The Political Revival of Islam: The Case of Egypt

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The Middle East was the cradle of the world's three great monotheistic religions, and to this day they continue to play a very important role it its affairs.

The recent events in Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Afghanistan, and in Libya and Pakistan, as well as the less widely publicized events in Turkey, Syria, Egypt and the Gulf, have stimulated and renewed people's interest in understanding both the role of religion and the religious revival in the Middle East.

It should be observed here that I speak of religious revival, not only of Islamic revival, for in addition to Islamic movements we have the Likud bloc (with its important religious component) in power in Israel for the first time in that state's three decades of existence, while in Lebanon and in Egypt we can observe Christian revivalist movements that cannot be regarded entirely as counterreactions.

However, it is the so-called Islamic revival that has drawn people's attention most in the West, owing in part to political and international considerations.

The International Significance of Islam

The curious events in Mecca late in 1979 illustrate in a symbolic way just how international the issue of Islam and politics can be. The Iranian revolution stirred up segments of the Shi'i population in a number of Gulf states, and when a group of urban guerillas took over the Most Sacred Mosque of Mecca, some Saudi leaders jumped to the conclusion that Iran and the Shi'i minority of Saudi Arabia (who work mainly in the oil-producing Eastern area) were behind it. Hearing of this, the Ayatollah Khomeini suspected and declared his suspicion of an American and Israeli plot to turn Muslims against each other.[1] Hearing of this plot, Muslims in Pakistan, Libya, and other countries acted against American institutions in their countries. Fearing further aggravation, leaders in certain American circles suggested that the "plot" was merely a rumor spread by Soviet agents in the Middle East to arouse anti-American sentiment. As it happened, the Mecca affair turned out to be a purely "Sunni" exercise (launched by a neo-Wahhabi puritanical group), but it was, nevertheless, quite multinational: those who were eventually executed included, in addition to the Saudis, Egyptians, Yemenis, Kuwaitis, a Sudanese, and an Iraqi. To add to the international nature of the event, it has now been confirmed that the Saudi counterattack was made possible by French assistance in the form of equip-

ment and personnel, bringing the total number of countries mentioned in this tale to thirteen!

This is on a symbolic level. On a concrete level, it is possible to suggest at least four likely areas where developments in the Islamic world may have some international and strategic significance:

1. In the perception of the world a curious relationship has been established between Islam and petroleum: among OPEC members, Muslim nations form a majority; that is, the Middle East plus Indonesia plus Nigeria, which has a large Muslim population.[2] And energy has of course become a matter of vital strategic importance to many countries.

2. The main part of the Muslim world borders on the Soviet Union and has, therefore, traditionally been regarded by the West as a buffer zone in any policy of containment toward the Soviet Union.[3] Of symbolic significance in this respect is the fact that one such pro-Western arrangement in that region was known as the Islamic Pact.

3. Whatever happens in the Muslim world is of great significance to the Soviet Union, not only because of the existing strategic importance and the potential economic importance of the region to the Soviets, but also because such developments may have an impact on the sizable (and growing) Soviet Muslim minority.[4]

4. Solidarity among Muslim countries, although still minimal and basically symbolic, is not entirely without weight internationally. A reasonable degree of unity in Islamic conferences and summits can be achieved only in connection with emotional cases such as the fate of Jerusalem and the related Palestinian cause.[5] Otherwise, Islamic groupings are used by single countries for their own foreign-policy objectives. While Egypt has used the Islamic Congress (and Council) and emphasized cultural contacts, Saudi Arabia has used the Islamic Bank (and other funds) and expanded financial contacts. It is also worth noticing that Pakistan's experimentation with nuclear options, possibly with the financial help of Libya, has led some to speak of the "Islamic nuclear bomb."[6] Last but not least, the international influence of Islam seems to be expanding as Islam increasingly gains more converts in Africa than does any other religion.[7]

These are some aspects of the international importance of Islam, and it goes without saying, of course, that Islam plays an even greater political role in the domestic affairs of most Muslim countries. But before going any further in examining the political significance of Islam, let us first look at some elements of the doctrinal and historical background that may help in analyzing the political importance of this religion. Two approaches in particular will have to be avoided when considering such a topic.

The first is the Orientalist approach. The Orientalist or Islamist, with most of his effort invested in language and antique texts, is inclined to mistake the script for reality, is bound to notice aspects of static continuity rather than of dynamic change, and is often likely to picture Muslim peoples as acting always *as* Muslims and nothing else. Or he may be obsessed by a search for the exotic, for endless Arabian nights.[8]

The second path to be avoided is what one might call the strategist approach. The strategist is much inclined to treat other nations simply as pawns in the game of international politics. To him the study of their culture, society, and economy can be of interest only if, and inasmuch as, it impinges on the foreign policy objectives of the superpowers.[9] By looking at everything through the "spectacles" of self-interest, those who take this approach will quite likely see

reality distorted or incomplete; nor is such an approach going to be happily en-tertained by the peoples it deals with.[10]

Avoiding these two different but equally narrow and misleading approaches, we now move to a sociopolitical examination of the relationships between reli-gion and politics in the Middle East.

The Political Role of Religion

To start with, it should be remembered that Islam is an all-encompassing be-lief system that involves matters of man's relationship to God (*'ibadat*) as well as his relationship to his fellow men (*mu'amalat*). It follows from this that there is no dichotomy in Islam between religious and civil matters. It is inaccurate, however, to say that in Islam there is no separation between state and church, since Islam – at least Sunni (Orthodox) Islam – has no "church" in the sense of a formal ecclesiastical hierarchy.[11] Even in Shi'ite Islam, which has more of a clerical elite, no claim has ever been made by the *ulama* (religious scholars) to assume government directly by themselves. In this respect, if in no other, the government of the Ayatollah Khomeini in Iran represents an aspect of innova-tion rather than of fundamentalism.

Apart from the doctrine, it is probably because of the nonexistence of a church in Islam that it has not been possible practically – in spite of the efforts of many "modernizers" such as M. Kemal Atatürk – to isolate religion from sociopolitical affairs. In Muslim societies there is no institutional church which, if it interferes in government, can therefore be neatly removed from politics and asked to mind its own business. In Islamic government any good Muslim be-liever can rule, *but* – and this is what makes the government Islamic – he should literally follow the *Shari'a,* at least as it is laid down in the Qur'ān and in the Traditions of the Prophet Muhammad. Now, this *Shari'a* happens to cover many matters of social, economic, and political life, as well as matters of wor-ship and devotion to the Almighty. As for the religious scholars (*ulama*), al-though they themselves do not rule, they may offer guidance and counseling. The political outcome of this counseling, in modern terminology, is to render legitimacy to the rulers or else to instigate rebellion against them.[12] This is in domestic politics.

