Religion, State & Society, Vol. 24, Nos. 2/3, 1996

Religion, Politics and Social Change: A Theoretical Framework

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Religion versus Secularism: Tensions within Modernity

In contemporary political jargon, 'social change' has conventionally come to mean the natural evolution of all members of the global village towards a *modern* state of existence. Modernity was both ontologically and teleologically subsumed in this process of change as the inevitable goal. It therefore became the banner of secular salvation in countries with recent colonial experiences, especially during the 1950s and through the 1970s. Having achieved their independence from the colonial powers, the leaders of those newly-emerging nations made it their paramount objective to undergo a rapid process of modernisation in order to improve their peoples' and nations' material well-being.

In many cases, however, and despite the best of intentions, the modernisation process produced less than the expected results. Attempts at modernisation brought with them new kinds of problems and raised new issues which had not previously been perceived or encountered. In most cases these countries had to deal with the destructive as well as the constructive dimensions of this complex process. Old traditions and institutions were broken down, family ties of kinship had to be loosened, and cities had to absorb the population migrating from rural to urban centres. Ties with the past were weakened, yet nations experiencing profound change failed to become part of the modern 'present' or an aspiring part of the future. These profound changes had serious effects on the social relations and structures of the societies undergoing the modernisation experience.

This situation called for a reassessment on the part of an increasing number of developing nations of the basic premises of modernity and its impact on the indigenous culture, in which religion formed a major component. Knowledge, technology and modernity have so far proved to constitute a complex and value-laden package which involves not just industrialisation and material improvement, but a whole array of profound attitudinal and cultural transformations pertaining to and concomitant with a relevant value structure reflective of the undertaking.[1] This paper aims at proposing a theoretical frame within which the nature of the conflictive relationship between religious and modern regimes in religiously mediated societies may be analysed. It further attempts to investigate the autonomous role that religion plays within its social context. The underlying discourse of the Iranian Islamic Revolution is then conceptualised at the ideational/epistemological level as a case in point.

0963-7494/96/02/30241-28

Sources of Disenchantment: Modern Culture

Modernity as the symbiotic offspring of technological innovation effects a most profound transformation in the basic foundations of human subjective and objective consciousness. While it carries different meanings, modernity as a general concept reflects a commonality of salient features. One becomes modern

> ... when one sheds the substantive limitation imposed by traditional values and ways of life. Substantive values limit one's access to a wider field of possibilities; the widest field of possibilities is correlated to an 'empty' self, defined by its formal role of maximizing chosen satisfactions or attaining its goals with greatest efficiency.[2]

In light of the criteria of efficiency an intrinsic value is perceived in modernity which is independent of any other virtues. A modern *existence*

> is being 'advanced' and being advanced means being rich, free of the encumbrances of familial authority, religious authority, and deferentiality. It means being rational and being 'rationalized'. ... If such rationalization were achieved, all traditions except the traditions of secularity, scientism, and hedonism would be overpowered.[3]

Mankind in its modern dimension becomes in effect the primary determinate cause not only of new instruments of production, but aso of all social, political, cultural and religious modes of existence contrived by its subjective and objective exertions. In this capacity, individuals become the masters of nature and therefore external to and independent of it. In the words of Kant, 'in all creation everything one may want or may have in one's power can indeed be used *only as means*; only man, and with him every rational creature, is an end in himself'.[4]

Under this anthropocentric rubric, typologies of human relationships become confined to a relative existence independent of 'real knowledge' or the 'Truth' as epitomised by the intrinsic nature of revelation. Modernity acquires a dynamism of its own which ignores rigorous moral boundaries to its field of action. It leads an autonomous objective material life of scientific discovery which eschews pondering on the spiritual implications. In modernity, 'the give-and-take that has always existed between man and the rest of his environment and the constant dialogue that is so necessary both for self-knowledge and social cooperation have no place'.[5] Its 'irresistible inner dynamics', as Jürgen Habermas puts it,[6] constrain revelation by the dictates of reason as a 'religion of culture'.[7] This culture, through its theoretical capacity to colonise religious lifeworlds, opens the previously sealed-off collective religious convictions to the 'influx of dissonant experiences' and disseminates them through the structural instruments of rationality and efficiency.[8] As a result it has failed to develop 'any synthetic forces that could renew the unifying power of traditional religion'.[9]

While this paper does not purport to present a comprehensive or detailed philosophical critique of modernity, underscoring its major shortcomings as a process of social change remains vital in explaining the increasing role that religion has come to play in the last two decades or so. Human self-knowledge, as far as religion is concerned, cannot be achieved in isolation from the 'man-society-God' relational meaning of existence; mankind's ordered, purposeful and *a priori* concerns with the issues of truth, certainty, finitude and infinity cannot be addressed independently of the absolutist criterion of the 'Divine'. Incessant strife for mastery over nature which is

understood as a reflection of the divine cosmos ultimately puts individuals in conflict with their own selves and their own essence. In the modern project of conquering the environment the real loser, from a religio-philosophical standpoint, has been man, who 'through his technological proliferation, has alienated himself from nature as well as from his fellow man'.[10] In other words, by attempting an autonomous existence from the cosmos, man loses his essence and thus commits the ultimate sacrilege against God. By shedding his responsibility as a reflection of the divine image and as a receiver of his beatitude, mankind ultimately suffers from a 'loss of meaning'.[11]

A fundamental problem with modernity is thus its externality to restraining boundaries and to the absolute standards of a religio-ethical foundation. Though perceived by many as an unqualified blessing for mankind in the light of its astounding scientific achievements, its subjective cost remains at large, subtle and unquantified. Modernity as a reflection of man's striving for freedom through mastery over his own environment has in effect substituted his harmonious bondage with nature for that of discorded automated alienation.

Observing the impact of modern scientific and technological achievements on human existence, Lewis Mumford comments:

> By attempting to eliminate the human factor, by reducing all experience to supposedly ultimate atomic components describable in terms of mass and motion, science discarded mankind's cumulative knowledge of history and biography and paid attention only to discrete passing events. The typical vice of this ideology accordingly, is to overvalue the contemporary, the dynamic and the novel and to neglect stability, continuity, and the time-seasoned values of both collective history and individual human experience. The scientific intelligence, however magnified by its capacity to handle abstractions, is only a partial expression of the fully dimensional personality, not a substitute for it.[12]

Modernity thus far has failed to achieve the multi-dimensional fulfilment required by human society. Its alluring promise of a better life has masked a dwindling concern with human self-realisation through spiritual as well as material development. The internal dimension of the human essence has been externalised, and this has induced an unprecedented chaotic and conflictive relationship between body and spirit. To restore order and harmony between the two it is necessary, as Jacques Ellul puts it, 'to question all the basis of that society – its social and political structure, its arts, and its way of life, its commercial system'.[13] What is required, then, is nothing short of a total discursive–structural transformation which radically opposes the fundamental identifications of modern secularism in both its liberal and historicist manifestations. This reaction to the dilemmas of modern culture, in the words of Manfred Stanley, 'is not congruent with longer-standing Western ideals of freedom and personal responsibility, so that all who still care about such traditions are morally obliged to oppose it'.[14] Any fundamental proposed resolution to problems of modernity, in other words, can only be violently antimodern, antisecular, antidemocratic, and therefore antiwestern.

That this may eventually prove to be the tidings of what is yet to come is echoed by Mumford:

> People in contemporary democracies can no longer take for granted the notion that their immediate conceptions of individual and group interests are the best measuring rod for public policy. In complex modern societies,

> simple conceptions of self-interest may be spurious and potentially harmful to the operation of a genuinely democratic society. Failure to recognize this possibility is at the root of polarizations – such as that between 'elitism' and 'participation' – that can easily turn into abstract, irrational, and dangerous bifurcations.[15]

Ultimately such expectations, which recognise, directly or indirectly, the fallibility of individual and collective choice, may serve as a justification for the rationalisation of theocratic regimes or at least of organic religious influences on future human exertions. Most certainly this is expected to provoke a violent discourse between modernists and their opponents regarding the morally and ethically determinate and causal foundations of human social and political organisation.

Errors of Omission: Religions Reinstated

Observations by two western scholars, Max Weber and Robert Wuthnow, contribute to justifying the introduction of religion as a rejuvenated, relatively independent and explanatory variable in the field of social sciences. Weber recognises that

> Certain conceptions of ideal values, grown out of a world of definite religious ideas, have stamped the ethical peculiarity and cultural values of modern mankind. They have done so by working with numerous political constellations, themselves quite unique, and with the material preconditions of early capitalism. One need merely ask whether any material development or even any development of the high capitalism of today could maintain or create again these unique historical conditions of freedom and democracy in order to know the answer. No shadow of probability speaks for the fact that economic 'socialization' as such must harbor in its lap either the development of inwardly 'free' personalities or 'altruistic' ideals.[16]

Reasons and explanations for such conditions are not difficult to discern. Celso Furtado, for example, notes that the dilemmas facing many countries in their attempts to develop basically arise from the fact that these attempts have evolved from a process of grafting onto their precapitalist economies 'one or more enterprises connected with the commercial activity of industrialized economies in a state of expansion'. In this respect, social and political change in these nations have been exogenously imposed and as such constitute a totally different inductive phenomenon from the classic formation process of the European capitalistic economies.[17] Even the concomitant modern values of freedom and democracy have failed to be reflected in institutional structures and political processes. Many developing nations, as a consequence, have come to realise after agonising experiences that the historical origin of modernity had certain unique preconditions which are unlikely to repeat themselves. The superimposition of modernity on societies with very different cultural and historical experiences has underscored the essential biases inherent in western *ethnocentricity*.

