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## **THE INTERNATIONAL DIMENSIONS OF THE RISE OF ISLAMIST MOVEMENTS: IMPACT ON WESTERN INTERESTS**

*by Shireen Hunter*

Paper presented at the Conference "The Political Role of the Islamist Movements in the  
Contemporary Arab World: National, Regional and International Dimensions"  
*Bologna, 26-27 November 1993*

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## **The International Dimensions of the Rise of Islamist Movements: Impact on Western Interests**

Shireen T. Hunter  
November 12, 1993

The emergence of Islamic political movements in the Arab and Islamic worlds, along with their growing strength since the late 1970s, has been a significant political phenomenon with potentially wide-ranging regional and international ramifications. In the Arab world, these movements have gained in strength since the late 1980s. The rise of the Islamist movements in the Arab and Islamic worlds has been due to indigenous social, economic, political, and cultural factors. However, Arab regional and international events -- including various Middle East wars and international reactions to them -- have also affected the evolution of these movements. Meanwhile, the views expounded by Islamist leaders and the actions undertaken by them, both within their countries and abroad, have profoundly affected the perceptions that other countries have of their impact, both at the regional level and internationally, and thus policies toward them.

In short, there has been a dynamic interaction between the Islamist movements and the international community, defined in its broadest sense..

The rise of Islamist movements has been of consequence and concern to many states, big and small, Muslim and non-Muslim -- including the Soviet Union and its successor states, notably Russia. However, it has been the issue of the Islamist challenge to the West and the latter's response to it which has generated the greatest controversy. The West has justifiably felt threatened by the emergence of these movements, because the Islamists have expressed their hostility toward various aspects of Western culture, its policy toward the Arab and Islamic worlds, and its conduct of North-South relations. The Islamists have vowed to curtail, if not to eliminate, Western influence in the Muslim world.

However, throughout the period beginning with the Iranian revolution in 1979, when the political and cultural potency of the Islamists was first impressed on the world's

consciousness, until the present, opinion within the Western academic and policy community has been divided on the nature and extent of the Islamist challenge, as well as on the extent of its threat to Western interests.

During the last few years, events in the Arab world, notably the growth of the Islamists' influence in Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, and among the Palestinians of the West Bank and Gaza, coupled with such dramatic international developments such as the disintegration of the Soviet empire have intensified these divergences.

Two other factors have also contributed to the widening of the opinion gap, namely that: (1) With the exception of Iran -- a non-Arab country -- and Sudan -- an African state, none of the Islamists have yet gained political power in any Arab state. This situation has made extremely difficult a correct assessment of the potential consequences for Western interests of a potential Islamist takeover in one or several Muslim countries in the coming years. (2) The difficulties involved in judging how reliable a guide for future action are the statements of Islamist leaders. This problem is compounded by the fact that there are various shades of opinion within Islamist movements on a wide range of issues, including future relations with the West. Additionally, Islamist leaders express diverse opinions on the same subjects to different audiences. Thus, those dealing with this issue frequently come across contradictory statements made by Islamist leaders on various issues.

Another source of the divergence of opinion is the fact that various Western states are affected in different ways and to varying degrees by this phenomenon. However, this problem could be overcome fairly easily by merely focusing on individual countries and assessing the extent of their vulnerability to the Islamic challenge.

It is also difficult to calibrate exactly the short- and long-term consequences of the Islamist trend for Western interests. The task of threat assessment is also complicated by the tendency of various actors, including existing Arab governments, to manipulate the Islamist phenomenon in order to maintain Western support, and to avoid painful domestic reforms. Nevertheless, notwithstanding the foregoing, presently there is enough information on the

nature and character of various Islamist movements, plus some experience with such movements in power, and facts related to Islam's historical evolution, to allow an informed judgment on the potential impact of the Islamist trend on Western interests. This is what this paper will do by observing the following guidelines:

- (1) The assessment will be country-specific, focusing mainly on the United States. However, when appropriate, the consequences of the Islamist phenomenon for other Western countries will also be mentioned;
- (2) It will rely both on the statements and declarations of various groups and on their record of action;
- (3) It will establish the pattern of dynamic interaction which has existed between aspects of Western policies and the rise of Islamist movements and their behavior on the one hand, and the impact of the Islamists' agenda and actions on the West's threat perception and, hence, policies;
- (4) It will assess the short- and long-term implications of the Islamist phenomenon for the West. This part will rely partly on the experiences gained with Islamist groups which have already gained power, as well as by drawing on the experience of other non-Islamic radical movements in the Arab world. It will, in particular, assess to what extent the challenge of this phenomenon derives from its Islamic character or is due to other factors.

Before moving into the stage of assessing implications, the paper will present a survey of existing expert and general opinion in the United States, and whenever appropriate, in other Western countries on: (1) the causes of the rise of Islamist movements, including the extent to which Western policies toward Arab states have contributed to this phenomenon; (2) the character and main goals of these movements; (3) the compatibility and/or conflict of Islamists' goals with Western interests; and (4) the nature and seriousness of the Islamist threat to the West.

### **Western Opinion on the Root Causes of the Islamist Resurgence and its Anti-Western Dimension**

The scholarly and informed opinion in the United States, and the West in general, on the root causes of the Islamist phenomenon has evolved since it first captured Western attention following the Iranian revolution.

During the first few years, most Western scholars tended to view the Islamist trend as a mainly Shi'a phenomenon. The radicalization of Lebanon's Shi'a population and the emergence of the extremist Shi'a Islamist groups such as the Hizbullah, following the Israeli invasion of 1982, further strengthened this tendency. According to this school, certain characteristics of the Shi'a faith, and the structure of the Shi'a clerical establishment, made it more susceptible to extremist Islamist tendencies.<sup>1</sup> Others attributed Shi'a militancy partly to the fact that the Arab Shi'as were discriminated against economically and politically even when they constituted numerical majorities, as is the case in Lebanon and in Iraq.

In addition, to Western scholars, many Arab analysts, politicians, and even heads of states considered the Islamist movement as a mainly Shi'a/Persian phenomenon.<sup>2</sup> However, this view did not correspond to the realities of the Arab and Islamic worlds. For instance, in the early 1980s, one of the strongest Islamist movements existed in Syria and was exclusively Sunni.<sup>3</sup> In addition, earlier Islamist movements, including the group in Egypt whose members bombed the Cairo Polytechnic Institute in 1974, and later assassinated Egyptian President Anwar al-Sadat in 1980, were Sunni.<sup>4</sup>

However, since the late 1980s, the growing strength of Islamist movements in the predominantly Sunni countries such as Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt, and Jordan, has proven the invalidity of this theory. But even in the early 1980s some scholars and analysts did not subscribe to this theory.<sup>5</sup>

Western scholars have also disagreed on the extent to which the social, political, and cultural malaise of Muslim societies, plus a popular desire for independence from internal and external domination, as opposed to inherent characteristics of Islam have contributed to this phenomenon.<sup>6</sup>

Most scholars recognize the multiplicity of factors involved in the development of the Islamist phenomenon. However, they differ on the relative weight which should be accorded to various factors. Yet the answer to this question is very important, because it would to a large extent determine the character of recommended responses. And thus it has significant policy implications.

For example, if one accepts the view that the main cause of the rise of the Islamist phenomenon is the Arab world's economic, social, and political problems, then the best remedy to deal with it would be to try to solve these difficulties or at least to reduce their intensity. This explanation also leaves room for accommodation and compromise between the Islamists and the Arab and Western governments. By contrast, the view which attributes the Islamist phenomenon to Islam's inherent characteristics, notably its fusion of spiritual and temporal domains, holds little prospect of accommodation.

### **The Impact of Western Policies**

Western scholars also disagree on the causes of the anti-Western dimensions of the Islamist phenomenon, especially on the extent to which specific Western policies toward the Arab and Muslims worlds, both in the recent and more distant past, have contributed to it.

Since the United States has been a favorite target of the Islamists' animosity, this aspect of the debate has been especially controversial in America. However, here, too, differences of opinion mostly relate to the relative weight which should be given to various factors.

In this respect, the principal line of cleavage is between those scholars who attribute some share of the responsibility for the Islamists' anti-Western feelings to Western policies, and those who see it as the result of Islam's inherent characteristics, thus absolving the West of any responsibility. The first group are philosophically closer to the so-called third-worldist tradition of Western scholarship, whereas the other group has more in common with the so-called Orientalists. The first group does not see an inevitable or unavoidable enmity or conflict between Islam and the West. In its view, the Islamists' anti-Westernism partly derives from the legacy of Western colonialism. They also tend to see the rise of the Islamist

phenomenon as another phase in the anti-colonial movements of the Arab and Muslim worlds.

Thus, Francois Burgat, the French scholar, believes that:

"...we are witnessing the third phase of the process of decolonialization. The first phase was political -- the independence movements -- , the second, economic -- the nationalization of the Suez Canal in Egypt, or oil in Algeria, the last phase is cultural..."<sup>7</sup>

In other words, according to this group of scholars, the impulse against foreign domination has strongly contributed to the rise of Islamist movements. Yet this impulse, these experts point out, is not specifically Islamic and is shared by many secular Muslims. They also believe that specific U.S. and Western policies, especially those toward the Arabs and the Muslims, notably Western support for repressive and unpopular regimes and what they characterize as one-sided support for the state of Israel, are mostly responsible for the Islamists' anti-Western tendencies.<sup>8</sup>

Another expert who shares Burgat's view is the American, Graham Fuller of the RAND Corporation. According to him, although it is true that many fundamentalists are not well disposed toward the West, this derives not from Islam per se, but from the fact that:

"...A residue of considerable anti-Western sentiment will always remain in much of the Third World that still feels anger that colonialism of the past -- as well as the present-day Western-dominated international political order -- often delivered a raw deal to developing countries..."<sup>9</sup>

According to these experts, in more recent times the American-led war against Saddam Hussein in Iraq, and the West's inaction in the face of Serbian atrocities against Bosnian Muslims, have contributed both to the increase in the Islamists' influence and to their anti-Western feelings.<sup>10</sup> These experts also tend to believe that some kind of compromise and accommodation between the Islamists and the West would be possible, provided that the West changed some of its policies.

The other group, by contrast, dismiss a strong connection between Western policies and the Islamists' anti-Western proclivities. Rather, they see the Islamists' anti-Western leanings as the inevitable consequence of a "clash of civilizations."