Internationally, Islam views the universe, at least theoretically, as being di-vided into two worlds: *Dar al-harb* (the household of war) and *Dar al-Islam* (the household of Islam); and *jihad* (struggle or holy war) is the way to trans-form the first into the second. In theory, this division was supposed to be tem-porary until a Muslim universal state had been established. In practice, how-ever, it persisted throughout Islamic history and the situation in modern legal terms is perhaps quite similar to nonrecognition that nevertheless does not pre-clude diplomatic negotiations. Some jurists have in fact devised a third tem-porary division of the world called *Dar al-sulh* (the household of reconciliation) or *Dar al-'ahd* (the household of covenant), giving qualified recognition to a non-Muslim state if it entered into treaty relations with Islamdom on certain conditions. And in reality, the more the Muslims became disinclined to launch

religious wars, the more reconciled they tended to be to the permanency of a "law of peace," a tendency that fitted well into the modern pattern of world politics and international relations.[13]

It remains true, however, that Islam conceives of differences between peoples and states, not, for example, according to nationalities but according to religion: Muslims all over the world form one unified *umma* (religiopolitical community), and this sense of belonging should impart to the Muslim every-where the most important aspect of his identity. As though to complicate things even further, the modern Arabs have, in many cases, adopted this old (reli-gious) notion of *umma* to describe the present-day "nation" (although the more accurate word *qawmiyya* is of course also used). This semantic problem is sym-bolically representative of a real overlapping and possible confusion between the concept of religious community and the concept of national community in the Muslim world.

Now, having in a very general way established the complex doctrinal and his-torical relationship in Islam between religion and politics, both domestically and internationally, we come to consider its possible political roles in contem-porary times.[14] Observation indicates that there are at least two varieties of roles that Islam can play in modern politics:

1. Religion can be an instrument for legitimization, as in the case of the Saudi royal family ("protectors of the Two Sacred Mosques"), the Moroccan king ("Commander of the Faithful"), and, to a lesser extent, President Sadat (the "Believer-President").

2. Religion can be a catalyst for sociopolitical resistance and/or a revolutionary means to reconstruct society. This is of course the type of role that tends to take a vio-lent approach and that is therefore more likely to draw people's attention. It is for this reason that we will look more closely at this possible role of Islam.

Why are many people in Muslim societies in a state of discontent, and what exactly do they want?

In answering this question, it seems to me that, having considered briefly some aspects of the specificity of Islam, it would be erroneous to continue to attribute every change (or for that matter, lack of change) in Muslim societies to Islam. Most Middle Easterners are Muslim, and their political struggle may therefore take an Islamic form or at least acquire an Islamic flavor. But Mus-lims are people who share with all other humans the same basic needs, and who are motivated by more or less the same aspirations and fears. What happens in the Muslim countries today cannot be taken out of, and artificially separated from, the general context of the Third World with all its current agonizing prob-lems.

Two of these problems stand out above all others: the need for the society to establish its own identity and "be its own self"; and the need for the society to manage its resources and potentials in a way most conducive to meeting the demands of the people (or "authenticity and effectiveness," as Jacques Berque would say). To achieve this blend of self-realization and improved capability (which is probably the essence of development) Muslim peoples have been ex-perimenting with a variety of models, including in particular the following:

1. *Nationalism*. In its modern, secular, European concept, nationalism has repeatedly been tried in the Middle East. Many of these experiments outside the Arab world have had to play down Islam, possibly because of its historical connection with the Arabs – for example, Kemalist Turkey, Pahlavi Iran. Most of them, including the most vociferous of the Islamic nations – Pakistan – ended up being strongly pro-Western. From the viewpoint of comprehensive emancipation and self-realization, too much affiliation with and dependence on the West was considered by many to be undesirable. In the Arab world the nationalist idiom, even when it was propagated by Christians such as William Makram 'Ubaid and Michel 'Aflaq, included an important Islamic component. For although Arabs are a minority among Muslims, they have always tended to regard the main achievements of the Islamic civilizations as their own. Contrary to what occurred in modern Turkey and in modern Iran, Islam has occupied a crucial place in the conceptualization of modern Arab nationalism.[15] But it should be emphasized that this is a secularized Islam that was looked at basically as one aspect of the Arab *cultural* heritage, and not particularly as a religion.[16] And Arab nationalism has not, in any case, succeeded in realizing its main goal of Arab unity.

2. *Socialism and Marxism*. The picture here is more complex. The Arab world in particular has flirted with socialistic ideas and practices. The main and most influential model, however, was the Nasserist variety, usually called Arab socialism. That experiment represented a type of developmental nationalism that was closer to state capitalism than it was to socialism. It was paralyzed by the defeat of the regime in 1967 and started to fade out gradually after Nasser's death in 1970, giving way to an open-door mercantile economy. Most people believe that socialism has been given a try and has failed; and other Arab countries that adopted something similar to the Egyptian model (Syria, Algeria, Iraq, etc.) are following to some extent or another the same path toward mercantile economics.

Marxism has also been tried here and there: in Somalia it remains the official doctrine, though in reality it has, to all intents and purposes, disappeared; in South Yemen it is dominant now, with a spillover that seems to be reviving in Dhofar. Outside the Arab world, in Afghanistan, the government is Marxist but is in conflict with rural traditionalism, which is expressing itself in religious terms. With only the possible exception of South Yemen it can be said therefore that Marxism does not seem to be gaining ground in the Muslim world.

Two observations are in order at this point. First, the main struggle of Muslim peoples has been for comprehensive national emancipation. The experimentation with socialism tended to represent an extension in the scope of the national struggle and was always closely related and subordinate to it (hence the term "economic nationalism" may be more accurate than "socialism"). And secondly, socialism was no less imported a concept than nationalism was. Like the latter, socialism (including Marxism) was basically a European concept, introduced – as in the case of the Arab world – by intellectuals exposed to the French and the Italian cultures.

To some extent therefore, contemporary Islamic movements can be said to represent a cultural reaction to alien theories that proved, in addition, not to be very useful. Indeed as the drive toward emancipation becomes increasingly and genuinely popular, it shows a tendency to be "less national and more religious."[17]

For example, the secular outlook, which until the fifties was predominant in Egypt and the Arab East, seems to be giving way to a more religiously conscious political atmosphere. The Copts of Egypt who, between the twenties and forties, found it possible to get elected to numerous parliamentary seats representing even predominantly Muslim constituencies, now find it difficult to win even two or three seats in a whole parliament. In Syria, the failure of the draft of the present constitution to specify Islam as the state religion was the cause of a great many violent demonstrations and skirmishes in 1973. There is also a growing pressure in many countries for increased reliance on religious laws: in Egypt, for example, the present constitution stipulates for the first time that the *Shari'a* (religious law) is *a* main source of legislation; however, there is growing pressure toward changing this item and stating that the Shari'a is *the* main source of legislation.[18]

But regardless of the technical details it is possible to say that, in their search for identity and fulfillment, Muslim people are revealing aspects of a turning away from secular prescriptions (whether nationalist, leftist or whatever) and are moving toward religiously framed prescriptions. Secular prescriptions are being increasingly regarded as importations, and unsuccessful importations at that. Of course it must be remembered that outside Arabia Islam was itself an importation, but indeed an old importation from thirteen centuries earlier and one that became deeply rooted in the society and its culture.