Wuthnow meanwhile has stated that 'social theory prevents us from understanding what it means to be an "infidel" civilization. To understand requires abandoning social science as a privileged framework and shifting toward a view of multiple discourses, each illuminating the meaning of events in different ways.' For this shift to occur, religion has to be taken seriously by 'granting it parity as an interpretive

framework'.[18] Such errors of omission in western social theory have become the focus of much criticism by nonwestern scholars and intellectuals.[19] Though not new, these critiques 'are spreading and becoming universal, the common elements are being analyzed, and they are increasingly informed by solid facts and arguments.'[20] Most of them call for a duly accorded respect for indigenous tradition as an organic and instrumental vehicle of progress.[21]

Reflection on such critiques underscores the situational influence which conditions an investigator's definition of *what* should be investigated, *how* the investigation should proceed, and the *purpose* that such an investigation would serve. All of this takes place within the context of a dynamic relationship that synthesises the socio-religious environment with new directions in theological innovation in order to arrive at a different and healthier plane of social existence.[22] This synthesis is not to be confined to economic and material indices. It is to incorporate a socio-religious analysis of reality in order to establish social justice and the liberation of mankind from all hindrances to its spiritual as well as material well-being. Religion has thus come to represent an alternative vehicle of reintegration capable of challenging modern culture which separates the objective material and subjective aesthetic harmony so vital to human fulfilment and wholeness. In addition to bridging the gap between the two, it contributes to the reordering of priorities of socio-political and religious means and ends along transcendentally justified and rationalised foundations.

Religion and Social Change: A Research Agenda

The Iranian Islamic Revolution of 1979 was a major event which introduced a new religious dimension into the realm of politics and social change. It represented the culmination of a long-evolving process of criticism in many developing countries of the western capitalist and socialist models. In addition to carrying this process to its logical objective conclusion and presenting itself as a potential alternative model, the Islamic Revolution raised serious questions regarding the nature of religio-political dynamics. For example, what role does religion play in social change? Why have certain revolutionary movements come to be based on or orientated towards religion? What *form* does religion have to take to become an instrument of social change? Why has religion failed at one historical epoch to satisfy the demands of its followers, and why do those same followers at another historical juncture perceive it as an alternative to the status quo? Is there something lacking in secular movements which only religion can rectify? Or are there objective and subjective factors which render religion much more than merely the refuge of the desperate?

In many cases tensions within the modernisation process create a social and political vacuum which gives religious forces a new chance to reassert themselves. For some analysts this phenomenon has created the perception that religiously-inspired political movements are simply a reaction to modernisation, and that they are therefore reactionary and antiprogressive. This view tends to be reinforced by the traditional western analysis of religion as an impediment to change and a relic of ancient irrationalism.[23] Such an outlook, unfortunately, is both simplistic and unidimensional. It fails to come to grips with the different facets of religio-political dynamics. To be confined to a one-dimensional explanation of a complex phenomenon frequently generates both superficiality and bias which go against the basic principles of objective social science research. To adopt such a deterministic approach regarding the emergence of religio-political movements is to ignore the internal dynamics of religion itself.

These theoretical and methodological problems have been the focus of scholarly analytical scrutiny. In order to be able to understand how religion and politics interact and change, Daniel Levine for example has stressed that

> analysis must accept the logic of religious belief and practice. This requires a conscious effort to hear it as expressed, to see it as practised, and to construct or reconstruct the context in which these religious ideas resonate. Only then is it possible to see how and why religion helps people to make sense of the world and to organize themselves and others to deal with it.[24]

Levine proposes an agenda for future research which goes beyond the conventional categorisation of religious movements along the traditional range of political criteria from radicalism to conservatism.[25] Such classifications render religion a secondary variable, dependent on the contingent definition of varying designations. The first task for the researcher is therefore to identify the sources of transformation in religious ideas, together with the underlying causes which give rise to different interpretations. These sources could be either internal or external, or a combination of both. What one should be looking for, then, is a clarification of how religion itself, together with its interaction with other social variables, explains the phenomenon of religio-political movements. Consequently,

> the first step to greater knowledge (of the mutual impact of religion and politics) is to see that influence runs both ways. Political action and commitment grow from religious motives and structures; politics gives models and provides pressures which spur reflection, organization, and action. The whole process spills over formal ideological and institutional limits, shaping and drawing strength from the everyday experience of meaning and power. A second step comes with realization that all this operates not only through the pursuit of short term goals, but also through building languages, universes of discourse, and expectations. These create 'spaces' which in the long run can be filled with different ideological contents.[26]

This process requires one to address the autonomous role that religion plays as a source and agent of change. It also involves identifying the structural factors which provide religion with its prominence and resilience. The ultimate outcome would be a series of comparative generalisations helpful in making deductions and producing theories. In this context one must deal with issues of social and political change, symbols of legitimacy and authority, elite-mass relations and other historical configuratons of power. One must also deal with the centres of religious organisation such as churches, mosques and grass roots organisations, class formations including the clergy, political institutions (executive, legislative, judicial), hierarchies and religious divisions. Only by undertaking such an exercise can one understand why religious groups turn political or vice versa.

The second task for the researcher is to specify the relationship between changing ideas and existing social groups. In a developing society characterised by a sharp dichotomy between the elites and the masses, what does religion represent for both? What aspects of religion are emphasised by the establishment on the one hand and by the masses on the other? Such questions oblige us to submit the social and political environment in the context of which these ideas emerge to a careful examination. Even if it is derived from a revealed scriptural text, religion remains partly situational-contextual in character and partly normative-metaphysical.[27] A very important

distinction therefore has to be made between religion as a universal creed which transcends borders, classes and races, and ideology, which according to Marx constitutes vested interests which aim at perpetuating and justifying the status quo.

The third task for the researcher is to identify any attempts to shape and repoliticise religion and to relate these to an identifiable power base. Organic connections between the leadership, the cadres and the popular base have to be closely scrutinised in order to be able to identify who determines the programme of action, along what lines, and towards what outcome. In the realm of Islam, for example, structural mediations and concepts of legitimacy are most likely to differ depending on whether a Shiite or a Sunni leadership is setting the political agenda, notwithstanding those salient features of Islam which remain the same in both cases.

The final task for the researcher is to determine how religious principles and structures exhibit flexibility or rigidity in the face of changing times and demands. Under normal circumstances of stability this task may be of no urgency since continuity is the norm. In times of crises, however, the issue becomes of utmost importance since it is the ability of religion to withstand challenge and attack that will determine the final outcome of a conflict. If religious institutions and structures fail to offer answers to newly emerging problems, and instead confine their efforts to protecting and preserving their inherited privileges, the result will be either schism or the disenchantment of the masses. Religion can therefore survive only if it perceives itself as functioning in a specific social context by which it is affected and which it attempts to shape or reconstruct. To be able to do that, religious planning has to exhibit social relevance in order to endow its efforts with legitimacy and authority. People will ultimately commit their convictions not only to that which promises them salvation in the hereafter, but to that which also contributes to their survival in the here and now.

This proposed research agenda may therefore be summarised as shown in Figure 1. The diagram's point of departure is an examination of the interaction of ideas and social structures which are eventually translated into action. The broad concern behind such an exercise is to be able to form 'packages' or 'clusters' of elements that lead to or consolidate comprehension. The result of all this 'would be work focused less on "Catholic radicalism", "Islamic fundamentalism", millenarian movements, and the like, as on the clustering of ideas, leadership, followers, resources, and opportunities which make these [movements] emerge and give them enduring impact.'[28]

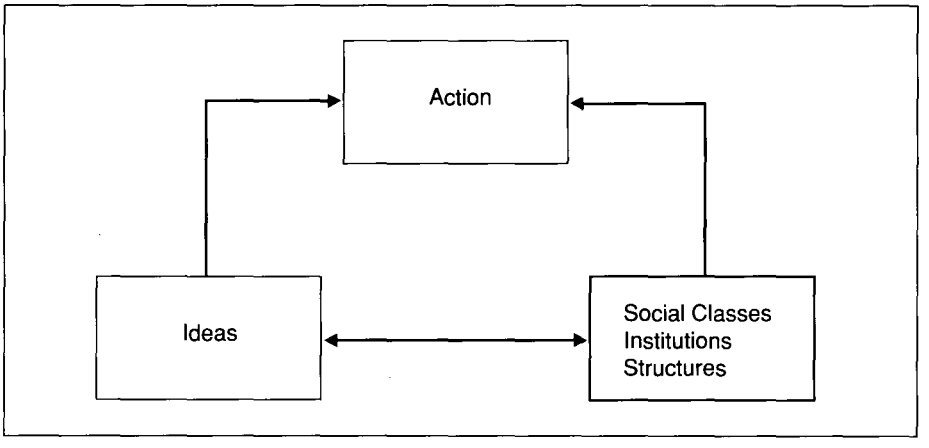

Figure 1

Religion and the Social Order: A Paradigmatic Shift

The research agenda proposed by Levine involves a substantial amount of abstraction and generalisation which makes it difficult to focus on the more concrete aspects of religion and social change in modern times. Levine's plan in fact attempts to develop a new paradigm for research which deals with the dynamic relationship between religion and politics, a relationship to which earlier works on social change have paid negligible attention.[29] In most of the modernisation and social change literature religious influences have frequently been assumed to be epiphenomenal, prepolitical, or a survivor from the past destined to insignificance by the awesome progression of secularism. Such assumptions, which at best perceive religion merely as a function of socio-historical need, to be cast aside once having served its purpose, ignore the ontologically causal and transformative potential of supernatural or metaphysical beliefs.