A prominent exponent of this view is Professor Bernard Lewis. He believes that the

Islamists' anti-Westernism, and especially anti-Americanism, derive from a mixture of "humiliation, envy, and fear." In an article entitled "The Roots of Muslim Rage," after noting that the Muslims' early admiration of the West has turned into hostility and rejection, he says:

"...In part, this mood is surely due to a feeling of humiliation -- a growing awareness among the heirs of an old, proud and long dominant civilization, of having been overtaken, overborne and overwhelmed by those whom they regarded as their inferiors..."<sup>11</sup>

According to him, the Islamists fear the West because of the attractiveness of its culture as an alternative to the Islamic way of life, and because:

"...More than ever before, it is Western capitalism and democracy that provide an authentic and attractive alternative to traditional ways of thought and life. [Fundamentalist] leaders are not mistaken in seeing in Western civilization the greatest challenge to the way of life that they wish to retain or restore for their people..."<sup>12</sup>

He adds:

"...The instinct of the masses is not false in locating the ultimate source of these cataclysmic changes in the West and in attributing the disruption of their old way of life to the impact of Western domination, Western influence, or Western precept and example...."<sup>13</sup>

He then explains that the intensity of the Islamists' anti-American feelings is because:

"...the United States as the *legitimate heir of European civilization and unchallenged leader of the West, the United States has inherited the resulting grievances and become the focus for the pent-up hate and anger.*"<sup>14</sup>

According to him, the Islamists' antagonism goes beyond specific policies; rather, in the Muslim world, the West is:

"...facing a mood and a movement far *transcending the level of issues and policies and the governments that pursue them. This is no less than a clash of civilizations -- the perhaps irrational but surely historic reaction of an ancient rival against our Judeo-Christian heritage, our secular present, and the worldwide expansion of both.*"<sup>15</sup>

Daniel Pipes is another scholar who sees the root causes of Islamists' anti-Western leanings in their fear of the attractiveness and power of Western culture and the historic rivalry between Islam and Christianity. According to him:

"...The more attractive an alien culture, the more fundamentalist Muslims fear it and fight it. A leading Iranian mullah declared that the main objective of the Islamic revolution is to 'root out' American culture from Muslim countries. He probably never thought of Soviet culture as a comparable threat."<sup>16</sup>



This type of opinion on the roots of the Islamists' anti-Westernism had existed before the disintegration of the Soviet Union. For instance, apparently in 1984 Leon Uris wrote his novel, *The Haj*, in order to warn the West that "...We have an enraged bull of a billion people on our planet, and tilted the wrong way, they could open the second road to Armageddon..."<sup>17</sup> However, the theory of an inevitable clash between Islam and the West has become more popular since the Soviet Union's collapse. The reasons for this development are varied and complex. But one factor stands out in particular, namely that in the minds of many Westerners, Islam, and not merely the more extreme Islamist groups, has replaced Communism as the new enemy.

The following comments illustrate this point: An editorial in London's *Sunday Times* stated:

"Almost every month the threat from the Warsaw Pact diminishes; but every year for the rest of this decade and beyond, the threat from fundamentalist Islam will grow. It is different in kind and degree from the Cold War threat. But the West will have to learn how to contain it, just as it once had to learn how to contain Soviet Communism."<sup>18</sup>

Or, according to British commentator Peter Jenkins:

"...Keeping Islam at bay was Europe's preoccupation from 1354, when Gallipoli fell, until the last occasion on which the Turks stood at the gates of Vienna, in 1683. It is once more a preoccupation in the face of the Islamic revolution."<sup>19</sup>

An American commentator and journalist sees two sustained geopolitical threats to the United States, the second of which is "...an Islamic world united under the banner of Iranian-style fundamentalism in *existential struggle* with the infidel West..."<sup>20</sup>

However, American and other Western scholars are not alone in seeing the Islam-West conflict as a battle of civilizations, or in viewing Islam as the West's main ideological rival after the demise of Communism. Some Islamist leaders have on occasion expressed similar views. In an address to the first Islamic Congress on the Palestinian cause held in Tehran in October, 1991, Rashid Gannoushi, Tunisia's Islamist leader, said the following:

"...The West as a civilizational concept has seen its center of gravity move from Western Europe to America then to Eastern Europe. Israel represents the projection of this center into the East to wipe out its specific character, its spiritual wealth and

humankind's hope for a new renaissance....The essential reason for the failure or weakness of attempts to liberate Palestine lie, I think, in the weakness of the ideological bases, the lack of a comprehensive ideological and civilizational strategic vision which could serve to educate and train the militants so that they become aware -- and with them, humanity as a whole--of the dangers of the Western-American-Zionist project for mankind and for civilization, and the heavy responsibility here that is shouldered by the true believers and those who defend the dignity and freedom of man...."21

Other Islamists also have similar views, as can be gleaned from the content of various papers dealing with the subject.

These two groups of scholars also disagree on the strategy best suited to deal with the Islamist phenomenon. The group subscribing to the theory of the clash of civilizations believes in a strict policy of containment and denial. tends to view as naive those who believe a compromise between the West and the Islamists is possible. Its members argue that the West should not fall into the trap of allowing the Islamists a role in the political process. Martin Kramer, for example, after characterizing those scholars who view Islam as capable of reform and reaching of a *modus vivendi* between Islam and the West possible as "apologists," warns that other Westerners a century earlier have had similar feelings, only to be disappointed. He then says that the current phase of Islamic resurgence, like previous ones, could spend itself by the end of the century, provided that:

"...It is not abetted by a misguided reprise of the Carter administration's policy toward Iran -- a policy which in the name of human rights first inaugurated the era of the Ayatollahs..."22

The others, more in tune with the traditional Third worldists, believe that. in dealing with the Islamist phenomenon, the West, on the one hand, should adopt "...policies more sensitive to the needs of Third World economies..." and, on the other hand, to allow Islam to "...come out of the underground and learn to survive in electoral politics..."23 They also believe that total "containment" would be costly and perhaps even dangerous because as Robin Wright has put it, "...Challenging an ideology that is supported by a failed economic system is one thing; demonizing a centuries-old faith and culture is another..."24 Another American expert advises that:

"...Above all, the West should avoid designating a monolithic 'Islamic revival' the new enemy of the future. Classifying all Islamic movements as potentially threatening to Western interests could, over time, turn out to be a self-fulfilling prophecy..."<sup>25</sup>

For their part, the Islamist leaders, including Gannoushi, and notwithstanding his views on the civilizational conflict between the believers and non-believers, on other occasions have pointed to the areas of commonality between the West and Islam. For example, in a speech delivered at the University of Westminster on October 6, 1992, Ghannoushi expressed the hope that better understanding of Islam by the Westerners would enable them to see that "...we have many common denominators upon which a fruitful cooperation can be established..."<sup>26</sup>

The official U.S. view on this issue tends not to see all Islamist movements as inherently and irremediably anti-West.

During a Congressional hearing on the so-called [Islamic fundamentalism], especially in light of what had happened in Algeria in 1992, the then-director of the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency Robert Gates said that:

*"I am not ready yet to concede that Islamic Fundamentalism is, by its nature, anti-Western and anti-democratic. There are some fundamentalist elements in the region -- they are not in power -- that are not necessarily that way, and I think that is also in evolution..."*<sup>27</sup>

U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs Edward Djerejian, in a famous speech at the Meridian International Center in June 1992, said that:

*"...If there is one thought I can leave with you tonight, it is that the United States Government does not view Islam as the next 'ism' confronting the West or threatening world peace. That is an overly simplistic response to a complex reality. The Cold War is not being replaced with a new competition between Islam and the West."*<sup>28</sup>

### **Character and Principal Goals of Islamist Movements**

Western opinion is also divided on the Islamist movements' character and its principal goals, including the issue whether the Islamist phenomenon is monolithic or diverse. Here, however, the line of division is less clear between the two groups noted earlier. Nevertheless, the Third worldists seem to be more willing to see the differences among various Islamist groups and do not subscribe to the monolithic view of the movement. The Orientalists, by

contrast, do not consider these differences to be very important. Yet this is a very important issue as far as the future outlook for the relations between Islam and the West is concerned. It also has serious policy implications for the West. Hence, it is important to mention various opinions on this subject.

Most scholars accept the existence of various tendencies within the Islamist movements. For instance, distinctions have been made between "traditionalist" and "revolutionary" Islam or what Professor James Bill has called "establishment" versus "popular" Islam.<sup>29</sup>

Others have divided various Islamist groups on the basis of their tactics for gaining power, between the so-called "gradualists," including those who are willing to use the electoral process to reform, and those who believe in rapid and, if need be, violent action to overthrow existing governments and to establish Islamic states.<sup>30</sup>

Yet another division is between those groups which believe in reforming Islam by incorporating certain foreign ideas and notions, including those borrowed from the West, and those who consider Islam to provide all the answers.

Most scholars also are aware that various Islamist movements differ from one another as they reflect their respective countries' specific conditions and historic and cultural traits. Moreover, even within individual countries there are different types of Islamist groups, and even a single movement may be divided into two or more factions at odds with each other at some point of doctrine or strategy.

While recognizing these variations, those scholars who tend to see the Islamist movement as a monolith believe that with the possible exception of the so-called "traditional" or "establishment" Islam, these movements have an activist agenda and want to change the character of existing Muslims governments and to pursue goals that are ultimately against Western interests.

They point out that all of these movements want to establish Islamic governments, ensure the complete rule of the Shari'a, and to eliminate the West's economic, political, and cultural influence from the Muslim world. The only difference among them relates to their

methodology and time table, namely either immediately and violently, or gradually and peacefully. They thus conclude that there is little comfort for the West in the fact that these groups disagree on certain issues among themselves.

In addition, those who lean toward a more "monolithic" view of the Islamist phenomenon point to the growing network of contact and communications which has developed among these groups. While not all scholars subscribe to the notion of an "Islaminterm" having replaced the Cominterm of the old Cold War years, they tend to believe that the linkages among the Islamist groups and the commonality of their ultimate goals are much more extensive than believed by those scholars who view it as a diverse phenomenon.

