



# ISLAMIC RESURGENCE

Challenges, Directions & Future Perspectives

A Roundtable with  
PROF. KHURSHID AHMAD

Ibrahim M. Abu-Rabi, *ed.*

INSTITUTE OF POLICY STUDIES  
WORLD & ISLAM STUDIES ENTERPRISE

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*To My Parents, Who Are Still Resisting*

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Hartford, Connecticut  
February 10, 1995

Ibrahim M. Abu-Rabi

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*Our nightmares are now knocking on the door. Modernity deified is man devalued, history discredited, and humanity divided into polar opposites, modern and traditional... For our purposes, this is where a new series of questions comes up, questions which Islam asks of the West, and the West of Islam.*

Hichem Djait, *Europe and Islam: Cultures and Modernity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), pp 167.

# PREFACE

Islamic movements, concepts and activism have always been a hot topic for discussion and debate. The issues have received an enormous coverage in the Western media during the past few years. Besides Muslim thinkers and activists, a good amount of this work and literature has also been contributed by the non-Muslims and Western scholars. This speaks volumes of the increasing importance of the subject.

Today's post-Cold-War era has added new dimensions to the subject and its importance. The divide and confrontation between 'religious' and 'mundane' worlds has become more sharp and intense. After the demise of the Soviet Union, the US, along with its Western allies, wants global imposition of its secular likes and dislikes through the 'new world order.' But, it finds itself faced with the 'religious' challenge and uprising. How is the tussle between 'matter' and 'soul' going on and how they dub and see each other promises to be an interesting study.

Islamic resurgence is important also in the context that though there are many religions, and their presence is felt and acknowledged, only Islam is offering significant resistance to the forces of secularism.

Professor Khurshid Ahmad is an internationally known scholar and activist. He has thoroughly studied the resur-



gences that have taken place all over the world, particularly in the Muslim world.

While feeling the need for a constructive, unbiased and comprehensive treatment of the subject, World and Islam Studies Enterprise (WISE) and the Committee for Middle Eastern Studies, University of Tampa, South Florida, USA, arranged a Roundtable with Professor Khurshid. He shares views on resurgence, activism, fundamentalism and related issues in an expressive and elaborate manner and leaves no dimension of the topic untouched.

The WISE published the first edition of this book in the USA in 1994. The Institute of Policy Studies is grateful to WISE for giving the opportunity to publish the second edition from Pakistan as a joint venture.

We hope the book will be in easy access to all those Pakistani readers who have a particular interest in these issues.

Islamabad  
March 15, 1995

Khalid Rahman

## EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

**N**UMEROUS BOOKS AND articles have appeared lately on the political, historical, and international dimensions of Islamic resurgence. Only a meager part of this literature has been authored by Muslim scholars and thinkers. The importance of this work stems from the fact that an internationally recognized Muslim thinker and activist, Professor Khurshid Ahmad of Pakistan, shares his views on Islamic resurgence, Islam and the world, Islam and democracy, and other pertinent issues and themes with a number of American scholars in an honest and constructive way.

In order to locate Professor Khurshid Ahmad's ideas in the context of the ongoing discussion on Islam and Islamic resurgence, I would like to discuss, albeit briefly, some contemporary views on Islamic resurgence. In this introduction, I approach the question of resurgence from the perspective of tradition, since, in my view, Islamic resurgence worldwide has appealed to Islamic tradition in a unique and creative way. This is only one limited, although important way of looking at resurgence in the Muslim world. As we shall see in this book, the question of Islam, its relevance to the modern world and the position that Islamic tradition occupies in the contemporary scene are of paramount importance. How can one, then,

define the epistemological parameters of religious tradition and its impact on the present?

To start with, rational and empirical criteria of judgement may be insufficient to define and analyze the different components of tradition, especially if it is characterized by a strong metaphysical edge, i.e. Islam is a monotheistic religion that strongly believes in a transcendent God. In addition to its metaphysical and intangible part, tradition can also be tangible, especially if we refer to the concrete cultural, social, and literary practices and habits of a people. Both tangible and intangible dimensions of tradition often belong to the past, and they both invoke a sense of authority, an implicit one at least. In addition, in the minds of some, tradition is synonymous with order meaning sacredness, and equilibrium. In the mind of others, tradition is anachronistic religiosity, mental backwardness, lack of creativity, and fear of innovation.

Religious traditions are often transmitted from one generation to another, either orally or in a written form. Both 'high culture' and 'folk culture' play a significant part in this transmission. The object of transmission, besides dissemination and conservation of tradition, is also to foster ways of managing the (religious) tradition by believers. And in that sense, it is understandable how believers often impose a sense of homogeneity on their tradition of the distant past. Tradition gets reified, abstracted, and, sometimes, atomized and sliced into a fine and thin piece. When a generation is beset by problems or imbued with a sense of insecurity vis-a-vis an aggressive culture, i.e. Western culture in the Third World, there is always a longing for, and aspiring to, a pure and manageable past. A classical phase is appealed to as a form of alleviating present difficulties, and classicism as a movement of thought emerges. Aside from its psychological appeal, therefore, classicism, to paraphrase von Grunebaum, is seen as authoritative in the case of questionable and disputed matters. Also classicism is double-sided: on the one hand, it is a dynamic and dynamizing concept; on the other, it is a static notion of perfection. The latter sense always leads to imitation, and satisfaction with past criteria of thought and action.<sup>1</sup>

In delineating the core structure and comprehending the nature of the Islamic tradition, one must define its central intellectual pieces, which are mainly the Qur'an and the Sunnah, and how they have interacted throughout Islamic history with all sorts of persons, forces, and situations to create the Islamic canon of doctrine, philosophy, ethics, and social and political attitudes and notions. This what Wilfred Cantwell Smith appropriately terms 'the cumulative tradition', by which he means a religio-historical construct: "it is diverse, it is fluid, it grows, it changes, it accumulates."<sup>2</sup> As a social and historical construct, in large measure, the cumulative tradition can be "something intelligible, and empirically knowable."<sup>3</sup> That is to say that one can determine with a certain historical precision, depending of course on the available data and documentation, the 'movers and shakers' of tradition.

The Islamic cumulative tradition, as a universal and monotheistic phenomenon, has been distinguished by a sacred text, which naturally lies at its very heart. This sacred text forms its central tradition, and is complemented by the Hadith as a sub-tradition. Both the Qur'an and the Hadith, however, have accumulated a substantive body of interpretation, and this body, in turn, has formed its own distinctive traditions. Both the primary tradition, i.e. the Qur'an, and the body of interpretation created around it, have been in constant interaction and it is usually hard to understand one without the other. The American sociologist, Edward Shils, comments with great insight on the process of tradition formation in the high cultures of the world, including that of Islam:

The intellectual tradition of religious belief is two-sided. There is on the one side the tradition of the sacred text itself. The formation of that tradition, the amalgamation of sacred texts into a canon is a process of great complexity. It is not merely a matter of the transmission of manuscripts. It is a matter of determining which variants are best and which belong in the canon. Not wholly separate from this is the tradition of interpretation of the text. The meaning of the text is a creation of the interpretation tradition.<sup>4</sup>

It was therefore natural for the Islamic tradition, pro-

duced against a complex background and over a long historical period, to establish certain basic mechanisms of both conservation and expansion. Also, tradition is not immune to cultural and intellectual borrowing and adaptation. In its formative phase, Islam was not hesitant to incorporate Hellenistic elements, especially in the domain of philosophy and logic, into its mental fabric.<sup>4</sup> Consequently, "Every major tradition is a product of the confluence of contributory traditions, not only at its origin but in the course of its history."<sup>6</sup>

In addition to the Qur'an and the Hadith — the two major components of Islamic tradition — Islam, as a great sacral culture, has been distinguished by a sacred language through which it was possible to imagine the Islamic Ummah as a universal community of believers. In the words of Benedict Anderson, "All the great classical communities conceived of themselves as cosmically central, through the medium of a sacred language linked to a superterrestrial order of power."<sup>7</sup> And he correctly notes that, "In fact, the deader the written language — the farther it was from speech — the better; in principle everyone has access to a pure world of signs."<sup>8</sup> Although Qur'anic Arabic is not a dead language, it has been challenged by the rise of the vernaculars that was made possible as a result of the introduction of print media in the 19th century. Nevertheless, Arabic has served as a binding sacred force since the birth of Islam and it continues to play a similar role in spite of the emergence of nationalisms in different Muslim lands. In the Middle East, the collapse of the Ottoman caliphate and the rise of Turkish and Arab nationalisms dealt a heavy blow to the political vision of Islam, but it is doubtful that its religious integrity, i.e. the ability of Islam to still imagine itself as a universal Ummah that is bound by a sacred language, suffered the same damaging blows.

In fact, the rise of Islamic resurgence in the wake of the abolition of the Ottoman caliphate could be explained in part as a continuation of Islam to imagine itself as a universal Ummah, as opposed, let us say, to a particular community or nation. Perhaps the central reason for the am-

bivalence of Arab nationalism towards Islamic resurgence, as a religious and political movement, lies in the fact that Arab nationalism, from the very moment of its emergence, has been unable to abolish or transcend one of the central components of Islam — the Arabic language. In the words of Halim Barakat, "There is, in fact, unanimous agreement among theoreticians of Arab nationalism on the great significance of [Arabic] language."<sup>9</sup> Language is the pulse of both Arabism and Islam.<sup>10</sup> And Islamic resurgence, in spite of its confrontation with the Egyptian nation-state in the 1950s and 1960s, the Syrian nation-state in the 1980s and the Algerian in the 1990s, did understand the special role of Arabism and the Arabic language.<sup>11</sup>

Although Islam as an 'imagined religious community' has not disintegrated totally in the wake of the collapse of the Ottoman state, Muslim culture and institutions, especially under the impact of hegemonic and aggressive westernization, have been challenged to the core. As has already been noted above, Muslim *nahdah* thinkers, especially in the Arab world, perceived the Western encroachment in the guise of colonialism to be, first and foremost, a substantive threat to the "Islamic tradition" — to the central sources of the Islamic way of life, the Qur'an and the Sunnah. They conceived of *nahdah* as an intellectual movement capable of imagining Islam afresh and in light of outside challenges. However, some of the Muslim intelligentsia who opted for a secular path, especially in the first part of this century, lost confidence in the truth of their religious tradition, and assimilated the central tenets of Western culture.<sup>12</sup>

It is undoubtedly clear that one consequence of the modern confrontation between the Islamic religious tradition and mentality on one hand, and the Western world-view on the other, has been a renewed interest in the problematic of 'Islamic tradition'. It is common knowledge, as mentioned above, that the authority of tradition gets invoked, albeit in various degrees, when there is a major trauma in society. Islamic tradition has been invoked by all sorts of forces in modern Islam, ranging from the Wahabis in Arabia to the Ikhwan in Egypt and the rest of the Arab

world. It is perhaps true that the Islamic tradition has been invoked and manipulated differently by various people for the sake of safeguarding their own interests and objectives in times of crisis and predicament.<sup>13</sup> Traditional symbols come to the fore, and 'neo-traditionalism' as socio-political and religious force begins to emerge. "When the traditionalist begins to come more deeply to grips with the Western challenge, he may become a 'neo-traditionalist'. Here, too, we may discern 'rejectionist' and 'adaptionist' extremes. Neo-traditionalism may be viewed as a transitional phase on the way to secularism, modernism, and radical Islamism."<sup>14</sup> One can see Islamic resurgence, therefore, as a 'neo-traditional' Islamism, which, in many ways, has felt the impact of the West and has been compelled to forge a kind of an intellectual and political synthesis in order to respond to the formidable challenge of the West. This is perhaps what differentiates it from other traditionalist and conservative tendencies in the modern Arab world that did not take the Western threat seriously. In other words, Islamic resurgence is not a strident assertion of old values in a condensed and purified form, but is a reaction to an aggressive Western and capitalist modernity. In one sense, at least, modern Muslims must be indebted to Islamic resurgence for promoting intellectual and religious revival that has proved very urgent and necessary in view of the sterility of the intellectual formulations of the traditional ulema class, and, perhaps, the unfortunate debacle of Islamic modernism.<sup>15</sup>

The view, promoted by some scholars, that a total vacuum of Islamic intellectualism exists in the modern Muslim world, neglects to consider the phenomenal emergence, growth, and resilience, in spite of political repression of Islamic resurgence throughout the Arab world. What is significant about Islamism, especially when seen in the context of Arab intellectual history, is that, aside from being a political and sociological fact, it has emerged as a viable intellectual movement invoking the authority and seeking the legitimacy of the central Islamic tradition. It has undoubtedly shown a great ability to utilize and depend on a complex Islamic tradition, and has thus competed successfully with secular and Westernized trends, espe-



cially in translating its notion of the Islamic tradition in a popularly manageable way, thus securing the support of the masses. What that means is that the Islamic religious tradition and its relevant symbols, which had been pushed to the side before the resurgence of religious neo-traditionalism, are occupying a center stage again, to the extent that even the most secular politician and thinker of all in the contemporary Muslim world cannot neglect this significant development. In the words of Issa Boullata, who comments on the Arab world only, contemporary Arab thinkers have only recently begun to realize "that Arab culture and the Islamic heritage will inevitably have to be taken into serious consideration in any modernization process."<sup>16</sup> The point that must be made here is that neither the orientalist solution *a la mode* of Hamilton Gibb,<sup>17</sup> nor the Arab Marxist solution *a la mode* of Abdallah Laroui<sup>18</sup> of transcending the Islamic tradition reflects adequately the process of the reconstruction and resurgence of neo-traditionalism in the contemporary Muslim world. Although it is true that the process of modernizing Arab society had been under way since the latter part of the 19th century that did not preclude but perhaps facilitated the emergence of Islamism. Consequently, the Islamic tradition, besides occupying center stage, has been transformed into a radical ideology, a program of action, and a competing paradigm in the ideological and intellectual landscape of the contemporary Arab world. And this is a far cry from the position that 'Islam' held in the twenties and the thirties when its very symbols, articulations, and even cognitive (revelational) core had been under severe attack by secular ideologies. Instead of facing erosion and attrition, the Islamic tradition has become the center of debate.<sup>19</sup>

One can use Eric Hobsbawm's recently-coined phrase "the invention of tradition" to refer to the process initiated by 'neo-traditional Islamism.'<sup>20</sup> What is very significant about today's Islamic resurgence is, perhaps, not its political slogans, or various attempts to seize political authority, but its invention of the Islamic tradition in such a way where Turath is not understood as a belonging to the past, but as forming the center of the contemporary Arab and Muslim intellectual discourse.<sup>21</sup> Inventing the Turath, and



not merely preserving it, also means ascribing an ideological value to tradition, i.e. the use of Islam as an ideological weapon against all sorts of enemies. It is not my intent here to argue that the ideological side of Islam is a novel phenomenon. One may argue, and indeed many have, that Islam has been an ideological religion since its inception.<sup>22</sup> But what is distinctive about Islamic resurgence is the particular milieu in which it was born. This milieu is significantly different from that which gave birth to Islam. Islam, although a universal religious phenomenon, does not form a center as it did in its formative phase. In this sense, what Edward Shils has to say about the past expansion of the Islamic center is very instructive:

One of the most successful expansions of a center is the expansion of Islam from Mecca into the realms of other societies and cultures of Asia and Africa... The expansion of Islam, militant, and intellectual and organizationally superior to the rest of the sparsely settled, intellectually and organizationally weak, Arabian peninsula, was a simple matter. The expansion into the realm of hellenistic and Graeco-Roman traditions was more complex. The intellectual tradition of this area, pagan and Christian, was still very strong, while militarily the eastern Roman Empire and what remained of the western Empire were weak. The consequence was military triumph, and the diminution of adherence to the hitherto dominant traditions of the area to very small enclaves. The expansion of the Islamic center replaced those previously dominant traditions. The changes did not only take place at the periphery; Islamic traditions also changed in the course of their expansion. Greek philosophy and science entered into Islamic thought. Islamic theology had to adapt itself to these, undergoing the changes necessary to incorporate them.<sup>23</sup>

One cannot but contrast this marvelous historical expansion of Islam to the modern state of affairs where the Islamic center, both geographically and intellectually, had been under incessant external attack and internal contraction and loss of vitality. This historical reversal of fortune forms the backbone of the argument of Islamism that there needs to be a new form of Islamic expansion, especially in the wake of the failure of nationalism in delivering Muslim societies from its woes and problems.

This newly-invented traditionalism, in the form of Islamic resurgence, juxtaposes the present state of decline of the Muslim world and its 'increasing peripherality' to the 'Islamic center' of the past, when Islam was confident of itself, expanding beyond its original territory and winning new converts. Islam and Muslims are no more the center of the world and shrinkage was experienced over the centuries not only in terms of territory but, worse yet, in terms of beliefs, ideas, and concepts.

To elaborate the above notions, it is possible to argue that one cannot understand the historical dynamics of the modern Muslim world except in relation to Western modernity. One can generally define modernity as an objective historical, social, and cultural movement and phenomenon, emerging mainly in Europe in the post-Industrial Revolution era and seeking to stamp the modern age with a new, rational, vital, and dynamic outlook and ideology.<sup>24</sup>

From its inception, modernity espoused a highly visible rationalist attitude. Whether it was Hegel who first developed "a clear concept of modernity,"<sup>25</sup> or Rousseau being the "archetypal modern voice in the early phase of modernity,"<sup>26</sup> or Luther being its greatest modern anxiety-ridden religious personality,<sup>27</sup> there is almost a universal agreement shared by the intellectual historians of modernity that early modernists were troubled, lonely, and anxious human beings, just like the early nationalists in the colonized Third World in the 19th century, who "were lonely, bilingual intelligentsias."<sup>28</sup> early modernists sought a total break with their inherited intellectual and social tradition, especially religion.<sup>29</sup> Further, early modernists suffered a great deal from theoretical and conceptual solitude. In many ways, they produced their own concepts without reference to religious foundations or epistemologies.<sup>30</sup>

One of the main premises of modernism is the belief in the infinite capacity of the human mind to transform and control social and natural phenomenon. This presupposition challenges the theistic (Islamic) mind at its foundation. Reason, in Hegel's crude words, is what "distinguishes us from the brutes."<sup>31</sup> Therefore, modernist thinkers view man as being endowed with reason, self-conscious-

ness, a sense of individualism, progress, 'esprit systematique,' freedom, and as a maker of history. In Kojève's words, "there is something in Man, in every man, that makes him suited to participate — passively or actively — in the realization of universal history."<sup>32</sup> Modern man, and not God, is the maker of history,<sup>33</sup> which contrasts sharply with the Islamic view of history.

One of the main features of modernity in the 19th century was the pursuit of progress. For instance, Reinhold Niebuhr contends, along the same lines of the main 18th and 19th century thinkers, that the concept of progress reflected a highly volatile rational movement, which is best understood as "a tremendous affirmation of the limitless possibilities of human existence, and as a rediscovery of the sense of a meaningful history." To Niebuhr's mind, the movement of rationalism took many forms of expression and gave rise to diverse philosophical, religious and social movements, such as Cartesian rationalism, the French enlightenment, liberalism, Marxism, secular utopianism and Nietzschean nihilism.<sup>34</sup> However, "In all of these multifarious expressions there is a unifying principle. It is the impulse towards the fulfillment of life in history."<sup>35</sup>

In addition to progress, Europe was bent on the universalization of its human reason. Therefore, 18th and 19th century philosophers and thinkers were in search of universal epistemological criteria in order to subdue the mysteries of nature and man. Looking in retrospect at the unfolding of Western civilization since the Renaissance, one can discern essential and substantial qualities and consequences produced against the tumultuous background of this complex history. One of these consequences is secularization which has persisted ever since. This, it seems to me, has never been a minor factor in the history of the West for the mere reason that theology has ceased to capture the imagination of the Western mind. By ceasing to perceive God as an epistemological problematic, Western man has endeavored to find other avenues of expressing his potential.

A nagging philosophical issue faced by European modernists was 'the theory of knowledge.' There was an ur-

gency to establish new foundational knowledge, not legitimized by metaphysics or monotheism. One sees the transition from a metaphysics-bound knowledge to a rational one in the works of Locke, Descartes, and Kant, and their various disciples and admirers. This led definitely to the secularization of knowledge. In addition, European modernists had to find an answer to the question pertaining to the possible relationship between philosophy, as epistemology or foundation of knowledge, and other arenas of life: society, ethics, and history. Rorty maintains that there was a real secularization of many areas of thought, including the moral aspect of life:

The secularization of moral thought, which was the dominating concern of European intellectuals in the 17th and 18th centuries, was not then viewed as a search for a new metaphysical foundation to take the place of theistic metaphysics. Kant, however, managed to transform the old notion of philosophy — metaphysics as “queen of sciences” because of its concern with what was most universal and least material — into the notion of “most basic” discipline — a foundational discipline. Philosophy became “primary” no longer in the sense of “highest” but in the sense of “underlying.”\*

Therefore, knowledge is not to be searched for in the realm of metaphysics but in the domain of fluctuating human history. Exported to the Muslim world under the auspices of colonialism, this idea had a major impact on producing a new type of indigenous intelligentsia that no longer saw its role as that of preserving but critiquing tradition and even Islam as a monotheistic phenomenon.

To look at it from a different angle, capitalist nihilism, i.e. the negation of divine metaphysics and the role of God as stipulated by monotheism, promoted a double-edged approach in the wake of the western expansion overseas: on the one hand, it offered the indigenous people, especially the educated, an abundance of social, educational, and economic opportunities; on the other, it stripped the ‘natives’ of their traditional values and standards. This approach had a major bearing as well on sacred space in traditional Muslim society. The ancient Muslim city, with the mosque, the *madrassah*, and the bazaar at its center, no longer per-

forms a useful function in the eyes of modernist capitalism. Space, far from being sacred and stable, is subject to continuous change. This view has led to a more pronounced segregation of people in terms of poverty and wealth, and a gradual alienation of the sacred city from the affairs of secular urbanism. Woven into this complex process is that the traditional values, that more or less had given a sense of security to the people, came under rampant assault. In a sense, when talking about the progression of nihilism in Muslim lands, it is important to note that far from being limited to an assault on the Qur'anic foundations of revelation and knowledge, it also led to the depreciation of a traditional mode of life that had been entrenched for many centuries.<sup>37</sup> Both knowledge and modern values, as propagated by secular capitalism, are no longer in need of foundational structures and contents; they do not need to arrive at ultimate causes, or bring to life a history-based norm and behavior. Thus nihilism, simply defined as supremacy of the human mind over divine matters, becomes reified not only in the modernist consciousness of a few selected natives who go to the schools of Europe, but is appropriated by the process of modernization as well. This process of modernization, simply defined as a systematic commitment to rationality, tends to push forward what it perceives as new universal principles, derived mainly from European conception of progress and evolution. It is understandable why in its process of expanding overseas, capitalist modernity sought to bypass the traditional mentality and implant a new one. And that is why a clash between the traditional and the modern in a colonized context was unavoidable. Added to the agony resulting from this direct collision between two fundamentally different worldviews is another deriving from the lack of a self-critical attitude of both modernity and traditionalism.

Modernity is intrinsically unsettling and disturbing. Its strong commitment to rationalization underscores its enigma and gradual progression towards more commitment to reason. In its universal march aimed at 'modernizing' the world, modernity has swept away in quite unprecedented fashion many a traditional mode of behavior. The new in-

stitutions in modern society, such as those crafted by the majestic touch of modernity, supersede the somewhat limited scope of traditionalism. In Anthony Giddens' words, four major institutions are: 1) industrialism or transformation of nature; 2) capitalism or capital accumulation in the context of competitive labor; 3) military power or the control of the means of violence in the context of industrialization of war; and 4) surveillance or the control of information and social supervision, distinguish modern society from traditional institutions.<sup>38</sup> Perhaps, the most unsettling aspect of these modern institutions is the assault on traditional bases of knowledge or, in Giddens' words, "modernity effectively involves the institutionalization of doubt."<sup>39</sup>

Western modernity has thus translated itself in the modern Muslim world into a complex political, economic, and cultural phenomenon known as colonialism, which possesses a radically different outlook than that of Islam, i.e. what makes Islamism, as a modern religious movement, a reaction to the onslaught of modernity and its philosophical outlook.

As a result of the enduring impact of modernity, one cannot but view the thought of Islamic resurgence in the context of the social and historical transformations of colonial and post-colonial Arab society. Undoubtedly, colonialism as a major political, social, cultural, and psychological phenomenon has deeply affected the workings of the modern Arab/Islamic mind; and it is naive to assume that the inner developments in contemporary Islamic thought are immune to the impact of colonialism and its aftermath. It is as strong a component (sometimes negative, sometimes positive) in modern Arab societies as the Qur'anic impact on the Arab mind.

As a result of the engrossing impact of colonization (understood later on as modernity and modernization), there ought to have been a response at all levels of thought. The Islamic thought was no exception to that. Therefore, when studying the main manifestations of the Ikhwan thought, especially before the *thawra* phase of 1952, one cannot fail to notice the great strides of critical thinking in this



discourse. This critical orientation produced a multifarious and complex process at the metaphysical, theological, religious, cultural, literary, and political levels. I believe that the task of the historian of ideas is to develop a reflective philosophical approach in order to study this complex "Islamist discourse." Because of the immense theological and historical significance of the Qur'an in the world of Islam, a serious scholar must study the way the Qur'an has been understood and interpreted by the Islamist discourse. Qutb's grandiose exegesis, as analyzed in Chapter Six, is just one example of how serious and critical the Islamicist tendency was in orientation and method.

Reacting to Westernization and its various cultural and political forms and expressions, Islamic resurgence aimed, from its very beginning, at finding the '*al-hall al-Islami*' (the Islamic solution) — a famous slogan of all Islamist organizations — to the problem of alienation, education, economic organization, and social justice in society.

### SALIENT FEATURES OF ISLAMIC RESURGENCE

Let us discuss briefly the salient features of Islamic resurgence on the basis of some of the most advanced literature in the field.

To Hisham Sharabi and his 'radical school of critics' of Arab society, Islamic resurgence is one of the fundamental manifestations of neo-patriarchal structure and discourse in modern Arab society. Sharabi defines neo-patriarchy as a mode of being that is neither modern nor traditional and that is born out of deformed modernization.<sup>40</sup> Sharabi argues that as a result of the failure of critical modernity, i.e. Marxism, to gain a strong foothold in Arab society, "[the] relations and values of neo-patriarchy have gained the ascendancy (1970s and 1980s), and Islamic fundamentalism has moved to the center of the political stage."<sup>41</sup> In Sharabi's view, the main distinguishing fact about Islamism is its modern character and the fact that it was born in dialectical reaction to imperialism:

The movement of Islamic radicalization accompanied the process of "modernization" and was dialectically linked to

it. Islamic fundamentalism, like Westernization and “modernization,” was a psychosocial phenomenon taking form under European domination and in direct reaction to it. But militant Islam (fundamentalism) ought to be interpreted not simply as a rejection of foreign values and ideas but rather as an attempt to give a new Islamic content to the meaning of self and society by reformulating a redemptive Islamic dogma.<sup>42</sup>

It is plausible to argue, as does Sharabi, that Islamism’s identity, especially in its first stage, is highly embedded in imperialism. It has criticized colonialism on the grounds of religious alienation and cultural dependency. Its deep commitment to retrieve authenticity (*asala*) is a reflection of the deep anxiety and crisis of identity permeating modern Arab and Muslim society. To the majority of Islamists, especially those who follow in the footsteps of Sayyid Qutb and Yusuf al-Qaradawi, the modern nation-state, emerging in the wake of colonialism’s eclipse, did not stem the tide leading to foreign intellectual hegemony. Instead, it propagated cultural dualism and further dependency on the West.<sup>43</sup> The modern nation-state also has espoused a national policy of education in the fields of history and philosophy where only dead issues are raised—hollow issues that have no relevance whatsoever to the great social, political, and cultural problems besetting modern Muslim societies. This is best expressed by Rashid al-Ghanoushi of Tunisia:

What difference does it make for us when we, defeated Muslims..., know the Mu’tazilite position on God’s attributes... or Ibn Rushd’s understanding of the universe... or Ibn Sina’s opinion of the self...?<sup>44</sup>

The bone of contention of many Islamist movements is their critique of oppressive social and political reality as well as passive and subdued intellectual environment. In short, Islamism has emerged as a viable protest movement in the Arab world. In the words of Halim Barakat, himself a radical critic of ‘Islamic fundamentalism,’ “religion has been used by the colonized and the oppressed as a mechanism of instigation against their colonizers and oppressors... In fact, one of the most significant reasons for what is called the Islamic resurgence is the active involvement



of religious movements in opposition to colonization and dependent, repressive regimes."<sup>45</sup> This observation gains further significance if it is extended to cover the conflict between different Arab regimes, espousing Arab nationalism (i.e. Egypt and Syria), and Islamic resurgence. From the point of view of resurgence, nationalism is an alien and repressive ideology.