Otto Maduro has developed a synthesised neo-Marxist/Weberian model which accepts the economic modes of production as a determining social factor but which nevertheless does not neglect the impact of culture and ideas on social existence.[30] Admitting to the ideological role that religion has played in various historical eras, Maduro seeks a solution not in the desertion of religion, but in the revisions and mutations arising from religious innovation.[31] Such a position allows for religion to play a relatively independent role which is not totally subordinate to the ideology of the dominant class.

The root of the thesis arguing for a positive and active role for religion in social and economic life is grounded in Max Weber's original and influential study *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*.[32] As opposed to Marx, who firmly believed that religious values and interpretations were exclusively a by-product determined and conditioned by economic factors, Weber stressed that religion also played an important determining role. In his words,

> not ideas, but material and ideal interests ... directly govern men's conduct. Yet very frequently the 'world images' that have been created by 'ideas' have, like switchmen, determined the tracks along which action has been pushed by the dynamic of interest. 'From what' and 'for what' one wished to be redeemed and, let us not forget 'could be redeemed', depended upon one's image of the world.[33]

He supported his argument further by examining the role that the Calvinistic ethical system had played in the rise of capitalism in Europe and concluded that there was a positive and direct correlation between the two.[34]

This conclusion, however, should not be taken to suggest that Weber believed in a determinate relationship between the Protestant reformation and the rise of capitalism. On the contrary, as he himself pointed out, his goal was only 'to ascertain whether and to what extent religious forces have taken part in the qualitative formation and the quantitative expansion of that spirit over the world'.[35]

The model illustrated below reflects a mutual and interactive relationship between the material modes of production and the ideas or culture in which the former are situated; neither is totally independent of or the cause of the other. The modes of production refer to a socially structured set of relations shaped and constructed partially by human will, but mostly by the content of organisable resources. As opposed to the purely economic Marxist conception of human relations, this understanding sees the modes of production as constituting a *regime*[36] which indirectly influences other non-

economic aspects of social life. It will determine what kind of activities will be impossible, undesirable, tolerated, secondary, urgent or primary. As far as religious culture is concerned, the modes of production will both limit and orientate its activities and scope, highlighting particular aspects of the faith at one time while dimming the same aspects at another. In this respect the religious culture is conditioned by its social setting.[37]

Simultaneously, the religious culture plays a role of its own, stimulated by its own dynamics, and which is relatively autonomous of the social context. 'Autonomous' means that religion is not totally shaped by social structures, conflicts or transformations. Instead it plays an active role in the construction of a subjective, objective and institutional world view[38] which shapes the social experience of the collectivity both generally – in terms of heritage, culture, norms, beliefs, traditions – and particularly through furnishing the fertile ground for the emergence of a founding charismatic leader.[39]

The modes of production and the ideas and the culture of the society thus constitute the components of the regime which shapes and forms the social setting (secular or religious) while limiting and orientating the various different religio-political activities and interpretations. Both the social context and the religio-political elements are in a constant state of interaction which may be harmonious, if the two are compatible and congruent, or conflictive.[40]

In a secular social setting conflict will arise as a result of the autonomous orientation of politically active religions. Under such circumstances harmony can be restored only if religion renounces its political activism or if the secular regime is able to neutralise religious opposition either through repression, or by presenting a feasible and successful alternative, or by a combination of both. In the case of a religiously-based social setting conflict is likely to arise between opposing secular forces or between different religious interpretations; in the latter case the outcome is likely to be schismatic. Harmony in this case can be achieved either through the establishment of a pluralistic tradition that accepts different interpretations, through successful repression or through the emergence of a charismatic figure capable of embodying or transcending the different conflicting currents. Whichever the case, there will be an overlapping of methods adopted. Figure 2 may help to illustrate the point.

The model's point of departure is a secular regime in power facing opposition from religiously-orientated political groups which are trying to reconstruct the order in congruence with their own image of society. In so doing religious activists are in fact attempting to shape and influence the prevailing social arrangements in a fundamental way which is both exclusive and uncompromising. This inevitably endows the religio-political movement with an innate revolutionary dynamic which, if victorious in the face of pro-status quo conservative opposition, feeds back into the regime and in turn is influenced by it. This process continues as long as the revolution continues and has not reached its equilibrium state or Thermidor.[41] Once in power, the new regime will recast the structures of society in a new mould while limiting and orientating the concomitant religio-political interpretations, which are most likely to be those of a charismatic leader or group.

The second round of developments in the model will then envisage a reversal in the roles played by the relevant variables. Once the religious regime is securely situated in power, and especially after the inevitable demise of charismatic leadership, it will eventually attempt to institutionalise and preserve the status quo. The revolutionary regime will adopt a conservative attitude and will not be inclined to change.[42]

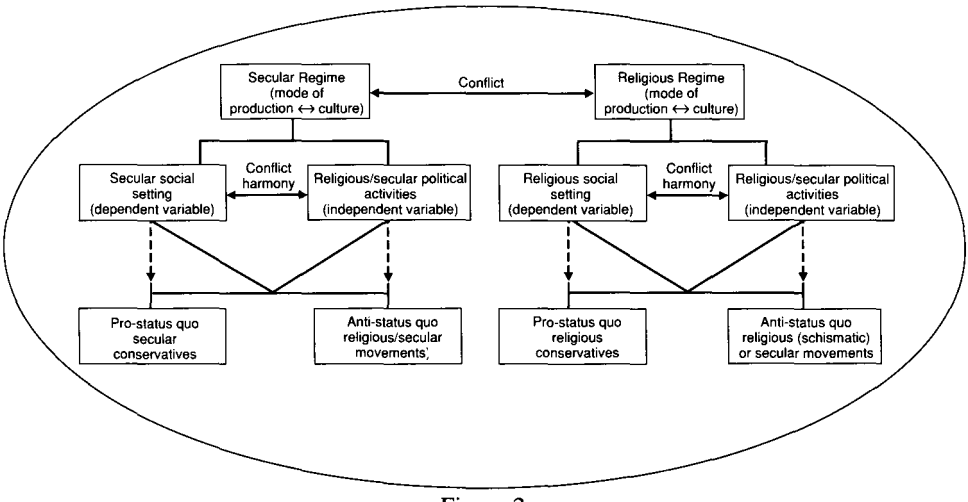

Figure 2

The subsequent nature of interaction between the social and religio-political forces will depend on the ability of the new regime to achieve a consensual social acquiescence which perceives congruence, or at worst minimal divergence, between theory (religiously based convictions and aspirations) and practice (social arrangements and structures). The greater the discrepancy between the two the more likely it is that a conflictive situation will arise in which the social action will be the independent determining variable.

The nature of opposition – whether religious or secular – will depend on the types of existing structures capable of mobilising resources and on the social configurations of power. Whichever the case, social conflict will be an inherent idiosyncrasy of those forces opposed to the status quo. A secular challenge which attempts to restructure society along non-religious lines will render the religious setting a dependent phenomenon. If, however, the challenge is emanating from a different religious interpretation, then there will emerge a series of overlapping variables in which religion is both a determining and determined element. Religious dynamics may therefore become a source either of unity or of divisiveness. The problem then becomes one of identifying the factors which contribute to either orientation.

A corollary to this problem is the question of power and control. Are the rules of the power game the same irrespective of who is at the apex of the regime hierarchy or do they vary with the change of ideology and ruling elites? Another question arises for those who subscribe to the belief in natural historical processes: is the history of mankind one of inevitable progression towards secularism, or one of inevitable cycles of religious and secular swings? If it is the latter, what then are the factors which cause the shift from one regime to another?

I will now address some of these issues and problems associated with religion and politics, using Maduro's model, in an attempt to explain the relationship between religion and social change.

Religion and Society: An Epistemology of Theory and Praxis[43]

In his second thesis on Feuerbach Marx made a definitive statement regarding the interplay between theory and praxis insofar as they contribute towards the attainment of 'truth' or 'real knowledge':

> ... the question whether objective truth can be attributed to human thinking is not a question of theory but is a *practical* question. Man must prove the truth, i.e. the reality and power, the this-sidedness of his thinking in practice. The dispute over the reality or non-reality of thinking that is isolated from practice is a purely scholastic question.[44]

In this interpretation social reality is not only the outcome of subjective mediation but also an active participant in its own creation. Far from being just a dependent component of 'truth', praxis is in effect also an independent agent of certitude. Just as much as praxis, truth remains dependent on human activity. 'The truth of doctrinal statements', as Moltmann has emphasised, 'is found in the fact that they can be shown to agree with the existing reality which we can all experience.'[45] This reality of course has, in one way or another, to reflect a certitude so as not to allow adaptive praxis to turn into *pragmatism* which 'in all its forms', as René Guénon puts it, 'amounts to a complete indifference to truth'.[46]

Elegant and persuasive as Marx's thesis may be, his reduction of religious consciousness to a mere superstructural reflection is less than convincing. His emphasis on the social relations of production as the infrastructural determinant of human praxis overlooks the impact of revelation as a subjectively autonomous and causal domain of action. The neo-marxist Otto Maduro, arguing for a more complex understanding of religion and social change, criticises Marx's reductionist approach to faith.[47] Highlighting his fundamental break with classical Marxism, Maduro makes the following observations regarding the role of religion in society:

> 1: Religion is not a mere passive effect of the social relations of production; it is an active element of social dynamics, both conditioning and conditioned by social processes. 2: Religion is not always a subordinate element within social processes; it may often play an important part in the birth and consolidation of a particular social structure. 3: Religion is not necessarily a functional, reproductive or conservative factor in society; it often is one of the main (and sometimes the only) available channel to bring about a social revolution.[48]

Such observations offer significant help in understanding the dynamics of religious thought. The conventional Marxist premise that religion is a static force which can express itself only in the form of reactionary and antiprogressive impulses gives way before the undeniable reality of contemporary religious and social and political activism. Marx's contention that religion is the opium of the masses, far from being the dogma it used to be, has become the object of intense reinterpretative efforts at best, and at worst of intellectual embarrassment. One defence of Marx's statement claims that it is a 'sociological affirmation' bound by time and place rather than an ahistorical 'metaphysical assertion' about the essential nature of religion.[49]

The function of religion is to establish a sacred universe within which existential human experiences can be assessed with respect to a consecrated cosmic order. By its very nature it initiates a dialectical process in which religion as an external principle contributes to the creation of communal world views. At the same time it is conditioned and orientated by human social interactive interests and configurations. Insofar as religion continues to function as a conflictive element, it will acquire the ability to produce, reproduce and transform social relations, and hence to play a social role.[50] Despite modern reductionism, this role can never be negated in any practical sense. The position of the 'holy' or the 'sacred' in mundane human affairs

remains intrinsic and fundamental. It constitutes, as Weber indicates, the source of ultimate answers to the problem of meaning, and when these are internalised and institutionalised they play a causal role in determining human action. Religion, in other words, maintains a functional relation to the system of action at all times.[51]

Writing in the 1940s Kingsley Davis rejected the notion that secularisation would continue to the point where religion became totally nonexistent. In a far-sighted perception about religious regimes he poignantly stated that

> Secularization will likely be terminated by religious revivals of one sort or another. The precise nature of the revivals is impossible to predict. The details may resemble nothing we know now, but it is safe to assume that they will perform the same functions and have the same basic principles that have heretofore characterized all religion in all societies.[52]

These functions would involve the maintenance of equilibrium as the 'normal condition' of society where a change in any particular social variable produces change in other variables so as to maintain a uniform state.[53] Religious activities which in the process do not contribute to social harmony are perceived in this context as 'dysfunctional', 'anomalous and sociopathic'.[54] The functionalist school of thought, therefore, ignores the dynamic and potentially revolutionary role that religion can play in social processes.

The problem with such an approach is that it does not recognise that the symbolic components which converge at a particular historical conjuncture can have their own unique dynamics. In different societies at different times religious and structural processes combine or fuse in a variety of independent formations. The basic implication of this is that there is no unique or universal set of rules or functions that religion might *a priori* be predetermined to fulfil. Its social role or manifestation will instead largely depend on the historical and structural vicissitudes within the interplaying domains of social and religious impulses. That is to say, the social functions of religion can be determined only after the relevant socio-religious dynamic variables have been examined experimentally. After all, 'we are treating the particular social functions of a particular religious society, situated in space and time. This is something that can be established only *a posteriori* – after an empirical investigation of the phenomena we want to analyze.'[55] In other words a scientific study of religion requires a multifaceted empirical method that cannot be substituted or anticipated by theoretical constructs.[56]

The point to be made here is that religion *per se* does not perform a predetermined well-defined social role which lacks functional variability. Religious influences and roles instead can, and do, mutate, and their historical and structural metamorphosis is conditioned by the limits of time, space and social affiliations. In other words the social functions of any religion will largely depend on the objective social conditions of any particular society together with the position and internal circumstances of the religious sphere itself.[57]

An understanding of the interplay of these various factors is of basic importance for any theoretical framework of analytical or predictive powers. Reaching such an understanding will certainly involve a close scrutiny of different socio-religious variables such as the qualities of religious beliefs and practices, the cognitive framework of the culture, the social location of religion, and the internal structure of religious organisations and movements.[58] Within such a dynamic framework the religious field, as a terrain of mediation, can be examined as an agent of either social hegemony or oppositional autonomy, entangled in a conflictive social context.

The realisation of oppositional autonomy will be a direct function of *oppressed group consciousness, oppressed group organisation* and *oppressed group mobilisation.* A progressive polarisation of these distinct yet complementary levels of action, however, is unlikely to occur in the absence of the main dynamic instruments of religio-theoretical autonomy: innovation and mutation. Their impact will be all the more profound if they are capable of supplying a consumable product to an alienated, religiously mediated subordinate social group.

It becomes necessary therefore that those instruments, while attempting an anti-hegemonic breach with religious tradition, maintain a respectable measure of continuity with the past. This configurative fusion of continuity and change in the religious field constitutes the principal challenge to the realisation of an autonomous, religiously inspired revolutionary transformation. Tactical or strategic fusional errors may ultimately render innovation simply an adaptive change which may end up in sheer pragmatism, or, if the breach goes too far, in producing an incomprehensible and marginalised sectarian offshoot.[59]

A delicate balance therefore has to be struck between innovative change and authentic continuity so as to render possible, given a conducive social context, a dynamic and guided outburst of human emotions. Whatever the case may be, the practical manifestation of such a process will be in the form of a distinct orientation within the monopolistic religious field, or if not possible, a potentially schismatic movement of conflictive and divisive dimensions.

What made the clerical role so important in the Iranian revolutionary experience was the fact that they had come to constitute *organic intellectuals* who were spontaneously sought out by the subordinate classes to gather, systematise, express and respond to their aspirations. If enough space exists in the religious field to allow for the articulation of popular clamour against hegemony, or if the field itself is autonomous in creating theological innovation, a situation prone to the consummation of clerical revolutionary potential is produced. This situation remains particularly relevant in social regimes where all other avenues of protest against economic, political and cultural tyranny have been blocked by the state.[60] Subjective religious autonomy hence emerges as the most viable, if not the only, channel of opposition capable of leading to an objective manifestation of doctrinal and popular defiance.

To assert that religion at times plays an autonomous and independent role in the formation and structuring of social life is not however to attribute to it an absolute idiosyncracy. Religion at any time and in any place is a socially situated phenomenon which, notwithstanding its metaphysical qualities, has to be relevant to the contextual and environmental realities of its field of action.[61] Such relativeness remains an imperative if religion is to protect itself against the impotence of absolutism. What this means, in effect, is that the faithful who adhere to and practise a particular religion actually do so within the confines of a finite set of objective choices which militate against attaining absolute religious standards. Such choices are determined to a large extent by the social context and international pressures which allow for different degrees of religious impact and alternative policy implications and outcomes.[62]

The most fertile grounds therefore for religious formation are collectivities which are prone to express their concerns and beliefs in a transcendental and 'metasocial' form. Such collectivities or social groups tend to develop a 'religious interest' which purports to translate their religious world-view into a communicable representation of their milieu in a way that will permit them comfortably to act and socially situate themselves. 'Religious interest' is defined as

> that need present in some societies and some social groups, to situate and orientate themselves – and to act – in their natural environment and social milieu through the mediation of a view of this milieu that is referred – centrally or laterally, totally or partially – to metasocial and supernatural forces upon which the group feels dependent and before which it considers itself obliged to a certain conduct.[63]

This religious interest gives rise to an autonomous persuasion which drives its subjects to exert an effort to reconcile their natural and social environment with a transcendentally and subjectively perceived idea.

Both religious interest and the concomitant effort to bring an 'ideal' down to reality converge at a particular historical conjuncture to provide the necessary conditions conducive to setting in motion a process of religious production. This process reflects 'the effort motivated by religious interest to develop a world view that would permit the subjects of a particular religion to situate themselves, and act in the most satisfying manner possible in their natural and social environment'.[64] The process is usually initiated through the experience of a charismatic figure or group of figures who are capable of incarnating in themselves the hopes and aspirations of the religiously interested social group. All three factors (religious interest, social effort, and the charismatic leadership) constitute the necessary and sufficient conditions for the initiation of a relatively autonomous religiously inspired social process. They do not however determine whether the outcome of the process is to be successful or unsuccessful.