The tendency to view the Islamist movement more as a monolith has been strengthened since the collapse of the Soviet Union. This has been partly because, while the Soviet Union was in power, many in the West saw Islam, especially the so-called "traditional" or "establishment" Islam, as a potential ally against Communism. Occasionally the West even collaborated with non-traditional Islamist groups in order to combat the Communists, as was the case in Afghanistan after the Soviet invasion of that country in 1979. With the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union, the West not only does no longer need Islam as a potential ally, it increasingly views it as an ideological rival, and an impediment to the global victory of Western liberalism.

Thus, unlike the past, when some scholars argued for a two-pronged Western strategy of fighting the Islamic extremists, while at the same time trying to make common cause with the traditional Muslims, now many analysts argue for a joint Russo-Western policy of containing Islam.

The two following quotes show this change of perception about Islam among this group of scholars. For example, writing in 1986, Daniel Pipes has the following suggestion for the United States in dealing with the Islamist challenge:

"...As for fundamentalists in power, they divide into two types, conservatives and radicals. The former usually seek good relations with the United States, and, keeping the profound differences between their goals and those of the United States in mind, ties should be cultivated...."<sup>31</sup>

But only a few years later and even before the total collapse of the Soviet Union, Walter McDougall, the Pulitzer Prize-winning historian viewed Russia as:

"...holding the frontier of Christendom against its common enemy. Should the Russian empire in Central Asia threaten to collapse, a full-scale religious war fought with nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons is not impossible..." FOOTNOTE??

Another American commentator, William Lind, suggested that:

"...Russia's role as part of the West takes on special importance in the light of a potential Islamic revival....The Soviet Union holds the West's vital right flank, stretching from the Black Sea to Vladivostok." <sup>32</sup>

The official U.S. view, as best described by Edward Djerejian, the Assistant Secretary of State for Near East and South Asian Affairs, sees the Islamist movements as a diverse phenomenon. In the speech noted earlier, he said that:

"...In countries throughout the Middle East and North Africa, we see groups or movements seeking to reform their societies in keeping with Islamic ideals. There is considerable diversity in how these ideals are expressed. We detect no monolithic or coordinated international effort behind these movements..." <sup>33</sup>

### **The Goals of Islamist Groups: Points of Conflict with the West**

In order to assess the potential implications of the rise of the Islamic movements, it is important to discern their goals and how and in which areas they conflict with Western interests. As is clear from the papers dealing with individuals countries, all Islamist groups want to create Islamic societies and states based on Islamic law and morality, where political legitimacy can only flow from Islam. However, they differ on the specific characteristics of an Islamic state, on how and by whom it should be run, and by which means it should be established.

According to almost all Western scholars and analysts, at an ideological and philosophical level, there is a basic conflict between the concept of a society and state based on and ruled according to Islamic law and the secular and liberal democratic values of the Western world. To begin with, as Daniel Pipes has put it, "...Americans have difficulty in supporting a government that flogs alcohol drinkers, cuts off the hands of thieves and stones adulterers..." <sup>34</sup> The same repulsion is also felt by most Europeans. Moreover, the whole

notion of fusion of religion and politics and state and the granting or withholding of privileges on religious grounds is against Western secular philosophy.

Thus, many Western commentators see a basic conflict between the Islamists' goal of creating societies and governments ruled by Islamic law and morality, and the Western goal of spreading democracy and human rights. Indeed, the issue of whether Islam is compatible with democracy is a subject on which Western opinion is deeply divided. Here, too, one group of scholars -- namely, those close to traditional Orientalists -- views Islam as inherently in contradiction with democracy. For example, according to Amos Perlmutter:

*"...There is an amazing amount of ignorance and wishful thinking at work here. The issue is not democracy but the true nature of Islam. Is Islam, fundamental or otherwise, compatible with liberal, human rights oriented Western style representative democracy? The answer is an emphatic 'No.'"*<sup>35</sup>

Others -- namely, the Third-worldists -- believe that it is possible to develop an Islamic version of democracy.<sup>36</sup> Contradictory statements of various Islamist leaders on this subject further confuses the debate.

The underlying problem in this debate is the definition of "democracy" and what is meant by it. Those Western analysts who see an inherent incompatibility between Islam and democracy, define the latter as meaning a secular system of government, with complete separation of church and state, and where popular will is the source of law and political legitimacy, and where a series of rights for individuals derived from the principle of "natural law" are guaranteed by the state.

Defined in this sense, democracy is indeed incompatible with Islam, according to which, at least in theory, there is no separation of religion and politics, sovereignty belongs to God and the Koran and the Shari'a are the only sources of law. In fact, a number of Islamist leaders have openly stated that democracy is the equivalent of blasphemy and thus an enemy of Islam. This is the view expressed by Ali-Benhadj, one of Algeria's FIS leaders. According to the Ayatollah Khomeini, there is no need for a legislative body in an Islamic state since the laws are already given in the Koran and in the Shari'a. And thus the only function of Parliament in an Islamic state is to set programs.

Similar views have been expressed by other intellectual mentors of Islamist groups such as the Egyptian Muhammad Qutub and the Pakistani founder of the Jamat-i-Islami, Abul A'la Mawdudi. According to Qutub, any notion of popular sovereignty is unacceptable because "...it is a usurpation of God's sovereignty and a form of tyranny for it subsumes the individual to the will of other individuals..."<sup>37</sup> Mawdudi, too, sees secular democracy as practiced in the West as the very antithesis of Islam.<sup>38</sup>

Other Islamist leaders have tried to bridge the gap between secular democracy and Islam by positing that both Koran and the popular will are the sources of law and political legitimacy. The Sudanese Islamist leader Hassan al-Turabi is one such leader.<sup>39</sup> Other Western scholars, who see the potential for an Islamic version of democracy, do not equate democracy with Western-style secularism. Rather, they emphasize the participatory and consultative aspect of democracy. Similarly, they point to the existence of the principle of "Shura," (consultation) in Islam, as well as the growing tendency among Islamist movements to become involved in the political process, parliamentary elections, and to use the ballot box rather than violence to gain power.

They also take into account Islamic principles of Ijtihad (independent reasoning) and Ijma (consensus). These two principles, in the view of this group, allow for the interpretation of Islamic rules so as to make them compatible with contemporary conditions and to allow for popular participation in the political process.<sup>40</sup> Indeed, most Islamist leaders accept the relevance of popular will in the structure of an Islamic state, albeit in a limited sense, and as long as it does not replace God's sovereignty and the supremacy of Islamic law.

For example, according to Mawdudi, "...if democracy is conceived as a limited form of *popular* sovereignty, restricted and directed by God's law, there is no incompatibility at all."<sup>41</sup> Or, according to Rashid Gannoushi, "The state is not something from God but from the people."<sup>42</sup> Or, according to another leader of Tunisia's Islamist movement, "...Laws come from God, but sovereignty is that of the people..."<sup>43</sup>

The Sudanese leader Hassan al-Turabi goes even further by saying that sovereignty



belongs both to God and to the people. Turabi in particular makes repeated references to the fact that the concept of "people (Al Nas)" and the notion that the government should be at the service of the people is emphasized in the Koran.<sup>44</sup>

Another Islamic concept which the Islamists use to demonstrate the inherently democratic nature of Islam is that of "Bay'a" or giving allegiance to the ruler. This "Bay'a" can be withdrawn if the people become unsatisfied with the ruler. In modern times, the application of this principle would mean changing an unpopular government.<sup>45</sup> The clash, therefore, between the West and Islam is not so much about the political process needed to ensure popular participation and consultation. The clash is about the sources of law and morality. For the Islamists, the fundamental laws and moral code of Islam are divine, eternal, and thus unchangeable. For the Western secularists, it is the individual and society which is the source of law. Thus, if the Western world were to view the global application of its secular political model as a vital interest, then the Islamists' goal of creating an Islamic polity and society would indeed be a threat to Western interests.

Thus, those Western analysts who subscribe to the theory of the inherent incompatibility of Islam and democracy see the efforts of the Islamists to gain power through constitutional means as an even greater threat than the more violent acts of the militants. This is so because seizure of power by peaceful means is more difficult to object to. Thus, writing under the title of "The Free Elections Trap," the New York Times columnist Leslie Gelb stated:

"...Today in most Islamic countries, free elections would produce fundamentalist victories and validate the imposition of theocracy....Fundamentalists have pressed for free elections in several Arab countries...but it is questionable that their real aim is to promote democracy....Islam draws no line between religion and politics. As undemocratic as the present Saudi regime is, a total Islamic one -- even with broader political participation -- would be less free."<sup>46</sup>

### **Islamists' Views on the Current Arab Governments: Impact on Western Interests**

The West is not satisfied with all aspects of most current Arab governments' policies. Nevertheless, it has developed either close or tolerable security, economic, and political

relations with them.

Thus, understandably, the West is disturbed by the possibility of these governments being replaced by elements which would end these relations or, even worse, adopt a confrontational stand vis-a-vis the West. The position of most Islamist groups on the current Arab governments is that they are illegitimate, corrupt, unpopular, and un-Islamic.

Their views are influenced partly by the fact that, in Islam sovereignty and absolute power belong only to God. Thus, as Turabi has put it, "Islam shuns absolute government, absolute authority, *dynastic* authority, and individual authority."<sup>47</sup> Thus, any notion of a right to rule based on dynastic privileges is, according to this interpretation, anathema to Islam. Beyond this doctrinal point, the Islamists' opposition to the current Arab regimes stem from their assessment of these governments as corrupt, anti-Islamic in their personal behavior, and under the control of foreigners, notably the infidel Western powers. Most Islamist leaders also see a connection between the Muslim world's colonial past and the character of current Arab regimes. Thus Ghannoushi believes that following the anti-colonial independence movements, the West withdrew from the Islamic world:

"...only tactically leaving behind agents through whom it continued to control most of the Muslim world. The agents are represented in the Westernized elites that are cut off from the faith and interests of the masses ruled by them. Whether such elites claimed to be liberal or socialist, they all lacked popular legitimacy. The only legitimacy they had was derived from their suppression of the people and their loyalty to the West..."<sup>48</sup>

These views find a resonance among the underprivileged masses of the Arab world, as the following quote from a marginally literate peddler from Tangiers illustrates:

"...Now the Fassis rule as the Christians used to. They have villas, cars, and servants. But those of us who toil for a mouthful of bread have gained nothing since independence. And the Fassis and other rich Moroccans have forgotten their religion. They have become like Christians. Sometimes they speak French among themselves. They send their children to French schools. They marry French women....And even today the Christians still control Morocco."<sup>49</sup>

Various Islamists and their leaders have different views on the degree of current Arab governments' corruptness and un-Islamicness, and hence on whether Islamic reform by

working through the system is a realistic option. It is important to note, however, that the attitude of Islamist groups on these issues has evolved and is still evolving in accordance with the approach of existing governments toward them. For example, in the late fifties, the confrontation between the Muslim Brotherhood and Nasser's regime in Egypt and Qutub's own imprisonment convinced him that "...attempts to bring about change from within the existing repressive Muslim political systems were futile..."<sup>50</sup> Another British diplomat recalls that the Islamists believe that they cannot have an Islamic state and society without removing their leaders because "...They had invited the West and were dependent upon it for staying in power." This is also why they mistrust their leaders because "...How can we trust our rulers when we know they are only acting on behalf of the West. And their inept leadership has led to catastrophic disasters such as the 'Six Day War' in 1967."<sup>51</sup> Of course, these Islamists forget that Nasser of Egypt played an important role in starting the war. But he was not supported by the West.