Therefore, Islamic resurgence is undoubtedly a modern phenomenon, the product, to a large extent, of modern conditions which ironically enable it to use Islamic symbols to face the new situation. Some Muslim scholars, best represented by Khurshid Ahmad, argue that modern Islamism is part of an overall Islamic historical pattern, known as *tajdid*, and is, consequently, "a perennial phenomenon in Islamic history and, therefore, not particularly new or modern."<sup>46</sup> It seems to me that the resurgence is Islamic only to the extent that it has utilized and re-invented the main Islamic symbols of *tajdid* (renewal), *islah* (reform), *ijtihad* (reasoning), and *harakiyya* (dynamism) in a modern setting.<sup>47</sup> However, one must perceive Islamic resurgence as a socio-religious phenomenon evolving mainly in reaction to the Western thrust into the Muslim world. Further, the nature of the West itself as a capitalist system, with its complex culture of advanced industrial societies, has a direct bearing on the emergence of resurgence initially, at least, as the movement of the oppressed. In its foundational phase, Islamism focussed on the issue of social justice as its leading social concern. This is true in the case of both Sunni and Shi'i resurgence in the Arab world as will be shown in our analysis of the work of both Qutb and Fadlallah. One may agree with Samir Amin's observation that "It seems realistic to start from the bold observation that capitalist development and imperialist conquests have created the situation [of Islamic resurgence] we are experiencing. Like it or not, the problems facing us are those engendered by this development."<sup>48</sup> John Voll, on the other hand, provides a more general thesis on the origins of modern resurgence: "Islamic fundamentalism is... a distinctive mode of response to major social and cultural change introduced either by exogenous or indigenous forces and perceived as threatening to dilute or dissolve

the clear lines of Islamic identity, or to overwhelm that identity in a synthesis of many different elements."<sup>49</sup> The point to be made here is that both the external factors: the West, capitalism, and social and economic forces, and the internal factors: Islamic *tajdid*, etc, have produced this phenomenon, and that both sets of factors are modern themselves. Islamic resurgence in the modern Arab world is a socio-religious and political movement that represents social interests, perhaps those of the 'alienated petty bourgeois mass and its proletarian extension.'<sup>50</sup> It has nevertheless given rise to a variety of voices and expressions, and has been unrelenting in pursuing its major goals — to alter or supplant (some portion of) the existing culture and society either through legal peaceful means or revolutionary methods. As a social movement, Islamic resurgence is revolutionary because it seeks to introduce radical changes and transformations in the philosophical bases as well as the social, economic, and political structures of the status quo. The Iranian revolution, carried out in the name of Islam, has been a real indicator that Islam can be a vehicle of revolutionary change in 20th century Muslim societies.

Moreover, Islamic resurgence, besides being a social and political movement, is part of an intellectual and religious formation which must be adequately accounted for within the social formation sphere. One could agree to a certain extent with Eric Davis' assessment that many a study of Islamic resurgence lacks theoretical and intellectual rigor and orientation, and that a great majority of "Western and non-Western scholars... have presented a reified, reductionist, and ultimately ideological understanding of the relationship between Islam and politics. An escape from this theoretical *cul-de-sac* requires a historical examination of the articulation of Islamic political movements with the surrounding social structure, state formation, competing ideologies, and exogenous forces such as colonialism and the world market."<sup>51</sup> While all the above criteria are necessary to examine Islamic resurgence, none sheds enough light on its theological and intellectual formation. In a sense, as a radical political ideology, Islamic resurgence appeals to a revolutionary tradition in normative Islam.

One major religious premise of Islamism is that 'correct Islam' cannot be practiced in the 20th century except in the context of an Islamic political system. Therefore, one conspicuous goal of Islamic resurgence, especially its radical wing, is the establishment of an Islamic political regime. Seen against the context of the current regimes in the Arab world, Islamic resurgence has adopted an ideological position that seeks to transcend the status quo, and is thus seen as a counter-state ideology. It is somewhat ironic, notes Nazih Ayubi, that the post-colonial state in the Arab world which has, in the most part, neglected to define itself in religious (theocratic) terms, has paved the way for Islamism to use one of its strongest weapons, viz, religion:

[The] fact that the contemporary state lays claim to secularism has enabled some forces of political protest to appropriate Islam as their own weapon. Because the state does not embrace Islam (except in a 'defensive' reactive way), it cannot describe its opponents as easily as the traditional state could as being simply heretic cults. Political Islam [Islamism] now reverses the historical process — it claims 'generic' Islam for the protest movements, leaving to the state the more difficult task of qualifying and justifying its own 'version' of Islam.<sup>52</sup>

From the above, one can come to one possible conclusion that Islamism did not participate in any substantial sense in erecting the foundations of the modern [secular] state, and, therefore, it finds itself compelled to condemn a system that it considers to have failed on all counts. Condemnation of the political system complements a rejection of all forms of [secular] ideologies that make up the intellectual landscape of the modern state. In this particular sense, one may well define Islamism as "the recourse to the vocabulary of Islam, used in the post-colonial period to express within the state, or more often against it, an alternative political program."<sup>53</sup> This program, to be sure, is based on a certain reading of Islamic history and culture.

It is also possible to argue that Islamism is a reaction to the crisis of the secular nation-state, especially in the wake of the 1967 Arab defeat with Israel.<sup>54</sup> Philip Khoury elaborates this thesis in an important article and concludes that

“Islamic revivalism can best be understood as a reaction to a crisis in the modern secular state. This crisis may be defined as ‘state-exhaustion.’ The reaction is to the state’s inability to bring the whole society into modernity.”<sup>55</sup> While this may be true, one cannot forget that a large segment of the leadership of Islamism is Western-trained and that some use their Westernized education as a means of asserting their tradition in a highly volatile and changing world. In this particular sense, Islamic resurgence does assimilate one major component of modernity, namely technology and science.<sup>56</sup>

As shown above, Islamic resurgence’s relation to the Islamic tradition has been a complex one. Although it is true that, “The ‘resurgence of Islam’ is, at least in some of its aspects, a utilization of tones and symbols that have deep roots within the Islamic tradition,”<sup>57</sup> it has nevertheless offered a unique interpretation of a major part of the corpus of the Islamic tradition that is consonant with the conditions of the modern world. As a religio-social movement, it attempted to explain and transcend the challenges posed by the modern world to Islam. Its understanding of tradition is thus innovative and not anachronistic, elastic and not rigid.

In its attempt to overcome the modern challenge, Islamic resurgence has emphasized, theoretically at least, the reconstruction of an Islamically-based authority, of the Islamic nation, which is a gradual ‘reconstitution of the Muslim Ummah,’ and the building of a comprehensive system of Islamic law, government, education, and ethics in the modern world. The reconstitution of the Ummah in the modern world is considered possible if there is “a return” to the original sources of Islam. This ‘cry’ has been a response to the forces of secularization and modernization in Arab societies. The preceding thesis raises the important question of the relationship between Islamism and nationalism.

To come to grips with the relation of nationalism to religion, let us look briefly at Benedict Anderson’s *Imagined Communities*, one of the few works that treat the relationship between religion and nationalism as a theoretical

problem.<sup>58</sup> In Partha Chatterjee's words, Anderson's book is a highly unorthodox intervention in the literature on nationalism, because Anderson "refuses to 'define' a nation by a set of external and abstract criteria. On the contrary, he fundamentally subverts the determinist scheme by asserting that the nation is 'an imagined political community.' It is not uniquely produced by the constellation of certain objective social factors; rather, the nation is 'thought-out,' 'created.'"<sup>59</sup> The following treatment of Anderson's work is quite necessary at this stage because it is impossible to have a proper understanding of, for example, Sayyid Qutb's 'religious' thought of the 1950s and 1960s without shedding enough theoretical light on the problematic of religion and nationalism in general. As it will be seen later, few of the intellectual leaders of Islamic resurgence have provided any systematic treatment of the subject of nationalism, but one must concede that the second important variable in the making of Islamic resurgence in the Arab world after colonialism has been nationalism. The intellectual history of Arab Islamic resurgence gains a new 'epistemic' force during the time [Arab] nationalism is gaining political power. And Sayyid Qutb's thought is a clear representative of that.<sup>60</sup>

What does Benedict Anderson say? Anderson skillfully treats what he calls 'the anomaly of nationalism' in the context of modern European history without underestimating the unique nature of non-European nationalisms. "[In] Western Europe," he argues, "the 18th century marks not only the dawn of the age of nationalism but the dusk of religious modes of thought."<sup>61</sup> That this argument is not new is unimportant; what is important, however, is that nationalism "is an imagined political community — imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign."<sup>62</sup> The crux of the argument is that nationalism is able to invent a new community, as opposed to the ancient religious constellation of community, and give it new parameters and meanings.

Although it would be simple-minded to assume a historical congruence between Western nationalism and Muslim nationalism (or nationalism in the Muslim world), they

nevertheless share similar ideological and philosophical bases. Although one may argue that the early leaders of the Ikhwan did not object to Arab nationalism as long as an Islamic state could be established, one must note that religion, and all it stands for, occupies a peripheral status in nationalist thought. Nationalism reached this conclusion through a complex process of interaction between different historical and social variables and factors that are not the same in each country. But one thing is clear, "The great sacral cultures... incorporated conceptions of immense communities... Christendom, [and] the Islamic Ummah, imagined itself... as central... [religious communities] were imaginable largely through the medium of a sacred language and written script."<sup>63</sup> One can possibly argue, therefore, that Arab nationalism, both as an intellectual and political force, was able to imagine a limited and sovereign political community not congruent with the universal ideals of Islam, and as a result it produced a new type of intelligentsia — an intelligentsia that does not subscribe to the traditional modes of religious thinking, as it had been enunciated by the ulema, and that does not see itself as part of "a cosmological hierarchy of which the apex [is] divine."<sup>64</sup>

Anderson argues that nationalism in the Third World was a response to the colonialist/capitalist intervention in its gestation period. With the expansion of capitalism to the Third World in the context of colonialism, a number of fundamental changes take place: 1) the book industry and journalism in the colonies encourages local (vernacular) dialects at the expense of the language of the elite culture; 2) missionaries establish West-oriented educational institutions to train the indigenous intelligentsia to think in Western terms; and 3) some of the Western-trained intelligentsia carry the banner of nationalism. Anderson's assessment of the subject is all the more useful:

It is generally recognized that the intelligentsia were central to the rise of nationalism in the colonial territories... [their] vanguard role derived from their bilingual literacy, or rather literacy and bilingualism... Bilingualism meant access, through the European language-of-state, to modern Western culture in the broadest sense, and, in particular, to the mod-



els of nationalism, nationness, and nation-state produced elsewhere in the course of the 19th century.<sup>65</sup>

But Anderson comments with brutal sarcasm on the 'cultural' state of this bilingual intelligentsia produced in the Western schools: "The expansion of the colonial state which, so to speak, invited 'natives' into schools and offices, and of colonial capitalism which, as it were, excluded them from boardrooms, meant that to an unprecedented extent the early key spokesmen for colonial nationalism were lonely, bilingual intelligentsia unattached to sturdy local bourgeoisie."<sup>66</sup> Colonial nationalism showed little interest in indigenous religions, whereas the second generation of nationalists, who were still influenced by the West, showed a certain interest in their religion and even tried to incorporate a religious language in their nationalist thought.<sup>67</sup> But in the mind of the Islamist intelligentsia, the nationalist intelligentsia, while being able to fight colonialism politically, was not able to shake off the spiritual and intellectual influence of Westernization.

To a large extent, one may argue that the emergence of Islamic resurgence in the Arab world, specifically in Egypt, coincided with the 'crisis of orientation' in the life of the nationalist intelligentsia.<sup>68</sup> Both were, more or less, reacting to similar forces — foreign presence and lack of internal political and social cohesiveness. However, Islamic resurgence envisioned the Muslim Ummah as the answer to this state of affairs, whereas Arab nationalism was more limited in its imagining. There is no doubt that Islamic resurgence has been politically romantic in its imagining of the Ummah as a gradually reconstituted religious and social community. But perhaps this romanticism is the dynamo that propels the movement into action, and that has littered its lengthy way with tragic pitfalls and hazards.

Anderson's theoretical formulation has drawn our attention once again to the 'crisis theory' discussed above. To some the crisis did not result from any historical conflict between nationalism and religion in the Arab world, but that it resulted from the historical rupture between the Islamic ideal and real. This rupture, they claim, resulted in an endemic spiritual and social crisis, and that the real

thrust of Islamic resurgence has been to 'correct the spiritual crisis' in modern Islam by endeavoring "to strike a balance between the divine promise of earthly success to Muslims and their contemporary situation."<sup>69</sup> In short, according to this view, Islamism is a reflection of a pathological crisis that is deeply rooted in Muslim society. 'Crisis theory' is also articulated in political terms:

An outstanding characteristic of religious fundamentalist movements is their cyclical propensity, consisting of successive periods of dormancy and resurgence. A casual pattern can be discerned whereby manifestations of religious resurgence correspond to periods of intense spiritual, social, and political crisis. Islamic fundamentalism is no exception to this historical pattern. Indeed, throughout Islamic history, the incidence of fundamentalist resurgence has been closely associated with periods of great turmoil when the very existence of the Islamic polity and/or its moral integrity was under threat.<sup>70</sup>

Once again, the great historical transformations that led to the rise of nationalism in the modern Arab world are seen as enough reason for this 'crisis,' but the above argument stipulates that crisis has been the most distinguishing characteristic of both classical and modern Islamic history. If this theory is to be taken at face value, what prevents us from considering total human history to be crisis prone? Other 'crisis theorists' are somewhat sensible in that they do not trace the origins of the modern 'crisis' to the distant past, but they see Islamism as a reflection as well as a major reason for the crisis of contemporary Arab society. The Sudanese scholar Haydar Ibrahim Ali writes that "Islamic resurgence is principally a movement of crisis,"<sup>71</sup> and that it is "the result of a deep psychological, social, economic, political, and civilizational crisis, and in turn, it [Islamism] gets transformed to become itself a reason for a far complicated and deeper crisis as has been the case lately in a number of Arab societies, such as Tunisia, Algeria, and the Sudan."<sup>72</sup> Some Islamist writers propose a similar line of argument but reach different conclusions and argue that Islamism is a self-conscious effort to deal with 'crisis.' Islamism, in their view, is the last defense mechanism that contemporary Muslim societies resort to in



order to transcend internal fragmentation, loss of autonomy and inner unity, and is a means of bridging social, political, cultural, sectarian gaps and problems caused by the modern secular state: "In most cases, Islamism is a conscious attempt to contain all these contradictions by bypassing them, and is a response to foreign hegemony as well as the failure of the regional state internally."<sup>73</sup> Halim Barakat, more or less, reiterates the preceding position by concluding that religion, as an expression of the frustration, exploitation, and sense of illusion of the masses, cannot be a truly revolutionary force. What Barakat has to say summarizes in a nutshell the attitude of the contemporary Arab left towards the problem of resurgence.<sup>74</sup>

It is clear that the crisis of the independent nation-state in many Muslim and Arab countries has indeed led to a political and even intellectual vacuum that Islamic resurgence has not been oblivious to. What facilitated the efforts of Islamic resurgence in confronting the nation-state and taking advantage of this vacuum is perhaps the modernized element of resurgence.

## CONCLUSION

One can discern the following identifiable qualities of Islamic resurgence: 1) it represents a modern Islamic discourse that has been produced against the dynamics of modern Arab history; 2) it is an anti-establishment movement, both politically and religiously; 3) it does not agree with the basic premises of Arab nationalism; and 4) it has reinterpreted Islamic tradition in a way that lends itself to a revolutionary meaning. The failure of Islamic resurgence so far to accomplish its grandiose scheme of the political reconstruction of the Ummah has placed it in a head-on conflict with the current secular regimes in the Arab world.

## NOTES

- 1 Von Grunebaum, *Modern Islam: The Search for Cultural Identity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1962) p. 82. Also see, G. E. von Grunebaum, "Some Recent Constructions and Reconstructions of Islam," in Carl Leiden, ed., *The Conflict of Traditionalism and Modernism in the Muslim Middle East* (Austin: 1966) pp. 141-60.
- 2 W. C. Smith, *The Meaning and End of Religion: A New Approach to the Religious Traditions of Mankind* (New York: 1963) p. 159.
- 3 *Ibid.*, p. 169.
- 4 E. Shils, *Tradition* (Chicago: 1981) pp. 94-95.
- 5 See Henry Corbin, *History of Islamic Philosophy* (London, 1993), and Constantine K. Zurayk, *Tensions in Islamic Civilization* (Georgetown: 1978).
- 6 Shils, *op. cit.*, p. 97.
- 7 Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: 1991) p. 13.
- 8 *Ibid.*, p. 13.
- 9 Halim Barakat, *The Arab World: Society, Culture, and Change* (Berkeley: 1993) p. 34.
- 10 Hourani comments on the centrality of Arabic as thus: "More conscious of their language than any people in the world, seeing it not only as the greatest of their arts but also as their common good, most Arabs, if asked to define what they meant by 'the Arab nation', would begin by saying that it included all those who spoke the Arabic language." Albert Hourani, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age: 1798-1939* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969) p. 1.
- 11 Compare to the following: "The new revolutionary spirit of Islam is a feature of well-being which Arabism will gain, in order to seek the resumption of its authentic role. Arabism will bring about the modernization of Islam and will lead to the enlightenment of the masses adhering to Islam." Muta' Safadi, "al-Qawmiyya al-'arabiyya wa'l islam al-thawri," (Arab Nationalism and Revolutionary Islam) *al-Fikr al-'Arabi al-Mu'asir* (June 1980), p. 6. Quoted and translated by Bassam Tibi, "Islam and Arab Nationalism," in Barbara F. Stowasser, ed., *The Islamic Impulse* (London: 187) pp. 69-70.
- 12 John Esposito asserts that the problem facing the Muslim world, especially under colonialism, is that the development of the Muslim world was based on a theory that equated modernization and development with both secularization and modernization. One result of this theory was the gradual expansion of a Western-trained indigenous elite that was Westernized both intellectually and culturally and that sought to develop society along Western arguments. This resulted in clear dichotomies. And therefore, it is surprising "That the most forceful

manifestations of the Islamic resurgence have occurred in the more advanced and 'modernized' (seemingly) secular countries of the Muslim world." John L. Esposito, *The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality?* (New York: 1992) p. 10.

- 13 When Ottoman society began to feel the threat of the West in the 19th century, the elite culture of Turkey began to formulate the Islamic tradition in a new way: "The way Ottomans spoke of religion and state...as one and inseparable reflected not simply a long-standing Islamic belief but also a conception of their own goals and achievements. The attempts of the Ottomans to claim a position of unique eminence in relation to Islamic tradition also extended beyond the appeal to religious values to include an evocation of the cultural traditions of the Islamic Middle East in the broadest sense." C. V. Findley, "The Advent of Ideology in the Islamic Middle East," *Studia Islamica*, vol. LV, 1982, pp. 154-5.
- 14 William E. Shepard, "Islam and Ideology: Towards a Typology," *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, vol. 19 (3), August 1987, p. 319.
- 15 In a moving article on "Islamic Modernism," the late Fazlur Rahman bemoans the predicament of modern Muslim societies, which, in his view, are still largely controlled by the 'conservative ulema', and notes the failure of Muslim modernism, for a variety of historical and social reasons, to accomplish its goals of the 19th century. However, Rahman does not examine the impact of the resurgence of Islam on the contemporary intellectual situation in the Muslim world. He reaches the grim conclusion that, "Time alone will tell what choice the Muslims will make. For the time being, there exists only a total vacuum of Islamic intellectualism and a proliferation of modern secular institutions, which are ill at ease and largely sterile and unproductive due to a lack of integration with the conservative milieu." Fazlur Rahman, "Islamic Modernism: Its Scope, Method and Alternative," *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, vol. 1 (4), October 1970, p. 333. For our purposes here, I consider the following thinkers to fall under the modernist rubric: Jamal al-Din al-Afghani; Muhammad 'Abduh, Rashid Rida (at least in one part of his thought); Muhammad Husayn Haykal, 'Abbas M. al-'Aqqad, and Taha Husayn.
- 16 Issa Boullata, "Challenges to Arab Cultural Authenticity," in Hisham Sharabi, ed., *The Next Arab Decade: Alternative Futures* (Boulder: 1988) p. 155.
- 17 See H. Gibb, *Modern Trends in Islam* (Chicago: 1947).
- 18 See A. Laroui, *The Crisis of the Arab Intelligentsia: Traditionalism or Historicism?* (Berkeley: 1976).
- 19 For an elaboration on this theme in the context of Tunisian society, see Abdelkader Zghal, "The Reactivation of Tradition in a Post-Traditional Society," *Daedalus: Journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, vol. 102 (1), Winter 1973, pp. 225-38. On the theoretical side of the meaning of traditionalism and its adaptation, see S. N.

Eisenstadt, "Post-Traditional Societies and the Continuity and Reconstruction of Tradition," *Daedalus: Journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, vol. 102 (1), Winter 1973, pp. 1-28.

- 20 Hobsbawm maintains the following: "Inventing traditions...is essentially a process of formalization and ritualization, characterized by reference to the past, if only by imposing repetition." Eric Hobsbawm, "Introduction: Inventing Traditions," in Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, eds., *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: 1984) p. 4.
- 21 Contrast the preceding with the following statement: "political Islam is a new invention- it does not represent a 'going back' to any situation that existed in the past or to any theory that was formulated in the past. What it keeps from the past is the juridic tradition of linking politics and religion. But even then, it seeks to transform the formalistic and symbolic link that the jurists had forged between politics and religion into a real bond. Furthermore, political Islamists want to reverse the traditional relationship between the two spheres so that politics becomes subservient to religion, and not the other way round, as was the case historically." Nazih Ayubi, *Political Islam: Religion and Politics in the Arab World* (London: 1991) p. 3. What John Esposito has to say is illuminating as well: "Despite stereotypes of [Muslim] activists as fanatics who wish to retreat to the past, the vast majority share a common call for the transformation of society not through a blind return to seventh-century Medina but a response to the present. They do not seek to reproduce the past but to reconstruct society through a process of Islamic reform in which the principles of Islam are applied to contemporary needs. Each speaks of a comprehensive reformation or revolution, the creation of an Islamic order and state, since they regard Islam as comprehensive in scope, a faith-informed way of life." John L. Esposito, *The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality?* (New York: 1992) p. 165.
- 22 Iraqi historian Abd al-Aziz al-Duri argues that "Islam unified Arabs and provided them with a message, an ideological framework, and a state." Quoted by Halim Barakat, *The Arab World: Society, Culture, and State* (Berkeley: 1993) p. 35. On the interaction of religion and ideology in early Islam, see the following: Talal Asad, "Ideology, Class, and the Origins of the Islamic State," *Economy and Society*, vol. 9, no. 4; Suliman Bashear, "Qibla Musharriqa and Early Muslim Prayer in Churches," *The Muslim World*, vol. LXXXI (3-4), July-October 1991, pp. 267-82, and F. E. Peters, *Muhammad and the Origins of Islam* (Albany: 1994). On the relationship between religion and ideology in general, see the interesting analysis of Bruce B. Lawrence, *Defenders of God: The Fundamentalist Revolt Against the Modern Age* (New York: 1989), especially Chapter Three, and Talal Asad, *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam* (Baltimore: 1993).
- 23 Shils, op. cit., p. 250.
- 24 For an excellent treatment of the subject, see Marshall Berman, *All That is Solid Melts Into Air: The Experience of Modernity* (New York: 1982).

- 25 J. Habermas, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity* (Cambridge: 1987) p. 4.
- 26 Berman, op. cit., p. 17. Berman correctly observes that "Rousseau was... a deeply troubled man. Much of his anguish springs from sources peculiar to his own strained life; but some of it derives from his acute responsiveness to social conditions that were coming to shape millions of people's lives." Ibid.
- 27 Tillich maintains that as a young man, Luther was going through a great anxiety in his life. Luther's anxiety exemplified the great tension within Christianity that he understood and tried to diffuse. This anxiety was particularly painful because, "he was always in fear of the threatening God, of the punishing and the destroying God. And he asked: How can I get a merciful God? Out of this question and the anxiety behind it, the Reformation began." P. Tillich, *A History of Christian Thought* (New York: 1967) p. 229.
- 28 B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, op. cit., p. 140.
- 29 Kant was a major symbol of this intellectual movement that came to be known as the Enlightenment: "Kant declares that it is vital to Enlightenment not merely that men should free their thinking from all authority, but also that they should make free public use of their reason, and that all should have unfettered rights to report the results of their thought in speech and writing." L. Goldmann, *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment*, tr. H. Maas (London: 1973) p. 4. For an elaboration on the Enlightenment see P. Rabinow, ed., *The Foucault Reader* (New York: 1984), especially Foucault's comments on E. Kant's "What is Enlightenment?" pp. 32-50.
- 30 In his comment on the genius of Freud, Althusser says, "Theoretically, Freud set up in business alone: producing his 'home-made' concepts and under the protection of imported concepts borrowed from the sciences as they existed, and, it should be said, from within the horizons of the ideological world in which these concepts swam." L. Althusser, *Essays on Ideology* (London: 1976) p. 149.
- 31 G. Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of History*, tr. H. B. Nisbet (Cambridge: 1975) p. 8.
- 32 A. Kojeve, *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel: Lectures on the Phenomenology of Spirit* (Ithaca: 1980) p. 32.
- 33 This view of modern consciousness and modern man as absolute reason is challenged by a number of philosophers. See P. Berger, *Facing Up to Modernity: Excursion in Society, Politics, and Religion* (New York: 1977), especially pp. 186-88.
- 34 In the words of the Italian philosopher Vattimo, nihilism is one basic element of modernity. "For Nietzsche the entire process of nihilism can be summarized by the death of God, or by the 'devaluation of the highest values'. For Heidegger, Being is annihilated insofar as it is transformed completely into value." Gianni Vattimo, *The End of Modernity, Nihilism and Hermeneutics in Post-modern Culture*

(Baltimore: 1988) p. 20.

- 35 Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Nature and Destiny of Man*, vol. 2 (New York: 1964) p. 160.
- 36 R. Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*, loc. cit., p. 132.
- 37 For an elaboration on this theme, see D. Shayegan, *Le regard mutile: Schizophrenie culturelle: pays traditionnels face a la modernite* (Paris: 1989), especially Section 3
- 38 Anthony Giddens, *The Consequences of Modernity* (Stanford: 1990) p. 59.
- 39 Ibid., p. 176.
- 40 Sharabi, *Neo-patriarchy*, op. cit., p. 4.
- 41 Ibid., p. 37.
- 42 Ibid., p. 64.
- 43 Muhammad al-Baqi al-Hirmasi, "al-Islam al-ihitijaji fi Tunis," in Isma'il S. 'Abdallah et al, eds., *al-Harakat al-islamiyya al-m'usira fi al-'alam al-'arabi* (Beirut: 1989) p. 276.
- 44 R. Ghanoushi, *Da'wa ila al-rushd* (Tunis: 1982) p. 21.
- 45 Halim Barakat, *The Arab World*, p. 130.
- 46 Khurshid Ahmad, "The Nature of the Islamic Resurgence," in John L. Esposito, ed., *Voices of Resurgent Islam* (New York: 1983) 220. See also Anouar Abdel-Malek, "Foundations and Fundamentalism," *Die Welt des Islams*, vol. XXVIII, 1988, pp. 25-37.
- 47 See Fazlur Rahman, "Revival and Reform in Islam," *The Cambridge History of Islam*, ed., P.M. Holt, Ann Lambton, and Bernard Lewis (Cambridge: 1970), vol. 2, pp. 632-42. John Voll, "Renewal and Reform in Islamic History: Tajdid and Islah," in *Voices of Resurgent Islam*, ed., John Esposito (New York: 1983) pp. 32-47. John Voll argues in a recent article that "The contemporary Islamic revival is a special response to the particular conditions of the late 20th century and must be seen in the context of the conflicts and challenges of the modern world. At the same time it is also part of the historical experience of renewal within Muslim societies over the centuries. The current experience of Muslim revivalists cannot be separated from the heritage which they reaffirm. Both are important to the contemporary revivalist experience and neither can be ignored if that experience is to be understood." John O. Voll, "The Revivalist Heritage," in Yvonne Y. Haddad, et al., *The Contemporary Islamic Revival*, op. cit., p. 23.
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- 50 This is the point made by Michael M. Fischer in "Islam and the Revolt of the Petit Bourgeoisie," *Daedalus*, vol. 111, Winter 1982, pp. 101-25.
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- 54 Yusuf Qaradawi offers this theory in his, *al-Hall al-Islami, farida wa darura* (Beirut: 1989).
- 55 Philip S. Khoury, "Islamic Revivalism and the Crisis of the Secular State in the Arab World: An Historical Appraisal," in Ibrahim, ed., *Arab Resources: The Transformation of a Society* (Washington, D. C: 1983) p. 214.
- 56 An elaborate analysis of Islamic resurgence and science is found in Bassam Tibi, "The Worldview of Sunni Arab Fundamentalists: Attitudes Toward Modern Science and Technology," in Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby, eds., *Fundamentalisms and Society* (Chicago: 1993), pp. 73-102.
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- 58 On the same subject, see Conor Cruise O'Brien, *God Land: Reflections on Religion and Nationalism* (Cambridge: 1988), and Mark Juergensmeyer, *The New Cold War? Religious Nationalism Confronts the Secular State* (Berkeley: 1993).
- 59 Partha Chatterjee, *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse* (London: 1986) p. 19.
- 60 Halim Barakat takes a different approach: "For over three decades following World War II, the religious movement remained dormant and confined to a few narrow circles. Secular nationalist and socialist thought, thanks to the triumph of the 1952 Egyptian revolution, dominated the Arab world... The Islamic resurgence [in the Arab World], however, occurred only after the Iranian revolution of 1979." *The Arab World*, p. 258.
- 61 Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, p. 11.
- 62 Ibid., p. 6.
- 63 Ibid., pp. 12-13.
- 64 Ibid., p. 15.
- 65 Anderson, p. 116.



