the premise of this collection seems to be that one can comprehend the Islamic revival as a whole by studying its constituent elements. But the larger pattern is more than the sum of its parts. Just as one does not try to understand the recent world-wide surge in inflation or terrorism by assembling case studies in individual countries, so with the Islamic revival. However useful some of the chapters in this collection, the book as a whole offers few insights into the general question raised in the title, that of

relations between Islam and the state in recent times.

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Islam and Revolution: Writings and Declarations of Imam Khomeini, tr. by Hamid Algar. Berkeley, CA: Mizan Press, 1981. 434 pages. Append. to p. 442. Notes to p. 443. Index to p. 460. \$19.95.

Islam: Continuity and Change in the Modern World, by John Obert Voll. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1982. xii + 357 pages. Notes to p. 370. Gloss. to p. 373. Bibl. to p. 381. Index to p. 397. \$30.00 cloth. \$13.95 paper.

Reviewed by Khalid Bin Sayeed

The central theme running through these two books is the state of crisis in which the world of Islam finds itself today. It is significant that these two authors, one an academic scholar and the other a religious thinker and the dominant political leader of Iran, have identified the crisis in broadly similar terms. This crisis of the Islamic world consists of the following elements: Western domination, periodic military and political humiliations, ineffective political leadership, and the social fabric of Islamic societies riddled with inequity and consequential tension.

Voll rightly claims that the perspective he has followed in delineating the Islamic crisis is primarily evolutionary or historical. In this perspective the major emphasis is on the "modes of dealing with changing historical conditions and of interpreting the Islamic message" (p. 354). We are offered this perspective through the panorama of the entire world of Islam and we view the unfolding process of history in considerable detail all the way from the 18th century to the present phase. Very few writers have attempted such an ambitious task. Even writers like Gibb, Smith and Fazlur Rahman have not provided such a wide canvas of comparison and analy-

sis. The natural result is that Voll, by spreading his net so wide, has sacrificed depth.

In the chapter entitled "The Resurgence of Islam," Voll analyzes a number of regimes in the Muslim world. In the case of Saudi Arabia, Voll finds that the regime has been successful in blending modernization with fundamentalist Islam. On the Islamic side there is the enforcement of the Islamic penal code to control or eliminate offenses like theft, adultery, gambling, drinking, etc. The modernizing dimension may be seen in the regime's unparalleled investments in industrial development, education and a modern military force. The question that remains unanswered is what the long-term consequences of these policies will be in terms of stabilizing or destabilizing the regime. Voll detects certain tensions like the capture of the Grand Mosque in 1979, but does not tell us what further explosions are likely to follow these incipient rumblings. Voll also tends to underestimate the hostility that exists in the Islamic world in general towards the West.

When one turns to Algar's translation of Khomeynī's writings and speeches entitled *Islam and Revolution*, one gets the impression that with the launching of the Islamic Revolution in Iran the world of Islam may have entered a new cataclysmic phase. According to Khomeynī, Sunnīs for centuries have been lulled into submission to oppressive or unjust rulers through the constant preaching of the Qur'ānic verse (Sūra 4:59) in which they are enjoined to obey God, obey the Messenger and those who are in authority. The Shī'a belief, on the other hand, has been that only those rulers who act in accordance with the instructions of God and the precepts of the Messenger are to be obeyed. Khomeynī proclaims: "It is the duty of all of us to overthrow the *tāghūt*; i.e., the illegitimate political powers that now rule the entire Islamic world" (p. 147). Given the aggressive policies of Israel, the Palestinian problem, and the continuing impotence of the Arab and Muslim regimes, Khomeynī's proclamations are bound to fall on receptive ears. However, developments like the Iran-Iraq war and the policy of total suppression of leftist groups