The Iranian Revolution: An Islamic Epistemology of Good and Evil

The challenging message of the Iranian revolution as an example of an antimodern and antiwestern phenomenon is that it provides new religious standards for moral references which are totally opposed to secular traditions of popular ethical judgments and conceptions of popular sovereignty. It thus constitutes a basic rejection of the western modern project in theory and praxis. The novelty of the situation was explicitly expressed in the astonished remark of a White House aid: 'The notion of a popular revolution leading to the establishment of a theocratic state seemed so unlikely as to be absurd. ... What was truly "unthinkable" ... was not the Shah's demise but the emergence of a clerical-dominated Islamic republic.'[65] This new republic attempted to reconstitute the organic relationship between morality and its objective environment through a process of religious reinterpretation and reconstruction of society. The ultimate project was to create a new religious field of action in which the faithful could express their religious interest in a manner consistent with the corresponding social and political reality. The Islamic militants had recognised that the essential field of hermeneutical investigation was not the relationship between doctrine and history but the nature of the bond between theory and social praxis, and that in order to be relevant the revolution had to be well grounded in its own socio-cultural milieu, notwithstanding its 'fidelity to original and traditional elements in religion'.[66] The religious militants in fact 'fortified an already vigorous religion with the ideological armor necessary for battle in the arena of mass politics.'[67]

The final outcome of the dialectical process in the religious sphere in Iran remains to be seen. The immediate goal of the fundamental transformations under way is to supply an adequate religious commodity relevant to an unsatisfied demand which is rendered acute by the crushing onslaught of modernity, and to mobilise increasingly

alienated social forces in order to embark on the transformation of the 'anomalous' structural components of the religious field. This has necessitated a basic change in the epistemological foundations of religion incorporating a far-reaching dialectical process of historical demythologisation.[68] The aim of this process is not to eliminate myths, but rather to interpret them in existentialist, anthropocentric contexts rather than simply in cosmological terms. The process has involved the destruction of old myths and the creation of new ones relevant to contemporary circumstances within the context of a well discerned and delineated 'epistemology of good and evil'.[69]

This epistemology produced by the discourse of the Islamic revolution has provoked a hostile attitude from secular and westernised scholars who have failed to see, beyond the revolutionary violence, the overall dynamics of a profound and historically unique process of social transformation.[70] With the outbreak of the Iranian revolution, conflict between secular and religious regimes became inevitable. The dimensions of this conflict were visible to John Stempel who observed that

> Historically, the most important consequence of the revolution may prove to be the rise of religion as a significant political factor. Blending theocratic ideology with power on a sustained basis offers an alternative revolutionary model to supplement Marxist and other paradigms. It is a way to replace the authority and legitimacy of a monarch or other secular leader with another kind of power based on a different justification. Tactically it accomplishes its aim without resorting to massive sustained violence. In this case the fundamentalists proved that even a powerful armed force can be destroyed from within. The most disturbing element about Ayatollah Khomeini's Islamic movement is not its doctrine but its effective mobilization of a diverse society into a political organization supporting a religious government. Clerical supremacy as asserted by Ayatollah Khomeini is an implied standing challenge to secular governments everywhere. If it continues to exist and prosper, a centuries-old Western trend of separation between church and state would be reversed.[71]

Free Thinkers: Discourse as Epistemology

Any attempt to analyse and understand the objective factors which ultimately created a revolutionary consciousness among the Iranians and succeeded in mobilising them must take account of the subjective idiosyncracies of this society. In many respects the Iranian revolution exhibits those structural features identified by scholars of social change as causal and determinate.[72] It is, however, the confluence of the subjective historical and cultural traits of the population and its clerical leadership which have shaped the revolution's religious impulse, and the praxis of the revolution has reflected it, precipitating what the Italian scholar G. Scarcia has described as 'a confluence between Shi'ism and the popular spirit, taking on the form of national consciousness'.[73]

Behind the structural causalities of the Iranian revolution lies as foundation an intellectual movement which has fused religion and politics in the crucible of revolutionary praxis. This movement combines Iranian Shiite idiosyncracies with the Islamic heritage in a reinterpreted context of futuristic immanency. While Ayatollah Khomeini provided the revolution with its praxis leadership, Ali Shariati provided it with its discourse. On the basis of his western sociological training Shariati paved the way for the emergence of a radical manifestation of Islamic revolutionary expression.

His theory and Ayatollah Khomeini's praxis therefore proceeded on parallel lines, to converge at a particular historical conjuncture when the former mobilised the intellectuals and the latter the masses. In this sense the theory and praxis of the Islamic revolution reflected what Hugo Assman has termed 'the epistemological privilege of the poor'[74] or *mustadafin* (the oppressed), to use Islamic terminology. This privilege attributes a more realistic view of the world to those who perceive it from below (the oppressed), as opposed to those who perceive it from above (the oppressors).

Both figures based their exhortations on a qualitatively and symbolically altered appeal to the cognitive standards of reference of their respective audience. Both were able to strike a sensitive chord in the subjective and objective make-up of the Iranian Islamic identity, which merged in an authentic cultural revival and doctrinal praxis. Their innovative contributions provided for the crystallisation of mass consciousness, organisation and mobilisation into a well-defined programme of religious and political action.

Underlying the philosophy and ideology of Shariati and Ayatollah Khomeini was a clear understanding of the major cultural principles governing social and human interaction in Iran in the realms of the sacred and the profane. These cultural principles, deeply rooted in the Iranian identity stucture, involve a dialectical relationship between the spiritual internal and materialistic external, reflected in a state of 'dynamic tension' within a cosmic equilibrium. Within this equilibrium, however, a balanced discrepancy between reality and the perceived ideal is maintained and tolerated.[75]

While a distinction between the internal and the external exists in many societies,[76] in the Iranian case it remains particularly important. According to Beeman, 'Iranian Shi'ism has been built up over the centuries on a base of native pre-Islamic (Zoroastrian) belief and flavoured with particularly Iranian aesthetic and philosophic doctrines.'[77] This complex belief system envisages a constant struggle between two diametrically opposed and polarised forces of good and evil. The internal represents the prized core of human spiritual perfection which strives to overcome the unsavoury external periphery. The constant tension between core and periphery, internal and external, esoteric (*batin*) and exoteric (*zahir*)[78] thus constitutes the teleological domain of human strife.

A mere discrepancy in this dialectical relationship, *per se*, need not necessarily be a source of disturbance or anxiety. After all, apart from the case of the chosen few (the prophets and the imams), perfection can only be sought, not attained. A condition of crisis can emerge, however; and this occurs not when perfection fails to be actualised but when the very process of striving for the ideal comes to a halt or goes into reverse. The internal/external distinction thus exists not only in the Shiite religious consciousness but

> in the political and historical consciousness of Iranians as well. The struggle between the pure core of Iranian civilization and the external forces that threaten to destroy it is one of the principal popular idealizations of Iranian history. ... In extreme situations of personal suffering or national need, the resources of this symbolic core can be marshalled for political action.[79]

Within this context it was possible for Shariati and Ayatollah Khomeini to present to the Iranian nation a religious framework which brought Islam to the forefront of subjective consciousness and objective political activism. Contrasts between good and evil as embodied in confrontation between Moses and Pharaoh,[80] Hussein and

Yazid,[81] Abel and Cain,[82] Ayatollah Khomeini and the shah, the oppressed and the oppressors, the righteous few and the Great Satan,[83] provided new meanings and definitions of identity and added a new focus of liberation to the symbolic cognitive core of the masses. Revolutionary mobilisation was therefore not only a product of the fervent exhortations of revolutionary leaders but also the result of the conjunctural cathartic function of the passion plays which reenacted and kept alive the memory of the martyrdom of Imam Hussein at Karbala. 'The climax in such plays', Akhavi tells us, 'is the Imam's martyrdom, but the triggering mechanism of martyrdom is the repeated question of participants: "May I be your Ransom?" In the Christian tradition, the sacrifice of one leads to the salvation of all. The Shi'i tradition requires that the sacrifice be borne equally.'[84]

The Karbala metaphor was thus manipulated in order to unify disparate social groups into one mass movement; its popular meaning also altered. The Karbala passion changed from a passive act of mourning for Hussein and anticipation of the return of the Twelfth Imam into an active demonstration of opposition to and defiance of tyranny. The Islamic revolution thus constituted a 'social drama' or a 'successful passion play' with distinctive Iranian and Shiite characteristics:[85] injustice inflicted in the past was at the present moment uniquely rectifiable in the context of the revolutionary discourse articulated by Shariati and consummated by Ayatollah Khomeini.

Shariati's thinking was based on an analytical distinction between two alternative types of Islam: a static Islam characteristic of the oppressors and a dynamic, liberating Islam committed to the oppressed. It is the duty of what he calls the 'free thinker', who is conscious of his own human condition and the condition of his society and of the period in which he lives,[86] to reveal, on the basis of his own strong convictions rather than any imported ideologies, the sometimes subtle difference between the two. In fact, as Shariati indicated, if Muslims seem to be oppressed everywhere despite their commitment to Islam, this should not be a cause to doubt the faith, but only the understanding of this faith. 'If we are Muslims, if we are Shi'ites,' he states,

> and believe in the Islamic and Shi'i precepts, and yet those precepts have had no positive results upon our lives, it is obvious that we have to doubt our understanding of them. For we all believe that it is not possible for a nation to be Muslim, to believe in Ali and his way, and yet to gain no benefit from such a belief.[87]

The foundation of a true understanding of the faith is to be able to distinguish between the Islam of Abu Zarr, the ascetic companion of Prophet Muhammed (570-632 AD), and that of the Ummayyad kings. Both are brands of Islam, yet their implications are inherently antithetical.[88] It is only in the former type of Islam that Islamic concepts such as *umma, imam, adl* (justice), *shahadat* (martyrdom), *hijra* (migration), *intizar* (awaiting) and *tawhid* (unity of God) can bear dynamic underpinnings. It is when these concepts acquire a transformatory meaning that Islam can become a praxis-orientated religion.

How then was this to be achieved? Shariati suggested a method which he believed that the Prophet had adopted in conveying his revolutionary social and spiritual message to the pagans of Arabia. Conservatives cling to the past, revolutionaries break with it, and reformists seek gradual change over time. The Prophet's method, by contrast, was to preserve the form of a custom while transforming its meaning.