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- 67 On this phenomenon, see Charles D. Smith, "The 'Crisis of Orientation': The Shift of Egyptian Intellectuals to Islamic Subjects in the 1930s," *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, vol. 4 (4), October 1974, pp. 382-410. Also C. Ernest Dawn, "The Formation of Pan-Arab Ideology in the Interwar Years," *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, vol. 20 (1), February 1988, pp. 67-91.
- 68 "The vision of religious nationalists is appealing in part because it promises a future that cannot easily fail: its moral and spiritual goals are transcendent and not as easy to gauge as are the more materialistic promises of secular nationalists." Mark Juergensmeyer, op. cit., p. 24.
- 69 Abdulaziz Sachedina, "Activist Shi'ism in Iran, Iraq, and Lebanon," in *Fundamentalisms Observed*, ed., Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby (Chicago: 1992) p. 405.
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## KHURSHID AHMAD: MUSLIM ACTIVIST-ECONOMIST

**T**HE ISLAMIC RESURGENCE has put Islam in the headlines and brought a great deal of scholarly as well as media coverage. While one man, the Ayatollah Khomeini, has come to be equated with the resurgence of Islam in the popular mind and imagination, in fact, the reassertion of Islam in Muslim life is a broad-based, complex, multi-faceted phenomenon which has embraced Muslim societies from the Sudan to Sumatra. Its leaders and organizations are as varied as its manifestations.

Contemporary Islamic revivalism has included a greater emphasis upon religious identity and values in private and public life. As a result, organizations like the Muslim Brotherhood and the Jamaat-i-Islami, which combine both the private and public emphases, best reflect the dynamism and leadership of contemporary Islam. Khurshid Ahmad of Pakistan is among the dominant figures in this select group. A trained economist and an early follower of Mawlana Mawdudi (1903-79), the founder of the Jamaat-i-Islami, he has been a leader of the Jamaat, a member of the cabinet and senate of Pakistan, a father of modern Islamic economics, and an internationally recognized

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Islamic activist.

The economic dimension of Islamic resurgence, while not the headlines as a part of the Islamic revolution, is an important part of contemporary Islam. Islamic economics involves both conceptual developments and concrete programs. During the past decade, Islamic economic institutions (banks, finance houses, insurance and taxes) have been introduced in many countries. As in other areas of [religious] resurgence, the interrelated emphasis on theory and practice has required leaders who are both theorists and activists. Khurshid Ahmad has been one of the leading figures in the emergence of Islamic economics as an intellectual discipline and as a foundation for new institutions and programs. He has combined an active participation in one of the major Islamic movements of the modern era with a career as an economist. He has also worked in academia, with governments, and with financial institutions in developing economic theory and practice within an Islamic framework.

Khurshid Ahmad reflects in his life and thought the basic themes and dynamics of the emergence of contemporary Islamic economics. It is important, then, to know his biography since he is an activist as well as a theorist, and his life is as important as his thought in reflecting the nature of Islamic economics. It is equally important to situate Khurshid Ahmad within the context of the Jamaat-i-Islami, a movement which has shaped his life and thought. This paper will examine Khurshid Ahmad's life, the Jamaat-i-Islami and his connections with it, and the fundamental ideas of Islamic economics as seen by him.

## THE BIOGRAPHY

Khurshid Ahmad was born in Delhi, India, in 1932. His father, Nazir Ahmad, was a well-to-do businessman who was involved in several projects, among them the financing of magazines. He was keenly interested in science and Marxism. He was also active in Muslim politics during the pre-independence period, serving as counsellor to the Muslim League in Delhi. Among Nazir Ahmad's friends was Mawlana Mawdudi, a journalist and writer on reli-

gious topics, who would later found the Jamaat-i-Islami, which came to play a central role in the life and development of Khurshid.

Khurshid had a traditional Islamic education. As a young boy he attended the Anglo-Arabic higher secondary school in Delhi. He was an excellent student and already showed an inclination to political activism. Influenced by his father who participated in the Pakistan movement, he was elected President of the Children's League in Delhi in 1946. As a student leader, he led demonstrations for Pakistan's independence regularly in the final months before partition. In 1948, after the partition of the Indian subcontinent and the creation of Pakistan, Nazir Ahmad and his family emigrated with millions of Muslims to West Pakistan, travelling first to Lahore for a few months and then onto Karachi, where the family settled. Mawlana Mawdudi, who was also in Lahore, became a regular visitor at the Ahmad home in the Muslim Town section of Lahore.

When the family moved to Karachi, Khurshid enrolled at Government College of Commerce and Economics. It was here that he developed a serious interest in economics and the Jamaat, the twin passions of much of his life's work. In 1949, he wrote his first article on Pakistan's budget which was published in the *Muslim Economist*. This was also the time when he discovered Mawlana Mawdudi. He had known Mawdudi the man as a frequent visitor in his father's house; it was only in 1949 that he encountered Mawdudi the religious scholar for the first time. In particular, he was impressed with Mawdudi's discussion of both Islamic and Western thought and the conflict between Western civilization and Islam.

Khurshid had been exposed to Western thought through his father's interest in political science and his schooling. In fact, he had written his first article in English. The young student was drawn to the writings of two other great Muslim thinkers who were schooled in both Western and Islamic thought, and who wrote about the contemporary relevance of Islam: 1) Muhammad Asad and 2) Muhammad Iqbal. Asad (formerly Leopold Weiss), an Austrian Jewish convert to Islam, had moved to Pakistan

and had written *Islam at the Crossroads*<sup>1</sup> which greatly impressed Khurshid. Iqbal (1877-1938), the poet-philosopher and co-founder of Pakistan, who had earned a doctorate and a law degree in Europe, had dominated the first decades of the 20th century subcontinent as a great poet of India-Pakistan. Although Khurshid, like most South Asians, had memorized his poetry as a child, it was only now, as a college student, that he discovered Iqbal, the prolific Islamic modernist thinker and author who used both poetry and prose to explore such themes as the relationship of Islam to Western science and philosophy, the relevance of Islam as a comprehensive way of life, the need for reinterpretation and reform to renew Islam, and the need to revitalize the Muslim community. These themes were synthesized in Iqbal's *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*.<sup>2</sup>

Khurshid Ahmad's years at Government College in Karachi proved to be a significant turning point, for it was here that he combined the intellectual and the religious aspects, embarking on the path of a scholar-activist. He also became active in the Islami Jami'at-i-Talaba (IJT, Islamic Student Association). Three fellow students were particularly influential in attracting him to the IJT: a fellow student of economics, Zafar Ishaq Ansari, who would later earn a doctorate in Islamic Studies at McGill University, teach at the University of Petroleum and Mining Engineering in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, and finally become Director of the Islamic Research Institute in Islamabad<sup>3</sup>; Khurram Murad, who would train in science, write on Islam, succeed Khurshid as Director of the Islamic Foundation in Leicester, England, and later become deputy Amir (leader) of the Jamaat in Pakistan; and Khurshid's elder brother, Zamir, who studied science and rose to the rank of Vice-Admiral in Pakistan's navy, prior to his death in 1985.

Reflecting on this early exposure to the IJT, Khurshid Ahmad has remarked that it, "determined the future course of my life."<sup>4</sup> In the fellowship of the IJT, Khurshid deepened his understanding of Islam and formulated his future activist orientation through his reading and discussion of

Mawlana Mawdudi's writings, in particular, *Let Us Be Muslims*. The experience moved him emotionally as well as intellectually.

It covers the fundamentals of Islam (faith, prayer, worship) in a manner which moves the soul and the consciousness that to be a Muslim is something different. That is, that it is not just belief ('*aqida*) and prayer but also to play a new role in life, to have a mission to change the world.<sup>6</sup>

In December 1949, he officially became a member of the IJT.

The IJT were serious-minded students who held training programs in religious beliefs, prayer, discipline, and social etiquette. As he excelled as a student so too he emerged as a gifted leader. In 1950, he was elected head of the IJT in Karachi. From 1953 to 1955, he served as President of the all-Pakistan IJT. He introduced two major changes. A biweekly student newspaper, *The Students' Voice*, addressed current issues such as whether Islam could provide the basis for Pakistan's constitution and student concerns. Shortly after it published an open letter to the Prime Minister on student problems, student riots broke out in Pakistan. Between 1952 and 1956, he wrote a series of articles on Islam, capitalism, socialism, secularism, and Western civilization. As with other Muslim intellectuals of the time such as Egypt's Sayyid Qutb, who would become the principal ideologue of the Muslim Brotherhood, Khurshid Ahmad's analysis of Islam and Socialism explored the relationship of his religio-cultural upbringing — Islam — to social justice. In particular, he emphasized the rights of labor and the poor in an attempt to demonstrate that Islam possessed its own notions of social justice and thus its own alternative to capitalism and the social ills of society.

The second change, conducting weekly meetings at the university instead of private homes or mosques, gave the IJT a higher profile and reinforced its image as a student-based and student-rights organization. The IJT became a center of campus politics with a reputation for excellent organization and dedication. It recruited students from the first day of class by replacing a British-inspired freshmen

orientation, which emphasized drinking and hazing, with an "Introduction Day," on which members of the IJT received new students and brought them to their classes and the library. New students were assisted with books and given other means of support as well as offered opportunities to become involved in campus study groups, debates, and publications. Their recruitment and organization techniques paid off. In 1953, the IJT won its first campus-wide election at the Urdu College. By 1970's, IJT in Pakistan was winning from 60 to 80 per cent of the student elections.

The 1950s and the early 1960s were a long formative period of development both academically and Islamically. Khurshid Ahmad earned his B.A. in Commerce (First Class) in 1953, M.A. in Economics in 1955, L.L.B. (First Class) in 1958, and M.A. in Islamic Studies (First Class) in 1964. During that period, after serving as national President of the Islamic Student Association from 1953-55, he formally joined the Jamaat-i-Islami as a full member in 1956. In addition to serving as editor of *The Students' Voice* (1952-55), he was the editor of three other Jamaat publications: 1) *The New Era* (1955-56); 2) *The Voice of Islam* (1957-64), and 3) *Chiragh-e-Rah* (1957-68), as well as associate editor of the *Iqbal Review* (1960-64). From 1955 to 1977, Khurshid taught economics in the Faculties of Economics and Commerce at the Urdu College and in the Department of Economics at Karachi University. Increasingly, in the late 1960s and the 1970s, as a member of the Jamaat, he combined teaching and writing as an economist with *da'wah* [propagation], the spread of Islam nationally and internationally. Understanding his life, thought, and activities requires an appreciation of the nature and ideological outlook of the Jamaat-i-Islami, which has provided the inspiration, motivation, and context for his life's work.

## THE JAMAAT-I-ISLAMI EXPERIENCE

The Jamaat-i-Islami was founded in Lahore in 1941 by Mawlana Mawdudi as an ideological rather than a political party. Mawdudi, who had moved to Lahore in 1938, believed that Islam was a universal and comprehensive way



of life that was to govern state and society. Critical of Muslim dependence upon the West, he advocated an Islamic revolution, a gradual Islamization of all aspects of Muslim life: politics, law, economics, education, and social life. He had for a number of years been developing and disseminating his interpretation of Islam in his journal *Tarjuman al-Qur'an* (Exegesis of the Qur'an).<sup>7</sup> Now, gathering around him 75 faithful followers, he set about realizing that vision. His goal was to train and produce a dynamic nucleus, a vanguard of true believers who would constitute a new elite prepared to lead and implement a true Islamic society in the subcontinent.

Formation, indoctrination, discipline, and religious propagation were cornerstones of the Jamaat. Its ideology and program came directly from the prolific writings of its leader which were based on two principles: the unity and the sovereignty of God. To Mawdudi, "The belief in the unity and sovereignty of Allah is the foundation of the social and moral system propounded by the Prophets."<sup>8</sup> That system was delineated and preserved in Islamic law (the Shari'ah), a sacred law based upon God's Revelation (the Qur'an) and the example (the Sunnah) of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). Thus, Islam is an integrated way of life. Mawdudi believed that imitation of Western secularism (the separation of religion and the state), nationalism, capitalism, and Marxism were among the major causes of the decline of Muslim societies. He believed that health, vitality, and power of the Islamic community (Ummah) will only be restored by a recognition that Muslims have their own divinely revealed and mandated Islamic alternative and a return to true Islam.

The Jamaat recruited its members from schools, universities and mosques. It attracted the urban middle class in particular: students, merchants, professionals. Modern learning and religious commitment were combined in an effort to produce a new educated elite. Its message was propagated through student groups, worker organizations, research institutes, publications (newspapers, magazines, journals), preaching, social services, and youth centers. As a result, Mawdudi's impact has been impressive: he has provided the common understanding of Islam that has



formed the training and activities of the Jamaat. Further, through his systematic presentation of Islam, he has had a broad impact on Muslims within the subcontinent, and, through translation, throughout the greater Muslim world. In Pakistan, he is among the most widely-read authors, providing middle-class Muslims with an intelligent and coherent explanation of Islam which speaks to modern concerns and issues. Internationally, Mawdudi and the Jamaat have long been formative influences ideologically and organizationally. He is commonly regarded as among the most significant Islamic ideologues (along with Hasan al-Banna<sup>9</sup> and Sayyid Qutb<sup>10</sup> of Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood) whose writings may be found from Morocco to Indonesia and beyond.

From Khurshid Ahmad's early days as a youth leader, editor, and professor of Economics, as well as editor and translator of Mawlana Mawdudi's works to the present, he has attempted to realize and to extend the message of Mawlana Mawdudi and the Jamaat. He has authored or edited some 24 books in English, written 16 books in Urdu, translated and edited 10 works of Mawdudi, and authored many chapters and articles. He has often averaged three to six months a year lecturing at universities, participating in international ecumenical gatherings, speaking to Muslim audiences and helping Muslims in Europe, Africa, Asia, and America organize their communities.<sup>11</sup>

Like his mentor, Khurshid Ahmad believes that Islam is a Divinely-revealed code of life. The comprehensive guidance of Islam and its integral relationship to all aspects of life are rooted in the doctrine of *tawhid*, the unity or oneness of God. Absolute monotheism is the essence of Islam: the belief that there is one omnipotent, omnipresent Lord of the universe, creator and sustainer of the world,

points to the supremacy of the law in the cosmos, the all-pervading unity behind the manifest diversity... It presents a unified view of the world and offers the vision of an integrated universe... It is a dynamic belief and a revolutionary doctrine. It means that all men are the creatures of God — they are all equal.<sup>12</sup>

Ahmad believes that man's vocation is to serve as God's

vicegerent, representative (*khalifa*) on earth, to fulfill God's Will by establishing a new order of equity and justice, peace and prosperity. This duty is incumbent upon both the individual and the community. Thus, according to Khurshid, individual rights are counterbalanced by Islam's emphasis on social responsibility. Similarly, Islam establishes an equilibrium between the material and spiritual aspects of life. Avoiding the Western pitfall of separation of the sacred and the secular, Islam is a complete way of life. "Islam provides guidance for all walks of life — individual and social, material and moral, economic and political, legal and cultural, national and international."<sup>13</sup> It is this holistic vision of the world which undergirds the multifaceted, yet religiously motivated and integrated, career of Khurshid Ahmad. It also accounts for his intellectual and ecumenical dialogue with the West despite his deep criticism of it.

One of the characteristics of contemporary Islamic revivalism is its criticism of the West and its assertion of the self-sufficiency of Islam. Mawdudi, who had been self-educated in English and Western literature, had tended to cite Western sources in constructing his indictment of the West and its values, and its hostility to Islam. In contrast, Islam held the answers to the failure of the West and the Muslim decline. Khurshid Ahmad shared this indictment of the West. However, he represented the next generation, which had far more exposure to and mastery of Western education. Although critical, he also appreciated the importance of science and technology and the fact that Muslim societies were part of an international political and economic system. For Khurshid Ahmad, knowledge of the past was necessary not only to understand the feelings of hostility and mistrust towards the West, but also to inform efforts to develop better relations and cooperation with it. His writing of *Islam and the West* in 1967 signalled the acceptance of this important distinction by Mawlana Mawdudi, who wrote in his Foreword:

The call of our times is that, with a view to achieving world peace and international amity, mutual relationship among different nations be reconstructed... the need for the establishment of a relationship of the people of Europe and

America with the Islamic fraternity, on new foundations of goodwill and good-cheer, stands out as of paramount significance.<sup>14</sup>

While Khurshid critically reviewed the history of confrontation between Islam and the West, the vilification of Islam and the Prophet Muhammad, the impact of European colonialism (economic exploitation, political and cultural dominance, the imposition of Western education and Christianity, the attacks on Islam perpetrated by missionaries and Western scholars of Islam), these were now presented as the causes of Muslim distrust which must be understood as a prerequisite for the new task at hand, that is, mutual cooperation. In contrast to radical militants, Khurshid Ahmad did not call for a total rejection of the West. He has spent a major portion of his time mastering Western knowledge, from history and religion to science and economics. Instead, he argued self-confidently that the basis for better relations was a redefining of the relationship of the West to the Muslim world from that of master-servant to that of equal partners. This would enable the two parties to co-exist and interact without Muslims having to pay the price of domination and assimilation:

If the only practical ground of cooperation is the assimilation of the Western culture and rejection of Islam as we understand it, then there is no ground for any meeting. But if the cooperation is to be achieved on equal footing, then it is most welcomed.<sup>15</sup>

Khurshid Ahmad's activities from 1966 to the present have reflected this opening to the West. While retaining his position as a member of the Foreign Relations Department of the Jamaat, he moved to Great Britain in 1968, where he resided permanently until 1978. During that time, his assignment was to engage "in worldwide *da'wah*," i.e., propagation of Islam in Europe, Africa, and America.<sup>16</sup> He helped to organize, and served on, the Executive Council of the Islamic Council of Europe; he was a research scholar at the University of Leicester (1969-72); and established the Islamic Foundation in Leicester. The Foundation, although legally not affiliated with the Jamaat, is nevertheless inspired by its outlook and

ideals. It publishes and distributes Islamic books (including new translations of Mawdudi's writings), publishes journals and bibliographies of Western and Muslim materials on Islam, conducts conferences, and engages in ecumenical programs. Khurshid often travelled six months out of the year establishing and/or serving as a trustee of Islamic Centers in Europe and Africa, lecturing at universities and to Muslim organizations in Europe, America, and Africa, and initiating and participating in international ecumenical dialogues. The breadth and diversity of his activities are reflected in the offices which he held during that time, among them: Director General of the Islamic Foundation, Leicester; member of the Advisory Council, Centre for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations; Vice-President, Standing Conference on Jews, Christians, and Muslims in Europe.

Events in Pakistan led to his return in 1978 to serve in the cabinet of General Zia ul-Haq. In July 1977, Zia ul-Haq seized power from Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto (1971-77).<sup>17</sup> Bhutto, as Prime Minister, had increasingly appealed to Islam to attract Arab oil money and to enhance the legitimacy of his socialist policies. At the same time, a coalition of opposition forces, representing a spectrum of religious and more secularly oriented parties, had joined together in the Pakistan National Alliance (PNA). Placing themselves under the umbrella of Islam, they rejected Bhutto's Islamic socialism and promised an Islamic system of government.

When Zia ul-Haq seized power, he promised an Islamic system in order to legitimate his rule. Also, he invited members of the PNA, in particular those associated with religious organizations like the Jamaat-i-Islami, to join his government. Khurshid Ahmad, along with three other Jamaat members, became a government minister. He was Federal Minister (Planning, Development and Statistics) and Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission in August 1978. Although he and other members of the PNA resigned in April 1979, Khurshid (and the Jamaat) remained actively involved, both as an adviser to the government and as a leader of the Jamaat, in Pakistan's experiment in introducing a more Islamically-oriented system of

government.

Khurshid was, at the same time, increasingly involved internationally in the Islamic revivalist tide that swept across much of the Muslim world. Because of his particular expertise, a primary focus of his activities was the development of Islamic economics and the implementation of Islamic reforms. While a professor at Urdu College and Karachi University, teaching basic courses in economics and comparative economic systems, he had begun to introduce Islamic perspectives on economic problems and to eventually speak of an Islamic economic system. While Islamic universities such as the Azhar in Cairo and Umm al-Qura in Makkah taught the economic teachings of Islam, he undertook a systematic effort to develop Islamic economics. He had served as vice-president of the First International Conference on Islamic Economics in Makkah in 1976. Now he lectured and wrote on Islamic economics, created and became chairman of a think-tank, the Institute of Policy Studies, in Islamabad, chaired the Second International Conference on Islamic Economics in Islamabad, became chairman of the International Institute of Islamic Economics, at the International Islamic University, Islamabad, served as a member of the Supreme Advisory Board of the International Centre for Research in Islamic Economics in Saudi Arabia, and lectured and published books and articles on Islamic economics. International recognition for his contribution to Islamic economics and to the Muslim world has occurred in many contexts. He was elected the first president of the International Association for Islamic Economics which was founded in 1986, a position which he continues to retain. In 1988, he was awarded the first Islamic Development Bank prize for distinguished contribution to Islamic Economics. And in 1990, he was awarded the prestigious King Faisal award for service to Islam.

## FUNDAMENTAL IDEAS OF CONTEMPORARY ISLAMIC ECONOMICS

In his full life of religious and political involvement, Khurshid Ahmad has participated in the creation of the

contemporary discipline of Islamic Economics. This has not been done in addition to his other activities, but as a direct part of his active involvement in the Islamic movement. Like other contemporary Islamic activist thinkers, Khurshid combines theory and practice, not because he believes that this is the most efficient or effective way of operating but because he believes that it is the only way for a Muslim professional. His roles as a believer, as a member of the Jamaat-i-Islami, and as an economist are combined in many important ways.

As an economist, Khurshid has played an important role in the evolution of economic thought and programs in the Muslim world. He has himself described the major lines of transition:

Initially, the emphasis was on explaining the economic teachings of Islam and offering Islamic critique of the Western contemporary theory and policy. During this phase, most of the work was done by the ulema, the leftists and Muslim social thinkers and reformers. Gradually, the Muslim economists and other professionals became involved in this challenging enterprise. Perhaps the First International Conference on Islamic Economics [held in 1976]... represents the watershed in the history of the evolution of Muslim thinking on economics, representing the transition from 'economic teachings of Islam' to the emergence of 'Islamic Economics.'<sup>18</sup>

This statement provides both a description of the changes taking place in the intellectual world of Islam and an insight into Khurshid's perceptions of those changes. It is clear that this transformation is something which he approved and came to constitute the program and challenge to which he devoted his future activities as a Muslim economist.

Khurshid and other contemporary Muslim economists would maintain that the fundamental values and message of Islam are not different than they have been since the days of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). What is new is the approach and method; the different approach can be seen clearly in Khurshid's works.

The more traditional approach concentrates on 'the eco-



conomic teachings of Islam.' There is an effort to search out all of the verses of the Qur'an which have specific economic implications. This is supported by a similar collecting of the traditions (*ahadith*) of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) which have an economic message. The description of the plans for a conference on "The Place of Economics in Islam," held in New Jersey in 1968, provides an example of the more traditional approach. Planners said:

[There was to be] a classified presentation of relevant verses from the Qur'an and selections from the Hadith literature on the subject. In this way it was hoped that prior to entering into the details of specific issues and practices, participants in the conference would be reminded of the basic sources on which Muslim economic thought is based.<sup>19</sup>

This approach has as its foundation a vast aggregation of separate propositions and specific cases which are then used to provide the legitimizing proof for particular positions. From the perspective of many Muslim intellectuals in the decades since World War II, this methodology had the advantage of grounding the presentation in explicitly Islamic sources and fundamentals. It emphasizes the effort to go beyond apologetically trying to show that Islamic teachings and some Western concepts are compatible.

At the same time, this approach has some problems. It tends to result in a collection of discussions rather than a more holistic and integrated analysis. In addition, the traditional approach involves the scholar in many of the traditional debates of Qur'anic study and Hadith analysis. For example, old arguments about abrogation (*naskh*) of one Hadith by another or of one Qur'anic verse by another become the necessary starting points for analysis.<sup>20</sup> These debates are regarded as of critical importance in presentations of 'the economic teachings of Islam.'

Islamic economics, however, is a more holistic enterprise. Muslim economists like Khurshid Ahmad are aware of specific Qur'anic verses and traditions, but this is the foundation of their perspective rather than the starting point for their analysis. Khurshid makes this distinction clear in his definition of the 'first premise' of Islamic de-



velopment economics. "The first premise which we want to establish is that economic development is an Islamic framework and Islamic development economics are rooted in the value-pattern embodied in the Qur'an and the Sunnah [emphasis added]." <sup>21</sup> In Islamic economics, Khurshid speaks of the broader Qur'anic 'value-patterns' rather than the specific provisions of particular verses. This enables him to present a more broadly integrated model of Islamic economics rather than a list of Islamic characteristics and teachings.

Certain basic themes and beliefs provide the foundation for Khurshid Ahmad's approach as an Islamic economist. These are often consciously distinguished from basic assumptions of Western economics. However, Khurshid's perspective is not simply apologetic or defensive. It is an attempt to create an intellectual discipline on an Islamic basis so that it can provide guidance for operational programs and activities.

The first principle of Islamic economics is that it is not a separate system describing a distinct aspect of human experience. Islam is seen as a comprehensive system and as a total way of life. In this framework, economics as a discipline is only part of the picture and must be integrated into other aspects of analysis from the very beginning of the process.

The comprehensive nature of Islam was one of the major keystones of the teachings of Mawdudi, and Khurshid maintains this principle. The implications of this comprehensiveness were clearly spelled out in essays by Mawdudi which Khurshid edited and published. It is clear that Khurshid shares these views. In an address on "The Economic Problem of Man and Its Islamic Solution," Mawdudi states that,

the economic problem of man, which was, indeed, part of the larger problem of human life, has been separated from the whole and looked at as if it were an independent problem by itself. And gradually this attitude has taken such a firm root that the economic problem has come to be regarded as the sole problem of life. This... has made its evolution infinitely difficult. <sup>22</sup>

The human economic problem is defined in simple terms which are similar to those in any economic system,

with a view to sustain and advance human civilization how to arrange economic distribution so as to keep all men supplied with the necessities of existence and to see that every individual in society is provided with opportunities adequate to the development of his personality and the attainment of the highest possible perfection according to his capacity and aptitude.<sup>23</sup>

Within this perspective, economic problems arise when the economic dimension of life is separated from the rest. Problems of distribution arise not from inefficiencies but from immoral acts by humans. Khurshid defines the basis and position of Islamic economics as follows:

Islam does not admit any separation between 'material' and 'moral,' 'mundane' and 'spiritual' life, and enjoins man to devote all his energies to the reconstruction of life on healthy foundations. It teaches him that moral and material powers must be welded together and spiritual salvation can be achieved by using the material resources for the good of man, and not by living a life of asceticism.<sup>24</sup>

In this broad perspective, two key concepts set the basic framework for analysis. One is the unity and sovereignty of God, or *tawhid*, and the other is the stewardship or *khi-lafah* of humans operating in God's creation. The delineation of the economic implications of *tawhid* and *khilafah* represent the primary focus of thinking and analysis in contemporary Islamic economics.

*Tawhid* means that there can be no other source of authority than God and that there can be no other focus for ultimate human loyalty than God. These are implications accepted by all Muslims. However, people involved in the contemporary Islamic resurgence have drawn more limiting conclusions from *tawhid* analysis than the more general, inclusive Islamic modernist thinkers of the 1960s had done. In political terms, people like Khurshid emphasize that while state institutions are necessary and that national communities legitimately exist, loyalties to states or nationalisms must be subordinated to allegiance to God and the global community of Muslims.

In more economic terms, Khurshid's discussion of economic development in Islamic economics shows that *tawhid* sets the goals of development. "The development effort, in an Islamic framework, is directed towards the development of a God-conscious human being, a balanced personality committed to and capable of acting as the witness of truth to mankind."<sup>25</sup> In concrete policy terms, this means, for Khurshid, that human resource development — education, vocational training, improvement of the quality of life — is the objective of development policy.

In this perspective, while industrialization programs are not rejected, policies which regard industrialization as the leading element in development are seen unsuitable. The development of the industrial sector must be placed in the broader context of creating conditions of social and economic justice for all citizens in the society. Property can be possessed and used for investment but, in the Islamic model, may not be used to gain advantage over or exploit others who may be in need. In this way, the emphasis is on 'God-conscious' planning.

The economic role of human beings is also seen in this way. In Islamic economic analysis, the basic operating unity is not 'economic man.' Instead, humans are seen as the direct agents or representatives of God in God's creation. The concept of Muslims as God's *khalifas* (or human stewardship, for which the term is *khilafah*) is an important part of Khurshid's presentation of Islamic economics. For him, *khilafah* is the 'unique Islamic concept of man's trusteeship' in moral, political, and economic terms.<sup>26</sup> It is the source of the Muslim vocation and mission:

This exalts man to the noble and dignified position of being God's deputy on earth and endows his life with a lofty purpose: to fulfill the Will of God on earth. This will solve the perplexing problems of human society and establish a new order wherein equity and justice and peace and prosperity will reign supreme.<sup>27</sup>

The concept of *khilafah* provides the basis for the creation of an economic system in which cooperation and mutual obligations replace competition as the dominant

feature of human economic interaction. Thus, Islamic economics, as defined by Mawdudi and Khurshid, affirms private property as part of the human agent's management responsibilities. Both scholar-activists also recognize and accept that there can be competition and differing successes in obtaining material goods.

In this framework, Khurshid rejects the concept of private ownership which allows an absolute right of an owner to manage property in any way. (He also sees a socialist system where all means of production are nationalized as a threat to human initiative.) Instead, he argues that:

Islam's most important contribution in the field of economics lies in changing the concept of ownership. No one has the right to destroy property. If misused it can be taken away. If it is not needed it must be passed on to others.<sup>28</sup>

Ownership is, in other words, stewardship of God's property rather than an absolute right of the individual human. The concept of stewardship means that those who succeed in gaining wealth must do so without harming others and then must use that wealth to help other human beings.