However, in some other countries such as Jordan, where the government has been willing to allow Islamic groups to take part in the parliamentary process, they have chosen to operate within the system.<sup>52</sup> It must be noted, however, that the relationship between the Islamists and the government has not been easy. Recently, the government has moved to limit the role of the Islamists by manipulating the electoral rules.<sup>53</sup> In Lebanon, even the extremist Shi'a Islamists, the Hizbollah, have recently chosen the parliamentary route, taken part in the Lebanese elections which were held September of 1992, and fared very well.<sup>54</sup> Tunisia's Islamist movement has also essentially tried to work through the system, but it has been denied the chance by the government.<sup>55</sup> The most dramatic case of the Islamists trying to gain power by working through the system was that of Algeria's "Front Islamic de Salut (FIS)" which was thwarted by the authorities after FIS appeared to be winning a parliamentary majority in the elections of 1992.<sup>56</sup> After the denial of the fruits of their parliamentary victory and the Algerian government's crackdown on the FIS leaders and members, the more militant elements of the FIS have increasingly resorted to violence, and acts of sabotage in order to undermine

the stability of the ruling government.<sup>57</sup> It is thus safe to assume that there is some connection between the approach of ruling governments toward Islamist movements, and the latter's propensity toward achieving their goals by working through the system or by resorting to violence.

### **The Islamist Movements and the Question of the Arab-Israeli Conflict**

For more than forty years, the dynamics of the Arab-Israeli conflict and their consequences for regional politics and stability have preoccupied the West in general and the United States in particular.

During the Cold War, after the main theater of East-West confrontation in Western Europe, the Arab-Israeli dispute was the one regional conflict with the greatest potential of degenerating into a superpower confrontation. The main dilemma for the West, especially the United States, deriving from the Arab-Israeli conflict has always been the following: how to reconcile commitment to the survival and security of the state of Israel on the one hand, and the maintenance of friendly relations with Arab governments, especially the oil-rich states of the Persian Gulf, on the other. During the Cold War, the United States and the West were also concerned about the Soviet Union's manipulation of this conflict in order to expand its own influence in the Arab world.

The connection which has existed in Arab minds between oil and the Arab-Israeli conflict, and between this conflict and the character of Arab regimes, historically has complicated Western choices and policies. The connection between oil and the Arab-Israeli conflict has long been established as there have been oil boycotts by Arab governments of varying degrees of efficacy during major Arab-Israeli wars, the most dramatic of which was the Arab oil embargo of 1973.

Indeed, a dominant idea in the Arab world has always been that the Arabs should use their oil in order to affect Western policies in regard to the Arab-Israeli conflict.<sup>58</sup> The split in Arab opinion has related to how to use the oil wealth, namely as an instrument of oppression or co-optation. The moderate and pro-Western Arab regimes have generally

argued that Arab oil and the wealth associated with it should be used as incentives in order to engage the West in an intricate web of economic and financial ties and thus enhance Arab influence. The result, they have hoped, would be a more pro-Arab Western approach to the conflict. The secular, radical Arabs have traditionally argued in terms of using oil as a threat in order to influence Western policy.

Radical Arab opinion has also long blamed the corrupt Arab governments for Arab failure to protect its lands and its rights. They have also maintained that the Arabs would never be able to stand up to Israel until and unless they change the character of their governments. This view was an important and integral part of the ideology of various Arab leftist parties such as the Ba'ath, and varieties of Arab nationalist groups. This aspect of these groups' philosophy was also one of the main reasons for the West's concern with the growth of secular Arab radicalism in the 1960s and 1970s..

The triangular relationship between oil, the nature of Arab regimes, and the Arab-Israeli conflict became crystallized during the Persian Gulf crisis of 1990-91. Saddam Hussein in his propaganda rehashed all of these slogans in order to garner support among Arab peoples.

The Iraqi challenge of 1990-91 was the last gasp of the secular nationalist version of Arab radicalism which had started with Nasser of Egypt in the 1950s, culminating in the war of 1967 and the Arab defeat. A constant component of the radical Arab leftists and nationalist philosophy, at least in theory, was their vision of the state of Israel as an illegitimate creation thrust by the West into the heart of the Arab world.<sup>59</sup> Moreover, these Arabs believed that the state of Israel as presently constituted should be eliminated either through armed struggle or by other means. They maintained this view despite the fact that some radical Arab states such as Syria, by accepting the United Nations Security Council Resolution 242 implicitly recognized the state of Israel and its right to exist.

With the collapse of the Soviet Union and the final defeat of radical Arab nationalism in the Persian Gulf, the prospects for resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict through peaceful means appeared more promising. Meanwhile, however, Islamic groups inherited the mantle of

total rejection of Israel from secular radical Arabs.

According to a number of Western scholars, there has been a direct linkage between the Arab defeat by Israel, the discreditation of Arab nationalism and leftist ideologies, and the rise in the influence of the Islamists. Indeed, many Arab and Western scholars trace the revival of Islam to the Arab defeat of 1967 and the soul-searching that it generated in the Arab world.

What emerged as a result of this soul-searching was an Islamic reinterpretation of the old ideology of linkage between the character of Arab regimes and the Arab defeat in the confrontation with Israel. To put it very briefly and somewhat simplistically, to the Islamists of nearly all stripes, the current predicament of the Arab world, including its repeated defeats by Israel, is the result of the Arabs' deviation from the path of Islam. Some even see the entire problem as the result of God's wrath and as divine punishment for the Arabs' straying from the path of God.

The following words uttered by the aforementioned Muslim peddler from Tangiers captures this notion of divine punishment better than any theoretician. He laments:

"...Why did God allow the Christians to rule over the house of Islam? Why did God allow the Jews to take Palestine and holy Jerusalem? Why does God allow the Christians to live like sultans in our land while we are like slaves in their land? This is God's punishment. And this is God's test. Muslims have left the path of Islam..."<sup>60</sup>

The Islamists make a direct connection between the rule of Islam and the golden age of Arab civilization and power, and the straying from Islam with Arab decline. Thus, for them, the resolution of all Arab problems, including the problem of Israel, depends on a return to Islam. Unlike secular Arab radicals, who now seem to have realized the futility of a confrontational strategy for the resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict and appear ready for a compromise solution, the Islamists are still in a totally rejectionist mode vis-a-vis Israel.

This rejectionist philosophy is reflected in many of the statements and actions of Islamist groups. For example, at a conference in Tehran in October 1991 in which a large number of Islamist leaders took part, they had the following to say about the state of Israel:

"...The conference considers the Zionist regime a fictitious and illegitimate entity and views its establishment in the heart of the Islamic lands as a premeditated conspiracy by

global Zionism, the arrogant powers, and enemies of Islam against Muslim nations, and a launching pad for their ambitions and goals..."<sup>61</sup>

Similar statements have been made by individual Islamist leaders. For example, on the eve of the American-sponsored Madrid Peace Conference on the Arab-Israeli conflict, the leader of the Lebanese Hizbullah, Abbas al-Musawi, had the following to say: "...We [the Arabs] are the major nation in this region, whereas the Jews are an alien and temporary entity. It is our judgment that the Jews should leave the region..."<sup>62</sup> Even the less radical Islamists who do not ask for the wholesale repatriation of Jews from Palestine believe in the dismantling of the state of Israel.

According to Turabi, the Sudanese Islamist leader, "...Islamists believe that principles have to be observed. That is not to say that the Jews must be thrown out, but they [the Islamists] think that the Palestinians are entitled to their land."<sup>63</sup> The Islamists are also against those Western, especially U.S., efforts supported by some Arab states, which aim to resolve the conflict through negotiations.

Apparently the Sudanese leader Hassan al-Turabi has accused these Arab states of "...befriending Israel much the same way they did in the days of the Crusaders."<sup>64</sup> What is even more important is that for the Islamists, the Arab-Israeli conflict is not merely a territorial dispute between the state of Israel and the Arabs. Rather, they see the heart of the problem as the usurpation of Islam's holy land by the infidels.

On a more practical level, the Islamists believe that by defining the Arab-Israeli conflict as a solely Palestinian, or even Arab, problem, the Arabs have deprived themselves of the Muslim world's assistance, an attitude which has weakened the Arab camp.

The Islamists' view on this issue is mostly why Israel and Western powers are concerned about their growing strength. They fear that if the Islamists were to win power, they would scuttle all efforts to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict peacefully, and might even undo past progress such as the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty.<sup>65</sup> The stakes in this regard have increased, especially since the historic meeting between Yassir Arafat, Chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and the Prime Minister of Israel, Itzak Rabin, and the

announcement of the Washington Agreement of 1993 to establish limited self-rule for the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip and Jericho, which could be the beginning of real peace between the Arabs and Israel. Thus although opposition to the peace process is not limited to the Islamists, and although not all Islamists are opposed to any form of peace, an Islamist victory could have serious negative implications for regional stability and hence for Western states.

#### **A United Islamic Front: What Threats to the West?**

U.S. and Western scholars are also divided on the likelihood of a united Islamic front emerging which could eventually be turned into an Islamic state stretching from southern Europe to Indonesia and the Great Wall of China. Here, too, the main line of cleavage is between the Third-worldists and the Orientalists.