'The Prophet', states Shariati,

> preserves the form, the container of a custom which has deep roots in society, one which people have gotten used to from generation to generation, one which is practised in a natural manner, but he changes the contained, the contents, spirit, direction and practical application of this custom in a revolutionary, decisive and immediate manner.[89]

For an example of this method Shariati referred to the *haj* or pilgrimage. Through revelation the Prophet was ordered to maintain the ritualistic form of the haj as it had been practised by the idol-worshippers, and yet fundamentally to change its focus of reverence towards 'the unity of God [and] the oneness of mankind'.[90] In so doing the Prophet in effect initiated a qualitative, revolutionary leap which transformed the haj into a ritual that is 'completely contrary to and opposite of its original use' without challenging the cognitive framework of his audience. What was involved here was a 'shift in consciousness' which facilitated the internalisation of the new message without inflicting upon its subjects the 'anguish of having to dispense with historically rooted and emotionally valued traditions and rituals'.[91] It was in fact a shift in consciousness which impressed upon the Arabs the 'revival and ... cleansing of their eternal customs'.[92]

Shariati believed that by adopting this method 'one can reach revolutionary goals without forcibly bearing all the [consequences] of a revolution and without opposing the basis of faith and ancient social values'.[93] He pointed out, for example, a new symbolic understanding of the ritual of haj which went beyond its significance as a mere religious observance and imbued it with social and political content. The stoning of the three idols which is part of the haj rituals symbolised for Shariati a condemnation of the three tyrannies of oppression, ignorance and hypocrisy which stood against the attainment of true faith, or tawhid. The stoning in effect constituted a 'revolutionary act' which revealed to mankind 'the clear horizon and free way to migration to eternity toward the all mighty Allah'.[94] To migrate toward Allah one has to rebel against tyranny as Abraham did – even at the expense of being thrown into fire. Those who follow Abraham's footsteps and willingly accept being thrown into 'fire' shall by no means be burned to ashes, but instead 'Allah will make [for them] a rose garden from the fire of Nimrods.'[95] There is no place here for a withdrawal into a monkish life in isolation from human concerns. Self-centeredness is the only outcome of such a withdrawal, which by its nature is antithetical to real faith. Only through exercising generosity, kindness and devotion to the community (umma) can one attain self-realisation. The ultimate manifestation of devotion is the willingness to sacrifice one's life on the path of God; this is, by becoming a '*shahid*' (martyr). '*Shahadat*' (martyrdom) is being present, alive, palpable and visible. A shahid is an everlasting witness and visitor; he exemplifies an eternal being.[96] Self-realisation also involves the knowledge that 'guidance', 'self-consciousness', 'deliverance' and 'salvation' can be attained only through the praxis of '*jihad*'.[97] This is the knowledge that

> ... the way of righteousness, the road toward Allah may never be approached without practising devotion, self-denial, transpersonal generosity, captivity, torture, exile, pain, endless danger, even the firing squad. This is how one may walk with the people and step in the direction to approach Allah.[98]

The archetypal shahid was of course Imam Hussein, who was not merely a historical figure but represents humanity's eternal struggle for liberation, salvation

and perfection. He is the symbol of the fight against tyranny and corruption everywhere and at any time. He set the standards of revolutionary praxis where 'only blood could distinguish the boundary between truth and falsehood', irrespective of the end result. As a matter of fact

> ... whenever and wherever a liberated person has refused to submit to despotism and its attempts for distorting supreme values, and has preferred death to a dehumanized purposeless existence under a monstrous regime and inhuman social system, it is a response to Hussein's call. Wherever there is struggle for liberation, Hussein is present on the battlefield.[99]

Shahadat thus becomes a matter of choice rather than an imposed necessity, for Hussein could have avoided it had he wanted to. It becomes in fact the harbinger of revolutionary liberation and the cornerstone of a sublimated forthcoming order. Through it 'Islam ... would spearhead the revolution for creating a new transformation in history to fulfill the Quranic promise that the *mostad'afin* would inherent the earth'.[100]

Human strife therefore constitutes a perpetual dynamic and dialectical flux between the divinely spiritual and the profanely material in man. This flux is reflected in the constant altercation between his base component (clay) and his sublimated spirituality (soul) which strives for perfection and transcendence. His objective history is that of the conflict between Abel and Cain from which all historical contradictions inherent in the opposing forces of tawhid and *shirk* (idolatry) emerge.[101] Shirk represents the evil forces of Cain (injustice, tyranny, oppression) which seek to destroy the liberating message of Abel. In the modern context this conflict takes the form of a constant struggle between Islam on the one hand and the tyrannical regimes and their imperialist supporters on the other. It expresses a conscious and cognisant commitment to a liberative praxis which pits faith against capitalist exploitation and Marxist atheistic materialism.[102]

A constant evolution towards liberative perfection renders intizar, or the quietistic awaiting of the Imam, a dynamic concept. Man's 'obligatory' pursuit of truth can after all never be a substitute for the role of the Imam as the realisation of this ideal. Intizar thus becomes a religion of protest and absolute denial of the status quo.

> *Intizar* not only does not negate man's responsibility, but indeed it makes his responsibility for his own course, the course of truth, the course of mankind, heavy, immediate, logical, and vital. The religion of *intizar*, which is a 'positive philosophy of history', a historical determinism ... is ultimately a philosophy of protest against the status quo.[103]

In other words, man is responsible for his secular salvation inasmuch as he is responsible for his transcendental deliverance. Both are distinct yet harmonious components of the divine will of tawhid. A Muslim's progressive evolution towards higher moral perfection is after all contingent on his social consciousness and praxis within the Islamic plan of salvation.[104]

Revolutionary praxis within the Karbala and shahadat metaphors is neither utilitarian nor goal-oriented. It is an intrinsic value in and of itself: 'anyone believing in the liberating spirit of truth had to put up a fight against falsehood, even if that meant sure death for oneself.'[105] Legitimate revolutionary violence is thus a struggle for power not as a goal in itself but as a means of establishing an Islamic moral order. Power in this case is not the *outcome* of a triumphant strife but the *actual* praxis of

strife itself. In May 1984, for example, Ayatollah Khomeini exhorted non-Iranian *ulama* to 'speak out'. 'Do not wait until you attain power so that you can speak', he declared. 'Speak and then you will have attained power.'[106] The same sentiments were expressed by Shariati in a speech on Imam Hussein:

> The great teacher of martyrdom has risen to teach a lesson to those who believe that struggle against dictatorship should be waged only when victory is possible, and to those who have despaired or have compromised with the Establishment, or have become indifferent to their environment. Hosein teaches that *shahadat* is a *choice* through which a *mujahid*, by sacrificing himself on the altar of the temple of freedom and love, is irrevocably victorious. Hosein has come to teach the Children of Adam how to die. He declares that people who submit themselves to all forms of humiliations, injustice and oppression just to live a little longer are destined to die a 'black death'. Those who lack the courage to choose martyrdom, death will choose them.[107]

For Shariati the blood of the shahid is the most important element in historical dynamics. Shahadat is the act of supreme sacrifice which maintains evolutionary purification and sublimates revolutionary consciousness. It is the engine of social protest which crushes all obstacles, and the pulsating heart that throbs with life.

> Just as the heart injects life in the body by pumping blood through its dry veins, so the *shaheed* is the heart that transmits his blood and gives life to the dried-up and dying body of the society – a society where people have submitted to false values, coercion, and oppression so as to survive a little longer and are content with sheer physical survival.

Shahadat is thus 'an invitation to all generations and for all times that if you can, then kill the oppressor, and if you can't then die'.[108]

The influence of these ideas on the praxis of the Iranian revolution can hardly be exaggerated. The willingness of the masses to die can hardly be matched in any other similar upheaval in contemporary history. The 'cult of martyrdom' in effect became the symbol of the wrath of the revolution and the crucible of an emotional outburst which had been suppressed for close to fourteen hundred years. Martyrdom in the Iranian context was not just an interpretation of jihad but a step beyond it. It was not the mere acceptance of death but the actual choice of it. It constituted an act of supreme negation of utilitarianism and materialism and the paramount affirmation of spiritual purification. It was the vindication for the 'guilt complex' among those who fell short of the standards of Karbala. Here was a chance offered to them to salvage their spiritual defeat in the most sublime and transcendental way. Here was the battle of Hussein and Yazid reenacted between Ayatollah Khomeini and the shah. Here was the chance to relive Karbala, and better yet to win.

Shariati's contribution to the revolutionising of Islam was of pivotal importance in raising the consciousness of the masses – especially the students – towards expressing their protest in Islamic terms. His acceptance of historical dialectics, however, meant that, directly or indirectly, Islam became an instrument of these dialectics, and therefore a component subservient to them. Shariati presented to his audience a *revolutionary Islam*, yet the clergy, led by Ayatollah Khomeini, wanted an *Islamic revolution*. What the latter sought was a revolution that served the purposes and values of Islam, and not a religion that served the purposes of revolution. While recognising that Islam certainly envisaged struggle as a legitimate instrumental praxis of faith, they did not see internal conflict – an intrinsic component of dialectics – as an

inevitable or desirable end. On the contrary, while recognising dialectical contradictions in and with other non-Islamic societies, they offered Islam as the alternative solution to this dilemma.[109]

The Islamic revoution was a phenomenon of religious consumption that took place as a result of the convergence of an unsatisfied religious demand with a satisfactory supply of religious production. This religious production involved a fundamental shift in paradigm from the conventional 'national modernisation' model to a model basically concerned with the 'moral purification of a corrupt society'.[110] The shift was fundamental: religion was not concerned simply with criticising the mode of modernisation or its shortcomings and failures, but instead perceived the whole undertaking as undesirable from the start. Ayatollah Khomeini articulated the position of his Islamic Government thus:

> Let them [the West] go all the way to Mars or beyond the Milky Way; they will still be deprived of true happiness, moral virtue, and spiritual advancement and be unable to solve their own social problems. For the solution of social problems and the relief of human misery require foundations in faith and morals; merely acquiring material power and wealth, conquering nature and space, have no effect in this regard. This conviction, this morality, these laws that are needed, we already possess.[111]

Ayatollah Khomeini's success as a revolutionary leader was therefore largely due to his ability to secure a considerable degree of solidarity among the clergy and to rally the traditional loyalties of the masses by highlighting the revolutionary elements of Twelver Shiism in a subtle manner that did not openly contradict classical or traditional thought. Above all, he was able to fuse the elements of divine law, Islamic government and just order into one image of an 'ideal utopian apocalyptic world' that transcended the corrupt and unrighteous mundane order.[112] In this context, power, means and ends were not to be measured or judged by the general critical standards of secular relativism, but by the absolute standards of revelation, which brings into existence the structures that are required to reflect the harmonious relationship between man and God and their unity of purpose. Islam holds that man is primordially good, but through his erring may choose to be corrupted. Unjust social structures are thus simply the outcome of man's erring choice and not of necessity or divine ordination. From a theological perspective, religious absolutism exercises vigilance over secular relativism and it is the former, therefore, that sets the epistemological criteria of judgment. What determines an Islamic society, then, is not its position on the left-right political spectrum but its own standards of social, economic and political justice, and the types of structures which lead to and/or reflect such standards.