Thus it should not be surprising to observe people resorting to Islam as a result of what they would consider the failure of other options. On one level they may turn to Islam as a refuge that provides emotional peace and comfort, and for the certainty and assurance that can be derived from the familiar or the absolute. At another level, Islam may become the spearhead for sociopolitical resistance. Internally this resistance may be launched against what is considered corruption or injustice in government; externally it may be directed against foreign domination. Such domination may represent a cultural threat or challenge to the indigenous culture, but normally it has also its economic, political, and strategic burdens. The West, and more specifically the United States of America, tends usually to be the object of this resistance, and the causes for this are multiple:

1. There are historical memories of the Crusades and the religious wars; Middle Easterners have a strong sense of history.

2. There are all the sensitivities created by the contradictions between a glorious past and a miserable present – the injured pride and the sense of grievance and injustice.

3. There is the impact of the European colonial experience, followed by the American imperialist phase; Middle Easterners saw America as a liberal friendly power until the early fifties. When it replaced the British and French in the region, the United States became increasingly regarded as a dominating intruder.

4. There is the intimate and special support given by the West and by America to Israel; this has resulted in bitter feelings, especially among the Arabs.

5. The tendency of Western and American powers to ally themselves with oppressive or exploitative regimes in the Middle East and the Third World has caused much fear, doubt, and hatred.

6. Images of the West as a consumer, a permissive and decadent society prevail in many Middle East circles, making the West both alluring and despised.

Once Islam is used as a spearhead for a resistance movement, the difficult and challenging task of launching a real Islamic revolution would revolve around the possible ways in which Islam can be used in reconstructing society. Facile commentaries often speak of Islamic "fundamentalists" trying to "turn back the clock to the Middle Ages." Just incidentally (and ironically) we may remark here that the Middle Ages – which were the Dark Ages for Europe – saw the peak of the Arab-Islamic civilization, so it may not be such a bad thing, given the state of Muslim societies today, to return to some of the cultural and scientific achievements of the Middle Ages in the Muslim world! Any going back in time is, of course, impossible, and for this and other reasons one should use the term "fundamentalism" with great care: the so-called fundamentalists are often modernizers and are not as much interested in going back into history as they are in dealing with contemporary social, economic, and political problems. Even if they themselves believe that there is only one fundamental truth in Islam, their interpretations and perceptions of that truth are widely different: compare, for example, Pakistan and Libya. In any case, the phenomenon increasingly being called the "return," "revival," or "resurgence" of Islam[19] is not entirely, or even basically, related to the nature of Islam as a religion, but has more to do with the problems and crises of Muslim societies as a part of the Third World today.

If resistance is taking more of an Islamic form in such countries, it is partly because Islam represents one of the most entrenched (and therefore least alien) cultural traits in the society. More practically, however, revolt takes an Islamic expression because quite often there are no other outlets left in the society for channeling political demands. In Pahlavi Iran, for example, all possible channels for political expression were blocked, and even the emerging new class created by the regime could not express itself politically in terms of interests or ideas. Islam represented the only opening left for protest, and it was used, one might suggest, by different groups and powers seeking probably completely different goals and including, among others, the new urban middle class.

To illustrate my argument further, I will turn at this point to a specific examination of the role of Islamic movements in Egypt, a role that offers interesting parallels with a country like Iran inasmuch as it represents dissimilarities with a country like Afghanistan.

THE CASE OF EGYPT

As is to be expected, Islam plays an important role in Egypt.[20] Furthermore, there can be little doubt that what people call the "Islamic trend" is growing in political significance in Egypt today. At least three aspects of the increasing importance of that Islamic trend can be detected in present day Egypt:

1. There has been growth in religious writing and in the circulation of religious literature,[21] as well as in the manifestations of religious piety (including involvement in *Sufi*

orders and *dhikr* sessions), not only among common people but also among technocrats, socialists, and other presumably secular groups. Related to this are growing social and political pressures (partly successful in achieving their goals) for incorporating larger Islamic "doses" into the constitution, into education, and into social life (the family law, the prohibition of alcohol, etc.).

2. The political leadership has increasingly relied on religion as a means of legitimization.[22] Since coming to power, President Sadat has emphasized Muhammad as his first name, labels himself "the Believer-President," ends his political speeches with verses from the Qur'ān, and was able to get the scholars of Al-Azhar recently to issue a *fatwa* (religio-legal counsel) that endorsed the settlement with Israel.[23]

3. Religion has played a growing role as a catalyst for sociopolitical revolt. And this is potentially a more violent type of religious expression. Two main sets of groups fall into this category: (a) the conventional Muslim Brothers (*Ikhwan*), who first organized in the twenties and whom we will call, for lack of a better term, the fundamentalists. They now seek the right to form a political party, and they enjoy at least an aspect of the right of expression through publication of two magazines representing the movement; (b) the newer, smaller, and on the whole more militant groups that represent offshoots from the mainstream *Ikhwan*, or new formations appearing for the first time after the defeat of 1967. These we will call the neofundamentalists.

The Islamic Groups

The most important Islamic movement in the country's modern history is, of course, the Muslim Brothers (*Al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun*). The group was founded in 1928 and was active in the thirties and forties as a fundamentalist religious and cultural society with important – and sometimes violent – political activities that led to more than one crisis before 1952.[24] The *Ikhwan* were also subject to two crises under the Nasserist regime: one in 1954 and one in 1965–1966. In both cases, large numbers of the group's leaders and members were arrested and imprisoned (and of them a handful were executed). Most were later released, mainly in the seventies.

Ideologically, there are not many basic differences between the older *Ikhwan* – the fundamentalists – and the newer Islamic organizations that we are calling neofundamentalists.[25] The main differences seem to lie in the intensity of feelings and in the means they use to achieve their goals. Members of the newer organizations seem to believe that ungodliness and corruption have spread to such an extent that they have made the whole society in its present form a hopeless case, one that cannot be rescued from its *jahiliyya* (total pagan ignorance) except through radical means (such as – according to some of them – retreat to the desert or the mountains in preparation for a powerful spiritual conquest to come).