According to the latter, this Islamic entity rich with oil, a one-billion population, and potentially armed with nuclear weapons and long-range missiles, can become a formidable contender for power and a threat to Western interests. They see stirring in the Muslim world as the beginning of this process, and use terms such as the "crescent of crisis," "global intifada," or "Islamic bomb" to illustrate the dimensions and seriousness of this threat."<sup>66</sup>

These analysts believe that an Islamic network already exists, and they call it "Islamintern" or "Khomeini-intern." For example, Judith Miller, when referring to a gathering of Islamist and Leftist Arab leaders in Khartoum in April 1991, believes that:

"...It [the conference] marked the first serious effort by an avowedly Islamic state to define with other leading figures of the movement their own vision of a new world order and a strategy for achieving it..."<sup>67</sup>

This type of analysis of Islamist movements is very appealing to the Western public, partly because it has deep roots in the European-Christian culture, and partly because it is simplistic and responds to a human need of seeing issues in a clear-cut and often black-and-white format.<sup>68</sup>

Other scholars, mostly of the Third-worldist school, dispute this vision of an emerging pan-Islamic movement by pointing to deep ethnic, sectarian, and other divisions in the Muslim world, and by drawing on the record of the past, both recent and more distant. They argue



that characterization of Pakistan's nuclear capabilities or Libya's past desperate efforts to acquire nuclear weapons as an Islamic bomb is absurd as, say, characterizing the U.S. nuclear capability as the Christian bomb, or Israel's nuclear power as the Jewish bomb.<sup>69</sup> These analysts liken this approach to the West's Cold War view of the Communist movement as a monolithic phenomenon, an attitude which had negative consequences for Western interests. And they warn against transferring such attitudes to the analysis of Islamist movements.<sup>70</sup>

### **Assessing Islam/West Gap and the Magnitude of Islamist Threat**

The foregoing discussion has laid out the main points of cleavage among American and Western experts on the nature of the Islamist phenomenon, and the character and seriousness of the threat which it poses to U.S. and Western interests. What follows is: (1) an assessment of the two basic positions outlined above based on the historical and current realities of the Islamic world; and (2) some prognosis on the likely evolution of the Islamist phenomenon, especially should Islamist groups gain power, and the impact that such developments could have on Western interests.

### **Assessing the Main Theories of the Islamist Phenomenon**

On the first point of controversy related to the causes of the Islamist resurgence, no doubt the fact that Islam has both a temporal and a spiritual dimension, and that the respective domains of public and private life are not clearly demarcated, have been important reasons for its past and current political vibrancy. However, the fact also is that historically, in practice in Muslim lands, there was clear demarcation and separation between the domain of politics and government (Dawlah and Siyassa) and religion (Din). It is also a historic fact that although the legal systems of Islamic societies were based on the Shari'a, and Islamic principles determined the moral code of society, religion was subordinated to politics, in practice if not in theory. Indeed, Islamic scholars are clear on the point that in order to maintain order and avoid chaos, an unjust and thus, by definition, un-Islamic ruler is better than none.<sup>71</sup>

Even in Shi'a Iran of the Safavid period and beyond, and despite the underlying Shi'a

political theory of the inherent illegitimacy of all political power, there was a compromise and *modus vivendi* between the religious and political establishments, and their respective domains of influence were recognized.

The dynastic legitimacy was also historically recognized in Islamic countries. Even the Ayatollah Khomeini, who later expanded the theory of the incompatibility of the institution of monarchy with Islam, at first had no objection to it, as long as the monarch ruled according to Islamic principles.<sup>72</sup>

Moreover, the popularity of constitutionalist ideas throughout the Islamic world in the last 150 years also disputes the theory that the Islamist phenomenon is the inevitable consequence of the fusion of religion and politics and the spiritual and temporal domains in Islam.

On the contrary, the argument that the latest wave of Islamist resurgence has resulted from the failure of the secular governments of the last seventy years to provide for social and economic justice and ensure popular participation makes more sense. Among these factors, the growing rift between more Westernized and traditional segments of Muslim societies, and the resulting cultural duality has been very important. In the last fifty years, Westernization often became a requirement for social and economic advancement. For instance, fluency in foreign languages rather than mastery of one's own language was needed for obtaining good jobs. Empirical evidence shows that this factor was important in determining political tendencies of African Muslims.<sup>73</sup> The following quote from Rashid Gannoushi clearly illustrates this point:

"...I am of the generation of Zaytuna students during the early years of independence. I remember we used to feel like strangers in our own country. We had been educated as Muslims and as Arabs, while we could see the country totally molded in the French cultural identity. For us, the doors to any further education were closed since the university was completely Westernized. At that time, those wanting to continue their studies in Arabic had to go to the Middle East."<sup>74</sup>

As explained in the paper on Algeria, a similar situation existed there.

Thus, there has been throughout the Muslim world a linkage between the blockage of

the people's upward mobility and the frustration of their aspirations and the surge in the popularity of Islamic theories. In other words, Islam has become the ideological weapon of those feeling betrayed by existing systems. This factor has also exacerbated the polarization of Muslim societies along the lines of traditionalists versus modernists, making Islam the ideological anchor of the traditionalists.

Interestingly, the reverse process is underway in Iran, where Islam has been in power. There, young graduates and students of secular universities are complaining that the graduates of religious studies enjoy unfair advantages in terms of access to jobs. This situation, in turn, is fueling anti-Islamic feelings.<sup>75</sup>

Admittedly, certain characteristics of Islam make the process of its "ideologization" easier. But by no means does it explain its recent political potency. Another important factor in the rise of the Islamist phenomenon has been the repression of secular political parties and the simultaneous manipulation of Islam in order to combat these forces by existing Arab governments in the belief that Islam is a quietist and conservative force.

Thus, it is well known that in the 1960s, in a strange alliance, the Shah of Iran, King Faisal of Saudi Arabia, and Habib Bourguiba of Tunisia formed the Islamic Conference to Combat Arab Socialism. It is also well known that both Presidents Sadat and Mubarak of Egypt used the Muslim Brotherhood in order to counter the influence of the Nasserites. Now that the tide has turned, the Egyptian government is consciously resurrecting Arab nationalism in order to combat the Islamists.<sup>76</sup> Saudi Arabia has in the last three decades bankrolled various Islamic groups from Turkey to Uganda.<sup>77</sup> And even Israel used Islamic groups in order to counter the influence of the PLO, and has only recently changed its policy in the face of the growing influence of Hamas.<sup>78</sup>

In short, the real causes of the rise of Islamist movements are much more earthly than certain Western scholars maintain. Ironically, by doing so they strengthen the Islamists' arguments of the inevitability of their vision for Muslim societies and politics. There is, however, a point which needs to be stressed here and that is the following: The main issue

here is that Muslim societies, including most of the Westernized elites, do not subscribe to what they see as extreme secularism of Western systems where no spiritual value deriving from a higher source than individual and collective consent has a place in the political life of the society. Rather, they believe that politics, too, are subject to and limited by certain moral and spiritual principles. But this does not mean that Islamic societies have never recognized or can ever recognize a degree of separation between the temporal and the spiritual, between the private and public domains, and between religion and politics.

To view the Islamist phenomenon as the inevitable consequence of Islam's inherent characteristics would only lead to internal polarization of Arab and Muslim societies, and the start of a secular versus Muslim crusade between the Islamic world and the West. Nor would the elimination of the Islamist phenomenon or its severe weakening eliminate the problem of extremism in many Muslim countries, from Algeria to Pakistan. And extremism is the principal cause of instability, which is, in turn, the main source of the threat to Western interest. Indeed, as long as the root causes of extremism are not addressed, after the elimination of Islamism some other ideology would become the vehicle expressing extremist tendencies. This is precisely what happened with the Islamists, who captured the nationalist and leftist constituencies after they were defeated.

As far as the issue of the root causes of the anti-Western dimension of the Islamists' views are concerned, again those analysts who tend to see it more as the result of specific actions of the West toward Arab and Islamic states rather than a civilizational battle are closer to reality, although certain elements of a clash of civilizations are also present in this conflict. However, the civilizational conflict is not that between Christianity and Islam. Rather, it is that between a totally materialistic and secular civilization and one which allows room for spirituality. Indeed, many in the Western/Christian world are not happy with the absolute secularism of their societies. For instance, in the United States, the controversy over such issues as abortion or homosexual marriages illustrate the point that not all Westerners subscribe to all tenets of their societies' secular ethos. These debates reflect the occasional intrusion of

the spiritual domain into the temporal in the West.

Christian religious leaders, most notably His Holiness the Pope, have also often urged the West to pay more attention to spiritual values, especially in the wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union. Indeed, some Western scholars, including Professor Henry Louis Gates, Chairman of Harvard University's Department of Afro-American Studies, foresees a possible alliance between what he calls the God-fearing Christians and the Muslim immigrants in the Western countries "...in the perennial *kulturkampf* between faith and secularism."<sup>79</sup> Moreover, concern over Western cultural influence or fears related to the loss of cultural identity and authenticity are not, and have never been, limited to either the Islamists or to the Arabs.<sup>80</sup>

On the contrary, secular elements both in the Arab world and in other Muslim countries have long complained about the blind imitation of foreign cultures. Nor has concern over the influence of outsiders on the indigenous culture been limited to the Arabs or the Muslims. For instance, the French are concerned about the intrusion of English words into their language, and view the McDonald's restaurants or EuroDisney parks as the dilution of France's cultural authenticity by the intrusion of Americanisms. But these kinds of concerns are a far cry from civilizational conflict, unless the cultural homogenization of the globe according to the Western image is viewed as a vital Western interest.

The civilizational conflict, to the extent that it exists, beyond the tension between spirituality and absolute secularity, is that between the civilization of the poor and the powerless, and that of the rich and the mighty. It is a conflict between those who have power and those who don't, those who control the world's destiny, and those who are subjects of control. But there is nothing exclusively Islamic or new about this conflict. The anti-colonial movements, for economic independence, the North-South debate, and Third World efforts to reform the international economic and political systems during the 1970s all have been aspects of this particular type of civilizational conflict, which is likely to continue for a very long time.