Some of the more familiar aspects of Islamic economics, such as Islam's alms tax or tithe [Zakat] and the banning of usury [riba], are part of these religious obligations or duties. One of the Five Pillars of Islam is the giving of charitable support to the less fortunate. Zakat is a "compulsory levy... on accumulated wealth, trade goods, various forms of business, agricultural produce, and cattle. Its purpose is to create a fund for the support of economically depressed classes."<sup>29</sup>

Similarly, the well-known Islamic prohibition against Riba, which traditionally has included banking interest, is based on the overall obligation of Muslims to help one another. Mawdudi and Khurshid both argue that interest has damaging effects:

Usury develops miserliness, selfishness, callousness, inhumanity and financial greed in the character of man... It increases a tendency among the people to hoard money and spend it to promote their private interest only. It blocks the free circulation of wealth in the society, and diverts the

flow of money from the poor to the rich.<sup>30</sup>

In this way, it undermines the function of human stewardship of God's resources.

Another major characteristic of Islamic economics, as it has developed in recent years, is that it has been consciously programmatic. Past discussions which aimed at presenting the 'economic teachings of Islam' tended to remain in the realm of theory. Much of the scholarship was in the hands of the traditionally-oriented ulema who were not practicing businessmen or government officials. With the growing involvement of professional economists like Khurshid Ahmad in the debates, there was an increased emphasis on actual projects rather than doctrine. Khurshid was, for example, one of the early advocates of Islamic banks and financial institutions and has played an important role in their establishment and rapid growth. In the past decade, more than one hundred Islamic banks or investment groups have been created in many different parts of the world with some relatively high degrees of success and profitability.<sup>31</sup> This programmatic activism is an important part of the emergence of Islamic economics.

A final major characteristic of Islamic economics, as developed in the work of Khurshid Ahmad, is that it is a self-consciously, value-oriented discipline. Khurshid, as many other Muslim social scientists, rejects the idea that economic analysis can take place in "a climate of positivistic objectivity and of complete value-neutrality. Most of the economic thinking that masquerades as value-neutral turns out, on closer scrutiny, to be otherwise."<sup>32</sup> The experience of many Muslims with Western economic planners and analysts over the past few decades has tended to confirm this belief. The value commitment of so-called value-free Western economic analysis becomes apparent when it is applied in non-Western contexts.

Muslim economists like Khurshid Ahmad firmly believe that economics is not a value-free academic discipline. They see the effort to develop a value-free system of analysis as being, at best, counter-productive and; at worst, satanic. They believe that economists have a moral responsibility to work for economic justice and the betterment of

humanity. This, then, points to a positive characteristic of Islamic economics:

The major contribution of Islam lies in making human life and effort purposive and value-oriented. The transformation it seeks to bring about in human attitudes and *pari passu* is that of the social sciences is to move them from a stance of pseudo-value-neutrality towards open and manifest value-commitment and value-fulfillment.<sup>33</sup>

In this way, the emergence of Islamic economics reflects a rejection of some of the basic assumptions of traditional Western scholarship, just as it represents a move away from the traditional Muslim approaches to economic subjects. Khurshid views his work as a mission, that of bringing a more effective programmatic awareness to Muslims and a recognition of the importance of value-commitment to economists in all societies. His contributions to Islam and to the field of Islamic economics were recognized in the late 1980s when he received the Islamic Development Bank's first award in economics and the Faisal Award for service to Islam.

The fundamental ideas of contemporary Islamic economics lead Khurshid Ahmad to the position of being a Muslim activist-economist. Islam, for him and in Islamic economics, is a comprehensive system in which no sector can be viewed as autonomous. Its basic concepts of *tawhid* and *khilafah* provide an effective conceptual foundation for a programmatic and value-committed discipline, which represents an important part of contemporary intellectual life and policymaking in the Muslim world.

## NOTES

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## OPENING REMARKS

**M**R JAMIL JREISAT: I would like to say a couple of words about the connection between the University of South Florida and the World and Islam Studies Enterprise (WISE). This is a very happy marriage indeed. It has so far produced some good results, one of which is the first monograph of last year's roundtable with Dr Hasan Turabi of the Sudan.<sup>1</sup> Here at the university, we have no Department of Islamic Studies or Department of Middle Eastern Studies *per se*. We really teach few courses on the Middle East. We, however, offer nine courses on Judaism, five courses on Christianity, and none on Islam. We have one course on the Middle East, thanks to Professors Arthur Lowrie and Abdelwahab Hechiche who, single-handedly, teach this course. Then comes WISE into the picture — an institution devoted to the research and study of Islamic thought and life. The institution approached us several years ago, and suggested that WISE and the university co-sponsor events on Islam and the Middle East. We, naturally, welcomed this opportunity, and we created 'the Committee on Middle Eastern Studies' in order to facilitate future work with WISE and other similar institutes and scholars in the United States. The university received it favorably, and our students, faculty, and members of the

community encouraged this relationship.

Last year, we co-sponsored a day-long Conference on Islam and a roundtable with Dr Hasan Turabi, both of which were an enormous success. We are indeed delighted to have the second roundtable with Dr Khurshid Ahmad this year. As a result of our relationship with WISE, thanks to its committed and dynamic leadership, we are able to invite you here and have this wonderful gathering, which, I am sure, you will find productive.

I would just like to make one more comment. Personally, I look at this wonderful result very favorably. I think that Muslims must represent themselves and Islam. They are in a better position than anyone else to do that. To a large extent, non-Muslims have represented Islam and the Muslims in the American media. I think it is high time that we give a genuine chance to people who understand this world phenomenon better than others. I am a student of Islam myself. Although I come from a Christian background, I understand how important it is for Muslims to speak for themselves. The Arabic saying, 'the people of Makkah are more cognizant of its alleys than anyone else' applies to what I am trying to say. What that means is that it is about time we hear 'Islam is talking about Islam' before we start our interpretation. There are a lot of books by Christians, a lot of books by Jews, the Espositos and the Bernard Lewises and the rest of them, but how about some really genuine Islamic thought presented, unembellished, uninterpreted, unrepresented, just from the original? That is why this kind of effort is enormously helpful, helpful to the people of the West, to scholars like you who are coming from universities across the country. I think it is enormously helpful to hear the words as they are before they get interpreted and get represented or misrepresented. This is why I think this is very significant.

Finally, I would like to welcome Professor Darrell Fasching, Chairman of the Department of Religious Studies at the University of South Florida, and Professor Renu Khator from the same university. I would welcome you again and I would turn to my friend and colleague, Ramadan Abdallah, who will introduce the speaker.

**MR RAMADAN ABDALLAH:** In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful. Dear guests, friends and colleagues, it is a great honor to have you here today at our Second Roundtable. We at WISE appreciate the great help of the faculty and staff of the University of South Florida. We believe cooperation and intellectual dialogue help both Americans and Muslims reach common grounds of understanding. WISE is committed to dialogue, and, from this perspective, we are happy to have with us a number of prominent American scholars who would share their insights and thoughts with our guest of honor, Professor Khurshid Ahmad.

Many of you, I believe, are familiar with the difficulties that usually confront organizers of a day-long seminar, especially with participants who have to come from various parts of the States. I believe we have overcome the challenge that faced us when we were looking for a Muslim figure with a significant contribution to Muslim thought and a good command of English. We are happy indeed to have Professor Khurshid Ahmad with us. We are fortunate to have such a speaker with a thorough command of both the Western and Islamic sources of knowledge and learning.

A year ago, we were fortunate to launch this program with Dr Hasan Turabi, an eminent Muslim thinker and activist from the Sudan. This year, we are equally fortunate to have both Professor Ahmad and our respected guests from a variety of American universities.

Our guest speaker today, Professor Khurshid Ahmad, is a prominent intellectual and political figure in the Muslim world. He is both an activist and a theorist in the field of Islamic economics, and has played important leadership roles in major Muslim organizations in many different areas. Although his origins are from South Asia, he was born in Delhi, India, before independence and migrated to West Pakistan in 1948. His activities are literally global. He has been an important leader of the Jamaat-i-Islami in Pakistan. As a student, he edited Islamic publications and was President for three years of his student organization i.e., IJT. He later became part of the leadership councils of

the Jamaat and is currently a member of the Central Shura and Vice-President of the Jamaat-i-Islami in Pakistan.

Khurshid Ahmad's academic training was economics and business. He has been a major force in the development of Islamic economics as a discipline, and played an important role in the transition of the thinking of the Islamic movement from the economic teachings of Islam to the field of Islamic economics. In Pakistan, Khurshid Ahmad has been active in political and educational affairs that go beyond his specialization in economics. He is currently a member of the Senate of Pakistan. Since 1991, he has been the Chairman of the Senate Standing Committee on Finance, Economic Affairs and Planning, and Chairman of the Institute of Policy Studies in Islamabad. In the late 1970s, he was Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Statistics, and was Deputy Chairman of the Pakistan Planning Commission. He serves on many different educational boards as well.

Internationally, Khurshid Ahmad has been very active in a number of ways. He has been serving for many years as the Chairman of the Islamic Foundation in Leicester, United Kingdom. This organization plays an important role in publishing and presenting information about Islam in the West. Professor Ahmad has also been active in encouraging Muslim-Christian dialogue, especially in the 1970s, with groups like the Centre for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations at the Selly Oak Colleges and the Standing Conference of Jews, Christians and Muslims in Europe. Professor Ahmad has also been an important advisor to government groups and institutions of many Muslim countries. He has also published numerous books and articles, and has delivered speeches in various countries, addressed international student groups, participated in various scholarly seminars and meetings, and a dozen of major universities have been informed by his speeches. His travels, as well as his religious, intellectual, and professional career have been much shaped by the major concerns and issues that are part of the contemporary Muslim world. With great pleasure and admiration, I present to you Professor Khurshid Ahmad.

## NOTES

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## ISLAMIC RESURGENCE: CHALLENGES, DIRECTIONS, AND FUTURE PERSPECTIVES

**P**ROFESSOR KHURSHID AHMAD: In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful. Let me, first of all, express my very deep gratitude to WISE, the University of South Florida, and all of you for providing me with this opportunity to be with you today, and to share with you my thoughts and reflections on a subject that is very dear to me and also of great concern to you. I regard this to be an important development that scholars and intellectuals have started to talk to each other in a spirit of dialogue and that they understand each other instead of just talking about each other, as had been, unfortunately, the tradition for long. It is definitely a significant development, and, I think, a lot of credit goes to intellectuals and scholars like you who have taken keen interest in moving from a kind of a monologue to something that can be described as a real dialogue. We are here to talk to each other, discuss, disagree, and yet continue our dialogue, and I think this is the real spirit in which we all are meeting and I am personally grateful to each one of you for joining us on this occasion. I would confine my presentation to the main aspects of the topic, that is, Islamic resurgence. There are certain micro aspects that I will take up in discussion, and I may also touch upon some of them in my presentation.



I think it is important that we should have an overall conceptual framework to understand and appreciate the phenomenon of Islamic resurgence. I think you all are aware that in 1848 when Karl Marx (d. 1883) [and Frederick Engels (d. 1895)] presented *The Manifesto of the Communist Party*, they began it with the very interesting phrase, "A specter is haunting Europe — the specter of Communism."<sup>1</sup> After a half century, going through some of the literature and media presentations, one is tempted to feel that there is a new specter that is haunting the West — the specter of 'Islamic fundamentalism.' Yet the difference is that while it was Marx and Engels themselves who identified Communism as a specter, it is not the Muslims who are projecting their program, their ideology, as a specter. It is also interesting, if not intriguing, that Marx identified his thought, his message as Communism, but Muslims do not even have the freedom to name the ideology, religion, and program they want to present. Instead, others give both the name and title.

I start my presentation with the determination that I will try to present before you in all honesty and objectivity the way a Muslim looks upon the Islamic resurgence. Yet I am here not as a propagandist, nor a salesman for certain ideas. I have joined you with great humility in the true spirit of sharing our discussion and benefiting from your observations and responses.

To begin with, Islamic resurgence is a worldwide phenomenon. It is not something which has come out of the blue. It has to be understood in its historical perspective. We Muslims believe that Islam is the religion that Allah (swt) has provided for the guidance of the entirety of mankind. And those who positively respond to this guidance, and commit themselves to it, are Muslims.

This guidance has been provided in the form of a sacred book which contains the word of God, pure and simple.<sup>2</sup> And this book was revealed through a prophet, who conveyed it honestly, explained it, and tried to carry out its commands and injunctions. And because of that effort, a historical movement came into existence to translate that idea, guidance, and vision into the lives of individuals and

their society.

We also believe that this is the last book, and, as such, while it contains universal truths, values, principles and ideals, it also provides a mechanism through which the demands of a variety of eras can be met. It does not spell out all the details. It deals only with the essentials, it brings about a new awakening in the individual and the community, and it gives a distinct approach and distinct guidelines. Under this approach, and following those guidelines, it is the responsibility of the Ummah<sup>2</sup> to actualize that ideal and message in space and time. And, as such, there is a built-in mechanism for change, innovation, and meeting the exigencies of time. This process of change, reinnovation, rethinking, reassertion, and reapplication, is something distinct in all periods of Muslim history. So Islamic resurgence today is not merely a product of certain specific contemporary challenges, but one must see it in the context of historical continuity and the response of Muslims to the challenges of the contemporary world.

At the outset, we must consider two dimensions: 1) the internal dimension, which is part of Muslim historical consciousness that makes Muslims reflect on their history in a unique way and try to find future solutions that may stem from their background, and 2) the external climate, i.e. the actual political, intellectual, economic, structural, and technological situation. Muslims have to respond to these challenges as well. So Islamic resurgence is a response to both of these internal and external phenomena.

Without going deeper into history, one can discern three phases in the contemporary history of Islamic resurgence: 1) pre-colonial; 2) colonial; and 3) post-colonial. I very frankly admit that throughout Muslim history, there have been ups and downs, ebbs and flows. In other words, there is no linear progression and for a number of reasons, mostly domestic, Muslim society in the 16th, 17th, 18th centuries, that is in pre-colonial times, was in a state of decline, not capable of creatively responding to challenges, particularly in the fields of science and technology, agriculture and industry, warfare and economics. Our confrontation with the West in the second phase, which is

known as colonialism, has been one in which the Muslims were at a disadvantage receding on the world scene. By the end of the 19th century, almost the entire Muslim world was under colonial rule, leaving only four small countries of hardly any great significance. During this period, Islam acted as a rallying point to resist colonialism, Western penetration and invasion of Muslim lands.

When colonial rule was established, again it was the Islamic instincts of honor, national identity, and political independence which provided continuous resistance to colonial rulers. In the post-colonial phase of the 20th century, Islam has been one of the major forces in confronting both the legacy of colonialism and the challenge of re-ordering of society. In my view, one must see contemporary Islamic resurgence in this ideological context.

Throughout these phases, the confrontation has taken place on a number of levels: intellectual, social, and political. Intellectually speaking, Islam possesses a worldview of its own, while on the social plane, it offers a clear set of social and cultural values that relate to the individual, society, economy, and to social relations in general.

As a result of the encroachment of colonialism, Islamic social and cultural values were under attack by both secular Western values and Christianity. On the political front, Muslims lost their hold on power for the first time in their long history. It is true that in the past, Muslims lost on one political front, but they gained on the other. The fall of Baghdad represented a low point in early Muslim history, but victory in Constantinople represented a new height. If there were reverses in the Middle East, there were expansion and ascendancy in Southeast Asia, Central and West Africa, and Central and South Asia.

The political eclipse of Muslim power in the last two or three centuries has definitely influenced the Muslim psyche and its responses, and, as a consequence, we see a variety of shades and colors in the galaxy of contemporary Muslim resurgence. In addition to political factors, both economic and technological dimensions have influenced the rise of resurgence.

However, there is one point that I would like to particularly emphasize, and that is during the roughly two centuries of colonial rule, a very fundamental change took place in Muslim societies. In the past, whenever there had been any reverse or decline, the institutions of society, particularly education, law, the judiciary, the economy, family, and the military, maintained their Islamic identity. During the colonial period, gradually most of these institutions were changed, overwhelmed, and replaced by Western institutions. Western ideas and institutions infiltrated into every aspect of Muslim societies to such an extent that even the family now is being restructured and 'modernized' along Western models. As a result of this, a new leadership emerged within Muslim society, whose roots were not in either the Muslim tradition or the Muslim people. Somehow psychologically, temperamentally, and educationally, the new Westernized elite in Muslim lands co-existed with the Western colonial system.

As a result of Western hegemony, a new kind of metamorphosis and unavoidable crisis began to prevail at all levels of Muslim society. In this context, nationalism was born as a response to this conflict-ridden situation. However, the nationalist movement was primarily motivated by religion, although it had nationalistic, and even secular overtones. By and large, nationalist leadership went to the people for legitimacy and support. Amongst the nationalists there were certain sincere people, yet the conditioning of a majority of leadership was such that after independence, instead of fulfilling the aspirations of the Ummah, they aspired to fulfill their nationalist aspirations outside the context of Islam. The Muslim people began to feel betrayed. This is the context in which Islamic resurgence began to articulate itself.

In my view, after the First World War, while there was still colonial rule in most parts of the Muslim countries, Islamic resurgence had to assert itself on the premise that Muslims needed both political and intellectual-cum-ideological freedom. Colonialism is not merely a political phenomenon. Also decolonization, besides its political meaning, can be an intellectual, cultural, and economic phenomenon. It was not only such eminent thinkers and

activists as Muhammad Iqbal,<sup>4</sup> Mawlana Mawdudi,<sup>4</sup> Hasan al-Banna,<sup>6</sup> Malek Bennabi,<sup>7</sup> and Said Nursi<sup>8</sup> who challenged Western colonialism, but all sorts of Muslim people did so as well.

Under colonial experience Muslim priorities were re-examined. Muslims realized that political freedom must be attained, as also systematic efforts be made to establish an Islamic identity, at both the individual and collective levels. So, in my view, contemporary Islamic resurgence is primarily a movement of internal renovation, rejuvenation and reassertion. It is a movement that allows Muslims to go back to their roots intellectually, morally, culturally, and ideologically.

Because of colonial hegemony and its challenge to the basic foundations of Islam and Muslim life, Islamic resurgence has sought liberation at all levels. Furthermore, Islamic resurgence is primarily a religious and ethical movement. It has political overtones, yet one must appreciate its real ethos, which is mainly an effort to strengthen *Iman* [belief]. To reaffirm this commitment to Allah (swt), it champions a certain introspection so that Muslims can live spiritually, ethically, and religiously. It is unfortunate that most Western literature on the subject of Islamic resurgence does not bring out these salient features. In my view, the political, social, and structural dimensions of Islamic resurgence are only outward expressions or manifestations of this ethical renovation, without which the rest is doomed to failure.

In fact, the unique contribution of the Islamic resurgence lies in its re-affirmation of the integration of the spiritual and the material dimensions of life.

This is the heart of the matter. To my mind, many Western scholars find it difficult to comprehend the attempt of Islamic resurgence to achieve thorough integration between the spiritual and the material. Mainstream Western thought, roughly since the Enlightenment, has been based upon the explicit or assumed dichotomy between spirit and matter. As a result of the triumph of rationalism and the negation of the centrality of the Divine in human affairs, Western thought has neglected to focus on

the impact that revelation, religious ethics and morality may have had on society, polity, and economy.<sup>9</sup> Modern Islamic thought as represented by Islamic resurgence affirms the unity of matter and spirit, and seeks spirituality through the reform of society and its institutions. The material world is only an expression of that inner reality.

Another important characteristic of Islamic resurgence, the religion-society relationship, is derived from the above-mentioned spirit-matter dimension. In Islamic thought, religion and polity, morality and law, go hand in hand. Again, this does not mean that the Divine law spells out everything in detail, but that it presents guidelines and provides the context for the approach, method, attitude, and motivation of people. That is why Islam places a great emphasis on change of structures and societies. This is very different from the Western humanistic approach which assumes that change in environment, structure, education, and institutions is a prelude to all-encompassing change. Instead, the Islamic approach stipulates that change must be initiated in man's heart and soul, perception, motivation, and vision, which must, in turn, comprehend social institutions, social realities, society, economy, and so on.

Finally, Islamic resurgence in the context of Muslim society represents a departure from some traditional [Islamic] approaches. The traditional approach focuses on the ulema as the religious leadership that has played a very distinct, glorious role in our history. By and large, the ulema were not forces of retrogression; yet over the ages, a kind of orthodoxy had gathered a momentum and erected a solid system of law based on both the Qur'an and Sunnah. The entire corpus of law, as it had developed, used to govern different aspects of individual and social life. Gradually, and no less important being the influence of a system of education, that over the years became fossilized and removed from the current intellectual, cultural and even political influences, there appeared a shift from the sources, i.e. the Qur'an and Sunnah, to the corpus of law, the Fiqh. As a result, direct inspiration from the Qur'an and Sunnah became less important, and adherence to the law, to the injunctions as spelled out in its complex corpus, became more important. As a result of overemphasizing the corpus



of law, a fossilization started to set in.

Now in this context Islamic resurgence does represent a very dynamic factor. However, it does not deny the importance of tradition, law, and custom. The Islamic movement has come up with a new set of priorities which represent dynamic elements that have emerged from within society while not disregarding tradition or rebelling against the dynamics of Islamic history. Consequently, Islamic resurgence has represented a conscious effort to have a fresh set of priorities.

In this regard, the intellectual leaders of Islamic resurgence have re-emphasized what is essential and fundamental as opposed to what is peripheral and secondary. The Islamic movements have stood against sectarianism by offering a very tolerant approach, and by emphasizing the vast possibilities of agreement between different schools of thought in Islam. This approach is somewhat different from that of the so-called 'modernists,' who, while remaining tied to Islam, interpret things in such a manner that most Islamic values and injunctions could be brought into conformity with Western values of liberalism and their intellectual, political and economic underpinnings.<sup>10</sup>

Other 'modernists' were inclined towards a more socialistic system and, therefore, tried to read some form of socialism into Islamic values and injunctions. In short, 'modernists' would like to reform Islam from within and reinterpret it in a manner that brings it nearer to the Western values of liberalism. They try to involve the principle of *ijtihad*, but without following the rules laid down for valid *ijtihad*. That is why the modernist interpretation lacks religious credibility.

The Islamic movements have emphasized the notion that a fresh look must be conducted within the framework of the Qur'an and Sunnah, without, in any way, laboring under any feeling of inferiority towards Islamic values or traditions. In addition, Islamic resurgence has drawn attention to the idea that Western culture, Western thought, and Western values must be looked upon again with an openness, not with a closed mind. A lot of positive developments, which have become a part of the permanent legacy



of mankind, have taken place in the modern Western world. In my view, Muslims must not deny this out of any prejudice, yet they should be sincere and loyal to their own value framework. The criterion by which Muslims decide what must be accepted and assimilated and what must be avoided or rejected is their value framework. Muslims must be in a position to preserve and protect the moral, ethical, and intellectual fiber of Islam. They must consciously avoid what is at variance with their Islamic understanding.

So this is how the Islamic movement has viewed the traditional approach, sectarian phenomena and the question of modernity.<sup>11</sup> Some have accused the Islamic movement of avoiding certain details, and failing to possess an elaborate program for socio-economic change. As a very short digression, I would submit that the Islamic movement has tried to offer a new intellectual, political, economic, and cultural approach. However, the level at which the Islamic movement presents its message is essentially civilizational. It is important that in this approach certain details have to be worked out and I think it is unfair to accuse the Islamic movement of ignoring that approach.

In its 'civilizational approach,' the Islamic movement has asked a number of questions: 1) what is the nature of Muslim society, and what are its religious, ethical, and cultural ingredients? 2) On what basis is society to be built? 3) What is the role of the fundamental institutions of society such as the family, mosque, local community, and *waqf* [religious endowment]? 4) What is the nature of the Islamic state and what are the essential features of an Islamic constitution and policy guidelines for a Muslim government? 5) What is the function of leadership? 6) How can the relationship with non-Muslims be constituted, and what aspects of foreign policy should the Islamic state promote? Finally, what type of economy do we envision for the Islamic state?

When examining the nature of the Islamic state, we must take seriously the nature of the Islamic economy, and the work that Muslim political scientists and economists have done during the last half century. Far from being propa-

ganda material or an articulation of wishes, this work is serious and fruitful. Although there has been much work, I think it is too much to expect, and even demand, that a detailed program should come before Muslim leadership comes to power. In my view, policymaking, social change, and socio-economic programs can be developed only through an interaction between theoretical values, principles, and ideals on the one hand, and practical realities on the other. This is not something which can be worked out in a research laboratory.

May I suggest that Adam Smith (d. 1790), the father of modern economic liberalism, does not give any detailed model in his *The Wealth of Nations*,<sup>12</sup> like those found in an average economic textbook. Neither does he spell out any details such as those one may find in an economic program. Instead, Smith only gives a fresh approach and tries to interpret the 18th century economic situation, and emphasizes the need for freedom of movement, goods and persons, international trade, protection, and market mechanism. However, David Ricardo (d. 1823) added a new dimension to the economic analysis that Smith had provided.<sup>13</sup> About 120 years after the publication of *The Wealth of Nations*, it was Alfred Marshall (d. 1924) who wrote the first textbook on economics that discusses the working of a modern economy, identifying major laws of economics and their policy implications, as also the interaction between capitalism and socialism, imperfect competition, and the role of the welfare state.<sup>14</sup> On the other hand, in the three bulky volumes of K. Marx' *Das Kapital*,<sup>15</sup> one finds certain laws of social evolution, and a plethora of material about injustices of capitalism, i.e. a charge-sheet of capitalism. Marx gives intimate details, even of what is happening to the workers in certain factories in Liverpool and Manchester. You do not even find the remotest mention of the institution of planning which became the basis of the whole socialistic system. In fact, the first reference to any program in the writings of Marx comes in critique of the economic program of the Social Democrats in Germany, known as *A critique of the Gotha Program*.

The economics of socialism was worked out in the 20th

century, in certain cases by economists Oskar Lange<sup>16</sup> (d. 1965) and Henry Dickinson<sup>17</sup> (d. 1968), who were responding to the critique of Ludwig von Mises,<sup>18</sup> and subsequently by the formulators of the Central Economic Plan in Soviet Russia, who were faced with the problem of establishing a new economy. Even after taking power, Lenin had no specific economic program. The Bolshevik revolution of 1917 was mainly a political event that sought to topple the political authority of the state. From 1923 to 1932, the Soviet state had had to rethink everything, and it was only in 1932 that the Communist Party was able to come up with that first viable five-year plan. In addition, the first textbook of the economics of socialism in Russia was published in 1928.

This is how matters articulate themselves in history. I think it is too much to expect the Islamic movement to come up with a blueprint for the future. That blueprint is not cooked in laboratories, but is worked out in the concrete workshop of society and economy. And that is what we are aiming at.

I think that we have to reflect also on the relationship of the Islamic movements with the West. First of all, there is a difficulty in terminology. In addition to being a geographic reality, the West can be seen as a concept, a notion. Also, Western civilization stands for certain values and principles that may have universal relevance. I do not deny that. However, one must be clear about the fact that as a political and economic reality, the West represents a certain dominant geographic power configuration, and, unfortunately, the West and the rest of the world have been in conflict and confrontation for the last four to five centuries.

During this period, it is the rest of the world, and particularly the Muslim world, which has been preyed upon. Whether we like it or not, our attitudes are a bit clouded by this historical context.

Islam, on the other hand, from a geographical point of view, is the majority religion in some 52 states; but Islam is not tied to any geographic landscape. It is a religion, an ideology, a civilizational approach, and a message. The

followers of Islam are spread all over the world. If there are about 800 million Muslims in Muslim majority areas, there are over 400 million Muslims in the rest of the world. Therefore, comparing Islam and the West is a complex and multidimensional endeavor.

I think that one must consider at least two dimensions of the relationship between Islam and the West. The first concerns the question of those moral values and principles that Islam stands for and those that the Western civilization stands for. There are certain areas where there is no conflict between the two, but there are certain other areas, including basic values in respect of which they differ. However, we must not look at this difference as a threat, or something that should lead to enmity or bitterness, but as an arena for healthy competition and cross-fertilization. There was a time in history when ideas and values were imposed through political power. May I submit that one of the major developments of contemporary history has been the free expression of ideas, and freedom of discussion and communication. The Helsinki Citizens' Assembly, I think, represents a very important development. In that context, we must encourage a healthy dialogue and exchange of ideas between Islam and the West.

The second dimension is the strategic, political and economic interests of both as well as the current hegemony of the Western world. In this regard, our only submission is that Islam and Islamic movements should not be looked upon primarily as a threat to the West, because the real concern of the Islamic movements is to set their own house in order. We do possess a program for remolding and refashioning society and polity, and our aim is to reconstruct Muslim society.

As mentioned above, our primary focus is setting our own house in order. Several factors shed light on our current problems: 1) the lingering shadows of colonialism; 2) the legacy of a leadership in Muslim countries whose vested interests somehow coincide with the interests of certain elements in the West; and 3) the failure of the secular leadership in the Muslim world during the last four decades to serve its own society, realize the ambitions of

its own people, be accountable to them, and ensure freedom of expression, human rights, and political participation. We stand against this type of leadership within Muslim societies, and the West must realize that how far its identification with such secular, corrupt, and autocratic regimes in the Muslim world, which are bound to fall down, is in the interests of the West. Why should the West be allergic to Islamic movements that are fighting autocratic regimes in their own homelands?