Concerning the socioeconomic ideas of the Islamic groups, it should be emphasized that these ideas should not automatically be identified with a rightist orientation. It is true that the Muslim establishment has habitually set out to fight communism, to the point that ᶜAbd al-Halim Mahmud, Shaikh al-Azhar in 1976, said that he was "specializing in combatting Communism."[26] And it is equally true that the press and the publications of the Brothers are full of con-

demnation of Marxism as an atheistic doctrine. However, there was an unmistakable socialist flavor in the writings of Sayyid Qutb.[27] The widespread belief that socialism was tried and failed in Nasser's Egypt might have reduced to some extent the attraction of certain of these socialistic ideas, but it would nevertheless be a mistake to assume that the Islamic organizations represent unequivocal rightist ideas. If anything, the dominant socioeconomic doctrine of the Islamic organizations has always tended to be of a corporatist type: their universalistic religious belief as well as their recent middle-class background leads them to call for a society of "owners and workers together."[28]

By most accounts, many of the Islamic groups that exist in Egypt today are more militant than the Brothers and may represent a less orthodox orientation similar to what the new left represents within socialist circles. The leaders and members of these new organizations are either among the very young elements of the Muslim Brothers who were imprisoned in the mid-sixties, are relatives (sons, cousins, etc.) of older Brothers, or are complete newcomers who became politically conscious during or after the defeat of 1967.

That occurrence was the most shattering event in Egypt's contemporary history. "Why were we so utterly defeated?" – the soul-searching question echoed all over the country. There were three main interpretative answers as to the causes of the catastrophe:

1. A socialistic explanation attributed the defeat to a bureaucratic elitist army, reflecting inequality in the society and lack of popular participation, and recommended as a remedy a "really socialist" society. This interpretation appealed to only a few among the intellectuals and the youth.

2. A technological explanation attributed the defeat to Egypt's scientific underdevelopment in relation to that of Israel and recommended a modernization formula for recovery. This was the dominant trend in professional and official circles. The declared goal from that time on would be to build a modernized state based on science and technology.

3. A religious explanation attributed the defeat to the lack of piety: "We left God so God left us." The "Jews" – as the proponents of this explanation would call the Israelis – won the war on religious bases, and Muslims should do the same to win. Judging by what happened later, this interpretation and its as yet untried prescription must have attracted a very wide following indeed in the society. Most neofundamentalist Islamic groups (as distinct, that is, from the established Muslim Brothers) saw their beginnings sometime during those years of agony and torment.

The initial warning that the country was entering a new and more religiously oriented era came during President Nasser's first public speech after the defeat. As soon as the secularist Nasser, who had previously spoken very little of religion, said that religion should play a more important role in the society, the broken hero was greeted by an exceptionally enthusiastic roar of applause.[29]

Another mysterious warning followed a few months afterward. Just about the time that millions of Egyptians were going to vote in a referendum on an official document that called for modernization and declared "science and technology" as the state's official slogan, they were also going in the hundreds of thousands to a small Coptic church in a Cairo suburb called Zaitun. For there

"the Virgin Mary had appeared in pure light" – and went on appearing for several months. *Al-Ahram* published what it called an "authentic" photo of the miracle on its front page. The Coptic clergy declared that the blessed message was clear, that Mary was saying, "I know, Egyptians, you are very sad because you can no longer visit Jerusalem, and that is why I come to you instead." People everywhere in predominantly Muslim Egypt continued to talk about the phenomenon to such a degree that it was eventually considered by the authorities to be too dangerous a topic for public discussion and had to be played down.[30]

The full psychological and cultural impact of the creation and consolidation of Israel on the future of Arab society remains to be seen. Yet there is one feeling that seems to have had an enormous impact on many people during those sad years (at least from 1967 to 1973), and that is a feeling that the secular formula of Arab nationalism had been challenged and defeated by a "morally inferior" formula – one that found it appropriate, on the basis of religion alone, to offer strangers all rights of citizenship as they touch the land of Israel (the "Law of Return"), while refusing to admit people whose connections with the land were generations old but who happened to belong to the "wrong" religion (i.e., Muslim and Christian Palestinians). Most Arabs have always gone out of their way to point out that they were in conflict with Zionism in Israel but that they had nothing against Jews as such. On the contrary, Israel emphasized that it represented Jews all over the world and did indeed gain much of their support; and Israel won, and brought to the Arabs, with defeat, a certain element of "religionization" of the conflict. In short, therefore, most Egyptians perceived Israel (regardless, of course, of what the Israelis themselves thought of it) as a country that operated according to a basically "religious" formula, and many Egyptians started to feel that this formula must be effective if it had led the Israelis to military victory.[31]

The religious symbolism that surrounded the October War of 1973 can be taken as an illustration of how religion had come more and more to bear on this problem. The war (known in Egypt as the Ramadan War) was launched in Ramadan, the glorious fasting month of the Muslims, the operational code name for the crossing of the Suez Canal was "Badr," the name of one of the battles fought by the Prophet Muhammad, and there were legends about white angels fighting in battle on the side of the Egyptians!

A liberal intellectual (Fu'ad Zakariyya) expressed his astonishment: if reference to metaphysical powers and symbols was understandable at the time of defeat in 1967, why should it be necessary at the time of "victory" in 1973? The comment exposed the man to ridicule from many *shaikhs* (religious preachers) and followers, and that is illustrative of the religiously oriented public opinion that had certainly become prevalent in the society. There were repeated attempts calling for the installation of the *shari'a* as the main source of legislation,[32] for the obligatory teaching of more religion in schools, and for – among other things – the forbidding of alcoholic drinks in Egypt.[33] Even Shaikh Al-Azhar, more often a follower rather than an opponent of the government line[34] had the courage to send circulars to the prime minister and the speaker of the

People's Assembly, stating that "Islam is not among the types of issues to be 'considered' or put at the mercy of discussion in the name of democracy; Islam is not to be in a waiting position to see whether such discussions will reveal support or opposition. . . . Whoever accepted [the belief of Islam] voluntarily and believed in it will have to abide by its canons. . . . No *ijtihad* [independent juristic investigation] is allowed to any human if a *shar*ʿ*i* text exists."[35]

Islamic fervor was intensifying and, within this atmosphere, the Islamic societies were becoming larger and stronger and their presence more obvious, especially in the period following the 1973 war.

But why should this be the case? That is, why did the religious movements develop so vigorously after 1973, whereas the Egyptian performance was far and away better than it has been in 1967? The following are possible reasons:

1. People felt a certain amount of disbelief that October 1973 had been as much of a victory as the official version would have it. Nevertheless, whatever the element of victory might have been, it was attributed to the degree of religious revival prevailing at the time.

2. The relative relaxation of political restrictions following the 1973 war might have enabled the religious movements to reorganize their ranks.

3. The regime had persecuted members of the left. The regime did indeed encourage the religious trend, as President Sadat tried to create an alternative power base after his confrontation with the official left in 1971. Since then, the liberal left (including the liberal Marxists) has been deprived of practically all platforms of expression.[36]

On a psychological level, the oil bonanza (or "blessing") in the basically Muslim Gulf area, especially in Saudi Arabia with its important religious significance, might have had an indirect effect on the revival of Islamic sentiments among the youth in Egypt. The authorities have claimed that the Islamic organizations receive financial support from outside sources (hinting at Libya and Saudi Arabia). This cannot be completely ruled out, and what is more important is that these organizations have tried to secure employment in Saudi Arabia for a number of their followers, so that they can finance their various groups more generously. This does not mean that members of the Egyptian Islamic organizations would consider Saudi Arabia their ideal Islamic society (indeed the recent violent events in Mecca would indicate that some of the youth do not believe that the Saudi political leadership is orthodox and puritan enough), but most of them may agree that Saudi Arabia represents the nearest *available* approximation to an Islamic government. In any case, even if outside quarters and outside finances have helped a little in the flourishing of Islamic organizations, their creation was certainly due basically to internal rather than to external considerations.