Western fears of the Islamist movements also essentially derive from the latter's propensity to challenge existing regional and global power equations rather than their desire to implement Islamic moral and criminal codes. No doubt, the Western public, as noted in the aforementioned quote by Daniel Pipes, is repulsed by the harshness of the Islamic Hudud. None of them would also like to see democratic principles applied in these countries. Yet, faced with the realities of international politics, Western governments have often supported and befriended such Arab regimes as that of Numeiry's Sudan, and Saudi Arabia, which indeed apply Islamic punishments. In fact, one U.S. commentator had the following to say in this regard:

"...The greatest hypocrisy in the debate over political Islam is the fact that Americans have fought a war and committed their military and diplomatic power to secure the survival of the most fundamentalist state of all--Saudi Arabia..."<sup>81</sup>

The same could be said of other Western countries.

In the past, the West has moved to crush those nationalist secular movements in the Arab and Muslim worlds which were challenging its supremacy. This was illustrated by the Anglo-American coup d'état against the nationalist government of Dr. Mohammad Mossadegh in Iran in 1953 and the Anglo-French expedition against Egypt in 1956 over the nationalization of the Suez Canal.

In short, the determining factor in defining the nature of the threat to Western interests and in deciding the West's response has not been the secular or religious dimension of political movements in the Arab and Muslim countries, but rather, their propensity to challenge Western supremacy. Similarly, the point made by Professor Bernard Lewis that the anti-Westernism of the Islamists derives from envy and their fear of Western culture because of its attractiveness also does not stand the test of closer scrutiny based on the empirical evidence.

Certainly, the element of envy is present. But it by no means explains the entire issue. In fact, evidence indicates that disenchantment with aspects of Western culture has played an important role in the Muslim youths' turning toward Islam. It is significant that many of the Islamist leaders and theorists were educated in the West, and found Western culture, especially its moral permissiveness, unattractive.

According to Professor John L. Esposito:

"...In 1949, Sayyid Qutb traveled to the United States to study educational organization. This experience proved to be a turning point in his life. After this visit he became a severe critic of the West, and shortly after his return to Egypt in 1951, he joined the Muslim Brotherhood. Although he came to the United States out of admiration, Qutb experienced a strong dose of culture shock which drove him to become more religiously observant and convinced of the moral decadence of Western civilization and its anti-Arab bias....He was scandalized by the sexual permissiveness and proximity of American society, the free use of alcohol, and free mingling of men and women in public..."<sup>82</sup>

Many other young Muslims also went through the same experience. The factor of humiliation, however, is more important in deciding the Muslims' attitudes toward the West.

In sum, the facile and simplistic explaining away of the complex factors involved in Islam-West relations by attributing everything to the Muslims' envy and inferiority complex does not help mitigate the conflictual aspects of these relations.

Insofar as Islam's inherent incompatibility with democracy, and the Islamists' animosity toward the West because of their undemocratic nature is concerned, indeed if democracy is equated with absolute secularism, then there is a conflict between Islam and democracy. However, if democracy is defined as a system of government based on popular participation and the consent of the majority and the protection of basic rights of the minority within the overall moral code of the society in general, then there are enough aspects of Islam which are, and can be made, compatible with democracy.

Moreover, those who tend to see Islam as inherently incompatible with democracy also see it as totally immutable and incapable of change. Yet, the existence of a large and varied legal opinion within various Islamic schools, and the important place that "Ijtihad" holds in Islamic tradition, especially in Shi'a Islam, creates almost unlimited opportunity for interpretation of Islamic principles in order to make them compatible with new situations. This also allows for a process of what could be called Islamic reformation.

Iran's experience, where the Islamists have been in power, illustrates how this process of change is already underway there. This process has been triggered by the realization of Iran's Islamic leaders of the limitations of Islamic law in running a modern society and Iran's

own historic and cultural realities, and hence, the necessity of creative Ijtihad.<sup>83</sup>

A detailed description of how this process has been unfolding in Iran is beyond the scope of this article. Suffice it to say that in many respects necessities of state and the imperatives of governance have been given priority over religious considerations. In fact, as a result of a series of incremental reforms in Iran, a fledgling process toward the separation of church and state has begun.<sup>84</sup>

The following quotes from a recent article by Robin Wright in the *Los Angeles Times* illustrate aspects of this process:

"...Iran's new divorce law contains many implicit precedents that fuel a new spirit of reform addressing some of the same issues -- such as the relationship between church and state -- central to the 16th century Christian Reformation. The most significant precedent is recognition that the state is superior to Islam -- because a divorce must be processed through the state, and according to civil statutes adapted from European law, not Shari'a. The new statute also hints at separation of powers between mosque and state... Indeed, because Iran has been ruled by Islam for 14 years, awareness of the issues and choices is often more advanced in Tehran. And some of the boldest challenges to Muslim traditions are coming from Iranians like Abdol Karim Sorooshi..who some view as a Muslim version of Martin Luther..."<sup>85</sup>

The fact is that those in the West who justify denying the Islamists the opportunity of taking part in the political process of their respective countries on the grounds of Islam's incompatibility with democracy are doing so for more pragmatic reasons. The principle reason is that given the Arabs' grievances toward the West, any popularly elected government, even if it were absolutely secular, is likely to be much less receptive to Western wishes and interests in a variety of areas than most of the current Arab governments.

This situation, in turn, is likely to create dilemmas for the West in the short term, in certain areas, notably the Arab-Israeli conflict. These are serious dilemmas and cannot be dismissed out of hand. However, in the long run, a workable and lasting modus vivendi between Arab and Islamic worlds and the West can only be worked out with governments which represent the views and feelings of the majority of their peoples.

The case of the PLO's loss of influence to Hamas because of its accommodationist policy illustrates this point. Indeed, some scholars in the mid-1980s predicted that the lack of



progress in the peace talks would strengthen Hamas.<sup>86</sup> If the new peace talks between the PLO and Israel succeed in generating a serious hope for the Palestinians for better economic conditions, more autonomy, and perhaps in the future some kind of statehood, it is bound to undercut the appeal of the extremist Islamists.

The threat of an emerging pan-Islamist bloc possibly armed with nuclear weapons has also been highly exaggerated. The fact is that the historic experience of the Muslims and the Arabs, and the Islamic world's current divided state along ethnic and sectarian lines, and the existence of a variety of territorial and other conflicts among the Arabs and the Muslims makes the realization of pan-Islamic dreams even more unlikely than those of pan-Arabism.<sup>87</sup>

Similarly, it is very unlikely that any Muslim state will put a nuclear capability at the service of pan-Islamic goals. For example, despite Pakistan's Islamic pretensions, it has been careful not to generate any reasonable expectations in their regard. Also, the impulse to develop nuclear weapons derives mainly from security concerns or national ambitions rather than from their Islamic or secular character. Thus in Pakistan's case, the conflict with India and the latter's acquisition of a nuclear capability were the primary sources of impetus for its drive to acquire a nuclear capability. In Iraq's case, Saddam Hussein's national and pan-Arabist ambitions fueled its quest for nuclear weapons.

The power gap on economic, technological, and military levels between the West and the Muslims is so vast that the latter, even united, are sure to lose in any confrontation with the West. Most Islamists, notwithstanding their defiant rhetoric, are fully cognizant of these facts of power. Moreover, as the history of other revolutionary forces illustrates, as these groups gain power and assume the responsibility of running a country, their behavior changes under the influence of particular characteristics and needs of their respective countries, and because of forces emanating from the international political system.

Iran's experience clearly illustrates this process of adjustment of ideological principles to internal and international realities. Given the fact that with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the ensuing geostrategic and economic ascendancy of the West, which puts Muslim

countries in a weaker bargaining position, this process of adjustment is bound to be shorter in the case of any Arab Islamists should they come to power. Moreover, many of these movements have learned from the mistakes of the Iranian revolutionaries and their excesses. Additionally, if, unlike Iran, the Islamists come to power or acquire a share in power through peaceful means, their ability to change course completely would be limited because of the influence of other forces. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, the international community is also in a better position to hasten this process of adjustment through the application of a mixture of incentives and pressures.

Despite these observations it is clear that, in the short term, the coming to power of Islamist forces would complicate the West's relations with the Arab world, and it would make the resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict more difficult. Thus, understandably the West cannot be complacent about such prospects. This is especially so because there seems to be a real chance for progress in Arab-Israeli relations. However, even in this regard, the impact of the Islamists, especially insofar as the risks of renewed military conflict are concerned, should not be exaggerated. Nevertheless, it is clear that an Islamist takeover in some countries would be more dangerous than in others. For example, an Islamist takeover in Jordan or a victory for Hamas in the Occupied Territories would be more dangerous than an Islamist takeover in some North African country. Egypt is another country where an Islamist victory would undermine the peace process, although perhaps not endangering the Egypt-Israeli Peace Treaty. This would be so because the most important reasons which led Egypt to sign a peace treaty with Israel were financial difficulties and a general battle fatigue. Egypt's Islamists would also have to deal with the same economic and political dilemmas. Nor would the coming to power of the Islamists dramatically alter Israel's military edge. In fact, once in power, the Islamists would have to deal with Israel in real terms and beyond their rhetorical posture. In time they, too, would come to realize that they have to reach a modus vivendi with Israel and ultimately recognize its right to exist. However, this long-term adjustment does not resolve the short-term dilemma of Western countries regarding the impact of an

Islamist victory on the vital issue of peace in the Arab Middle East. Thus, it must be concluded that, while in the long-run the Islamic challenge is not as dangerous as it is portrayed by some analysts, in the short-term its potential threat to Western interests is quite serious.

### **Conclusions and Assessment of U.S. Policy Toward the Islamists**

The foregoing has illustrated that the nature of the Islamist movements and the root causes of their resurgence are very complex. Although Islam's inherent characteristics have been important factor in the rise of the Islamist phenomenon, these movements have been essentially shaped by their respective countries' social, economic, political, and cultural conditions and experiences, notably the long rule of authoritarian regimes, the stifling of political debate, and the cynical use of Islam in the belief of its inherent conservatism and quietism in order to check the spread of the so-called subversive political ideologies. A strong desire for independence and greater influence on the international scene on the part of the Arabs and Muslims have been additional causes.

The anti-Western dimensions of the movement also derive from specific experiences of different countries. This is one reason why not all Muslim groups view all Western states in the same light. For instance, given the fact that since the 1950s the U.S. presence and influence in the Middle East has been the greatest, it has become a special focus of the Islamists' wrath. In general, the recent history of Western conquest of Muslim lands has been a main cause of anti-Western sentiments in the Arab and Islamic worlds, including a significant number of secular states.