To my mind, no Muslim country, no Muslim nation, no Islamic movement is a threat to the political power of Europe, China, Japan, America or any other country. Instead, we only want the freedom of our own lands to see that the interests and the will of our people could be realized through a fair political process. As far as the strategic interests of the Western countries are concerned, whether it is oil, or air, sea and land routes, raw materials, essential commodities, and international trade, we would very much like to have a dialogue so that we can resolve conflicts through negotiation.

We are aware of the conflicts within the West. After all, America and the European Economic Community are at loggerheads over a number of issues, and America and Japan are unhappy about certain economic relations. There are difficulties between South America and North America, and between America and Canada as well. If efforts are being made to resolve all these problems through negotiation, dialogue, and accommodation and the chances of success are reasonably bright, why can't we try the same strategy with the Muslim world as well? Why should it be essential that there must be a direct military control over sources of oil? Is this the only way to ensure supplies of oil to Western countries? Third World countries, including the Muslim world, must also have the right to ask for access to Western markets for their commodities. There is a mutuality of interests to be worked out.

Some have accused the Islamic movements of having an authoritarian or Fascist character. I think that we must examine these accusations fairly and objectively. Yes, we have certain problems and reservations about Western

democracy at both the philosophical and ethical levels. Secular democracy, as it has evolved in the post-Enlightenment era, is based upon the principle of the sovereignty of man, conceptually speaking. Islam, on the other hand, believes in the sovereignty of God and vicegerency of man, the difference being that man is God's *khalifa*, or vicegerent on the earth, and not the master of the world.

As far as divine guidance is concerned, as far as the law revealed by God is concerned, these are supreme. It is only within the divine framework that man is free. One cardinal tenet of Islam is that it ensures every community under its jurisdiction, be it religious or otherwise, the principle of the rule of law, which is the life blood of democracy.

Also, the question of human rights, when it is regarded not merely as a concession from authority but as something ensured by God for all human beings, is an integral part of the Islamic system. Islam offers *shura* as a cardinal principle of consultation at all levels of society and politics. The Islamic movement in Pakistan, for example, had from the very first day stood for adult franchise, full voting rights to be enjoyed by all members of the society — men and women, Muslims and non-Muslims. We had even gone to the extent of saying that if the basic source of law is derived from the Qur'an and Sunnah, people belonging to all religions can be elected to the federal and provincial legislatures.

One must note that the Islamic movement has affirmed the principle of the accountability of the government to the people, directly as well as indirectly, through representative political institutions and a process of election. Based on principles of *hakimiyyah* of Allah (Allah's sovereignty), *shura* (counseling and consultation), and accountability, a legislature and an executive may adapt modalities in line with these principles, whatever name may be given to it. As mentioned earlier, I have reservations regarding that philosophical basis of democracy. Yet, as far as democracy operationally is concerned, the Islamic movement is committed to this principle. Many in the West have raised the



banner of danger when an Islamic movement is elected through democratic means. If the Islamic movement were to succeed in Algeria, Yemen, Turkey, or Pakistan, it is alleged that they would try to reverse the electoral process. There is no justification for such allegations or apprehensions. As a matter of fact, the democratic process was reversed by the secular leadership in Turkey, Algeria, Pakistan and elsewhere, not by the Islamic movement.

Also, in Egypt the democratic process was reversed, aborted, polluted, corrupted by the secular despotic rulers who have all the blessing of the Western democracies. Algeria has suffered the same fate recently. Yet no one in the West has condemned the military for rigging the Algerian elections. Similarly, the West does not object to dictatorship, such as the one in Indonesia, as long as Western interests are served. That is what worries us deeply. We are naturally cautious about Western calls for democracy in our countries. The West has not been consistent in supporting truly democratic regimes.

Another issue is that of terrorism. I think that all human beings, particularly those who possess an ethical worldview, can never condone terrorism. The Qur'an stipulates that killing one human being unjustly is like killing the entire human race, and saving the life of one innocent person is like the saving the entirety of humanity.<sup>19</sup> This is what I believe. In my view, Islam does not promote, encourage, or condone terrorism. Yet we are intrigued by the Western view that accuses all Muslims of terrorism on the basis of solitary events without even properly investigating terrorism's real causes and those responsible for it.

When the Islamic movements are subjected to state repression, this is not condemned in the West as terrorism. In the last 40 years, the Islamic movements have passed through different phases of state terror perpetrated by secular regimes friendly to the West. We also have the example of the right of the people of Kashmir to self-determination. It has been accepted by the Non-Aligned Movement, if a nation opts for freedom and self-determination, even if that means resorting to force, it cannot be branded terrorist. Yet some people, especially in India, have accused the people



of Kashmir of terrorism, although Kashmir remains a disputed territory and its future is yet to be decided by its people in accordance with the UN resolutions.

Terrorism is both an individual and collective act. It takes place all over the world, in the East or the West. I was reading a news report about Florida the other day in which there is mention of some 34,200 cases of murder, rape and criminal assault last year. New York's record need not be repeated. Similar things are happening in Karachi, Bombay, and other major cities in the Third World. We are sorry about that, but why should a much more generalized approach be adopted when it comes to Islam and Muslims? I think that all of us agree that wherever terrorism exists, we should comprehend the conditions that give birth to it as a means of finding lasting solutions.

In way of concluding, I would like to invite you to reflect upon the Islamic movements as concrete socio-religious and ethical movements that aim to restructure their society. I think that such scholars as John Esposito and others have rightly said that there is a variety of groups within the Islamic movement.<sup>20</sup> It is a mistake to lump all of them together. In the same vein, the West itself is not monolithic. It contains a multiplicity of groups, opinions and attitudes. Yet, there are some who try to project the Islamic movements and even Islam as a new demon, and the new international enemy in the wake of the collapse of Communism and the end of the Cold War. However, there are other people in the West who are criticizing this kind of approach and who would like to apply a more rational and sophisticated method to understand Islam and Muslims. Therefore, it is certainly wise to move away from a monolithic approach.

I would also submit that the Islamic movements have also grown and evolved. Although continuity is their major hallmark, the Islamic movements also exhibit some important differences. They are flexible. Naturally, they do not compromise principles, yet they are very flexible about their strategies, tactics, and modes of operation, and even about responding to real difficulties which they face on the ground. I would also like to emphasize that they are eager

to have dialogue with the West. They are not arrogant, and they do not opt for isolation from that world. They are cognizant of the fact that the world today is becoming one global village. We certainly have to co-exist, and this is possible only if we all apply a humanistic approach to our political, intellectual, economic, and social problems. I, therefore, submit in all humility that Islam, from the very beginning, has adopted a pluralistic approach to the world and its people. While the Qur'an claims to be the truth, it also claims that all God's Prophets bore the same message, whether or not their names are given in the Qur'an. God has given individuals the freedom to deny His existence, and those who deny God's existence ought to have an equal right to live, although, from an Islamic standpoint, they will suffer in the afterworld for what they did. God has guaranteed the freedom of people to say no even to Him, and as such the Islamic approach is pluralistic in nature. Islam also accepts 'The People of the Book,' i.e. Jews and Christians, as being very close to Muslims and as having a special relationship on at least two levels: marriage and food-sharing. Islam accepts the fact that a Muslim family can have a non-Muslim member without forcing her to change her religion. Food-sharing is also permissible. This is definitely part of the Islamic pluralistic approach.

I also think that Muslims are pluralistic when it comes to political and economic issues and questions. The idea that one monolithic system, culture, or civilization plays a dominant role in world affairs does smack of imperialism. The end of Cold War does not mean birth of a unipolar world and the final victory of Western liberalism and consequent 'end of history.'<sup>21</sup> This is what we hear today in certain parts of the Western world. I believe that a more pluralistic approach from our side, and from the side of the Western countries, would perhaps make the world a better place to live in. This is the message I would like to convey to this Roundtable. Thank you.

## NOTES

- 1 K. Marx and F. Engels, *Collected Works*, vol. 6 (New York: International Publishers, 1976) 481.
- 2 Consider the following verse: "God did confer a great favor on the Believers when He sent among them a Messenger from among themselves, conveying unto them (His Message) the Signs of God, purifying them, and instructing them in Scripture and Wisdom, while, before that, they had been in manifest error." (Qur'an, 3: 164)
- 3 On the meaning of Ummah, see Abdallah Ahsan, *Ummah or Nation?: Identity Crisis in the Modern Muslim World* (Leicester: The Islamic Foundation, 1991).
- 4 See Muhammad Iqbal, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, ed., M. Saeed Sheikh (Lahore: Institute of Islamic Culture, 1986).
- 5 See K. Ahmad and Z. I. Ansari, eds., *Islamic Perspectives: Studies in Honor of Sayyid Abu A'la Mawdudi* (Leicester: The Islamic Foundation, 1979).
- 6 See H. Banna, *Memoirs of Hasan al-Banna*, tr. M. N. Shaikh (Karachi: International Islamic Publishers, 1981).
- 7 See Malek Bennabi, *Islam in History and Society*, tr. Asma Rashid (Islamabad: Islamic Research Institute, 1988), and F. M. Bariun, *Malek Bannabi's Life and Theory of Civilization*, PhD Dissertation (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan, 1988).
- 8 See, Serif Mardin, *Religion and Social Change in Modern Turkey: The Case of Badiuzzaman Said Nursi* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989), and Bilinmeyen Taraflariyla Badiuzzaman Said Nursi Necmeddin Sahiner (Istanbul: Guryay Mat., 1979).
- 9 For an elaboration on this subject, see G. Vattimo, *The End of Modernity: Nihilism and Hermeneutics in Post-modern Culture* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988).
- 10 On 'Islamic modernism,' see F. Rahman, *Islam and Modernity: Transformation of an Intellectual Tradition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982).
- 11 On modernity, see M. Berman, *All That is Solid Melts Into Air: The Experience of Modernity* (New York: Penguin, 1988).
- 12 A. Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (London: 1776).
- 13 David Ricardo, *On the Principles of Political Economy and Taxation* (London: 1821).
- 14 Alfred Marshall, *Principles of Economics* (London: 1890).

- 15 K. Marx, *Das Kapital* (New York: Vintage Books, 1977).
- 16 Oskar Lange, *The Political Economy of Socialism* (London: 1958). See also: Oskar Lange, and Fred M. Taylor, *On the Economic Theory of Socialism* (University of Minnesota Press, 1938).
- 17 Henry Dickinson, *Economics of Socialism* (London: Oxford University Press, 1939).
- 18 Ludwig von Mises, *Socialism*, tr. J. Kahana (London: 1951, First edition, 1936).
- 19 "On that account: We ordained for the Children of Israel that if anyone slew a person — unless it be for murder or for spreading mischief in the land — it would be as if he slew the whole people: And if anyone saved a life, it would be as if he saved the life of the whole people." (Qur'an, 5: 32).
- 20 See, John L. Esposito, *The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality?* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992); John Voll, "Fundamentalism in the Sunni Arab World: Egypt and the Sudan," in *Fundamentalisms Observed*, ed., Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), and Bassam Tibi, "The Worldview of Sunni Arab Fundamentalists: Attitudes Toward Modern Science and Technology," in *Fundamentalism and Society: Reclaiming the Sciences, the Family, and Education*, eds., Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1993).
- 21 Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (New York: Avon Books, 1992).

## ISLAMIC CONCEPTION OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND MODERNIZATION

**L**OUIS CANTORI: Many of us here are social scientists. However, we are all aware of the diversity and complexity of the internal discussion within Islam, especially as we live the experience of the Islamic revival. It is rather very important that we have meetings and conversations of this kind. I am struck, for example, by the high level and sobriety of discussion that Muslim and Western scholars have about Islam and the West, etc. So this is my way of paying a tribute to WISE and the common aspect that we are involved in here today. What we thought we would do for the rest of the program today is the following: we would see if we could structure our discussion according to particular topics. The first topic that we would like to turn to this morning is 'the Islamic conception of economic development and modernization.' I am encouraging you to perhaps even make a note of the things I am saying because it was not possible to put these ideas into the printed program.

The second topic would be to compare the Islamic movements of the 1950s to those of the 1990s, and cover essentially pre-Islamic revival and post- or present Islamic revival, Islamic organizations, similarities, differences and themes, and that kind of thing. The third topic concerns

the future of Islamic minorities in Western countries. This kind of topic, I think, is appropriate to the concerns of the Islamic community in Tampa and the United States, and also in the Western world. Finally, we will have an opportunity for more general discussion in our last session this afternoon, and this might take us to the field of Islamic states and international relations. Now it is not entirely clear how we might proceed, but I would like to suggest that perhaps our honored guest would begin each topic by offering some general remarks. I thought what we might do is to begin with the subject of the Islamic concept of economic development and modernization, and ask Dr Khurshid Ahmad whether he would like to make perhaps a few remarks about this and then give everyone in the room an opportunity to ask questions so that we can begin to promote some discussion here.

**KHURSHID AHMAD:** Thank you very much. In terms of the Islamic view of economic development and modernization, I have written about half a dozen articles, and I would very quickly summarize by saying that the Islamic concept of development is more comprehensive than the more limited notion of economic development as may be found in the literature. Because Islam believes in integrated development, i.e. moral, social, political, and economic development, it definitely takes economic factors into account. Muslim economists would like to move away from an economic approach that dwells on abstraction and obsession with the GNP growth to one that is more comprehensive and problem-oriented.

In order to better understand the current economic situation in the Third World, one must come to grips with the following: 1) a domestic gap in savings and investment; and 2) a gap in the 'balance of payments' between total receipts and total capacity to mobilize resources from abroad. Some thought that these gaps could be backed by foreign aid. Consequently, all Third World countries in the last four decades have been obsessed with the ideal of debt-based growth, and the result is that we are groaning under mountains of debt, and little or no development in

the land. As a result, a real take-off has not occurred in most of our countries.

The half dozen showpieces of Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore and Korea do not really represent the mainstream of the Third World problem. So our second submission is that we want to move away from this debt-based growth strategy by presenting the idea of equity-based financing which would be more directly related to investment in projects and sharing of profit and loss. Furthermore, we believe in a more decentralized model, where a few islands of development in an ocean of underdevelopment should not occur. Instead, it should be more balanced, integrated, and diffused. We also believe in a man-centered development, that leads to real improvement in the quality of life. We also believe that development is a multidimensional process, taking care of not only economic but also social and political dimensions. In fact, equity and justice are central to Islamic economics and not peripheral or consequential, as with the Western economics.

Muslim economists have emphasized these major elements. We do believe in modernization, and, in our view, modernization does not simply mean Westernization. Economic development is also not equivalent to mere industrialization. So with these views in mind, we want to have a very fresh look at the whole problem of economic development which should lead to more equitable distribution along with the expansion of the economy. We Muslim economists think that the capitalistic approach has failed to address the issue of equity, and, in our view, equitable distribution is as important for economic development and diffused prosperity as efforts to increase production and mobilize resources.

**VINCENT CORNELL:** I have two questions in regard to the issue of so-called Islamic economics and economic development in the Muslim world. One is theoretical and the other is practical. First of all, I listened with great interest to your presentation, and I have to agree with your comments on Adam Smith and your quick overview of the de-



velopment of economic theory. I think it is often forgotten nowadays that people like Adam Smith were philosophers and not econometricians, and what the early economic theorists were trying to do was to develop a philosophy of social life based on a sort of utilitarian set of ideals. What bothers me, however, is that when I read, not particularly your writings, but the writings of other people who have worked in Islamic economics, I discover a lot of econometric models, which seem, to a certain extent, to detract from the general philosophic principles of social justice that you have enunciated. And in line with some of these issues, I would like to say that Islamic *fiqh* has dealt with what some today call 'Islamic economic questions.' In your talk, you stressed the fossilization of many of the ulema's concepts, and I presume you were talking about *taqlid* here, or what one might call 'the doctrine of conformity,' the idea that once *ijma'* [consensus] is created, it can no longer be changed. It seems to me that people tend to forget that *madhhab* in Islamic law does not mean sect primarily, but methodology, and a way of proceeding. I think that the value of *fiqh* stems from its ability to provide methodologies for dealing with precisely the practical problems that you have addressed here, and that you deal within your work. Would you see a place for *fiqh* as an active, and innovative institution in dealing with economic questions, or do you feel that the question of Islamic economics has to divorce itself from *fiqh*?

**KHURSHID AHMAD:** I agree with you that *madhhab* and *fiqh* primarily represent methodologies, and even when it is said that once *ijma'* has been arrived at, and is final, there is a rider to that. *Ijma'* is multidimensional, and one form of *ijma'* can be replaced by another of the same or higher level. So what is of concern to us is the question of methodology.

As far as your observation on some writings in the field of economic analysis is concerned, I agree with you. Some of our colleagues have very quickly gone over to econometric approaches. Although econometrics is no substitute for economic thought, it is the language through which we

are in a position to establish close consistencies in a much better form. But I think a reasonable amount of literature is available on economic philosophy, and we have tried to spell out our premises, assumptions, and the principles which would guide us against the engineering approach of economics which has become more common in the contemporary world, particularly in neo-classical and Keynesian economics. Our approach is more institutional, more holistic and more philosophic. We do not deny the use of mathematical and econometrical tools and models, but we do believe that first things should come first, and in this respect *fiqh* is one of the major sources of Islamic economics. The other source is theology. Yet Islamic economics is not a branch of either theology or law. However, by drawing upon both these sources, we are trying to build our own premises, principles, objectives, goals, strategies, and then to derive from them a network of laws, rules, and policy implications. That is how we are trying to approach the subject of Islamic economics.

VINCENT CORNELL: In my own teaching as a Professor of Religion, although I deal quite often with economic, social, and civilizational issues in the sense that you have discussed, I think in the field of religious studies, one of the things we have learned is that even with a Scripture that everyone agrees with, and that about which there is no difference of opinion, the devil is in the details and the devil is in the application, as we say in the United States. In other words, Scripture can be turned into almost anything, depending on what people tend to do with it. To my mind, it is important to stress that Muslims do the defining of Islam, and that definition can change in important ways. This comes up in the question of economics, time and time again. For example, a lot of writing on Islamic economics has been devoted to Mudaraba financing<sup>1</sup>, which is basically venture capital financing for want of a better term, and it strikes me as interesting that most of the articles I have read about it in a modern context ignore the checks and balances that were put on it in the medieval period. There seems to be an assumption that once an Islamic economic system is established, somehow

the faith of people is going to ensure that that system is going to be operated equitably and honestly, and the whole concept of checks and balances seems to be lost. Other practical questions that have come up on the part of people who are critical of Islamic economics again also have to do with the question of the regulation of the system. As you know, many Islamic financial institutions have gone under in recent years — some have gone under because of under-capitalization, others because of misappropriation of funds on the part of the governing boards. It is clear that the question of regulation is extremely important to Western economic specialists, specially the governmental economists. It is often advanced that, for example, one of the reasons why the interest-based banking system is so important is that the government can control and regulate the economic affairs of the country by manipulating the interest rate, and also by controlling the supply of money. Those who know economics well and who are not familiar with Islam tend to ask the following: what sort of provisions are there in models of Islamic economics for governmental regulation, governmental control of the money supply, governmental control of the economic activities of the state? And is it possible to ensure fairness and equitability for the people who work within the system as a whole?

**KHURSHID AHMAD:** To answer these two practical questions, let me begin with the issue of Mudaraba, which means participation between capital and entrepreneurship in such a manner that they gain in profit, but the loss is to be borne by the financier and not the entrepreneur, save his own loss of time and expected income. There are about twelve other forms of financing in addition to Mudaraba. One of them is Musharaka, where profits and losses are shared. Islam has given a number of modes of financing, each of which has certain distinctions or peculiarities, and functions. I would like to submit that there are certain safeguards built into it, both at the legal (*fiqh*) level as well as the contemporary practice. Both Pakistan and Iran have passed the Mudaraba law, and built into this law checks and balances. In Pakistan, there is a Corporate Law Authority which oversees the operation of all Mudarabas,

and receives annual reports of every Mudarabat. We have also made an innovation that while Mudaraba members are not like members of a joint stock company, the performance of the Mudaraba must be shared, especially in relation to knowledge and information.

The preceding discussion brings us to the question of regulation. Let me be very clear that while Islam provides for freedom of enterprise, private ownership, and a market mechanism as the main mechanism for economic decision-making, it creates a moral filter for the market. That moral filter is not left to the conscience of the individual, although we expect this conscience to be more effective than in a system where moral values are totally ignored. It seems to me that correct behavior must be observed, since we are dealing with a question of behavior. I would also remind you that the institution of *hisba*,<sup>2</sup> introduced in Islam's early days, was a kind of mechanism for the regulation and supervision of market activities. Over the ages, this institution developed and performed a very important role. Along with that, the Islamic state also has the power to intervene in certain cases where injustice is being done.

**ABDELWAHAB HECHICHE:** I would like to ask about the difference that you may see between the recent speeches by His Holiness the Pope against greedy capitalism, speeches made in Africa and Latin America, and the essence of your message about economic development, and in particular the last notion of the filter in regulation by the state. As a Muslim trying to be a student of Islam in recent years, I would like also to raise the issue of Zakat. Is there a dialectical relationship between Zakat, as a permanent human duty, and social classes in Muslim society? When speaking of Islamic resurgence and economics, is there really a school of Muslim economic thought today? Many seminars, supported by some international financial institutions, have been held in Kuwait lately. My question concerns the planners of these economic seminars: are they really thinking as Muslims first, or are they again Westernized thinkers who are struggling to find some authenticity in traditional Islamic thought for

economic development?

**KHURSHID AHMAD:** There is definitely a great similarity as well as convergence between the thinking of the Pope on economic issues and our thinking. One might also note the writing of liberation theologians of Latin America on socio-economic issue.<sup>3</sup> Recently at Cambridge University, a professor introduced a seminar on moral and religious influence on economic policymaking. I think we agree with Christian theologians on the idea that economics is not value-neutral, and that ethics and moral values and religious values do influence and shape economic values and economic principles. In the case of Islam, however, we move beyond general influence to certain specific rules, principles and even institutions, and I look towards Christian economists as partners and colleagues and not as rivals in this effect. I have recently participated in some of their programs. Christian economists have set up an economic foundation in England. They emphasize that greed or utilitarianism has gone too far in capitalism, and some kind of moral restraint and filter deserves to be applied. Two years ago, simultaneous with an IMF conference of finance ministers, there was another conference of one hundred economists and theologians addressing themselves to these very problems of social equity, ecological crises, and poverty and affluence. These are areas where we have common concern and we want to share our approach with people of other religious traditions.

In terms of Zakat, I look upon it slightly differently. Zakat, far from perpetuating inequalities, is a system in which the redistribution of wealth takes place as a continuous process. Zakat serves two primary functions: 1) it promotes investment; and 2) it redistributes wealth. The system of Zakat makes sure that wealth moves into circulation. If it does not, that wealth will not be invested, and, consequently, it will deplete itself. Zakat transfers wealth from the rich to the poor, which also means it creates purchasing power at the lower levels of the society, which again has an effect on investment in the economy. It is clear in the Qur'an that this question of concentration of

wealth in a few hands is not consistent with the Islamic value framework. Therefore, Islamic economics looks at Zakat as a mechanism for egalitarian distribution, and for creating a simultaneous demand for investment that would ensure a much more balanced growth for the economy — a growth that is equitable in character.

**ABDELWAHAB HECHICHE:** Mr Chairman, a brief follow-up to catch the thought of our distinguished guest. Would you see the Marshall Plan or today's pressure to assist Russia economically independent of any ideological implications?

**KHURSHID AHMAD:** I am in favor of a global sharing. In my opinion, the Marshall Plan and the recent aid strategies are very different. The aim of the Marshall Plan was to meet the devastation caused by World War II in Europe. Europe, which had a high degree of human capital, expertise, technology, and experience, was in need of physical capital, and that transfer enabled Europeans to come out of that crisis very quickly. The problems of contemporary Russia are more structural. Russia bears the burden of \$70 billion in debt, and the foreign aid it is receiving is not on the lines of the Marshall Plan. Russia does receive interest-based loans, and is allowed to restructure earlier loans, but I do not see any possibility of creating a capacity in Russia where they would, on the one hand, be able to order their economy, and, on the other, generate resources to pay back this interest and capital in the future.

**ILIYA HARIK:** I first want to thank Dr Khurshid for his very enlightening statement and also for a very progressive, humanistic interpretation of Islamic resurgence, especially in that he has informed us that every person has a right to decide for himself, he has a right to be an atheist and that he has the freedom to think in the ways he considers in this world as responsible. In this spirit, I take advantage of what he has said, and would like to raise a question, not in a hostile way but in a spirit that seeks information and clarity. I remember being involved, a few



years ago, with a number of colleagues who were trying to define an 'Arab sociology.' They spent two days in a very wonderful isolated Italian mansion and produced a book on it. I still do not know whether science has a nationality, neither do I understand how sociology could have a nationality any more than economics have a religion. So when we speak, and I think this is still not that clear, of 'Islamic economics,' is there really an Islamic science of economics? In what way? There are certain aspects which disturb me, and I do not think Muslims would want to be in that situation. Let me clarify. The discipline of economics or sociology or any of these empirical sciences is a system of statements that are subject to being true or false. Religion, on the other hand, is a system of statements, a system of normative statements, that is not subject to being true or false. Now, if we mix these two together and say yes, Islam is a scientific system of economics, then we are putting it in a vulnerable situation where we might have to say that if this is Islamic economics, it is wrong, it is false, and it is making false statements. Religion is not open for that kind of treatment. This is like putting yourself in the place of the Pope and no scientist would want to do it. Of course, as social scientists, we all know that we differ a great deal and we make statements that do not hold up, and so I am concerned that this is not exactly what Islam wants for itself. We all know that economics is not a perfect science, and that also if we say that there is an Islamic science which is imperfect, then we are also putting Islam in a vulnerable situation.

Now, there are two things I need an answer for. The first concerns the question of 'what is Islamic?', and whether or not what Muslims think, believe, and do is Islamic. This is in line with what Professor Vincent Cornell has been talking about. The second relates to Islam as a religion that has something to say about what is ethically acceptable or not acceptable in the economic behavior of societies. That you may call it an Islamic science of economics is fine. It seems to me it is more consistent with the spirit of Islam and with the level of Islam that there is a science in Islam which we do not really find in the text, nor do I, according to my understanding of social



science, would want put in that vulnerable human position. So I would appreciate it very much, as a social scientist myself, if you could explain to us this anomaly.

**KHURSHID AHMAD:** Thank you very much. I think this is an important question. If I can be permitted to make a value judgement, I am grateful to you, and I fully appreciate your question. Now my problem is that we, who have been brought up in the tradition of the social sciences as they have grown over the last 200 years, have become prisoner to our methodology, while we in all humility are trying to challenge that methodology and may enrich that methodology with fresh perspectives.

Now the whole development of the Western social sciences has taken place under the shadow of the development of the natural sciences, and, almost in certain cases unthinkingly, the methodology of natural sciences has been extended to social sciences under the assumption that this makes social science more scientific, empirical, and pragmatic, etc. I think we have to stop here and reflect on the nature of the social sciences. In social science, we deal with human behavior. Human beings have their own will, volition, choice, motivation, perception, options. The human model is different from that of physics of the mid-19th century. Unfortunately, whether it is economics or sociology, or even psychology, behaviorism has developed into an unthinking extension of the methodology which characterizes the natural sciences. Even political philosophy has now become an exercise in political behavior. We are challenging this whole methodology as applied to the social sciences. We do not say that the empirical method is wrong; we regard it to be an important method. But it is only one method, not the only method. We believe that one must take both the positive and normative aspects of the social sciences into account. Some of us become over-obsessed with the positive aspects, and we tend to ignore the normative aspects. In terms of 'Arab sociology,' may I submit that even if you consider the definition of sociology, you will find more than 200 possible approaches. As for the question of culture, the definition of culture, you

will find hundreds of definitions, all at variance with each other. So I think that we must have a more comprehensive, more holistic approach to the study of human behavior, social sciences, and particularly economics. For example, one would find that Greek economics was a part of the total study of humankind. Also, Adam Smith wrote *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*<sup>4</sup> before he did *The Wealth of Nations*.<sup>5</sup> His basic contribution lies in the definition of prudence, and from prudence he arrives at his utility function. Now we ignore the prudence aspect, we can abstract only the utilitarian aspect. Even Marshall had to say that 'economics is a science of wealth,' but more important it is 'a study of man.' We forget, however, that economics is the science of humankind, and the entire methodology of science, particularly the neo-classical and the Keynesian, has forgotten that aspect altogether. Some economists have started to see a link between economic behavior and human motivation, as well as between economic values and ethical norms.<sup>6</sup>

Even in contemporary economics, we find that the question of 'economic rights' may occur, although not as a question of behavior. 'Economic rights' means that there are certain values, such as the question of economic freedom, that have to be accepted as a basis. The psychological school of economics in Holland, for example, believes that the standard economic perception of man as being motivated only by pecuniary considerations is incorrect. It reveals only a part of man. Man is also motivated by altruism. Altruism is as valid as pecuniary gain and loss. A certain methodology is required to study altruism in order to widen and enrich our perspective. This is not to negate the scientific method, but with this methodology, we are making it more scientific, more realistic, more human, down to earth. Our methodology represents an Islamic perspective on economics, sociology, psychology, and the social sciences in general. The Qur'an gives us an approach, a certain set of normative values. When we study economics, we offer both the normative and the positive perspectives. Of course, there are variations, and sometimes even failures. But we are not worried about that, mainly because religion is not something to be kept in an ivory

tower. To our mind, religion is not merely something metaphysical; it deals with human beings, their achievements and failings, and successes and setbacks. That does not falsify our religion. We have that confidence that as far as basic values and approaches are concerned, they are there because they represent values and truths that must be translated into behavior, activity, program and policies. We may go wrong in this practical activity, and that is when we start to re-evaluate matters from both perspectives, and ensure they agree with the norms.