The Neofundamentalists

In everyday political life, the presence of the new Islamic societies (*al-jamaʿat al-Islamiyya*) is most noticeable on the university campuses: the increasing number of places set aside for prayer, the frequent exhibitions of Islamic literature, the assault on musical and other entertainment occasions

within the university grounds. Most important of all is the fact that since 1977, members of the Islamic organizations have managed to win the majority of student union posts in the universities, thus relegating the Nasserists – who were the most powerful in the mid-seventies – to a very minor position.

There is no way of knowing the exact number of the so-called Islamic societies that exist in Egypt today. These groups also seem to vary in the degree to which they sanction the use of violence to achieve their goals. However, the activities of such groups tend to come to public attention when a certain degree of violence is involved. This happened, for example, during the sectarian troubles in 1972 when their activities took the form of attacks on Coptic churches; in the food riots of January 1977 when they concentrated on hitting casinos and nightclubs; and in the antisettlement demonstrations of 1979, when government officials, secular professors, and Christian students were physically attacked.

A more serious level of violence involves planned or accidental murder, and three such events in recent years resulted in the revealing of the existence of three different Islamic organizations of a highly militant character:

1. An armed attack in 1974 on the Technical Military Academy in Cairo led to the uncovering of the society known by some as "Shabab Muhammad," under the leadership of Salih Sariyya.

2. The murder of the former minister of Awqaf, Shaikh al-Dhahabi, in 1977, led to the discovery of the organization that the government was to call "Repentence and Retreat," under the leadership of Shukri Mustafa.

3. The implantation of explosives in some Coptic churches in Alexandria in January 1980 led to the revealing of "Al-Jihad" organization, which was under the leadership of Ali al-Maghrabi.

According to Egyptian official sources, a number of other Islamic organizations are also believed to exist.[37]

But what are the main ideas of the Islamic movements? With a great deal of generalization – and without forgetting that there are some differences among the Islamic groups themselves – one can say that the main emphasis remains on the unity of religion and politics and on the need to apply, even to enforce, the *shari*ᶜ*a*, and on the need for purification and the fighting of "corruption," mainly through the enforcement of Islamic penalties (*hudud*).[38] Another idea emphasizes that although non-Muslims should be tolerated and even protected, they should not have a say in the running of public affairs in an Islamic society. A certain amount of friction is therefore almost inevitable with non-Muslims. This takes the form, sometimes, of physical violence – as it did on Coptic Christmas, 6 January 1980,[39] and does lead to sharp Coptic reactions.[40]

Internationally, the Islamic movements tend to believe in the existence of a conspiracy against Islam whose partners are the Jews, the crusaders (i.e., the Christians), and the atheists (i.e., the communists).[41] It follows from this therefore that Muslims all over the world should have solidarity with each other as one unified *umma*. The most important recent issue was the rejection of the Egypt-Israel settlement; the Islamic societies spoke out against it in the violent Islamic demonstrations of 1979, and others expressed their objections in a less violent way in the Muslim Brothers' organ, *Al-Daᶜwa*. Another important issue

was support for the Islamic Revolution in Iran and condemnation of Egypt's hospitality toward the ex-Shah, which took the form, in March and April 1980, of demonstrations in Cairo and of more violent skirmishes in Asyut and Alexandria.

Such a simplistic representation would certainly do injustice to the teachings and doctrines of the Islamic movements. Yet however important their doctrine might be (and there is certainly a lot of effort put into it by the intellectuals and ideologues), it may not be the most significant and telling of all the aspects of the Islamic movements. Available reports of trials, always assuming that they have not been distorted out of all proportion, reveal that members of the Islamic movements are not always particularly knowledgeable about the technicalities of their religion. It is possible therefore that many of these people did not join the various movements basically for doctrinal reasons. If we add to this an analysis of the socioeconomic background of the membership, we may be able to suggest that a majority of the members may be joining more for social and psychological reasons than for strictly ideological (religious) ones. So let us at this point look at the individuals who join the Islamic movements, first in the mid-fifties and then, nearly a quarter of a century later, in the late seventies.

Before the fifties, the Muslim Brothers who were brought to trial were mainly civil servants, teachers, white-collar workers, small merchants, businessmen, and students. In a list of "wanted" Brothers, published by the government in 1954, there were many civil servants, teachers, clerks, workers and craftsmen, professionals, a few police and army officers, and – as the largest single group – students; there were quite a few unemployed as well. The hundreds who were tried in 1954 and 1955 worked at more or less the same types of occupations. Furthermore, very few of them came from rural areas. A listing of the Brothers' Consultative Assembly in 1953 showed that out of 1,950 members, only 22 members were not of the *effendiyya* (urban, European-costumed groups). The twelve top leaders were of a higher educational, cultural, and possibly social level. But even among the followers and sympathizers in general who attended the evening meetings of the society in the early fifties, people wearing either the informal or the decorated *galabiyya* (the native dress) were certainly in the obvious minority.[42]

A study of the Islamic organization responsible for the murder of the ex-minister of Awqaf in July 1977, identified by the government authorities as *al-Takfir w'al-Hijra* (Repentance and Retreat or else excommunication and emigration), reveals that the socioeconomic formation of the Islamic movements has changed only marginally. Of the forty or so members who were arrested during the week following the murder, we find the following occupations: seventeen students, eight civil servants and clerks, four police and army staff, three engineers, three small merchants, one physician, one agronomist, one teacher, and one or two unemployed. The ages of these members ranged from the early twenties to the mid-thirties. Among the first twenty-five to be arrested were seven girls, while among the several hundred members who continued to be arrested during the following weeks there were at least seventy young women. So neither can this movement be considered "traditional" in the sense of sep-

arating men from women and relegating the latter to a purely passive role. Published photographs of many members of the organization showed them wearing either European clothing or formalistic made-up "Islamic" (traditionally non-Egyptian) dress. Only one of them wore a native costume (*galabiyya* and *taqiyya*).[43]

The so-called Islamic costume used by the neofundamentalists is quite interesting. It consists for men of an Arabian-style (rather than Egyptian) *galabiyya*, normally white but sometimes dark, sandals, and occasionally a long scarf for the head. The female costume is more intriguing for it is again a made-up arrangement that not only differs from traditional Egyptian dress but also exceeds the limits required by religious tradition. According to strict Islamic teaching the woman's face and hands do not always have to be covered. The young neofundamentalist girls insist on covering their faces with all-enveloping veils (*niqab*) and on wearing gloves, which must not only cause them extreme discomfort in the heat but must also produce other practical and legal problems, for example, when they need to establish their identity. The most important thing is that this is not really a return to a traditional "motherly" dress; it is actually a modern, middle-class urban costume.[44] Further, given the degree of physical and social difficulty involved in deciding to wear this unusual dress, the act of dressing in such a way can be seen, at least in part, as a manifestation of social or psychological protest.[45]