The introduction of this metaphysical component into politics transformed Iranian political practice, as distinct from that of other nations, supplementing a two-dimensional plane of worldy secular concern with a third dimension of metaphysical continuity. Within this religio-political domain, Islamic politics represented 'a new kind of preoccupation with the self, a search for an original identity that only in a completely untainted form is deemed capable of unlocking the true source of social well-being.' 'In this search', as Afsaneh Najmabaki points out, 'lies the otherwordliness of Iranian politics today and its virtual incomprehensibility to all those not caught up in the new paradigm.'[113] This new paradigm expresses its innermost specificity in its perception of the dialectical relationship between the Islamic East and the materialist West.

Conclusion

I have been trying to reach a more profound understanding of the relationship between religion and social change by identifying a new perspective for observing the dynamic interaction between two processes inherent in man's social existence. I have also been trying to delineate the discursive/structural and religious factors which, inseparably from each other, have contributed to polarisation within society and to a new dynamism in internal religious logic. Interplay between *ideas* and *structures* and resultant *action* have provided the basis for a paradigmatic shift in modern conceptions of the role of religion: from the idea that religion is obsolescent to an understanding that religious dynamics play a principal and formative role in the structuring of social reality.

The implications of this shift for the discipline of social science in general and for the field of political science in particular are dramatic. The introduction of a religious dimension in modern politics has transformed our understanding of human means and ends in a way that has called into question the basic modern premises of rationality and cause–effect relationships. The basic assumptions of unilinear secular progression and development to which modern political literature is so attached have been strikingly challenged. Jerrold Green has come to the following conclusion.

> Characterizations of the Iranian Revolution in the West are incorrect and lack understanding, failing to recognize the fundamental role of religion as the source of strength and sustenance for adherents of innumerable faiths over countless centuries in all corners of the world. Such commitments are especially salient aspects of the modernization process, with religion serving as a particularly effective refuge from the more dehumanizing and anomic aspects of dramatic and rapid social change. Moreover, in light of the absence of conventional participatory mechanisms, formalized religious organizations can, and in the view of some religious leaders, should serve as vehicles for improving the quality of life for their adherents. Those disturbed by such religio-political movements must ask themselves: Are religions any more troubled than the societies that house them? In religiously homogeneous societies, religious-based political activity can serve as an accurate reflection of wider social needs while at the same time leading to dramatic political consequences.[114]

For the above reasons among others, an increasing number of western scholars have come to recognise their failure – so far – to explore new horizons or examine other options.[115] In all probability an alternative method will have to overcome the shortcomings of reductionism and relativism in favour of a holistic approach towards the various dimensions of human existence. It has, after all, proven next to impossible to understand human nature without taking its spiritual constituent into account, or by reducing its dimensionality to the merely quantitative indices of economic and material progression. Perhaps a vital key to a deeper understanding of human nature lies in revelation rather than in the artificially created and fallible assumptions of human reasoning.

Notes and References

[1] A distinction should be made between 'modernisation' and 'modernity'. Reinhard Bendix for example has argued that 'many attributes of modernisation, like widespread literacy or modern medicine, have appeared, or have been adopted, in isolation from other attributes of

modern society. Hence, modernisation in some sphere of life may occur without resulting in "modernity".' See his 'Tradition and modernity reconsidered', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, April 1967, p. 329.

[2] David Kolb, *The Critique of Pure Modernity* (The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1986), p. xii.

[3] Edward Shils, *Tradition* (Faber & Faber, London, 1981), pp. 288–90.

[4] Quoted in Alexander S. Kohanski, *Philosophy and Technology* (Philosophical Library, New York, 1977), p. xii.

[5] Lewis Mumford, 'The automation of knowledge', in Philip L. Bereano (ed.), *Technology as a Social and Political Phenomenon* (John Wiley, New York, 1976), p. 29.

[6] Jürgen Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action*, vol. 2, translated by Thomas McCarthy (Beacon Press, Boston, 1989), p. 331.

[7] Jürgen Habermas, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity* (MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, 1987), p. 86.

[8] Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action*, p. 353.

[9] Habermas, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, p. 86.

[10] Kohanski, *op. cit.*, pp. 178–79.

[11] Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action*, p. 351.

[12] Mumford, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

[13] Jacques Ellul, 'The technological society', in Albert H. Teich (ed.), *Technology and Man's Future* (St. Martin's Press, New York, 1972), p. 88.

[14] Manfred Stanley, 'Technology and its critics', in Bereano, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

[15] *ibid.*, p. 24.

[16] H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills, *From Max Weber* (Oxford University Press, New York, 1958), pp. 71–2.

[17] Celso Furtado, *Development and Underdevelopment*, translated by Ricardo W. De Aguiar and Eric Charles Drysdale (University of California Press, Berkeley, 1967), p. 142.

[18] Robert Wuthnow, 'Understanding religion and politics', *Daedalus*, vol. 120, no. 3, Summer 1991, p. 14.

[19] See for example the profound work by Hasan Hanafi, *Muqaddimah fi Ilm al-Istighrab* (*An Introduction to Occidentalism*) (Al-Dar al-Fanniyyah, Cairo, 1991).

[20] Howard Wiarda, 'Toward a nonethnocentric theory of development: alternative conceptions from the Third World,' in Howard Wiarda (ed.), *New Directions in Comparative Politics* (Westview Press, Boulder, 1985), p. 134.

[21] For an exposé of such a revisionist position see for example Vicky Randall and Robin Theobold, *Political Change and Underdevelopment* (Macmillan, London, 1985).

[22] Otto Maduro, *Religion and Social Conflict*, translated by Robert R. Barr (Orbis Books, Maryknoll, New York, 1982), p. 27. See also T. Howland Sanks and Brian H. Smith, 'Liberation ecclesiology: praxis, theory, praxis', *Theological Studies*, no. 38, 1977, pp. 3–38.

[23] See Henri de Saint Simon, *Social Organization, The Science of Man and Other Writings*, translated by Felix Markham (Harper and Row, New York, 1964); Auguste Comte, *A General View of Positivism* (Robert Speller & Sons, New York, 1957); Herbert Spencer, *The Study of Sociology* (University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, 1961); Ludwig Feuerbach, *The Essence of Christianity*, translated by George Eliot (Harper and Row, New York, 1957); Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *On Religion* (Schocken, New York, 1964).

[24] Daniel H. Levine, 'Religion and politics in comparative historical perspective', *Comparative Politics*, vol. 19, October 1986, p. 99.

[25] *ibid.*, p. 119. See also Daniel Levine, *Religion and Politics in Latin America* (Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1981).

[26] Levine, '*Religion and politics ...*', p. 119.

[27] Asghar Ali Engineer, *The Islamic State* (Vikas Publishing House PVT Ltd, Delhi, 1980), p. 25.

[28] Levine, *Religion and Politics in Latin America*, pp. 120–21.

[29] See for example Richard Appelbaum, *Theories of Social Change* (Markham Publishing

Company, Chicago, 1970); Cyril E. Black, *The Dynamics of Modernization* (Harper & Row Publishers, New York, 1966); Jason Finkle and Richard Gable (eds.), *Political Development and Social Change* (John Wiley, New York, 1963); Samuel Huntington, *Political Order and Changing Societies* (Yale University Press, New Haven, 1968); Myron Weiner (ed.), *Modernization: The Dynamics of Growth* (Basic Books, New York, 1966). In this literature by scholars of social change the religious factor as an influencing positive variable has been almost totally ignored.

[30] Maduro, *Religion and Social Conflicts*, p. 152, footnote 48.

[31] *ibid.*, p. 141.

[32] Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, translated by Talcott Parsons (Scribner's Sons, New York, 1958).

[33] Gerth and Mills, *op. cit.*, p. 280.

[34] For a critique of Weber's thesis see R. H. Tawney, *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism* (Peter Smith, Gloucester, MA, 1962); Winthrop S. Hudson, 'Puritanism and the spirit of capitalism', *Church History*, vol. 15, no. 1, 1949; and Richard L. Means, 'Protestantism and economic institutions: auxiliary theories to Weber's Protestant ethic', *Social Forces*, no. 44, March 1996, pp. 372–81. An excellent critique by Kurt Samuelson suggests that the emergence of the protestant ethic may have been due to the rise of capitalism rather than vice versa. See his *Religion and Economic Action: A Critique of Max Weber* (Harper Torchbooks, 1964).