Islamic economics is a social and human phenomenon that can have its variations, even its failings, as well as its successes. We draw upon both norms or values and experience. The normative and the pragmatic are intertwined. And even in contemporary social sciences we find a number of Western economists who are beginning to appreciate the need and usefulness of this perspective.

We believe that Islamic economics has both pragmatic and value-based dimensions, and, in this regard, I would like to take up that part of the question posed earlier by Professor Hechiche. In my humble view, Islamic economics is becoming a school of thought. It is true that, originally, it was the *fuqaha* and the ulema who wrote on economics. This we find from the mid-19th century roughly to the Second World War and after. They were nonprofessional economists, yet they were expounding the economic teachings of the Qur'an and Sunnah. During the last 50 years or so, we find that professional Muslim economists, drawing upon these sources, including the Qur'an and Sunnah, have erected the foundations for a nascent discipline, which can be described as Islamic economics. This discipline is still in the process of growth. We have established an International Association for Islamic Economics which has about 300 members, all professional economists, and we produce a biannual journal, *Review of the Islamic Economics*. There are other journals of Islamic economics, about half a dozen of them, from different universities of the world. There are about 40 universities that offer courses in Islamic economics. The flow of literature on the subject is increasing. During the last 50 years, over one thousand books and scholarly articles have

been published on different aspects of Islamic economics. Islamic economics is a discipline that is still in its early stage of growth.

**MICHAEL HUDSON:** The issues that have been raised by Professor Khurshid Ahmad in his prepared speech and the answers he has given to the questions that have come along so far are all very stimulating and arouse endless but interesting debates. Let me, before I ask my question, just comment on the last exchange. It seems to me that I feel basically akin to Professor Harik in his comment, and I must say I feel a certain skepticism about assigning national or religious or cultural adjectives or labels to scientific disciplines, whether it be Arab sociology or political science, or whether it be a Christian or Islamic economics. That is not because of any sort of inherent value or ideological disagreement with anybody; it is just that religion does one thing and social sciences do something else. I think that one has to distinguish between enterprises that try to explain why things happen and how as opposed to other enterprises that try to advocate and bring about how things *should* happen. Certainly not only Muslim scholars but many other people with values and programs that they want to promote use, and quite properly so, the tools of economics to promote and advocate certain situations.

I would tend to think that the argument as to whether one ought to, or, in fact, one actually is building an alternative science is an interesting argument, but not necessarily one that one should spend a great deal of time arguing about. I would like with that thought to raise a more practical kind of question which has to do with the values, both economic and developmental, which we spoke about in both your prepared and subsequent remarks. I want to put this in perhaps an exaggerated way, reflecting what is undoubtedly a certain amount of ignorance on my part as to the interplay between economic theory and practice among Islamic thinkers. I would submit that there is a certain tension between the developmental values that are enshrined in the term 'equity' that you used and the basic structure of economic behavior in the Islamic movement.

While the following may be a caricature of the situation, it seems to me that one might argue that the goals differ rather substantially from actual behavior. I am struck, for example, that there seems to be a certain tension between the goal of equity, on the one hand, and your statement that Islam is perfectly happy with the market mechanism, on the other.

It seems to me that in the present circumstances, the new economic development orthodoxy is actually an old one, which goes back to neo-classical conceptions that abandon earlier developmental philosophy rooted in socialism. It is surprising to me that the Islamic movement does not come out more strongly against the neo-classical orthodoxy of trickled-down market forces. Yet, I do not see in the Islamic thinking on this subject the kind of sharp objection to the neo-classical orthodoxy of the IMF and the World Bank that one would have expected. On the political level, this is also reflected in something that is not there, though one might have thought it would be: why is there not more of a coalition between Islamic political thinkers and the poor and those that speak for the poor? Why are there not more Islamic socialist parties in the Middle East? Why does it appear that the rules that are laid down by the international economic community are perfectly acceptable by many a Muslim party and thinker? I do not know that the Islamic Nahda Movement in Tunisia, the Sudanese leaders, or the Jordanian Muslim brothers are known to be socialists, or campaigners for equity or challengers to the prevailing economic order. So I would be interested to be corrected on this point if I have misread the situation entirely.

**LOUIS CANTORI:** I would like to have an opportunity to make some comments. Not for the first time, nor do I hope for the last time, I must disagree with my two friends and colleagues, Iliya and Michael. In placing my remark in a philosophical perspective, I would argue that, in fact, the critical literature in the social sciences is based on a certain epistemology. The epistemology of the Enlightenment emphasizes individualism, rationality, and,

most importantly, secularism. And so the issue of whether or not there can be an Islamic economics, I am speaking personally now, is clear, and that is yes. What is passed off as the science of economics is really Western economics with all these Enlightenment assumptions. That does not mean it is not valid, but it does mean that it has its own epistemology and philosophical orientation. So as I understand the question of Islamic economics, it is simply a question of realizing it at this stage in history. I have to acknowledge Khurshid Ahmad's earlier writings back in the 1960s, when in fact this is exactly what he was saying. The question then is: how do we talk about the principles of the market, the laws of supply and demand within an ethical and philosophical framework? It seems to me that Islamic economics is simply an effort to formulate a more human-oriented and society-oriented economics that wants to deny the excessiveness of individualism within classical economics, and that is just simply an interesting debate and discussion.

**KHURSHID AHMAD:** I am very grateful for the support you have shown for me. We speak of Western economics as a science, a universal economics, economics which should not be polluted by so-called nationalistic or ideological or religious or ethical influences. The basic premise of economics is that the individual is motivated by considerations of material and pecuniary gains and loss. And all this behavior can be understood and has to be understood in this framework. The basic rule of economics is that there are theories of demand, consumption, and market; there is both consumption and production. All economic policymaking has to be geared to the question of pecuniary motivation. My question relates to the utilitarian and secularist philosophy of the Enlightenment and post-Enlightenment which has been incorporated into economics as a science, but which, in fact, is not proved to be the norm of human behavior. To deny it would be stupid, but to assume that there are no other motivations and considerations is no less a fallacy.<sup>7</sup>

I think something is wrong with the way we have been



approaching the subject, and that is why, in our view, the philosophical basis of economics deserves to be re-examined and restructured. Islamic economics presents such an approach, and it is as scientific as socialist economics, which tried to move away from individual to social motivation. The socialist ideal was not maximization of personal gain, but that of national production and national power. Also, within the framework of Western institutional economics and Western bourgeois economics, especially Keynesian economics<sup>8</sup>, there is a move away from an individualistic framework to that of the public sector and public services. In my view, these philosophical and pragmatic dimensions had been fused together until the Depression of 1929-32. The Depression generated two approaches: first, that of L. Robbins<sup>9</sup> and the neo-classicists who tried to salvage economics from the morass of capitalism. They maintained that 'economics is a science, which has its own rules and validity, and is not to be judged on the basis of the results only.' Second, Keynes tried to salvage capitalism by presenting an economic approach that departed from the classical and neo-classical economic thinking. This approach had a more pragmatic, philosophical, and normative dimension. These two developments within the mainstream of economics indicate that the normative dimension cannot be totally ignored.

Our problem is that we are trying to identify the normative in more comprehensive and clearer terms by focusing on their philosophical and epistemological roots and foundations. Also, we are articulating our assumptions, and premises, and do not shy away from examining and reviewing these assumption and premises. I think this approach is far more scientific than the alleged scientific approach of Western bourgeois economics which is guilty of hiding its value assumptions and politico-cultural premises.<sup>10</sup>

Coming back to the factual position, may I submit that we do not believe in the so-called liberal market approach to economics. Our concept of market economy, as I have already mentioned, is conditioned by two very important considerations: 1) the moral filter which affects motivation,



behavior, and even law; and 2) the intervention of the state. To be sure, we do not want the state to take over economic functions, save in exceptional circumstances. The question is that of equitable distribution. Islamic economists and Islamic parties in their manifestoes and writings have articulated these principles repeatedly. It is worthwhile to consult the economic programs of the following Islamic parties and organizations: the Jamaat-i-Islami in Pakistan, the Muslim Brotherhood in the Arab world, the National Islamic Front of Syria, and the Islamic Tendency Movement in Tunisia, FIS in Algeria, etc. These programs have clearly stated that there would be a social dimension, equity, distributive justice, and, where the market fails, the state would have to play a positive role. This view is also articulated by the 1992 Report of the World Bank, which stipulates very clearly that while the market mechanism may be the main mechanism, the state will have to play a positive role in order to ensure justice and development. Also, the recent Club of Rome report makes it very clear that the market mechanism has to be supplemented by these social considerations and it is only a mix of the two that can ensure development with justice.<sup>11</sup> This is the same approach the Islamic movements have adopted.

**JAMIL JREISAT:** I think I will be ploughing over the same ground once more, and it is interesting to raise these questions with you, because you had been involved as Minister for National Planning, and that is why I would like to ask a very specific question in the same terrain. It is a fact that developing countries, according to the World Bank, owe \$1.35 trillion in debt at present. Many of these countries, which happen to be Muslim countries, would not reveal the extent of borrowing from the industrial world. Also it is a fact that the net negative transfer of resources from developing countries to the developed industrial world is alarming. This is causing developmental efforts to falter, a major factor really in the failure of a lot of the developmental activities in developing countries. The answer that you and other Muslim economists give, as a means of responding to this situation, is not new. Comprehensive and people-centered development is uni-

versally accepted. Also, self-reliance, equity, and similar values are universal. They are neither Western nor Muslim in nature. So the question revolves around political change. As you have mentioned in your presentation, Lenin did not have an economic blueprint. He opted for political change, and he even did not offer an elaborate plan for the economy of Russia or the Soviet Union later on. We have heard the saying that 'the devil is in the detail,' and 'the devil is in the application,' and my question is: if you were the head of a Muslim state, if you were the head of Pakistan today, faced with a bill for billions of dollars of payments as well as conditions of high poverty and low productivity, what would you do to break out of this cycle? What Islamic principles would you apply? How would your strategies be different, let us say, from those of Argentina that is facing similar problems and dilemmas? What would you do that would be different?

**KHURSHID AHMAD:** Thank you very much, Jamil. I think this is a crucial question. I think that whether we look upon the subject from a purely theoretical perspective, or a practical one, we must face this type of situation in the Third World. Both Muslim and non-Muslim countries face problems stemming from poverty or national debt. The difference would be in the philosophical and ethical dimensions of the state. I am grateful that you brought up the debt issue, since it is of critical importance. It is true that Third World countries are suffering because of this \$1.3 trillion, but we must not forget that the most indebted country of the world is the United States of America. The total national debt of America around the turn of the century was \$1 billion. If I remember correctly, Abraham Lincoln had said earlier that 'I would not go for a debt-based strategy, instead I would go for Green Paper.' Instead, the States adopted a different strategy, and the result is that today the domestic debt of the United States is around \$3 trillion plus \$1 trillion in international debt.

It is clear that the whole Third World faces a pervasive crisis because of annual debt-servicing, which is perforce a

drain on development, as well as having an adverse effect on equity and social services. There must be some kind of a disengagement, and shock treatment would be unavoidable. In Pakistan, for example, although our international indebtedness of \$22 billion is not as bad as that of Egypt, our debt repayment is about \$2 billion every year, and the total aid we receive is now less than that. So there is a reversal, and, unfortunately, there is an even greater domestic debt. Around 28 per cent of the total budget goes exclusively for debt-servicing, 40 per cent goes for defense, and what is left for social services? This presents a dilemma, and unless we can somehow break from this, even for a short period, the economy cannot move and cannot grow. When I was Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission in Pakistan, we prepared a plan to begin some restructuring. It was clear that we would need three to five years in order to move the economy forward and begin to generate the capacity to pay our debt back. That is why the model on which we want to finance in the future is not an interest-based debt model, but a model where domestic and international resources would be mobilized on a basis of real equity-sharing. I think this is a workable model.

To clarify some of the above points, let us take a look at the Sudan. When the Islamic movement came to power, it realized that the real problem facing the country was food shortages. The government prepared a three-year program for self-reliance in food, and within three years they were able to produce enough food, not only to meet all their domestic needs, but to build a capacity for export. But now their problem is that they are being denied resources, not only foreign investment, but even oil. So these types of external influences are undoing some of the good work they have done. But they have come up with an Islamic program that provides ethical and ideological motivations.

We in the Islamic movement would avoid interest and try to seek alternate modes of financing. Equitable distribution is an integral part of our program. We will not wait for that until the country develops fully, but we would make sure that, from the very beginning, there would be a more equitable sharing of resources. That is why in the

Sudan, the Islamic banks have given priority to small businessmen and co-operatives on the basis of equity-sharing.

**CHARLES BUTTERWORTH:** Thank you very much for being so candid in your replies, and I would like to push the dialogue that you initiated one step further. I would like to remind you, however, that sometimes when a dialogue becomes very interesting, the questions become more pointed. So if my question is pointed, it is only because I think that you are saying some very interesting things. I notice that there is a difference in language between yourself and some of the people who have asked questions, especially Iliya Harik and Michael Hudson. Both spoke a kind of language which was couched in terms of reason, and when you replied you spoke a language that was couched in terms of belief. Now that is precisely the gap that they tried to point to. When people try to think through a problem, they give the best reasons they can for what they say, and that is what we are trying to draw out of you. It seems to me that to point to something like the Enlightenment, and to identify it as an epistemology, is not to say that it is erroneous. One has to say why it is erroneous. And so I have two or three questions as follows. I was intrigued by your reference to Greek economics, and wondered what you meant by that. As I think about Greek economics, I think of somebody like Aristotle, and I remember that when he spoke of economics, he spoke of the notion that one had to use all tools possible, even human tools, and he spoke of using human beings in ways that we would now reject. So if we applied Greek economics because it had a holistic sense, we have to somehow think about why we would reject other aspects of Greek economics. Then, in terms of Adam Smith and capitalism, may I remind you of something that is very important. The image that Adam Smith starts with is an image of the Indian chieftain, the American Indian chieftain wrapped in his glory, and honored by his poverty-stricken people. So what Smith is going to do is to bring to human beings a means of overcoming that poverty. I think that what Smith is trying to do is speak about human nature. How do you motivate human beings to

work successfully? He speaks about the organization of work, division of labor, and exploitation of nature. Now, in terms of Islamic economics, what things would the Islamic program accept or reject? How do we understand Adam Smith and capitalism?

**KHURSHID AHMAD:** I know we have to live with these questions, and perhaps die with them, yet I think we cannot but face them. I would once again submit that our languages are not that different. My own training has also been that of a social scientist. I have taught economics as a discipline at different levels, and presented it as given wisdom. Yet may I ask this very pointed question: why is it that the panacea that man is motivated by pecuniary gain alone and all decision-making is controlled by this consideration, be treated reason and not belief? It is as much a belief as perhaps it is reason, and my only submission is this: man's motivation, which is the primary concern of Adam Smith, is a multidimensional phenomenon.

Man is motivated by personal gain, national gain, material wealth, political power, and social instincts. If a mother is motivated merely by pecuniary gain, she would never be able to fulfill her responsibilities as a mother, although the monetary and material gain may be there. So I bring all these considerations into my analysis as a means of highlighting my multidimensional approach. I think it is worthwhile to present this perspective as a social proposition. As for Greek economics, the idea is not to justify everything that the Greeks had said. Greek economics followed an integrated approach. We disagree with the moral and value framework of the Greek, but whatever their values, they adopted an integrated approach. That was the point I wanted to emphasize. This also underlies Islamic economics, where one finds a multidisciplinary approach and a more holistic approach, where the moral, economic, political, sociological, and psychological aspects are present. And again coming to Adam Smith, yes, he did emphasize this aspect, but I would submit that even the pecuniary and the gain motive was somehow based on his concept of prudence, which was not merely a pecuniary consideration.

It was a multidimensional concept. What we ignore in modern social science is philosophical, moral, and economic foundations; we only present a partial, piecemeal picture that fails to represent the whole domain. This has been the fatal mistake of social science methodology. I think that the present partial approach deserves to be rethought and replaced by a more comprehensive and all-embracing multidimensional approach, which would, in my view, be a more humane approach, as well as more representative of the entire human domain.

The excesses of capitalism, in my view, are a product of this one-dimensional approach. In order to remedy this situation, one must consider the moral, political, and social dimensions as well. This will not make matters more unscientific, but it will pave the way for a more dynamic methodology. I submit that this represents one viewpoint. You have every right to have a different viewpoint, and I think this dialogue should continue since it benefits all of us.

**VALI NASR:** It seems that much of the discussion so far has centered on the functional viability of the field of Islamic economics. Historically, when things were referred to as Islam, it was not because of what function they performed, but how they reflected the state of religion, and what one's own conscience said about Islam. I am not at all sure that many of the functional tools used by Islamic economists, from Mudaraba to various forms of financing, say or reflect anything about Islam. All they do is allow Muslims to practice economics within the bounds of the Shari'ah. In fact, contrary to what Professors Harik and Hudson have said, I am not asking whether it is possible to have a science of Islamic economics. What has been construed as Islamic economics has not been able to rise above this trap of relating a worldview to a practice. It has been too much concerned with functionality, viability at a functional level, and institutions. I very much agree with you that belief of some sort could be the foundation of social action. After all, that this is what Max Weber proposes, and social scientists and economists take more serious-



ly his thesis than they do Adam Smith's. The problem I have with much of the work on Islamic economics is that it does not measure the motivational issue that capitalism is so good at. You just abolish interest, you pass inheritance laws, and that is Islamic economics. I am interested to know what would happen to all the theorems in Islamic economics if you were to argue that a Muslim consumes and produces at a different point on the curve. What happens if there is a utility restraint instead of a utility constraint? In other words, my argument is that Islamic economics has, in some ways, gotten ahead of itself in its competition with socialism and capitalism. It seems that Muslims were so eager to come up with a viable economic system that they forgot all about philosophical suppositions and jumped on the bandwagon of having a model that they could present to the world.

**KHURSHID AHMAD:** Thank you very much. I am grateful that at least one person has said that Islamic economics is not Islamic enough. Anyway, I agree that Muslim economists have tried to emphasize the functional aspects much more than the motivational, ethical, and philosophical ones. One may find a very clear linkage between the functional and the philosophical dimensions in the literature of Islamic economics. Sometimes it happens, and I agree with you, that a number of articles start with the proposition of linkage, but they ignore it in the process. This is a common human failing. This happens when one proposes functional solutions when faced with certain functional problems.

So I concede your point, and I do feel that in some of the literature a degree of distortion has crept in. Yet if we look at the totality of the Islamic economic approach, the philosophical, ethical and motivational dimension is very much there. I agree that it definitely deserves to be emphasized because there cannot be an Islamic economics without Islamic motivation. I also believe that there are certain aspects of Islamic economics which are relevant even for non-Muslim countries.



**MUMTAZ AHMAD:** There are a number of Muslim countries which have experimented with the introduction of Islamic economic reforms, including Pakistan, the Sudan, and, to a certain extent, Malaysia. Looking back at the experience of these Muslim countries where certain institutional Islamic reforms were introduced, particularly Zakat collection by the state, as is the case in Pakistan, the declared purpose is to eliminate and reduce the level of poverty, promote social justice, and equity. Would you care to comment on the performance of these reforms? To what extent do you believe that the objectives of social justice and redistribution of wealth have been achieved in these societies?

**KHURSHID AHMAD:** I think you are right. While I fully agree that a number of Muslim countries have made a number of institutional and other reforms drawing upon Islamic sources, it is my honest assessment that so far in none of these countries has a very effective Islamic economic program been introduced. Changes have been so small, so piecemeal and so unrelated to the rest of economic policy that they at best represent a small backwater, not the mainstream. In my view, relatively speaking, the Sudan, despite its poverty and the economic constraints imposed on it by external powers, has fared relatively better. Yet the fundamental sources of inequality have not been influenced and tackled so far. It is not merely at the distributional level of Zakat that the problem of economic inequality and poverty and affluence can be solved. You will have to tackle them at the source of economic inequality and economic effort, or lack of effort.

In Pakistan, initially, the Zakat program took off very well, and it was geared to not just doling out some money to the poor, but 50 per cent was directed towards redistribution in a manner that the recipient could become an economic contributor in the future. So we helped out poor men and women, and we provided them with some sort of technology so that they could become earning members of the society. But later, unfortunately, government somehow changed the policy. Political motivations changed redistri-

bution into political handouts, and as a result the system did not have a real impact upon society. I believe that unless a comprehensive economic program based on Islam is introduced, it would be difficult to engender the result. In Iran, also, I found that initially they started with the idea of a social fund. Oil wealth had to be shared by every child in the society. But later on, unfortunately, nothing concrete was done to translate that into reality. Also, although interest was eliminated substantially in Iran, no real structural changes took place. The real objective of Islam is to make sure that labor and capital develop a new relationship altogether, and not just a mere change of names. We find that 90 per cent of the Islamic banking operations are in *murabaha*, which does not affect the structure of the society. So from that viewpoint, I am not very happy. As a Muslim economist, I feel that at the operational level, even in the private sector, an Islamic economic program is yet to be implemented.

**CHARLES KENNEDY:** I do have a follow-up in regards to the issue of the Federal Shariat Court decision that was passed about a year ago now, which was then put before the Shariat Bench at the Supreme Court in Pakistan. I would like to know whether that decision, which had declared some 20-odd laws repugnant to Islam on the basis of bank interest, has proceeded beyond the Shariat Bench at all at this point. Is the decision still standing before the Bench? And has the decision been able to generate any public support within Pakistan since its passage?

**KHURSHID AHMAD:** I think that the judgment of the Federal Shariat Court stands out as a milestone. It is a very important judgment. It deserves to be read very carefully, and it has addressed itself to some of the key questions which have been debated in different parts of the Muslim world, particularly about the definition of *riba* (interest), its scope and relevance to bank transactions. The 20-odd laws, considered by the court to be repugnant to the Qur'an and Sunnah, remain in abeyance. Constitutionally speaking, if the judgment of the Federal

Shariat Court is not appealed in the Shariat bench of the Supreme Court, then it is enforced on the day it becomes enforceable. But if the government or any party goes to the Supreme Court and appeals, then the judgment remains in abeyance till the Supreme Court decides. So a kind of a status quo prevails, but it has generated a very interesting national debate. A number of seminars have been held by research institutions, bankers, businessmen, and ulema to discuss the matter. I think the amount of articles which have appeared in the newspapers is remarkable. A lot of interest has been generated on both sides. There are people who have criticized it, and others who have identified certain problems which the economy would have to face if the judgment were implemented. The government has established a special commission which is now preparing a plan for the elimination of interest from the economy, and, I understand, its interim report has already been presented, and is expected to come up before the Parliament in the next session. So I think that these are positive developments. Yet, the Supreme Court has not been able to take up this issue. It has issued a questionnaire in the first week of January 1993, and I was also one of those who were asked to respond to that questionnaire and appear before the court when they start hearing, but they have not done so far.<sup>12</sup>

TAMARA SONN: Thank you. I would like to get back to Vali Nasr's question about the nature of Islamic economics. In this discussion, we have been focusing on a Western model because we have pretty much confined ourselves to questions of banking and finance which are paramount in the Western model. But if we look at the discussions of economic issues among the ulema and the *fuqaha*, you find other issues that Western models do not consider, such as the dignity of labor, and the notion of *khilafah* especially as it applies beyond human labor. I wonder if you would care to comment on some of those aspects, particularly how the issue of *khilafah* applies to Islamic economics, and how it is related to labor.

**KHURSHID AHMAD:** In fact, in my own writings on the nature and significance of Islamic economics as well as on economic development, you will find that *tawhid*, *istikhlaf*, and *rububiyya* are key concepts I have discussed. I firmly believe that this linkage with its roots determines the very character of Islamic economics, and also the dignity of labor. It is very interesting that the whole concept of limited liability in the capitalist system is directed towards preservation of the interest of capitalism and capitalists. However, the concept of limited liability and Mudaraba puts all liability on capital, and protects labor and the entrepreneur. As mentioned above, the ulema's and *fuqaha*'s writings are full of economic teachings. For example, in my edited work, *Studies in Islamic Economics*, you find a very interesting paper by Anas Zarqa which deals with this very aspect. Similarly, in another work on distributive justice by Munawar Iqbal, you will find very interesting material on the whole concept of individual and social needs, the question of distribution, respective roles of labor, and even the question of just wages as discussed by the Egyptian scholar, Yusuf al-Qardawi, who gives five criteria for a just wage. These different writings enrich our approach to economics. So I agree with you that all these dimensions in Islamic economics are germane to the discipline.<sup>13</sup>

We have also emphasized the notion that the elimination of interest and the introduction of Zakat is not the be-all and end-all of Islamic economics. They are only two pillars of policy. One must see Islamic economics as a new, moral, and humane approach to the whole economic problem. This kind of approach was lost during the long development of economic science from the classical to the contemporary phase. So, in a way, we are even inviting Western economists to adopt a more comprehensive and multidimensional approach to economics. In this country, some economists publish the *Journal of Economic Issues* in order to promote the state of evolutionary economics. This journal represents a movement in that direction, and persons like Kenneth Boulding, who has just passed away, have been emphasizing this dimension within the context of Western economics. I hold these economists as our fellow travelers and partners. Similarly, I regard the writings

of some of the Christian economists as quite refreshing.

Some think that Communism has now disintegrated. I hold a slightly different view. I do not regard the fall of the Berlin Wall to be the end of Communism, nor do I think that the contradictions and inequities of capitalism that had given rise to socialism have been resolved. Whether it is under the name of socialism or some other name, human beings would rise up again to see that the inequities of the system are rectified, and a more humane approach to the economic problems of humanity is adhered to.

**LOUIS CANTORI:** I think we have, as I have already suggested, a rather unusually well-focused discussion. I have one observation to make of my own and that is that Khurshid Ahmad has been very candid and forthright in his admission of the imperfections of the effort to implement Islamic economics as a matter of policy. So far, our discussion has focused on both the theoretical and epistemological questions, and also we have come down to some more practical things. But there is a dimension of this which we have not really discussed, and that is the possibility that we might also look at Islamic economics as a critical apparatus. Islamic economics is not just a theoretical discipline. People, governments and political parties tend to judge Islamic economics in light whether or not it has achieved the criteria of Islamic justice. I think that is something that we have not brought out in our discussion. When people look at the performance of politics and a government, they are asking questions about equity, morality, and the way an economic system contributes to the overall spiritual and social welfare of the community and so forth and so on. The failure on the part of the regime to be able to answer those questions results in attacks upon the regime, revolts, or whatever. So to my mind, for example, this resembles the way I would look at Marxism, and that is, Marxism is a critical apparatus. If you ask the questions of Marxism, you get some very interesting answers. If you ask the questions of Islamic economics, you get some very interesting answers as well. These are analytical and political questions and answers.

## NOTES

- 1 On this concept, consult M. N. Siddiqui, *Partnership and Profit-Sharing in Islamic Law* (Leicester: The Islamic Foundation, 1985).
- 2 See Cl. Cahen and M. Talbi, "Hisba," *Encyclopedia of Islam*, new ed., vol. 3 (Leiden: Brill, 1971). See also: Ibn Taymiya, *Public Duties in Islam: The Institution of Hisba*, (Leicester: The Islamic Foundation, 1982).
- 3 On liberation theology, see L. Boff, *Liberation Theology: From Dialogue to Confrontation* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1986).
- 4 A. Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (London: 1759).
- 5 A. Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, 2 vls. (London: 1776).
- 6 Amitai Etzioni, *The Moral Dimension: Towards a New Economics*, (New York: Macmillan, 1988); Amartya K. Sen, *On Ethics and Economics*, Oxford: Bantam, 1987; Cristovam Buarque, *The End of Economics Ethics and the Disorder of Progress* (London: Zed Books, 1993).
- 7 Herbert Sonion, *Models of Man* (New York: John Wiley, 1957). See also: A.K. Sen, *On Ethics and Economics*, op cit.
- 8 Consult John M. Keynes, *The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money* (London: 1936).
- 9 Consult the following major work by Robbins: *An Essay on the Nature and Significance of Economic Science* (London: 1932).
- 10 Gunnar Myrdal, *Value in Social Theory: A Selection of Essays on Methodology* (London: 1958).
- 11 Alexander King and Bertrand Schneider, *The First Global Revolution: A Reprint by the Council of the Club of Rome* (London: Simon & Schuster, 1992).
- 12 See *Elimination of Riba from the Economy* (Islamabad: Institute of Policy Studies, 1994).
- 13 See Khurshid Ahmad, ed., *Studies in Islamic Economics* (Leicester: The Islamic Foundation, 1980); Munawar Iqbal, ed., *Distributive Justice and Need Fulfilment in an Islamic Economy* (Leicester: The Islamic Foundation, 1988).

## THE ISLAMIC MOVEMENTS: A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

**L**OUIS CANTORI: There is a lot of talk nowadays about Islamic states and international relations. We might try to deal with this comprehensive subject along with other questions and concerns that we might have had as a result of today's discussion. I think we have a real opportunity to allow everybody to contribute his or her own thoughts on the subject. Having said that, I would like to turn to Dr Khurshid Ahmad, and ask him if he could make some observations about the subject of Islamic movements in the 1950s and the 1990s, and perhaps draw on his own experience with the Jamaat in Pakistan.