Further investigation confirms two points that may be of particular importance in explaining the emergence and development of religious movements. The first is that the bulk of the membership are professionals or students of scientific subjects who come from a lower-middle-class background and who are often first-generation immigrants to the city.[46]

The second point is that in spite of their passionate dedication to their religion, many members of the Islamic movements seem to be poorly informed about many doctrinal matters in Islam, and it is interesting in this connection to observe, for example, that while "religious" violence was so rabid among the students of the national (secular) university in Asyut during 1979, nothing similar was happening in the religious Al-Azhar University College in the same city, and the same thing applies to the state of affairs in Cairo and other Egyptian cities.[47]

This observation is important in refuting the familiar notion that somehow identifies fundamentalism with religious, impoverished, rural communities. Neofundamentalist movements are indeed to be found mainly among middle-class urban students of the secular universities, not among the religiously educated students of Al-Azhar's colleges, who are of lower income strata and of more recent rural origins.[48]

It is quite possible, therefore, that, as distinct from the ideologically oriented leadership, the ranks of the Islamic movements might be at least partly motivated by nonreligious – namely psychological and sociological – considerations. One of these motivations has already been discussed at some length; that is the psychological torment over the "national question." Other considera-

tions relate to existing and expected frustrations over employment and status.[49] For one thing, expansion in university education after 1967 has proceeded, under popular pressure, at a much higher rate than ever before, and this happened just at the time when economic activities in general were declining and as the public sector (the main employer in the country) in particular was being cut back. This is resulting, among other things, in delayed employment, poor salaries and working conditions, and the increasing likelihood of long-term mass unemployment of the educated.[50]

But, the question is often asked, if these people are motivated by politicopsychological and socioeconomic conditions, why do they not join other political organizations that would address themselves more directly to such issues? We have already suggested two possible reasons: the first is that alternative secular ideologies (right or left) are looked at as imported and alien; and the second is that very often other outlets for open political expression and action are not permitted. Another point that relates to these last two is that in a traditional society, socialization into religion takes place early on, in the home and at the "church." Relatively little effort would be sufficient to politicize this education at a later stage and to transform religious devotion into religiopolitical activism. The process would be much more difficult with, say, a socialist organization, since the process of socialization would have to start from the very beginning and without much help from primary and informal institutions.

Another of the reasons sometimes suggested for the attraction of the Islamic organizations is related to the recent arrival in the cities of most followers and therefore to their dominantly parochial outlook.[51] If this is true, then it has become more true in recent years as the population of Cairo alone has grown from two million just after the Second World War to some ten million in the Greater Cairo area today.[52] This process of overaccelerated urbanization has produced large numbers of people who are urban but not urbane. Furthermore, such fast overurbanization tends to be accompanied by a decline in "morals" (at least in their rural concept) as a result of, among other things, unemployment, restlessness, and overcrowded housing. And one should not forget, of course, that among the newcomers to the city were over a million refugees from the Canal Zone, who had to evacuate, under the impact of war, during the period from 1967 to 1974.

Two other problems, that have been particularly growing under the present "Open Door" economic policy, should be added to the list: soaring inflation and the not very separate phenomenon of increasing corruption.[53] Having accumulated this list, just imagine a recent immigrant from a village or a small town who has to cope with the dismal problems of a city like Cairo (the crowding, the noise, the crumbling, decayed, and moribund infrastructure, etc.), and who would on top of all that suspect that, under all kinds of pressures, his father might not be so correct (financially) and his sister might not be so correct (sexually); is not this the kind of situation that would lead people to search for a simple, strong, and clear-cut formula that would answer their many disturbing questions and provide them with certainty and assurance?

There is much to suggest that "the resurgence of Islam" may not be com-
pletely attributable to purely "Islamic" reasons; and in this Egypt may not be a
unique case among Muslim countries.

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NOTES

[1] See the good analysis in the London *Times*, 23 November 1979.

[2] See also J. D. Anthony, *The Middle East: Oil, Politics and Development* (Washington, D.C.:
American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1975), appendix. It is little wonder there-
fore that the view is sometimes heard that petroleum was a "reward" from God to his faithful be-
lievers. On the other hand, government authorities in countries like Egypt and Syria often claim
that "oil money" is behind the violent activities of the Islamic organizations.

[3] The classic on this topic is of course John Campbell, *Defense of the Middle East: Problems of
American Policy*, rev. ed. (New York: Praeger, 1960).

[4] The main source on this is still Alexandre Bennigsen and C. Lemercier-Quelquejay, *Islam in
the Soviet Union* (London: 1967), updated by A. Benningsen's lecture at UCLA on the same topic,
"Islam in the Soviet Union," on 15 October 1979. See also G. Wheeler, "Islam and the Soviet
Union," *Middle East Studies*, 13, 1 (January, 1977), 40–49.

[5] Muslim countries do not take a unified stand in many conflicts that involve a Muslim against a
non-Muslim party. Examples are the India-Pakistan conflict, the Cyprus crisis, and the recent So-
viet intervention in Afghanistan.

[6] See, for example, *The Los Angeles Times*, 28 December 1979.

[7] Pan-Islamism represents itself in other informal ways. Intellectually, the ideas of most leading
modern Islamic thinkers – starting with Jamal al-Afghani – were always circulated in other Muslim
societies. Politically, certain Islamic organizations are supranational. For example, the Muslim
Brothers, who emerged in Egypt, now have branches in other countries such as Syria, Jordan, and
Sudan.

[8] The most outspoken critique of this approach is, of course, that of Edward W. Said, *Orien-
talism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979).

[9] The study of Arab politics in general and the role of the military in particular has often been at
least partly employed "in obvious support of American or Israeli political interests." See the two
penetrating analyses by Roger Owen: "Explaining Arab Politics," *Political Studies*, 26, 4 (Decem-
ber, 1978), 507–12, and "The Role of the Army in Middle Eastern Politics," *Review of Middle East
Studies*, 3 (1978), 63–81.

[10] For example, a recent cartoon in a Kuwaiti newspaper commented on the apparent American
fondness for Islam in Afghanistan in contrast to America's apparent dislike of Islam in Iran. The
drawing showed President Carter delivering a speech in which he emphatically declares, "We will
fight the Russians to the very last . . . Muslim!" *Al-Ra'iy al-ᶜAm* (Kuwait), 16 January 1980.