The extremist and radical dimensions of these movements also largely stem from factors other than Islam, notably a strong sense of popular grievance -- justified or not -- against both internal and international injustice.

The discussion has also showed that Islam is by no means static and incapable of change, and that eventually some form of Islamic reformation is inevitable. However, for this to happen and happen sooner rather than later, at some point Islam and the Islamists must be

allowed to take part in the political process and the political life of Arab and Muslim worlds within the context of an overall liberalization. The difficulty is that such liberalization is likely to increase the risk of instability and conflict -- hence, the legitimate hesitation of all concerned to move swiftly on this front. At the same time, delaying the process tends to exacerbate problems on which the Islamists feed and also leads to instability.

The foregoing has also showed that there is no inevitability in the notion of a civilizational clash between Islam and the West. However, if differences and problems in Western-Muslim relations are defined in religious terms, then this civilizational conflict may become a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Given the above analysis and assessment, what has been U.S. -- and, in general, Western -- policy toward the Islamist movements and the Islamist phenomenon?

As was discussed earlier, U.S. policymakers do not subscribe, and never have subscribed, to the simplistic view of the Islamist wave as a monolithic force engaged in a life or death struggle with the West.

Rather, the emphasis has been on the diversity of these movements. In fact, U.S. and Western policy has made a point of distinguishing between the extremist and moderate Muslims, and has emphasized the point that its problems are only with the extremists.<sup>88</sup>

The U.S. and other Western countries have also recognized the social and economic causes of the Islamist phenomenon, including its militant dimensions. It was partly because of the recognition of these facts that, during the Gulf crisis, there was much talk about reducing income disparities within Arab countries and narrowing the gap between rich and poor Arab states. A number of European countries have taken measures to strengthen economic ties with Arab states of North Africa. However, most of these promises have yet to be fulfilled either at Arab or international levels.

U.S. and Western policymakers' main concerns have been on the impact of the Islamists and their views on the foreign policy of Arab states, notably such issues as the Arab-Israeli conflict, and the nature and extent of Arab relations with the West. Thus, insofar as the

application of Islamic rules and moral code within Arab states is concerned, the United States, and other Western governments, have basically adopted a neutral stand.

Beyond the above, given the serious short-term problems which an Islamists's victory would pose, the basic U.S. and Western policy toward the Islamists has been one of containment, even if this has meant sacrificing the goal of spreading democracy. This was best illustrated by the U.S. and Western attitude toward Algeria after the FIS scored a parliamentary victory in 1992. The failure of the United States, and other Western countries, to encourage the process of democratization in the Arab world after the end of the Persian Gulf war, and despite promises made during the crisis, largely stemmed from the desire to prevent a victory for the Islamists and to preserve the friendly Arab regimes.

The containment dimension of Western policy has been further enhanced after the collapse of the Soviet Union. For example, the United States, in February 1992, declared that an important aspect of its policy toward the newly independent republics of Soviet Asia is the containment of Islamic extremism and the Iranian influence, which the West views as its foremost champion.<sup>89</sup>

The United States and the West have also adopted a watchful policy on Sudan.<sup>90</sup> In terms of contacts with Islamist groups, so far the U.S. government has, with a few exceptions, refrained from establishing a dialogue with these groups. This policy has been prompted by the concern over the reaction of Arab governments and the fear that contacts with the United States may bestow greater legitimacy and influence on these movements.

In fact, the United States, and to some extent other Western countries, face a dilemma in this regard, namely: If they establish contacts with the Islamists, they risk antagonizing and perhaps undermining friendly Arab regimes; but if they do not have contacts, they lose an opportunity to influence these groups in a more moderate direction. This policy places them in a very disadvantaged position should these groups gain power anyway. U.S. policy makers are especially conscious of this dilemma, given America's bitter experience in Iran, where the lack of contact with various opposition groups clouded U.S. views of Iran's political realities

and the extent of the Shah's government's vulnerability.<sup>91</sup>

Whether a policy based mostly on containment and denial would be successful in meeting the Islamists' challenge, only time will tell. However, that policy does run the risk of further polarizing the Arab world along secular-Islamic lines, delaying the process of reform and thus increasing the risk of violent confrontation and chronic instability. This situation has already to some extent developed in Algeria, where the Islamist militants are engaged in almost guerrilla warfare against the state.

For some Western countries, such as France, this situation is already having consequences -- similar to what it feared would happen in the case of the Islamists' gaining political power -- such as an exodus of French nationals from Algeria and a rise in Algerian immigration to France. For example, following a series of kidnappings, the French government has advised its nationals to leave Algeria.

A pure containment policy is also likely to deepen the rift between the West and the Arab and Islamic worlds. Yet in the short-term, the risks of an alternative strategy seem to outweigh its long-term benefits. Thus in the coming years, the major challenge to the West will be how to devise a strategy which will minimize short-term risks, while allowing for future dialogue and reconciliation between Islam and the West.

#### NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> For example, many in the West argued that Shi'a militancy in Iran and in Lebanon was due to the Shi'as' propensity to fanaticism and their cult of martyrdom, plus the existence of a clerical establishment with an economic base independent from the state.
- <sup>2</sup> For instance, King Fahd of Saudi Arabia has warned Iran to stop exporting its alien Persian/Shi'a ideas to the Arab world.
- <sup>3</sup> Hafiz al-Assad brutally suppressed the Syrian Islamists by the massacre of Hama, where as many as 30,000 people perished. On Syria's Islamist movement, see Raymond A. Hinnebusch, "Syria" in Shireen T. Hunter (ed.), *The Politics of Islamic Revivalism: Diversity and Unity*, Bloomington, Indiana: University Press, 1988, pp. 39-54. Also, Fred H. Lawson, "Social Basis of the Hama Revolt," *MERIP Reports*, Vol. 12, No. 9 (November-December 1982), pp. 24-27.
- <sup>4</sup> On the Egyptian Islamists, see John L. Esposito, *The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality*, Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1992, pp. 133-140.

- <sup>5</sup> See, for instance, Shireen T. Hunter, "Islamic Fundamentalism: What It Really Is and Why It Frightens the West," *SAIS Review*, Vol. 6, No. 1, Winter/Spring 1988, pp. 189-200.
- <sup>6</sup> On the root causes of the Islamist movements, among other works, see Shireen T. Hunter (ed.) *Politics of Islamic Revivalism: Unity and Diversity*, Bloomington, Indiana: University Press, 1988. Also, R. Hrair Dekmejian, *Islam in Revolution: Fundamentalism in the Arab World*, Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 1985.
- <sup>7</sup> See Francois Burgat's comments in "Les Islamists En Europe," *L'Express*, 6 May 1966, p. 25 (author's translation).
- <sup>8</sup> For an elaboration of this theme, see the works listed in footnotes 4 and 6. Also, Abdul Aziz Said, "Islamic Fundamentalism and the West," *Mediterranean Quarterly*, Vol. 3, No. 4, Fall 1992, p. 27.
- <sup>9</sup> See Graham Fuller, "Islamic Fundamentalism: No Long-Term Threat," *Washington Post*, 13 January 1992, p. A-17.
- <sup>10</sup> See the interview with the French expert, Gilles Kepel, in *L'Express*, 6 May 1993, pp. 32-35; also Eqbal Ahmad "Soul Struggles," *New Statesman & Society*, 28 June 1991, pp. 23-24. According to the author, the Gulf War has boosted the appeal of anti-American fundamentalist Islam.
- <sup>11</sup> See Bernard Lewis, "The Roots of Muslim Rage," *The Atlantic Monthly*, September 1990, pp. 47-60.
- <sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, emphasis added.
- <sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>16</sup> See Daniel Pipes, "Fundamentalist Muslims Between America and Russia," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 64, No. 5, Summer 1986, p. 948.
- <sup>17</sup> Quoted in Daniel Pipes, "The Muslims Are Coming! The Muslims Are Coming!" *National Review*, 19 November 1990, p. 28.
- <sup>18</sup> Quoted in *Ibid.*, p. 29.
- <sup>19</sup> Quoted in *Ibid.*, p. 28.
- <sup>20</sup> See Charles Krauthammer, "The Foreign Policy President," *Washington Post*, April 16,

1993, p. A-25. (emphasis added)

- 21 Extracted from the text of Gannoushi's speech obtained by the author.
- 22 See Martin Kramer "Islam Versus Democracy," *Commentary*, January 1993.
- 23 Graham Fuller, "Islamic Fundamentalism," *op cit.*
- 24 Robin Wright, "Islam, Democracy, and the West," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 71, No. 3, Summer 1992, p. 145.
- 25 Phebe Marr, "The Islamic Revival: Security Issues," *Mediterranean Quarterly*, Vol. 3, No. 4, Fall 1992, p. 50.
- 26 Text of Gannoushi's speech obtained by the author.
- 27 See the testimony of Robert Gates in hearings before the Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives, "The Future of U.S. Foreign Policy in the Post-Cold War Era," 1/4.F, March 4-25 1992, pp. 228-229.
- 28 The text of Edward Djerejian's speech obtained by the author.
- 29 See James A. Bill, "Resurgent Islam in the Persian Gulf," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 63, No. 1, Fall 1984, pp. 108-127.
- 30 For an excellent analysis of these points, see R. Hrair Dekmejian, *Islam in Revolution*, *Op. cit.*
- 31 See Daniel Pipes, "Fundamentalist Muslims....," *Op. cit.*, p. 959.
- 32 Quoted in Daniel Pipes, "The Muslims Are Coming!..." *Op. cit.*, p. 29.
- 33 The text of Djerejian's speech obtained by the author.
- 34 Daniel Pipes, "Fundamentalist Muslims..." *Op. cit.*, p. 958.
- 35 See Amos Perlmutter, "Wishful Thinking About Islamic Fundamentalism," *Washington Post*, 19 January 1992, p. A-7. (emphasis added) Also see Bernard Lewis, "Islam and Liberal Democracy," *The Atlantic Monthly*, February 1993, pp. 89-98.
- 36 See, for example, John L. Esposito's testimony.
- 37 Quoted in John L. Esposito, "James P. Piscatori: Democratization and Islam," *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 45, No. 3, Summer 1991, p. 435. On other aspects of Qutb's view, see Yvonne Y. Haddad, "Sayyid Qutb: Ideologue of Islamic Revival," in John L. Esposito (ed.), *The Voices of Resurgent Islam*, Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1983, pp. 67-98.