**KHURSHID AHMAD:** Thank you very much, Professor Cantori. I think the moderator has structured our discussion very ably and we are moving in a very systematic manner. Comparing the 1950s with the 1990s is a very difficult task. To begin with, one must understand the term 'Islamic movement' at both its broad and specific levels. Broadly speaking, there is the Islamic movement, the overall resurgence, re-awakening, and concomitant institutional developments. The aim of resurgence is to achieve the Islamic ideal. By the Islamic ideal, I mean the following: 1) intellectual and religious reconstruction of Islamic



thought; 2) reconstruction of Muslim society and polity; and 3) approximation of some kind of Islamic cooperation, Islamic unity, Islamic solidarity, i.e. closeness between the different peoples who make up the Muslim Ummah.

At the more specific level, some organized Islamic groups, which have emerged lately, possess a worldview that differs substantially from that of nationalistic and secular groups. The ideological objective of the Islamic groups has been the development of Islamic thought and the Islamic reconstruction of individual and society. In pursuing their views on the rehabilitation of Islam in contemporary times, and in trying to find an honorable place for Muslims in the contemporary world, these organized groups have begun to pose a real challenge to the *status quo*. In a specific and limited sense, these groups have been known as the Muslim Brotherhood in the Arab world, and Jamaat-i-Islami in Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Kashmir. The Muslim Brotherhood is to be found in almost every Arab and Muslim country. There are other groups and movements as the Nursi group or the Rifah party in Turkey, the Islamic Tendency Movement in Tunisia, the FIS in Algeria, etc.

I think that the pre-1950s phase was that of intellectual articulation. The major concerns of Islamic resurgence then was to identify with the freedom movement which was primarily nationalistic, yet with Islamic roots. Also, I would suggest, that period was a formative one for the Islamic movements, organizationally as well as in terms of *da'wah* activities. In addition, I think that this phase was somewhat apolitical. I am not calling it non-political. I here slightly disagree with what Hasan Turabi said in his presentation last year. In my view, the intellectual base of the Islamic movement in the more specific sense was neither an afterthought nor a post-organization phase. In fact, it was the starting point. In India and Pakistan, such thinkers as Abu al-Kalam Azad, Muhammad Iqbal, and Sayyid Mawdudi laid the intellectual basis and foundation for this new approach. In Egypt, it was Jamaluddin Afghani, Muhammad Abduh, Rashid Rida, Hassan al-Banna, and Sayyid Qutb who were able to formulate and articulate the intellectual foundations of Islamic resur-

gence. In Algeria, it was the thought of Abdul Hamid bin Badis, Bashir al-Ibrahimi and Malek Bennabi that paved the way for general Islamic organization and activism.

Between the 1950s and 1990s, Islamic resurgence underwent a process of natural growth in terms of intellectual work, *da'wah* expansion, and organizational strength. I also find that during this period there was a general increase in the level of politicization leading to confrontation, persecution and the imprisonment of leading members of the Islamic movement. In short, initial efforts were made to eliminate the Islamic movements by force.

During the above-mentioned period, certain events acted as a catalyst. The burning of the Aqsa mosque in 1969 sparked off a new political movement leading to the creation of the Organization of Islamic Conference.<sup>1</sup> The Foreign Ministers of the Islamic Conference, the Islamic Development Bank, and about a dozen other institutions dealing with economic, educational, cultural, scientific, and technological affairs became concerned about the unity of the Muslim Ummah. This has been a major institutional and ideological development in the Muslim world. Also, one can see universities, religious institutes, journals, and professional groups that raise Islamic subjects and speak about Islamic education, Islamic sociology, and Islamic social sciences in general.

The 1967 war was a great setback politically, but ideologically, it marked a shift from Arab nationalism to a search for some kind of Islamic identity which could provide a more stable basis for contact and cooperation among the Muslim people.<sup>2</sup> The Islamic revolution of Iran (1979), on the other hand, was a watershed. Whatever one's appreciation of the revolution's Islamicity or direction, the fact is that the Iranian revolution boosted Muslim morale and gave Muslims a feeling that Islam can indeed succeed in the contemporary period. I am aware that some have, as I do, reservations about certain aspects of the Iranian revolution, but it was able to shatter a dictatorial regime, i.e. that of the Shah, which had been promoted by Western powers as one of the best shows of stability and representative of Western culture, besides Israel, in the

area. Looking at the 1990s, we find that the Islamic movements have gained both quantitatively as well as qualitatively. We also feel that a strong link emerged between local Islamic groups and organizations and the global resurgence in Islamic awakening.

Also, during this period the Islamic movements have learned from their own experience and from the developments abroad. To be sure, they began as religious organizations with a small popular base, yet with firm intellectual commitment and vision. In their initial growth, they had to take into account the indigenous regimes and the challenges of secular political systems. As a result of the differences between the Islamic approach and the secular nationalistic approach, there were some efforts at accommodation that ended in failure. One may appreciate the nature of confrontation between the Islamic movements and basically autocratic, monarchic, non-democratic indigenous regimes. In case democracy became a reality, the Islamic movements would be able to mobilize public support.

In the wake of the Iranian revolution and the ensuing hostage crisis, many a Western country and organization began to look at Islam as a threat to Western political and economic interests, as well as a threat to the regimes whose *raison d'être* was maintained and promoted by the West. The prospects for a widened confrontation between Islam and the West was present. However, a different prospect, for some convergence of interest between the Muslim world and the West, began to emerge just after the Iranian revolution. In 1979, the Soviet Union intervened militarily in Afghanistan, and this was an opportune moment for some Muslim countries and the West to find in that a common threat. The first years of the Soviet intervention saw no American aid, and only marginal Western support. When the West realized that the Afghan resistance was able to withstand the Soviet threat, roughly from 1982 to 1986, a new form of cooperation began to take shape. Even the terms *jihad* and *mujahideen*, which had been looked upon with suspicion, became acceptable in English.<sup>3</sup> To my mind, the withdrawal of the Soviet Union from Afghanistan was one of the factors which led to the

Soviet retreat from Eastern Europe, the liberation of the people of East Europe, and the fall of the Berlin Wall. The irony was that while *jihad* in Afghanistan had been somewhat instrumental in obtaining the liberation of the people of Eastern Europe from the yoke of communism, the people of Afghanistan were denied the fruits of their revolution and struggle.

The Sudanese case deserves some attention as well. The West has targeted and isolated the Sudan, and even placed pressure upon some Arab countries to do the same. Also, the Algerian situation does betray this Western attitude. The military intervened with the blessings of the West, especially France, to deny the Islamic forces their democratic victory. Undoubtedly, the emergence of the Islamic forces in such a way has been a major qualitative change in the politics and dynamism of Muslim societies. This has definitely affected the attitudes of the policymakers and leadership in many Western countries, including America, and also the attitudes of the Muslim people and Islamic movements.

**JOHN ENTELIS:** You have given us a presentation of the Islamic movements in the 1990s that seems to be indistinguishable in terms of ideology, organization, leadership, and so forth. Yet some of us may see some important differences. I would like to ask you to comment on the manner in which an Islamic movement achieves power, the manner in which it seeks to organize itself within the political system, and whether it is willing to work within the system or whether it seeks violent, or non-democratic means to achieve power. Can we draw distinctions between the violent and democratic means of obtaining power?

**KHURSHID AHMAD:** I am grateful that you have brought up this issue. This is a rather very difficult question in the sense that one must not see the issue of the resort to violent means to achieve power in the Muslim world a monolithic one. It has not followed the same pattern all over the Muslim world. For instance, the Islamic

movement in the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent has been part and parcel of the democratic process. The electoral door was opened, providing the opportunity for Islamic parties to take part. It is true that sometimes some movements resorted to violence, yet the democratic channels were there, and solutions were negotiated. The Islamic movement in Egypt (the Muslim Brotherhood), for instance, found itself in a different situation than that of the Jamaat. The Muslim Brotherhood set up a secret military branch in the 1940s in order to deal with the difficult political situation in Egypt. However, the Jamaat of Pakistan has opted to work through democratic channels from the beginning. As for Afghanistan, the situation was entirely different. There was both covert and direct intervention of a superpower's army that had to be resisted, not with speeches and ballot-box, but with bullets. Few people regarded this response as terrorism or unnecessary use of violence.

I think the whole issue of violence is a complex one. In this context, I would very much submit that the Islamic movements have desired change through persuasion, *da'wah*, and democratic means. Where these means were denied to them, and where they were forced to the wall, resort to violence was inevitable. But still, not every movement has responded in the same manner. For example, despite all the persecution, the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and Jordan have tried to remain tied to the democratic process. Even now in Egypt they are not allowed to operate under their own name in elections.

So I think that the question of violence cannot be, in any way, tied to a particular time period. We know that in the 1950s and 1960s, the Nasser regime accused the Muslim Brotherhood of violence. One can even detect elements of violence in the martyrdom of Hasan al-Banna in 1949. In all these cases the Islamic movement was at the receiving end of violence. One must consider these events in their particular context. It is my belief, however, that the deliberate use of violence and *coup d'etat* as a method for change has not been the primary focus of the Islamic movements, except, perhaps, in Afghanistan. In short, the Islamic movements have avoided violence, move when forced to as a last means. Violence itself is not their basic

mode of operation.

VINCENT CORNELL: What I would like to do is to try to follow the theme that we are discussing a little further back in time. As you know, the Muslim Brotherhood has a doctrine going back ultimately to Hassan al-Banna. They also embrace a spirituality which they characterize as being socially conscious. The Muslim Brothers counterpoise against that something called a 'withdrawn spirituality,' which they associate with the phenomenon of Sufism.

I have traced the history of Sufism in West North Africa, i.e. Morocco and Western Algeria, for the past ten years.<sup>4</sup> I have discovered that, contrary to what the theorists of the Muslim Brotherhood propose, Sufism in that area has been anything but isolationist. Sufis were instrumental in the dissemination of the Maleki school of Islamic law from the very beginning. They were involved in the Muwahid movement, which, in turn, became involved in the Maleki resurgence. Later on, they were involved in the eventual expulsion of the Portuguese, and, in essence, they had a lot to do with the creation of the ideological basis of the regime that rules Morocco even today.<sup>5</sup> There are many Sufi *tariqas* (associations) in Morocco that command the adherence of hundreds of thousands of members.

It is clear that there have been many examples of movements based on Sufism that were socially very conscious, and that their orientation, besides spirituality, was based on a sort of constructive social action. Now the difference, however, is this. You mentioned in your initial lecture that the Islamic movement seeks spirituality through the reform of societies and institutions. I think the Sufi movements are seeking the same sorts of social change. They seek to reform society and institutions through a resurgence of spirituality. It seems to me that the Islamic movement has not been able to appreciate the social orientation of *tasawwuf*. Sufi brotherhoods are still active in the social and political life of North Africa. Is there any room for *tasawwuf* in the Islamic movement, or is *tasawwuf* something that belongs to the pre-1950s intellectual and religious environment?



**KHURSHID AHMAD:** I do not regard *tasawwuf* as an antibody in Islam. *Tasawwuf*, in my view, is one of the sister parallel movements, and the very beginning of *tasawwuf* in Islamic history represents a very serious effort to protect Muslim youth and the masses from the evil influences of corrupt governmental systems. Sufi movements have always supported *jihad* against either foreign powers or internal deviation. Far from being two opposed movements, *jihad* and *tasawwuf* helped and strengthened each other. The Sufi *zawiya* (place of worship) was not a retreat from life, but an effort to reassert and reconstruct Islamic thought and practice. *Tasawwuf* represents a variety of expressions at certain metaphysical levels, some of which were influenced by Pantheism and other ideologies. The type of abstraction and formation that some Sufis resorted to was a deviation and that was not approved of. Similarly there had been certain Sufi groups which really represented retreat and escape from life, and they were criticized by Muhammad Iqbal, Mawlana Mawdudi, and Hasan al-Banna. On the other hand, the Islamic movement has not disregarded real *tasawwuf*, and that is why in a very famous speech in the 1930s, al-Banna spelled out the characteristics of the Muslim Brotherhood, and maintained that it was a Sufi movement in addition to being political and social in nature.

The Islamic movement is not antithetical to *tasawwuf*. On the contrary, it has assimilated the creative social, ethical, and educational dimensions of *tasawwuf*, and it has been critical only of those branches or formulations which were either metaphysically confusing and too abstract, or which represented escape routes.

**RENU KHATOR:** I would like to raise the following two issues: 1) the nature of the Islamic movements; and 2) the role of women. In the first place, you have given a homogeneous picture of the Islamic movements and stated they all had one goal in mind to achieve. However, within the larger context of Islamic resurgence, one must realize that there are several sub-identities of resurgence, and in Pakistan, for example, some of these sub-groups have been



unwilling to leave behind their sub-identities in pursuit of one single identity. Do you think that the Islamic movement of the 1990s is more successful in achieving some sort of cohesiveness than the movements of the 1950s? Second, what is the role of women, if it is different from that of men, in Muslim society, and what role do they play in the Islamic economic development model that you have presented today?

**KHURSHID AHMAD:** As to the first question, I agree that, while I have emphasized the common elements of the Islamic movement, there are also differences in every country, and within the movements of different countries. It is very difficult to capture all these in my short presentation, but, in my view, the elements that indicate homogeneity and some kind of uniformity are greater. Second, I do not believe in complete uniformity and I think Islam wants unity, not similarity. There can be unity in diversity and that is a much more healthy arrangement for human society.

As for your second question, from the viewpoint of the Islamic movement, women are as important as men in Islam and this has been the historical tradition. For instance, the services that Sayyida Khadija rendered to Islam are second to none, and we are all indebted to her. The only problem is that we do not subscribe to the Western concept of equality of sexes in the sense that men and women must be, if necessary, forced to do the same thing. We do not believe that different roles mean superiority or inferiority. Instead, the real issue from a Qur'anic perspective is the ethical dimension of human life. In this respect, no real difference exists between men and women. Yet because of certain physical and social realities, differentiation of roles has taken place. Women did play a positive role in *da'wah*. They also enjoy economic, political, and entrepreneurial rights. There has not been any real effort since the beginning of Islam to curtail or deny these rights. Yesterday, somebody asked me whether I opposed the election of Benazir Bhutto because she is a woman. I said I was opposed to her because she represented a particular

secular approach, and that her government had been incompetent and corrupt. Her being a woman was not the deciding factor, although normally in an Islamic society the head of the state may not be a woman, but in special circumstances there is that possibility. I think that the overall approach of the Islamic movement is to encourage women to play an active role. In economics also, as I have just said, there is no male Islamic economics and female Islamic economics.

**MUMTAZ AHMAD:** You talked about the pro-Western and pro-socialism dictators. Let us talk about the pro-Islam dictators. While you spoke favorably concerning the history of the Islamic movement from the 1950s to the 1990s, you have not mentioned that during the 1950s the essential feature of the relationship between the Islamic movements and the state was one of confrontation. We witnessed a very significant change in the 1980s when the relationship between some Islamic movements and the state became co-operative. We have this in the case of Pakistan where the Jamaat-i-Islami cooperated with the military regime of General Zia ul-Haq, and we have a similar experiment in the Sudan. In Malaysia, the democratic government received support and cooperation from the Islamic groups there, but that is a different case. I am primarily talking about the relationship between the Islamic movement and the state. What have the Islamic movements learned from this cooperative relationship with the state, especially with military dictators or military regimes? Who was using whom in terms of that relationship? Also, in answering Dr Khator's question, you said that because of certain social and physical realities, the role of men and women are different. In case social realities change, might the roles become the same or would they continue to remain different?

**KHURSHID AHMAD:** I am as uncomfortable with Islamic or pro-Islamic dictators as with pro-socialist or pro-capitalist ones. In my view, dictatorship, which means a system where the concentration of power is in one or a few individuals, does not go hand in hand with the Islamic

system. Yet, I would definitely submit that, technically, there have been some cases of cooperation between the Islamic movements and some people who may be described as dictators. We would like to be in an open society where we avoid cooperation with dictators, this being the lesson that we learned from the very short spell of cooperation between the Jamaat and General Zia ul-Haq in Pakistan (August 1978 to April 1979). Having said so, let me also clarify that when the Jamaat accepted participation in the Cabinet with General Zia ul-Haq, it was in a very specific context. There was a popular movement led by the PNA (Pakistan National Alliance), and instead of leading to the establishment of a democratic government, a coup took place, and the coup tried to hijack the ideals and the issues of the movement. Yet there was a written agreement between the PNA and General Zia ul-Haq on the basis of which elections would be held. This government would be formed so as to facilitate the holding of those elections. Even the People's Party was operating as a political party, the Jamaat was operating as a political party, and all other parties were operating. The Press was publishing all sorts of news. The institution of the judiciary was there, reviewing actions taken by the military government. So from that viewpoint, it was a very specific situation in which we participated, but we very soon realized that democratic forces and military government cannot go together for long.

As far as the Sudan is concerned, we must realize that they faced a very difficult situation and they realized that the army is one of the country's major political institutions, which is a reality in today's Middle East. The option was either they would allow the army to continue its oppressive rule as had been the case before, or they would cooperate with it and initiate a process of democratization. The Islamic movement pursued the latter path. In his round table last year, Dr Turabi commented on the stages through which they pursued this strategy. There can be two opinions about this strategy. I think that the Islamic movement can come to power through a democratic process.

As to the question of social and physical realities, while

physical realities have not changed so far, looking back at 10,000 years of human history, social realities represent the best of the human experience. In that respect, continuity of social values and social roles is something which is to be looked upon and desired at both those levels.

**JOHN VOLL:** There have been a couple of questions emphasizing diversity within the Islamic movement. I have a slightly different question, again asking about diversity. In terms of the relationship, say, between the movements of the 1950s and the 1990s, there have really been significant changes. In your original presentation this morning, you essentially talked about the need for continuing renewal as one adjusts to distinctive new conditions that emerge. In that sense the message of the movement, even within the broad framework, even if that message remains the same between the 1940s, the 1950s and the 1990s, is that there must be some significant differences in that message over time. I do not want to put a very awkward question to you, but a very concrete question in this sense. The thinking of the Islamic movements was very much shaped, determined and set by the thinking of people like Mawlana Mawdudi and Hasan al-Banna and so on; but now we are three generations or two generations or one generation beyond. So what would you see as the distinctive differences between someone like Hasan Turabi and Hasan al-Banna, or, let us say, between Khurshid Ahmad and Mawlana Mawdudi?

**KHURSHID AHMAD:** John wants to drag me into the fire. I think this point deserves to be emphasized, that whatever be the image of the Islamic movements in the outside world, it is a reality that within the Islamic movement there is not only the scope for, but actual realization of, a lot of variety, dissent, and flexibility. Mawlana Mawdudi looks like a big tower, yet whether it was the *Shura* or the meeting of the *arkan*, he was criticized, made accountable for hours, and he had to defend himself, and wherever he had gone wrong, offer his apologies. Mawlana Mawdudi, as definitive as he was on a number

of subjects and issues, did expect a diversity of opinion within the Jamaat. When he realized he was getting old in 1972, he offered to resign and he suggested that the party elect someone else to lead it, and that is how Mian Tufail Muhammad was elected in his lifetime. Also, when Mian Tufail Muhammad realized that he was getting old, instead of clinging to power, he again suggested the election of someone else who could lead the movement, and that is how a tradition of accountability and change, not hero-worship, has been achieved. The constitution of the Jamaat provides that even those who differ with the declared policy of the Jamaat can continue as members, and express their differences. So this diversity is built into the Islamic movement, although the outside world does not have a clear perception of this aspect. Then, of course, there is evolution and change in response to external circumstances. In this respect, I think that the most important point I realized and mentioned in my earlier presentation was that the Islamic movements in Pakistan and all over the world are becoming more and more conscious of the necessity to broaden their base and mobilize the masses in order to ensure the proper working of the democratic process. The Jamaat has been active among various professional groups, such as teachers, doctors, engineers, students, youth, and farmers. In the coming elections, as well as in the past, the Jamaat has made alliances with different organizations. This year [1993], we are thinking not of an alliance but a broader front in which we would like to bring in all those persons or groups who would be prepared to agree to a certain program and certain targets for political activity. So, I think, all these represent different aspects of variety, diversity, change, evolution, and flexibility. Similarly, in policy issues, for example, in respect of private property, Mawlana Mawdudi's views initially were very rigid, but later on he responded to the challenges that came from different directions. There are many areas where views have changed through discussion and experience. This proves the flexibility as well as the diversity of the Islamic movement.

**SAMI AL-ARIAN:** I have the following to raise. In

terms of the comparison between the Islamic movements of the 1950s and those of the 1990s, one finds that many of the 1950s' movements were either a one-man show (like the Islamic revolution in Iran) or did not exist (like the Islamic movement of the Sudan today). On the other hand, looking at the Islamic movements in the 1950s, and particularly the Muslim Brotherhood in the Arab world and the Jamaat-i-Islami in Pakistan and beyond, I see that one of the problems is that the Islamic movement has adopted a Western model where a clear dichotomy exists between the leadership and the masses. In the case of both the Iranian revolution and the Algerian experiment, this distinction did not exist. The masses always played a significant role, especially in times of crisis and transition. Many a member of the Muslim Brotherhood would think of himself or herself to be a special or elite person who would go to Paradise with this kind of feeling. I think there is a structural defect or fault within these movements, and that is probably part of the reason they are not successful in terms of reaching their goals. The Muslim Brotherhood has been there for 65 or so years, and it has not been able to reach its central goals. Someone has to pause a little and find out why the Brotherhood has not been successful. I would like to point out as well that the performance of the Muslim Brotherhood during the Gulf crisis was disappointing. The Brethren were in a viable position to oppose and perhaps stop the war, but their performance was miserable.

My second question concerns the Palestinian problem. In the 1950s, the Islamic movements adopted the Palestinian question as their cause. But, unfortunately, just like the Arab regimes did later, they gave up on their espousal of the Palestinian problem and they made it the problem of the PLO only. In a sense, they got rid of it. What efforts are there on the side of the Islamic movement to revive their commitment to the Palestinian cause, which is supposed to be sacred, central, and part of the overall problem between the world of Islam and the West?

**KHURSHID AHMAD:** I have been reflecting upon the



issue you raised in the first question for some time now. Frankly, I feel that the organizational principle adopted by the Jamaat or Ikhwan was not wrong. The dilemma was how to launch an Islamic movement in a Muslim society that had decayed for a host of reasons. If you need to create a cadre of *du'at* who could be catalysts for a change, certain principles and standards must be present. The Islamic movements, besides being political in nature, were ideological and religious parties and movements. Their aim, besides coming to power, was multidimensional: reform of society, intellectual reconstruction, moral regeneration, social change, social services, political change, and political power. So because of that they had to adopt a different principle of organization. One must also appreciate the Islamic movement's limitations. I think that the Islamic movement seems to be very much in keeping with the initial mission and responsibility that it took upon its shoulders.

In terms of mass participation and people's identification with the party they belong to, I would like to see how that materializes. For example, the two parties existing in the United States of America do not exclude other forms of political identification. The Democrats, for instance, might prefer a certain thing, but another point of view, i.e. a kind of a non-party political role, might emerge that is not partisan in nature. In England, for instance, there are two parties: the Conservative Party and the Labour Party. Now the Labour Party, ruling since 1951, has a total membership of only 300,000 in a country of 56 million people. The membership of the Liberal and the Social Democrats does not exceed 60,000. The Muslim Brotherhood (Ikhwan) had over 2 million members in the late 1940s and early 1950s. I do not think that there is much relationship between formal membership and the issues you identify with. Identification can take many forms. In my opinion, the Islamic movements are becoming more and more conscious of the issues at hand, and they need a broad mass base. In this respect, they may have to diversify their membership. They may have to adopt the techniques of the Islamic movements in Algeria, the Sudan, and Jordan.

In terms of the second question, I am sure that whatever



the limitations and practical failings of the Islamic movements may be, they have never thought of getting rid of the Palestine question or leaving it only to the PLO. I am aware that there are certain problems and difficulties here. But I think that the Islamic movement has both a vision and a commitment to the Palestine issue. I know the Ikhwan held a meeting several years ago to discuss the issue of the Aqsa mosque and the question of Palestine in order to work out a program that other Islamic movements can pursue. I think that the Palestine question is the central issue of the entire Islamic movement. We must seek each other's support and cooperation to bring that into the lime-light. We must support the Islamic movement in Palestine, be it Hamas or Jihad or both, to struggle against occupation. We feel it is the responsibility of the Islamic movement worldwide to support the Palestinian cause.

**ELION SHALOH:** I think it is excellent that we have a speaker from the subcontinent of India, and I hope that next year we will perhaps have a scholar from one of the provinces of South Russia, or from Malaysia, or even from China. Anyway it would be nice to have that kind of representation. In terms of Islamic resurgence and future perspectives, how do you perceive Islamic resurgence in the year 2000?

**KHURSHID AHMAD:** My problem is that I am neither an astrologer nor a man of imagination. As an activist, I have held the notion since my student days that the present is struggle and the future is Islam. I have always lived with that hope and confidence. Looking back, I see that we have moved ahead, although there have been difficulties and although the forces of opposition have also gained strength. In my view, the overall civilizational crisis of our age calls for rethinking certain primary issues. The fall of Communism, in my view, is not just something to rejoice over; it does pose some very serious questions. We must not commit the error of thinking that the problems of mankind have been solved. We are in a very serious situation. There are all sorts of moral, familial, urban, debt-re-

lated, and law and order problems. In this context, I believe that the Islamic movements and Islam have a message, both for Muslims and all thinking human beings.

I am reminded of an article appearing in *The Economist* in 1989. The article was about the fall of the Berlin Wall, and 20 other great monuments of human history. In the last paragraph, the editor, commenting on the great events of human history, said that the fall of Communism was not such a great event because it was a negative phenomenon that did not produce a new idea. We are no longer happy with new ideas, and new hopes are no longer there. There is definitely a vacuum in the world today. At least, we in the Islamic movements have some hope, vision, and aspiration. We hope that the 21st century would enable us to move ahead, and, at least, to move closer to reforming our own society which could give better signals to mankind. We are not happy with the status quo; that we have criticized often. We have given a vision for the future. The present, as I see it, remains a period of struggle.

**ELION SHALOH:** Is ethnic cleansing the way of the future?

**KHURSHID AHMAD:** Yes, this is one of the challenges that we will have to face. I do not think that what is happening in Central Europe would be something totally isolated. We have witnessed similar things in the past, and Holocaust memories are not very far away. In India, we also find some kind of Muslim cleansing is going on. There is ethnic cleansing in Azerbaijan, Tajikistan, and other parts of the world. It is not merely Bosnia, but the Bosnians fare the worst example. Ethnic cleansing *a la mode* of Bosnia is awakening the conscience of mankind. It is also making more and more people uneasy. This feeling that genocide of this type should not be tolerated gives us hope for the future.

**SARAH VOLL:** In speaking of the global resurgence of the Islamic movement, you seemed to be speaking not

only of individual movements around the globe, but also of global interaction and interconnectedness of the Islamic movements. As you know, most of the empirical work that is now being done on the global economy suggests the factor of international economy, and certainly a lack of national control over the individual national economy. Those peoples who will be successful, as we go forward into the 21st century, will have to operate in a global context. Do you agree with the premise that we are entering the age of an interconnected — national, international — global economy? In attempting to implement your Islamic economics, you may be pursuing an archaic approach, and you may be running the risk that if you are successful in developing an economy that is very different from the premises of the rest of the global economy, you are, in fact, marginalizing these economies!

**KHURSHID AHMAD:** I think it is a very important question. Perhaps, I have not been able to make myself very clear. However, I may not fully agree with the premise on which your question is based. Our own vision of Islamic economics is not that of self-contained isolated national economies. We do not believe in the disengagement of economic relationships between the totality of the Muslim world and the rest of the world. We, however, believe in some kind of collective self-reliance among the Muslim countries, greater co-operation among them, strengthening their complementarities, and using the vast markets within the Muslim world. Definitely, we do not believe in creating an Islamic economic unity that is not connected with the rest of the world. My worry, however, is that despite all the theoretical emphasis on the global economy, in effect the world economy, the Western economy, is divided into groups. Protectionism, under whatever name, is gaining strength. The European Common Market, if it is a common market within the 12 European countries, has also high tariff walls with the rest of the world. Even the American market and the new emphasis on the domestic factor is causing great worries about some kind of pseudo-protectionism gaining strength here. The Japanese economy, the Chinese economy, all these are re-

alities, so whatever be the theoretical thrust, we find that it is not one global economy, but a fractured global economy. The flow and the linkages are not as the theoretical proposition would demand them to be, and in that context it is a very imperfect world.

It is an imperfect world economy, and, as such, the Muslim economies would also be a part of this imperfect world. We would like to have greater service lines and greater co-operation within the Muslim countries. During the last 10 years, trade within the Muslim countries has increased almost 10 per cent, although it is still a very low percentage of their total world trade. We would be very eager to maintain and strengthen not only international linkages, but international flows.