[11] Although not without significance, the Sunni Shiᶜi difference should not be exaggerated in po-
litical analysis. Historically, Shiᶜism might have been at least partly motivated by a need for na-
tional assertion and social justice on the part of the Persians vis-à-vis the Arabs. In more recent
times, distinction from the Arabs (or even claimed superiority over them) has been emphasized
from time to time, most recently by the Pahlavis. Shiᶜism seems also to have witnessed more of a
clerical hierarchy, more mysticism, and more "martyrdom" than Sunni Islam did. In addition, the
arts seem to have found more expression, especially in their plastic and theatrical forms, in the
lands inhabited by Shiᶜis or more influenced by the Persian culture. Lands where Shiᶜis predomi-
nate tended also to witness a number of relatively more radical intellectual and social movements.
These historical generalizations seem to have some contemporary validity. In Iraq, where the larg-
est community of Shiᶜi Arabs lives, as well as among the (substantial) Shiᶜi minority communities in
Lebanon and Turkey, leftist tendencies seem to be more proportionately prevalent among Shiᶜis,

whereas Sunnis tend to convey the more traditional nationalistic outlook. In Iraq it has been the feeling of the Shiᶜi majority for many years that they are dominated by a Sunni minority. Curiously a reversed situation exists in contemporary Syria where, although the numerical majority as well as traditional influence are with the Sunnis, the Alawite minority (a vague offshoot of Shiᶜism) are currently more dominant in the government and the army.

   [12] On the role of the *ulama* as well as that of the mystics, see Nikki R. Keddie, ed., *Scholars, Saints and Sufis: Muslim Religious Institutions since* 1500 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972).

   [13] Majid Khadduri, *War and Peace in the Law of Islam* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1955), pp. 141–46; M. T. al-Ghunaimi, *The Muslim Conception of International Law and the Western Approach* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1968), esp. Part Three, p. 131 ff.

   [14] Good books on the sociopolitical role of Islam in modern times are very few. Methodologically useful as introductions to approaching the subject are the following: on the doctrinal and historical background, W. Montgomery Watt, *Islam and the Integration of Society* (London: Routledge, 1961); on the socioeconomic formations, M. Rodinson, *Islam and Capitalism*, trans., (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1978), and B. S. Turner, *Weber and Islam* (London and Boston: Routledge, 1974); and on the efforts of the Islamic reformists to reconcile their faith with concepts of Western "rationalism," Malcolm H. Kerr, *Islamic Reform* (University of California Press, 1966).

   [15] An ironic contradiction seems to exist between the Turkish and the Arab nationalist concepts. The Turkish (Kemalist) concept, for all its declared secularism, finds it difficult to conceive of a non-Muslim Turk and has therefore led, among other things, to the deportation of Turkish-speaking Christians from Turkey and the admission of Greek-speaking Muslims into the country. On the other hand, the Arab nationalist concept, in spite of its emphasis on cultural Islam, not only recognizes Arabic-speaking Christians as Arabs, but has also had some of them among its main proponents.

   [16] The most important analysis of the intricacies and problems of the secularist trends in modern Arabic thinking is, of course, that of Albert Hourani, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age* (London: Oxford University Press, 1962).

   [17] Compare Bernard Lewis, "The Return of Islam," *Middle East Review*, XII, 1 (Fall, 1979), 17–30.

   [18] For a good comparative article see R. Stephen Humphreys, "Islam and Political Values in Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Syria," *The Middle East Journal* 33, 1 (Winter, 1979), 1–19.

   [19] An even more dramatic title – "The Explosion of Islam" – was given to a round table discussion on the subject, published in *The New York Times*, 11 December 1979.

   [20] Although there are no comprehensive works on Islam and politics in Egypt, there are two books on some sociological and anthropological aspects of Islam in that country. They are Morroe Berger, *Islam in Egypt Today* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), and M. Gilsenan, *Saint and Sufi in Modern Egypt* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973).

   [21] In addition to the growth in sales of classical religious texts, there is also a glut of popular religious books, some written by journalists – of whom Mustafa Mahmud is by far the most popular – recently attracted to this lucrative field. The bulk of such writing is conservative in orientation, with the unique exception of the competent and liberal-progressive writings of Hasan Hanafi-Hasanain. See for example his *Qadaya muᶜasira* [Contemporary Issues], Vol. I, "On Arab Affairs" (Cairo: Dar al-Fikr al-'Arabi, 1976), esp. p. 70 ff.; compare also his "Theologie ou anthropologie," in A. Abdel-Malek et al., *Renaissance du monde arabe* (Paris: Duculot, 1972), pp. 233–64.

   [22] However, the government-controlled religious establishment is often accused, and not only by militants, of corruption, and the general secretary of the Higher Council for Islamic Affairs was, for example, severely attacked in 1976 on charges of financial misconduct. See also *Akhbar al-Yaum*, 25 September 1976.

   [23] See also, for example, the articles on peace in Islam in *Minbar al-Islam* (November, 1978). This magazine is published by the Ministry of Religious Endowments (Awqaf). Symbolically, following President Sadat's visit to Jerusalem in November 1977, a large banner covered one of the walls of the thousand-year-old Al-Azhar; it read "God is called Peace."

   [24] On the role of the Brothers in the political life of modern Egypt see Christina P. Harris, *Na-*

tionalism and Revolution in Egypt: The Role of the Muslim Brotherhood (The Hague: Mouton, 1964).

²⁵ Some of the writings of the organizational and ideological pioneer of the *Ikhwan* are now available in English; see Hasan al-Banna, *Five Tracts . . . a Selection from the Majmuᶜat Rasa'il al-Imam al-Shahid,* translated and annotated by Charles Wendell (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978).

²⁶ See *Al-Ahram,* 23 January 1976.

²⁷ In particular, Sayyid Qutb, *Al-ᶜAdala al-ijtimaᶜiyya fi al-Islam* [Social Justice in Islam], several editions and an English translation available (by J. B. Hardie, Washington, 1955).

²⁸ Muhammad al-Bahiy, "Islamic Society: A Society for Owners and Workers Together," [in Arabic], *Al-Iᶜtisam,* July, 1976, 14 ff.

²⁹ Prior to this, Nasser's leadership had been religious, but it was secular with a modernizing and socialistic orientation. Under him Al-Azhar University was rather abruptly modernized and the *ulama* persuaded to endorse such things as family planning and birth control. Intellectually there were several attempts during the sixties to emphasize the socialist character of Islam. A book by a Syrian Muslim Brother entitled *Ishtrakiyyat al-Islam* [The Socialism of Islam] was repeatedly printed and freely distributed by the Arab Socialist Union (ASU), and the Egyptian former Brother ᶜAbd al-ᶜAziz Kamil specialized in writing the "religious page" in the ASU's official organ, *Al-Ish-tiraki,* emphasizing in particular, concepts of social justice in Islam. A number of writers emphasized the egalitarian and revolutionary nature of Islam and showed increased interest in radical Islamic leaders such as Abu-Dhur al-Ghafari and radical Islamic movements such as that of the Qarmatians. Even a book carrying such a provocative title as *Madiyyat al-Islam* [The Materialism of Islam] was indeed to be published in the sixties. And ᶜAbd al-Rahman al-Sharqawi started to engage in his religiopolitical plays such as *Muhammad rasul al-huriyya* [Muhammad the Freedom Prophet]. It is also believed that the teaching of religion in schools during the Nasserist period was influenced by the socialist ideals of the society at the time. See Olivier Carré, *Enseignement islam-ique et idéal socialiste* (Beirut: Dar el-Machreq, 1974).