- <sup>38</sup> Quoted in John L. Esposito & James P. Piscatori, "Democratization and Islam," *Op. cit.*, p. 436. Also see, Charles J. Adams, "Mawdudi and the Islamic State," in John L. Esposito (ed.), *The Voices of Resurgent Islam*, *Op. cit.*, pp. 99-133.
- <sup>39</sup> On Turabi's views, see "Islam, Democracy, the State, and the West," Summary of a lecture and roundtable discussion with Hassan Turabi, prepared by Louis L. Cantori and Arthur Laurie, *Middle East Policy*, Vol. I, No. 3, 1992, pp. 49 and 61. Also, "Hassan Turabi: The Islamic State" in John L. Esposito (ed.), *The Voices of Resurgent Islam*, *Op. cit.*, pp. 241-260.
- <sup>40</sup> For an analysis of these issues, see Azizah Y. Al-Hibri, *Islamic Constitutionalism and the Concept of Democracy*, New York/Washington, D.C.: American Muslim Foundation, 1992.
- <sup>41</sup> See John L. Esposito and James P. Piscatori, "Islam and Democratization," *Op. cit.*, p. 436.
- <sup>42</sup> See *Ibid.*, p. 437.
- <sup>43</sup> See *Ibid.*
- <sup>44</sup> See Peter Ford, "The State According to Muhammad," *Christian Science Monitor*, 22 April 1993, pp. 6-7.
- <sup>45</sup> On the question of Bay'a, see *Ibid.*, also Azizah al-Hibri, "Islamic Constitutionalism..." *op cit.*
- <sup>46</sup> See Leslie Gelb, "The Free Election Trap," *New York Times*, May 29, 1991, p. A-23.
- <sup>47</sup> See "Islam, Democracy, the State and the West," *Middle East Policy*, *Op. cit.*, p. 51.
- <sup>48</sup> These views were expressed in the speech to a seminar at the Centre for Democratic Studies, the University of Westminster, October 6, 1992, entitled "Islam and the West: Realities and Prospects," p. 3 of 9. Text obtained by the author.
- <sup>49</sup> See Henry Munson, "Morocco," in Shireen T. Hunter (ed.), *The Politics of Islamic Revivalism*, *Op. cit.*, p. 141.
- <sup>50</sup> See John L. Esposito, *The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality*, *Op. cit.*, p. 128.
- <sup>51</sup> See Hugh Leach, "Observing Islam From Within and Without," *Asian Affairs*, Vol. XXI, Part I, February 1991, p. 13.
- <sup>52</sup> On the Jordanian democratization process, see Sama Atiyeh, "In Power 40 Years, King Hussein Strives for a Democratic Jordan," *Christian Science Monitor*, 4 May 1993, p.

7. Also 1993, p. 5, James Whittington, "Hussein Tries to Cope with Islamic Surge," *Financial Times*, 30 April 1993.

53 See:

54 On Lebanon's elections and Hizbullah's gains, see various issues of *Foreign Broadcasting Information Service, FBIS/ME & SA* for the month of September 1992.

55 For example, in Tunisia the Islamic opposition even at the time of Bourguiba offered to work through the parliamentary system. See Norma Salem "Tunisia," in Shireen T. Hunter (ed.), *The Politics of Islamic Revivalism*, *Op. cit.*, pp. 164-166. Also, John L. Esposito, "The Islamic Threat..." *Op. cit.*, pp. 153-163. Also see Wendy Kristiansen's interview with Gannoushi in *The Middle East*, Vol. \_\_, No. \_\_, September 1991, pp. 19-20.

56 On Algerian elections, see various issues of *FBIS/ME & SA* for 1992.

57 See *Ibid.* and those for 1993.

58 For an analysis of these issues, see Shireen T. Hunter, *OPEC and the Third World: The Politics of Aid*, Bloomington, Indiana: University Press, 1984.

59 Ali Mazrui expresses this opinion in the following way: "...On the one hand, Israel was virtually the fifty-first state of the USA, with massive American contributions to its preservation and massive American contributions to its maintenance and upkeep. In that respect, Israel was a piece of the West deposited in the heart of the Third World..." *Africa's International Relations: The Diplomacy of Dependency and Change*, Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1977, p. 136.

60 Quoted in Henry Munson, "Morocco," in Shireen T. Hunter (ed.), *The Politics of Islamic Revivalism...* *Op. cit.*, p. 140.

61 Quoted in Robert Satloff, "Palestinian Fundamentalism and the Peace Process," in Yehuda Mirsky & Ellen Rice (eds.), *The Soref Symposium, Islam and the U.S.: Challenges for the Nineties*, Washington, D.C.: The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 27 April 1992, p. 34.

62 *Ibid.*

63 Apparently, in a statement Turabi has said that "...The Islamists think that principles must be observed. That is not to say that the Jews must be thrown out, but they [the Islamists] think that the Palestinians are entitled to their land..." Quoted in Martin Kramer, "Islam Versus Democracy," *Op. cit.*, p. 40, *Commentary*, January 1993, Vol. 95, No. 1.

64 *Ibid.*

- <sup>65</sup> Apparently, an Islamist leader has said that in the event of an Islamist victory in Egypt, the whole Camp David process would be reassessed. Quoted in Judith Miller, "The Challenge of Radical Islam," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 72, No. 2, Spring 1993, p. 50.
- <sup>66</sup> See, for example, the article by Charles Krauthammer, "The New Crescent of Crisis: *Washington Post*, 16 February 1990, p. A-23.
- <sup>67</sup> See Judith Miller, "The Challenge of Radical Islam..." *Op. cit.*, pp. 44-45.
- <sup>68</sup> These arguments play to the West's fears of Islam, which goes back to the first centuries of Islam, as well as the general fear of the unknown, and is similar to earlier fears of a "Yellow peril" or "Red threat." This time it is the green of Islam which is so threatening.
- <sup>69</sup> For instance, John L. Esposito emphasizes this point. See *The Islamic Threat...*, *Op. cit.*, p. 174.  
(see p. 174)
- <sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>71</sup> For example, according to Ibn Khaldoun, an unjust Amir is better than a state of chaos.
- <sup>72</sup> In fact, in 1943 the Ayatollah Khomeini said that "...the Ulama never wanted to destroy the foundations of the government...They have never to this day opposed the principal foundations of the monarchy..." Quoted in Farhang Rajaee, *Islamic Values and World View: Khomeini on Man, the State, and International Politics*, New York: University Press of America, 1989, p. 57.
- <sup>73</sup> Quoted in Sulayman S. Nyang "West Africa," in Shireen T. Hunter (ed.), *The Politics of Islamic Revivalism*, *Op. cit.*, p. 211.
- <sup>74</sup> Quoted in Norma Salem, "Tunisia," in *Ibid.*, p. 165.
- <sup>75</sup> On the complaint of the Iranian students, see *FBIS\ME\SA*, 1993, p. \_\_\_\_.
- <sup>76</sup> At the time, Egypt was warned that a policy based on avoiding political liberalization and co-opting the Islamists would backfire. See Amira El-Azhary Sonbol "Egypt" in Shireen T. Hunter (ed.), *The Politics of Islamic Revivalism*, *Op. cit.*, pp. 33-36.
- <sup>77</sup> See "Militant Islam's Saudi Paymasters," *Guardian* (London), 29 February 1992. After the Gulf war and the Algerian fiasco, the Saudi government has tried to stem the flow of money to these groups, or so it claims. See "Youssef M. Ibrahim "Saudis Try to Curb Money Aiding to Islamic Militants," *New York Times*, 1 May 1993, p. 4.

- <sup>78</sup> See "Building an Enemy: America, Israel, and Arab States Created the Islamic Militants They Now Fear," *Newsweek*, 15 February 1993, pp. 27-30.
- <sup>79</sup> Henry Louis Gates, "Blood and Irony," *The Economist*, 11-17 September 1993, p. 38.
- <sup>80</sup> In Africa, for instance, the notion of "Negritude" was developed to maintain Africa's cultural authenticity. With the waning of Communism's grip in China, Confucianism is reemerging as people turn to their indigenous ideas. See "Cultural Confusion Sends China Back to Confucius," *Christian Science Monitor*, 24 May 1993, p. 10.
- <sup>81</sup> See Leon T. Haddad, "What Green Peril," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 72, No. 2., Spring 1993, p. 39.
- <sup>82</sup> See John L. Esposito, *The Islamic Threat*, *Op. cit.*, p. 127.
- <sup>83</sup> A favorite notion in Iran is the so-called "Fegh-e-Puya" (the seeker--jurisprudence meaning innovative).
- <sup>84</sup> For an elaboration of these themes, see Shireen T. Hunter, *Iran After Khomeini*, New York: Praeger, 1992, pp. 14-31.
- <sup>85</sup> See Robin Wright, "Muslims Open Up to Modern World," *Los Angeles Times*, 6 April 1993, pp. H12.
- <sup>86</sup> This was predicted by the experts a long time ago. See Emile Sahliyeh, "The West Bank and the Gaza Strip," in Shireen T. Hunter (ed.), *The Politics of Islamic Revivalism*, *Op. cit.*, pp. 98-99.
- <sup>87</sup> Despite its universal and egalitarian message, Islam has not succeeded in overcoming the hold of ethnicity and nationalism, and the divisiveness which derives from them. See Shireen T. Hunter, "Islam and the Future of Middle Eastern Societies," *Relazioni Internazionali*, *Op. cit.*, pp. 24-25.
- <sup>88</sup> See the text of the speech by Edward Djerejian, *Op. cit.*
- <sup>89</sup> See Thomas L. Friedman, "US to Counter Iran in Central Asia," *New York Times*, 6 February 1992, p. 2.
- <sup>90</sup> See "Le Soudan Sous Haute Surveillance," *Le Monde*, 17 April 1993, p. 1.
- <sup>91</sup> See Jane Friedman, "US Weighs Talk with Terrorists," *Christian Science Monitor*, 29 April 1993, p. 3. Also see Caryle Murphy, "Saudis Move Against Rights Unit," *Washington Post*, 16 May 1993, p. A-27, on the contacts between U.S. embassy officials and Saudi dissidents.

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