**MICHAEL HUDSON:** There are so many questions that one would like to put to you and so little time. I would like to raise two points. The first one has to do with the size and growth of the Islamic movements over this period of time. I think we might confine ourselves to the more detailed version of the sort of collection of groupings and how they have grown up, and I would be interested if you would be willing to hazard a numerical estimate as to what is the order of magnitude of growth, say in membership and/or in budgets of this collectivity of groups between the 1950s and the 1990s. Whatever the number might be, would you agree with the argument that, of all the factors that you mentioned that would account for this growth, by far the most important can be called a political economy factor, or indeed an economic factor, and it has to do with oil prices? That is to say, it is a double-edged kind of factor, both of which, in a sense, are to the advantage of the growth of an Islamic movement. One is the rise in oil prices and the ensuing revenue that accrued to important Muslim governments and societies, and the other is the collapse of oil prices which happened a little bit later on, which may have stimulated the kind of popular mood which would make people more interested in pursuing an Islamist protest course of action to protest their declining material circumstances. I am just curious how you

would deal with that as most important of what is a multi-factor situation. My second question concerns the debate going on now about the possible growth of civil society in Middle Eastern countries. Many have discussed the concept of civil society, which basically means the growth of associational life. Do you think that the civil society concept is worth pursuing in the first place, and, if it is, do you feel that the Islamic groups that we are discussing might be considered as pillars of this emerging civil society, and, therefore, accounting for its increased importance? How do you deal with the arguments of skeptics to the effect that Islamic parties do not really qualify as members of or supportive of civil society, because they may not be totally integrated in, or supportive of, or loyal to a larger sense of community that may include first of all some groups that are perhaps not Muslim? Second, other categories, as indicated above, may not receive in fact equal treatment. Speaking of women, and beyond that, do you feel that the notion that civil society presumably requires that there should be a kind of agreement on the rules of the game which apply to everybody is in fact a characteristic of these rules? That of course gets to a point where you are dealing with earlier about whether these groups are inherently democratic or perhaps undemocratic.

**LOUIS CANTORI:** I think Dr Khurshid Ahmad would agree that the way this has worked, the last two questions are the easiest.

**KHURSHID AHMAD:** I think every question is easy as long as I can answer it. I cannot give you figures about the membership, about the voters, and about the budgets right away. However, my impression is that over these four decades, the Islamic movements have gained — quantitatively as well as qualitatively. In both these respects, there has been an increase in their influence, and greater depth in their understanding of issues as well as the methods of dealing with problems of society. Also, their political and moral influence, even in those cases where a number of splinter groups have emerged, has increased. That is

my impression, but I am not in a position to substantiate that by marshalling concrete facts and figures. About the question of civil society, I may be excused if I say that sometimes we try to move from one fad to another, and much of the debates in this respect seem to be of that category. Islam came to create a homogeneous society, and, from a host of tribes, it was able to build a society which shared certain values, and was prepared to accept variety in a number of ways. In my view, certain problems and tensions would always remain with society. Even in highly-advanced societies, where education, increase in wealth and democracy are used as a measure of progress, there has been a noticeable growth of tension, rivalry, and disunity.

I think the Islamic movement has been a cementing and harmonizing force. But certain ethnic and economic divisions have, of course, created problems in Muslim societies. Yet, we believe that it would be only through the cementing force of Islam that we would be able to unite our society. In terms of non-Muslims in the Muslim world, a subject that will be taken up in the next session, the whole record of Muslim society has been impressive. The West, in my view, has achieved a lot in the field of political democracy, but as far as social democracy is concerned, I think it still has a long way to go. The West has emphasized human rights, but the thrust of emphasis has been on individual rights. The whole question of group, cultural, and religious rights, remains very much undeveloped. Consequently, we, in the West, have a rather lopsided view of civil society. While the attempt of scholars to develop these types of paradigms is not an exercise in futility, they do not provide the panacea that perhaps we had been hoping they would provide. It is rather too blunt a response, excuse me if I have not been too courteous, but I have to be convinced of the contribution of certain types of analysis and prototypes we are developing, whether in political science or economics or sociology, in terms of solving the problems that we have in society.

## NOTES

- 1 See H. Kizilbash, "The Islamic Conference: Retrospect and Prospect," *Arab Studies Quarterly*, vol. 4 (1-2), Spring 1982.
- 2 Yusuf al-Qaradawi elaborates on this thesis in *al-Hall al-Islami: farida wa darura* [The Islamic Solution: Duty and Necessity] (Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Risala, 1974).
- 3 On the role of religion in contemporary Afghani society, see David B. Edwards, "Summoning Muslims: Print, Politics, and Religious Ideology in Afghanistan," *The Journal of Asian Studies*, vol. 52 (3), August 1993, pp. 609-29.
- 4 Many Sufi brotherhoods emerged in North Africa. A recent book on the subject is Ibrahim M. Abu-Rabi, ed., *The Mystical Teachings of al-Shadhili: Including his Life, Prayers, and Followers*, tr. Elmer Douglas (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993).
- 5 See Henry Munson, Jr., *Religion and Power in Morocco* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994).



## MUSLIM MINORITIES IN THE WEST

**K**HURSHID AHMAD: Let me start on a rather different note. Minority, majority, are basically demographic concepts. I have some difficulty with these concepts in the sense that there can be a racial minority, and even a linguistic minority. In terms of number, this type of minority follows a specific category. Muslims, on the other hand, represent a different phenomenon altogether. They are a community of faith, a community that is not based on any fixity, whether it is color, or language, or race. Instead, it is a fluid and changing minority. So this represents a different category than the categories with which we had been dealing. In particular, I am thinking of the minority question as we find it in Communist literature, or the minority question as discussed by the League of Nations, or the Memoranda sent to the League of Nations Commission on Minorities, and all the literature that concerns those issues. So, when one talks of Muslim minorities, I think there is a qualitative difference.

As far as the Western world is concerned, there has been an Islamic presence for quite some time now. For instance, Islam reached Europe via the South in the very first century of the Muslim era, and ever since there has been a continuous Muslim presence in Europe, whether it be Spain,

France or via Italy, Sicily or Eastern Europe or then through Turkey. Presently in Europe, Islam is the second largest religion. Estimates differ, but the Muslims are anywhere between 25-30 million. There have been migrant as well as local Muslims. There has been a Muslim presence in Central Europe, especially in Bosnia, Macedonia, Kosovo, Albania, and Hungary since the 13th century. According to Muslim estimates, there are over 6 million Muslims in North America, and another 5-6 million in Central and South America. The presence of Islam is not just a migrant phenomenon. There have definitely been waves of migration, yet the Muslim presence has enriched the cultural, ideological, economic, and even political life in the West. The only problem that worries me is the possibility that some of us will think in the future in terms of limited national, parochial, linguistic and racial approaches, forgetting the humanistic, global, and ideological approaches. To my mind, the United States represents a very important experiment. It has allowed people from different backgrounds and different historical experiences, even different languages, religious traditions, and cultural backgrounds, to come, live, and develop a new identity without destroying their earlier identities. A mosaic of people has come into existence. And that is the message that I, as a Muslim, would like to share.

I think that we must possess a pluralistic concept of society. There must, definitely, be a thread of unity and a commonality of interests there, yet there should be enough scope for variety and differences. As mentioned above, the development of democratic institutions has brought us to a level where political difference is tolerated as authentic, yet cultural and linguistic differences, and even religious differences, despite a veneer of secularity, are not considered authentic. One also must consider nationalism, the nation-state, and the ambitions of the nation-state vis-a-vis its neighbors, and the impact of all that on religion and religious minorities. I think that all these dimensions are relevant to the whole question of Islamic minorities in the Western world.

I think that the future of humanity should be built on a greater cultural confluence, with a deep intellectual con-

tent, and widespread contact. I hope that there will be greater cooperation and contact between the Muslim world and the Western world. I also think that the presence of a Muslim community in the West can act as a bridge, which can be extremely helpful in cementing political, economic, and cultural relationships between the Western world and the Muslim world.

**ABDELWAHAB HECHICHE:** I would like to comment on the question of authentic pluralism that you have just raised. As a student and professor of international affairs, specifically the Middle East and North Africa, I have always tried to project a personal commitment to universality, as stipulated by my Muslim beliefs. I have also shared Judaeo-Arab relations in positive terms. I would like to ask about the Muslim notion, discussed earlier, of 'the People of the Book.' Do you think that this notion is compatible with the United Nations' Universal Declaration on Human Rights? Is it enough to tolerate today or simply recognize the dignity of the human being, whoever he or she is, and whatever religion he or she may belong to? I address this question to you, Professor Khurshid, specifically because this morning you referred to the image or to the resurrection of an Islamic faith, and to the notion of universal citizenship. I raise these issues because I was confronted by them when I visited Israel a few years back for the first time as an Arab and a Muslim. There, I had to exercise the maximum of open-mindedness, and say 'this is a sovereign Jewish state,' and, as an Arab, I am naturally interested in the rights of my brothers and sisters, the Palestinians, whom I went to visit. How do you define the Qur'anic notion of tolerance?

**KHURSHID AHMAD:** To start with, the concept of plurality is part and parcel of the Islamic system. It is therefore authentic. Tolerance, in that sense, is accepted, but as it has evolved in the West, it is a limited concept. Today we face a new situation. I think that granting citizenship rights to all members of society, whatever be their faith, is in keeping with Islamic norms. However, we must ensure

that the constitution accepts the principle of sovereignty of Allah, and the Qur'an is the source. I am really emphasizing a concept where we are not only trying to coexist but pro-exist, and that perhaps can be a vision for the future if Muslims take the lead. I am sure that this would help others also in moving towards a new paradigm of relationships.

**IBRAHIM ABU-RABI:** My question is about the Muslim minority or minorities in the United States. Actually, it seems to me that we cannot talk about one homogeneous Muslim minority, but about two different and dichotomous Muslim minorities. The first one is the indigenous, especially African-American Muslim minority, and the second one is the immigrant Muslim minority. In terms of the African Muslim minority, it seems to me that the process of their history has been such where they have been confronted, historically speaking, with slavery and racism, and some of them have rediscovered Islam as an ideological cover, so to speak. It is true that African-Americans have rediscovered Islam as a belief system, but the ideologization of Islam has permitted the African community to rebel against the norms of mainstream society. On the other hand, the Muslim immigrant community followed a different process of evolution in this society. Some immigrant Muslims have been assimilated in the larger society. They have not faced a history of racism or slavery. It seems to me that we are not asking the immigrant Muslim community to learn from the indigenous Muslim community. We are asking the opposite.

**KHURSHID AHMAD:** I think that as far as the physical realities are concerned, you are very right. Perhaps if you further analyze and disaggregate, there would be many more mainstreams within these two major streams. Yet I think that the real challenge that Islam faces here is to see how a homogeneous Muslim community can emerge out of these diverse streams. I am confident that this can take place, and also provide a model for human society. The African-American Muslim community has gone through

different phases of transition in the past few decades or so. In my own personal contact with a number of them, I found out that they have moved away from that background which at one time used to determine their identity, and are embracing the universal fraternity of Islam. So in my view, this is a big challenge which the Muslim community here faces, and the Muslims or the Muslim leadership in this country should play some role in that regard. I would also like to suggest that American society as such is passing through different forms of crisis, not only one. Muslims can credibly put up a better example of greater homogeneity and integration as a model for others. I think we must reflect on the whole concept of assimilation. If assimilation means that Muslims should lose their cultural identity to become part of the cultural milieu, I for one would have reservations about that. Instead, in my view, there has to be a society with many colors, and points of strength. I think Muslims should be clear about the process of assimilation and how far they can go.

**CLIFF GREEN:** Thank you. I would like to stretch the rubric a little bit, because it seems to me Christians in most secular Western states are also minorities, and the United States is the only peculiar exception to that. It is a question that has two or three parts having to do with your views about the relationship between Christianity and secularism. Let me put it this way. Some time this morning you spoke of the West as though it were some sort of unity, and maybe that was shorthand, sometimes you distinguished between Christianity and secularism as twin impacts in the 19th century in the Muslim world. So the parts of my question are: do you have a general comment on the relationship between Christianity and secularism in the West? Do you see secularism as a development out of Christianity, do you see an antagonism between them, what is your perspective there? Another way to come at this would be to ask, what historically do you see as the roots of Western secularism? Do you see any alternative to a secular state as a framework for plurality of religious communities given on the one hand your affirmation of plurality, but also your critique of secularism?

**KHURSHID AHMAD:** I hope you would excuse my frankness. I am a student of history also. I may be wrong in my appreciation, but my personal appreciation is that the success of secularism in the Western world, to a large extent, depends upon the abdication of Christian leadership of the role that they should have played as true followers of Christ. Christ, in my view, presented the same message inviting all human beings to live in the grace of God, and not to divide life into compartments, but to make that life a life of obedience to their Lord. Somehow over the years, for a number of historical reasons that I will not go into, there had been a struggle between the forces of secularism and those of Christianity, then some kind of a compromise, and later some kind of a shrinkage of the role of Christians and Christianity. Some Christians came to accept, accommodate, condone, and even patronize secularism. That is how, in my view, things have unfolded. We have always looked upon Christians, who want to live as Christians and who would like to see that the will of the Lord prevails, as partners in our effort to fight the forces of materialism, and secularism. Over the years, in the context of Christian-Muslim dialogue, I have always said that I do not abdicate my commitment to reach all human beings and share my values, thoughts, and beliefs with them. Having said that, I believe this world could be a much better place if Muslims are better Muslims, Christians are better Christians, and Jews are better Jews. That type of approach would really help us to move toward that coexistence and pro-existence that I mentioned above.

**SAMI AL-ARIAN:** My question pertains to the status of Muslims in non-Muslim countries, especially when they are in a minority situation. It seems to me that with the absence of *Dar al-Islam*, this is, perhaps, the first time in history where Muslims are basically on their own. Because of their unique situation, they have to develop their own *fiqh*, and they may have to depart, to a large degree, from the historical norms and traditions. This might mean that many a traditional Muslim in the East may resist this kind of orientation. For instance, a few years back, Dr Hasan Turabi expressed a novel Islamic opinion, and the audi-

ence, unappreciative of this opinion, almost revolted. Undoubtedly, Muslims in this country face a number of problems. What do we do, for instance, when we have Muslim women who cannot find Muslim husbands? I could cite many other problems and issues that face Muslims here. Also the concept of the development of *fiqh* does not exist in the *fiqh* schools or *fiqh* methodologies. What do we do in this instance especially when we cannot disagree with the existing *fiqh* in the East? Also, I would seek clarifications on the question of allegiance. Muslims faced this question during the Gulf War. Some do not take citizenship because they have to give an oath, and this kind of thing. How do you perceive Muslims who become citizens of a secular state or a non-Muslim state?

**KHURSHID AHMAD:** Thank you very much. Permit me to say a few words about one of the questions that Dr Cliff Green asked, which I missed. That was the question of the model of a nation-state and the alternative. In my view, the nation-state is somehow in a more fluid situation than before. Higher loyalties are being forged in the form of economic integration and political union. As you can see, the process is still there, and the heyday of the nation-state is perhaps over. This also opens the possibilities for other political forms of the state to emerge. So, the nation-state represents only one stage in political development. We are still subjected to it, although we are outgrowing it as well.

As to Dr Sami al-Arian's question, I am not competent to answer the *fiqh* side of the question. My grounding in *fiqh* is not that strong, and I would not venture an opinion on issues I am not certain about. But I would submit that this is not the first occasion when we have had some kind of Muslim presence in non-Muslim lands. I may refer you to the Muslim presence in Abyssinia which began well before the unification of Arabia by Islam. *Fiqh* has another concept, *Dar al-Aman*, which can be applied to the countries that Muslims have an agreement with. I think that traditional *fiqh* possesses a variety of models which we can invoke. I am in favor of continuous efforts towards the



evolution and growth of *fiqh* in any country, although specific questions of *fiqh* are beyond the realm of my competence.

**CHARLES BUTTERWORTH:** I will try to be brief. I cannot escape the thought that the whole event of the Enlightenment has received such a hard press today. Let us not forget that there is this strange man, Gotthold E. Lessing (d. 1781), who wrote a very strange play called *Nathan the Wise*.<sup>1</sup> Nathan, being a Jew, plays an important part when he faces Salah al-Din in Jerusalem. Salah al-Din asks Nathan, who has reputation of being wise, to resolve the most fundamental issue of which religion is the best. Without going deeply into the story, Lessing goes down in history as the spokesman for tolerance. As an academic, I have to somehow say that I am intrigued by the notion of pro-existence, although I have to know something about tolerance. I think I know the relationship between tolerance and coexistence; I, however, do not understand pro-existence. I would like a comment on that. Second, let me just say the following. It is true that there are many problems in the United States and the West. But it is important to realize that it is only in a secular state that people can be non-distinct citizens outside the house. I wonder what you have to say about that because the alternative to secular states is to have a non-secular state, to have a state which would mark citizens.

**KHURSHID AHMAD:** I think I can answer both questions with one answer. As long as we are prepared to respect differing identities as authentic, there is no need to seek refuge in the house and hope that we can only exist for each other if we are secular in the street. So if we are prepared to accept others as different, that is what I mean by pro-existence. If you are a Christian, you have a right to be Christian. I respect you as a Christian, and whether you are in the house, or in the church, or in the bazaar, or in the Parliament. Also, I, as a Muslim, expect to be respected in the same manner, in the house and outside. That is pro-existence, which is bigger than both tolerance and

coexistence, and that is what I am envisioning.

**JOHN ENTELLIS:** I would like your comment on the relationship that may exist between Muslim communities in the United States and Europe on the one hand, and the Islamic political movements in the Muslim world on the other. I would be interested in your view of the question of democracy. One of the statements made by an individual who was quoted in a series of articles in *The New York Times* about Muslims in the United States recently had to do with democracy and the freedom that they have here, and they supposedly did not enjoy in the Muslim world. Does the idea of freedom prevail sufficiently, both at the individual and collective levels, to influence the thinking of the political Islamic movements?

**KHURSHID AHMAD:** Very frankly, to the best of my knowledge, there is no 'Islam international' like the 'Communist or socialist international.' The Islamic groups, societies, and organizations are autonomous. They have some contacts, even common platforms in the form of conferences, but, to the best of my knowledge, no such international entity exists.

As for democracy, there are aspects that we value very much. It is a fact that in many Muslim countries, as far as the democratic process is concerned, the state of affairs is not that good. In certain Muslim countries, such as Pakistan, Turkey, and Malaysia, the democratic process is in relatively good operation. There have been difficulties, yet things are moving. There are other situations that have a semblance of democratic institutions with no concrete reality, and there are some which are out-and-out despotic or monarchical. I think that many Muslims have moved to Europe and America because they were persecuted in their own homes, in the same way as many people moved to this part of the world when they were persecuted because of the religious inquisitions in Europe. I think that many Muslims who immigrated to the West will not go back. I look at them as permanent residents and citizens of these countries. I think this is going to have a sobering influence

on Muslim countries back home in terms of the promotion of democratic values and democratic institutions. I also feel that the Islamic movements have learnt from their own experiences, misfortunes, and persecutions they have been subjected to, as well as by their exposure to the Western world, rule of law, democratic institutions, respect for human rights, principle of the accountability of the government, and formation of government through public opinion. All these things are positive achievements of mankind. They are in keeping with Islamic values and they can represent common features of humanity tomorrow.

## NOTES

- 1 G. Lessing, *Selected Prose Works*, tr. E. C. Beasley and H. Zimmern (London: 1879); and P. Hazard, *European Thought in the 18th Century* (London: 1954).

## CONCLUDING SUMMARY

**J**OHAN O. VOLL: have come today with the impression that I have an impossible task if I am to summarize this very rich experience. Louis Cantori has indicated this in saying what he expected me to do in this overwhelming context, that you are more likely to get a *khutba* (sermon) than a pure summary.

Where do we start? There were times today when I remembered one of my favorite stories. It depends upon which tradition you come from, whether you call him Goha or Juha or Nasreddin Hojja, but it is a 'Juha story' which I am sure many of you have already heard. One time Juha was sitting in his house and, from the next room his wife called him and said, "Juha, I have just dropped a coin. Help me find it." Juha immediately ran out into the courtyard and started scratching around in the dirt. His wife shouted out, "You fool! What are you doing out there? I dropped the coin in here!" And Juha replied, "Yes, I know, but the light is so much better out here."

At certain points I had the feeling that we were all possibly looking for the same thing, but that many of us were saying that "my light is better than your light for seeing what it is that we want to see." This is a reflection of the situation in which we are, of which Dr Khurshid reminded

us from time to time, and in the words of some of his comments early in the morning: We are in the middle of an overall civilizational crisis that demands an almost absolute type of rethinking and reviewing — not ‘reviewing,’ but *reviewing* and not reforming in the old sense, but *re*-forming. Even considering what we are going to do tonight. We relax at dinner *re*creating more than simply recreating. One of the good things about the term *tajdid* is that it does not involve the problem of the double meaning or implication of the English prefix ‘re-’. *Tajdid* is a process that is not redoing something; it gives us a different look. It is that new look that is the dimension of today that I want to emphasize in this summary.

We have been talking in many ways about a variety of subjects, but the underlying agenda has been to ask the question: What are the ‘rules of the game’ that we are looking at? This was particularly true this morning in our first discussion when we were talking about economics. Much of our really fruitful discussion circled around, and then bore in on, the questions of what is a science, what is a social science, what is a discipline, what is an economics, and most basically, what are the rules of the game? There was a very interesting spectrum in the dialogue as we started with the moral questions and the issue of what is the discipline of economics. In the discussion even of Western economics, I am sure that we all heard the same differences. In talking about Western economics, Dr Khurshid Ahmad was not talking about the same authorities that some of the social scientists here were talking about. Dr Khurshid’s Western economist was Kenneth Boulding. I do not know how many of you have ever tried to put forward the ideas of Kenneth Boulding<sup>1</sup> with some of your strict econometric friends, but it is like trying to convince a Methodist in the old days in the American Middle West that a Roman Catholic was really Christian. We were talking about the basic nature of the discipline and its mechanisms and methodologies.

The real problem, it seems to me, was that it was not just a disagreement over discipline, but it was a disagreement over the worldview that lies behind that discipline. It is the debate that exists in our country, and generally

within the social sciences in the West. It is a debate that is now taking place globally: Is there ever such a thing as a value-free social science? Dr Khurshid says no. That involves the very sense of the worldview which lies behind the mode of analysis. In this, then, we are involved in one of those situations where I have to use what is now an outmoded terminology. However, I want to use it because what we are now involved in is not just a reforming of the economic discipline; we are not just involved in a minor adjustment of a worldview; we are involved in a whole paradigmatic revolution that asks us to go back and look at the roots. The suggestion that I have for Charles Butterworth is that we are not necessarily just looking back to the revolution of the Enlightenment, but in the discussion of the nation-state, we are going back to 1648 and the European consequences of the Thirty Years' War and the Reformation.

As we start to ask questions about this grand worldview perspective, we are, in fact, asking the questions that the really paradigmatically post-modern people (not just the people who make a living by selling articles to the *New York Review of Books*) are asking and we are dealing with the profound issues of post-modernity that are raised by people like Stephen Toulmin in his book *Cosmopolis*,<sup>2</sup> where he talks about the rise and fall of the modern agenda.

Then we moved from the concrete discussion of grand issues to the question of the Islamic movement. Here again, we got involved in many ways in discussing specifics, but the particular concrete topics involved things that we were asking each other. We were talking to each other and we were finding information. However, the underlying current was again the question of trying to define what we were really talking about when we discuss the Islamic movements. What is the nature of that set of phenomena and how do these phenomena operate? As Dr Khurshid was talking to us, dealing with two sets of movements — the set of his definitions, the broad Islamic resurgence, and the particular set of specific movements — he was describing to us a set of experiences that has deep resonance with experiences in the past, not just the middle-modern and early-modern but, in his presentation, also



the pre-modern past of Islamic history.

Dr Khurshid was talking about things that have continuity and stability, and yet, at the same time, he was talking about new phenomena. (Now, I do hope that none of you will tell Bruce Lawrence that I said that. Some of you know that Bruce Lawrence has a major hypothesis regarding Islamic fundamentalism that says that it is a phenomenon of the modern world,<sup>3</sup> and he and I have had many interesting discussions about that.) There is something unique in this set of experiences that Dr Khurshid was describing to us.

This meeting itself would not have been possible a hundred years ago. The analogy that I give to my students in world history is that the United Nations now, in terms of time, space, travel, and the ability to gather together, is half the size of the colonial American Continental Congress in 1776. Think of how long it took John Adams to get to Philadelphia from Boston, and then ask yourself how long it takes Boris Yeltsin, even if he is starting from Siberia, to get to New York to give an address. Now it is in that context that Dr Khurshid reminds us that we have this broad Islamic movement in a global world, not necessarily a fractionated world. This is where our final discussion on minorities gave us again an interesting pause. As he did throughout the day, Dr Khurshid reminded us that it is useful to take the terms that we are thinking about and ask: Is this term that I am using really what it is that I am talking about? He reminded us of that most cogently when he reminded us of the problem of using the term minority when you are talking about a non-fixed category.

I would expand that to noting that the ethnic categories in the current historically-oriented political discussions are fluid. If current political theories about the development of nationalism, as reflected in the title of Benedict Anderson's book, *Imagined Communities*,<sup>4</sup> have any real significance, and I think they do, even the sort of 'fixed ethnic identity' is in fact fixed only in the mental dictionary of individual human beings as they gather together in groups, and they have the power to create new ethnic identities if they can get inside their minds to change their

mental dictionaries.

What we have is a day that has reminded us of the importance of dialogue, or multilogue, or simple discussion. The dialogue that we had today reminds us of the necessity for each and every one of us to rethink what we are dealing with. We had a discussion which talked about specific programmatic aspects of particular movements and peoples, and I think that was important. We need to exchange this kind of information. However, then we went on and discussed subjects that raised issues about the very rules of the game.

I would like to suggest, in my last couple of minutes of conclusion that we started to go beyond even that, especially in our final discussion, to remind ourselves that we might not even be trying to discuss the rules of the game. We were, I think, beginning to ask ourselves the even more basic question: What is the game? What is 'the game' that we are playing in our society and in global society at the moment? In the 'good old days,' the game and the rules seemed obvious. It was still possible, even as recently as 20 or 25 years ago, to think in terms of behavioralist positivism and development economic theory. Everybody could read Rostow and then hear about another Rostow and wonder which Rostow was talking about take-offs to self-sustaining economic growth.<sup>5</sup> Now we are not even sure what the game is.

In the old days, everybody knew what the game was, and it was a game defined in terms that Dr Khurshid objects to. The old game was like the old children's game of Monopoly. Everybody knew the rules of the game. How you advanced was by getting more and more houses and hotels and money. The old game was monopoly, and that was how you judged which country was 'winning' and which country was 'losing.' Now we have entered a different world, and I will use the analogy of another children's game. We are now in a world that is like the baseball games of Calvin and Hobbes, two cartoon characters. Calvin is an elementary school person who has a cloth tiger, Hobbes, who is his teddy bear companion. Calvin and Hobbes live in their own imaginary world much of the

time, and sometimes they play baseball. When they do, whoever is the batter or who is at the center of action gets to make up the rules for the game at that moment. We are now in the midst of a world which seems like a Calvin and Hobbes baseball game: We think that we know the rules until the next person gets to play and there is a whole new set of rules. We are in a context of constant change and what we are in fact trying to do is discover the nature of the 'game that we are playing.'

I want to suggest that we take the post-modern period and remember that our terms are in many ways archaic. If they are to be correctly used, we have to figure out a common meaning. Are we stuck with the nation-state for some time into the future? Is the nation-state what it is that is withering on the vine? Just as we had nation-state as a term to cope with, we also have 'tolerance.' I would remind you that there was one point in the discussion where we were reminded that 'tolerance' is something that recognizes inequality. The implicit idea of 'tolerance' is that I am better than you, but I will tolerate your existence anyway, and this is opposed to equality. Tolerance is a differential recognition of difference.

The issue, then, is one of going beyond tolerance and the nation-state and other terms tied to the modern context. There is an additional term that I would like to suggest. We started today by being reminded by Dr Khurshid that we are in the midst of a civilizational crisis. That is probably true, but I would like to suggest in a broader way that we are in the midst of a crisis of civilization as an organizational concept. Bernard Lewis's concept of the source of the 'rage of Islam' as resulting from the conflict between two civilizations<sup>6</sup> becomes a meaningless explanation if you are involved in the discussion that we just had for the last hour about significant Western Muslim communities and their future role. I would suggest that Islam ceased to be identifiable as a 'civilization' when it expanded beyond the Middle East region (the region of 'Middle Eastern civilization'). By the 15th century, Islam was a multi-civilizational phenomenon. South Asia combined with the Middle East, North Africa, and Central Asia, is something more than a civilization; it is multi-civilizational. By the 15th

century, Islam had expanded beyond the boundaries of what world history textbooks call 'civilization.' It was not only multi-civilization, it was also civilizationally pluralistic in that it included societies that were non-civilizational as well as societies that were civilizations. I think that as we raise the issues about the relationship between communities and societies, and groups and identities at the beginning of the 15th and 21st centuries, we need to remember that we are in a time when we must recognize that the 'civilizational crisis' is probably the crisis of the viability of the concept of civilization itself.

We need to be able to go beyond 'tolerance,' 'nation-state,' and 'civilization.' In this sense, we should be able to have an awareness of unity in the humanity of tomorrow. The awareness of unity and the recognition of our authentic diversity becomes the problem of today and the future. I think we all owe thanks to Dr Khurshid for giving us a good start in that kind of rethinking.

## NOTES

- 1 For examples of Kenneth Boulding's approach to economics, see Kenneth E. Boulding, *Beyond Economics* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1968); Kenneth E. Boulding, *Evolutionary Economics* (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1981); and Kenneth E. Boulding, *The World as a Total System* (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1985).
- 2 Stephen Toulmin, *Cosmopolis: The Hidden Agenda of Modernity* (New York: Free Press, 1990).
- 3 See, for example, his comprehensive presentation in Bruce B. Lawrence, *Defenders of God: The Fundamentalist Revolt Against the Modern Age* (New York: Harper & Row, 1989).
- 4 Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983).
- 5 The two Rostows were Eugene and W. W. The widely-cited theory of the stages of economic growth was first presented in W. W. Rostow, *The Stages of Economic Growth* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960).
- 6 Bernard Lewis, "The Roots of Muslim Rage," *The Atlantic* 266, no. 3 (September 1990).

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