³⁰ The Virgin Mary is highly revered in the Qur'ān and is greatly esteemed by many Muslims, particularly women (who, for example, often wear rings carrying her picture). Other Christian saints that are popular with Muslim as well as Coptic women are Saint George, whose shrine is in Old Cairo, and Saint Theresa, whose church is in the district of Shubra.

³¹ It is perhaps significant that the most serious intellectual challenge in the Arab world to such "religionistic" ideas and to religious thinking in general came from a non-Egyptian. See Sadiq Jalal al-ᶜAzm, *Naqd al-Fikr al-Dini* [A Critique of Religious Thinking], (Beirut: Dar al-Taliᶜa, 1969).

³² For some of the discussions that preceded the statement for the first time in an Egyptian constitution that the *Shariᶜa* was to become a main source of legislation, see Joseph P. O'Kane, "Islam in the New Egyptian Constitution," *Middle East Journal,* XXVI, 2 (Spring, 1972), 137–48.

³³ The controversy over the prohibition of alcoholic drinks took its time and ended in a "typical" law with enough loopholes to make it reasonably applicable. The "public" drinking of alcohol was forbidden, *except* in touristic places! Days afterward, local bars in popular areas of Cairo such as Shubra and Faggala, were being given hasty facelifts to make them look "touristic." The only bars to be really hit were those very popular ones serving buza, a crude drink of Sudanese origin made of fermented bread and served in huge pumpkin shells. Local authorities, however, have the right to prohibit the public consumption of alcohol in their areas, and a number of them, notably in the governorates of Suhaj and Asyut, issued by-laws in their own provinces to this effect.

³⁴ On the role of Al-Azhar in Egyptian society see, among others, educationally, B. Dodge, *Al-Azhar: A Millenium of Muslim Learning* (Washington, D.C.: 1961); historically, Afaf L. S. Marsot, "The *Ulama* of Cairo in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries" (and her other works on the *ulama* cited therein), in N. Keddie, ed., *Scholars, Saints,* pp. 149–65: socially, D. Crecelius, "Nonideological Responses of the Egyptian *Ulama* to Modernization," in *ibid.,* pp. 167–209; socio-politically, D. Crecelius, "Al-Azhar in the Revolution," *Middle East Journal,* XX, 1 (Winter, 1968), 31–49.

³⁵ *Al-Iᶜtisam,* July 1976, 12–13.

³⁶ The liberal left lost two monthly publications (*Al-Katib* and *Al-Taliᶜa*), one weekly magazine (*Rose al-Yusaf*), and a weekly newspaper (*Al-Ahali*). Even their typed material was confiscated. In

contrast there are at least two *political* magazines that represent the Islamic movement (*Al-Da^cwa* and *Al-I^ctisam*).

[37] They include *Hizb al-tahrir al-Islami, Jama^cat al-Muslimin, Jund Allah,* and others.

[38] See, among many others, *Al-Da^cwa,* June 1976, March 1977, September 1977, April 1978. *Al-Da^cwa* is of course the organ of the Muslim Brothers, but it is widely read and appreciated by the neofundamentalists, in addition to their own "internal" literature.

[39] *Al-Ahram,* 15, 17, 18 January 1980.

[40] On the Copts and politics in the modern period in general see Samira Bahr, *Al-Aqbat w'al-hayah al-siyasiyya* [Copts and Political Life in Egypt], (Cairo: The Anglo-Egyptian, 1979). The weekly newspaper *Watani* publishes a reasonable amount of information on the Copts' ecclesiatical and social affairs. For militant political views as well as reactions to Islamic opinions and actions, see the Coptic diaspora magazine, *The Copts: Christians of Egypt* (Jersey City, N.J.: The American Coptic Association).

[41] See for example Jabir Rizq, *Madhabih al-Ikhwan* [Massacres of the Brothers], (Cairo: Dar al-I^ctisam, 1977), p. 8. An interesting distinction has been drawn recently between the Soviets and the Americans; while the Soviets were considered a hopeless case, the Americans are still "people of the Book," who may one day find it possible "in fact to combine between the special interests of the U.S. and the just treatment of other peoples." See ^cUmar al-Tilmisani, "America from an Islamic Viewpoint" (in Arabic), *Al-Da^cwa* (December, 1979), 4 ff.

[42] These data are from the definitive book on the Brothers, R. P. Mitchell, *The Society of the Muslim Brothers* (London: Oxford University Press, 1969), esp. p. 328 ff.

[43] *Al-Ahram,* 7–15 July 1977.

[44] See John A. Williams, "A Return to the Veil in Egypt," *Middle East Review,* XI, 3 (Spring, 1979), 50–52.

[45] It is therefore not surprising that I was given a difficult time when, in one of my lectures at Cairo University, I suggested that it might be possible to explain at least the early historical beginnings of the veil in terms of its functional utility in the conditions of the desert.

[46] I am grateful to Saad E. Ibrahim for the fruitful conversations I had with him about his experience with some members of the Islamic movements.

[47] Muhammad Ismail Ali, "Religion and Education . . . " (in Arabic), *Al-Ahram,* 12 July 1979, 7.

[48] On the difference in social background between students at Cairo University and students at Al-Azhar, see my book, *Siyasat al-ta^clim . . .* [The Policy of Education in Egypt: A Political Study], (Cairo: Centre for Political and Strategic Studies, 1978), pp. 71–72 and references quoted therein.

[49] Compare Eric Davis, "Islam and Politics: Some Neglected Dimensions," mimeo, obtained from but not delivered at the Middle East Studies Association Thirteenth Annual Meeting, The University of Utah, Nov. 7–10, 1979.

[50] For details on this point see my *The Policy of Education,* pp. 41–46, 64–67, 74–76.

[51] I have argued along similar lines in my article, "Political Parties before the 1952 Revolution" (in Arabic), *Al-Ahram,* 18 May 1978.

[52] On the problems of Cairo as well as other contemporary Egyptian problems, see the interesting work of John Waterbury, *Egypt: Burdens of the Past, Options for the Future* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1978), esp. p. 113 ff.

[53] For some detailed aspects of corruption see my book *Al-Thawra al-idariyya wa azmat al-islah . . .* [Administrative Revolution and the Crisis of Reform in Egypt], (Cairo: Centre for Political and Strategic Studies, 1977), pp. 29–33; and also my book, *Bureaucracy and Politics in Contemporary Egypt* (London: Ithaca Press, 1980), pp. 280–301.