[35] Weber, *op. cit.*, p. 91. For a compromise position between Weber and his critics see N. J. Demerath III and Phillip E. Hammond, *Religion in Social Context* (Random House, New York, 1969), pp. 104–5. They propose that 'instead of arguing that Protestantism helped pave the way for capitalism by spinning out a legitimating ethic of its own, it may be more accurate to indicate that Protestantism was crucial in simply breaking the yoke of traditional Catholic dominance allowing for the autonomous evolution of alternative forms of political and economic production of which capitalism was one manifestation.'

[36] Since several modes of production can be available and possible at any one historical stage, human will inevitably plays a role in choosing among the different alternatives. Of course the choice will be influenced and conditioned by the objective and concrete social circumstances determined by the consensual (voluntary or coercive) arrangement of available material resources. See Maduro, *Religion and Social Conflicts*, p. 45.

[37] *ibid.*, pp. 45–46.

[38] *ibid.*, pp. 87–88, p. 154 footnote 90.

[39] *ibid.*, pp. 83, 87–88.

[40] Although the interaction between the social context and the religio-political/secular movements may be either conflictive or harmonious, this study will henceforth apply the model to conflictive social settings.

[41] Thermidor – the name of the month in the French revolutionary calendar in which Robespierre was ousted from power and eventually executed – refers to the return of society to its normal conditions of institutional functioning. See Crane Brinton, *Anatomy of Revolution* (Vintage Books, New York, 1959).

[42] Characterising a regime as conservative on the national level does not necessarily imply anything about the foreign policy of that particular regime. A politically conservative system may promote and support revolutionary movements in other parts of the world. It is therefore not inconsistent to adopt a pro-status-quo national policy while encouraging anti-status-quo movements abroad. See Michael Oakeshott, 'On being conservative', *Rationalism in Politics and Other Essays* (Methuen, London, 1962), pp. 168–96.

[43] Epistemology aims 'to clarify the origin, structure, and methods of knowledge formation and, most importantly, to construct ideal standards of objectivity and ideal criteria of validation which can guide investigators as they seek to test their knowledge claims.' William E. Connolly, *Practical Science and Ideology* (Atherton Press, New York, 1967), pp. 69–70.

[44] Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, in C. J. Arthur (ed.), *The German Ideology* (International Publishers, New York, 1981), p. 121. This work laid the foundation for the Marxist para-

digm that religion was simply a superstructural component of the economic substructure. In his sixth thesis on Feuerbach, for example, Marx stated that 'human essence', of which religion is an intrinsic subjective component, was in reality 'the ensemble of the social relations' (p. 122). In contrast Weber perceived religion as a potential determinant of social relations: see his *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism.* It is worthy of note, however, that Engels, recognising the problems associated with religious reductionism, in his later works admitted a positive and autonomous role for religion: see his *The Peasant War in Germany* (Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, 1956).

[45] Jürgen Moltmann, *Theology of Hope*, translated by James W. Leitch (Harper and Row, New York, 1967), p. 18.

[46] René Guénon, *The Crisis of the Modern World* (Luzac and Company Ltd, London, 1962), p. 85. Compare Guénon's statement with, for example, that of Father Vekemans of Chile, who believed that a 'cultural mutation' is required in order to achieve development, and that the new developmental ideology should incorporate 'all the virtues of Anglo-Saxon pragmatism'. Balancing between pragmatism and ideology remains however a very arduous task. See Roger E. Vekemans, S. J., 'Economic development, social change and cultural mutation in Latin America', in William V. D'Antonio and Fredrick B. Pike (eds), *Religion, Revolution, and Reform* (Praeger, New York, 1964), pp. 127–42.

[47] Otto Maduro, 'New Marxist approaches to the relative autonomy of religion', *Sociological Analysis*, vol. 38, no. 4, 1977.

[48] *ibid.*, p. 366.

[49] Maduro, *Religion and Social Conflicts*, p. xx.

[50] *ibid.*, pp. 116, 118.

[51] Talcott Parsons, *Essays in Sociological Theory* (revised edition) (Collin–Macmillan Ltd., London, 1954), pp. 208–9.

[52] Kingsley Davis, *Human Society* (Macmillan, New York, 1961), pp. 544–5.

[53] The functional role of religion has been studied under the strong influence of the functionalist school. Among its pioneers see: Talcott Parsons, *The Social System* (Free Press, Glencoe, Illinois, 1951); Robert K. Morton, *Social Theory and Social Structures* (rev. ed.) (Free Press, Glencoe, Illinois, 1957); Bronislaw Malinowski, *Magic, Science and Religion and Other Essays* (Doubleday, New York, 1954).

[54] Maduro, *Religion and Social Conflicts*, p. 118.

[55] *ibid.*, pp. 119–20; emphasis in quotation.

[56] *ibid.*, p. 366.

[57] *ibid.*, p. 120.

[58] Meredith B. McGuire, *Religion: The Social Context* (Wadsworth, Belmont, California, 1981), pp. 197–203.

[59] Maduro, *Religion and Social Conflicts*, pp. 137–42.

[60] *ibid.*, pp. 143–4.

[61] François Houtart defines the 'religious field' as 'that portion of social space constituted by the complexus of religious institutions and agents in [their] interrelationship', Maduro, *Religion and Social Conflicts*, pp. 151, 86–7.

[62] *ibid.*, p. 43.

[63] *loc. cit.*

[64] Maduro, *Religion and Social Conflicts*, p. 82.

[65] See Said Amir Arjomand, *The Turban for the Crown* (Oxford University Press, New York, 1988), p. 3.

[66] Alfredo Fierro, *The Militant Gospel* (Orbis Books, Maryknoll, New York, 1977), p. 121.

[67] Arjomand, *op. cit.*, p. 210.

[68] According to Bultmann, demythologising refers to the 'method of interpretation ... which tries to recover the deeper meaning behind the mythological conceptions'. See Rudolf Bultmann, *Jesus Christ and Mythology* (Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1958), p. 13. He defines mythology as a 'mode of representation in consequence of which cult is understood as action in which non-material forces are mediated by material means'. See

Bultmann's *New Testament and Mythology* (Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1984), p. 42.

[69] Luciano Pellicani, *Gramsci* (Hoover Institution Press, California, 1981), p. 41.

[70] See for example Mansour Farhang, 'Revolution and regression in Iran', *Comparative Politics*, 1985–86, pp. 260–2.

[71] John Stempel, *Inside the Iranian Revolution* (Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1981), p. 311.

[72] For an examination of the factors which contribute to or hinder the success of a revolutionary process of social change see Harry Eckstein, 'On the etiology of war', in George Kelly and Clifford Brown Jr (eds), *Struggles in the State* (John Wiley, New York, 1970), pp. 171–95. For the objective factors which contribute to the process of social change see Chalmers Johnson, *Revolutionary Change* (University of London Press, London, 1968); Barrington Moore Jr, *The Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy* (Beacon Press, Boston, 1967); Mancur Olson, 'Rapid growth as a destabilizing force', in Jason Finkle and Richard Gable (eds), *Political Development and Social Change* (John Wiley, New York, 1971); Karl Deutsch, 'Social mobilization and political development', in Finkle and Gable, *op. cit.*; Ted Gurr, *Why Men Rebel* (Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1971). The above-mentioned works deal mostly with structural causes of change. For a study that introduces a subjective psychological element together with an economic interpretation see James Davis, 'Towards a theory of revolution', in Kelly and Brown, *op. cit.*, pp. 148–67.

[73] Hamid Algar, *Religion and State in Iran, 1785–1906* (University of California Press, Berkeley, 1969).

[74] Robert McAffee Brown, *Theology in a New Key* (The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1978), p. 61.

[75] William O. Beeman, 'Patterns of religion and economic development in Iran from the Qajar era to the Islamic Revolution of 1978–79', in James Finn (ed.), *Global Economics and Religion* (Transaction Books, London, 1983), pp. 74–5.

[76] See for example Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (Basic Books, New York, 1973).

[77] Beeman, *op. cit.*, p. 74.

[78] According to Shiism 'the Quran contained crude religious notions for the masses (exoteric), and at the same time had deliberate obscurities and ambiguities which would lead the philosophically minded to contemplate and to achieve a true rational understanding of religion (esoteric)'. See Nikkie Keddie, 'Symbol and sincerity in Islam', *Studia Islamica*, no. 19, 1963, p. 53.

[79] Beeman, *op. cit.*, p. 76; see also William O. Beeman, 'Images of the Great Satan: symbolic representations of the U.S. in the Iranian Revolution', in Nikkie Keddie (ed.), *Religion and Politics in Iran* (Yale University Press, New Haven, 1983), pp. 191–217.

[80] One of the revolutionary posters for example depicted Ayatollah Khomeini defeating a defunct Shah and on it was inscribed 'For every Pharaoh there is a Moses'. See the paperback cover of Michael M. J. Fischer, *Iran: From Religious Dispute to Revolution* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1980).

[81] Imam Hussein was the grandson of the prophet Muhammed and the third imam for Shiite Muslims. He was killed at Karbala in Iraq with many of his family and companions by the Ummayyad army of King Yazid in 680 A.D.

[82] Ali Shari'ati, *On the Sociology of Islam*, translated by Hamid Algar (Mizan Press, Berkeley, 1979), PP. 97–110.

[83] See Beeman, 'Images of the Great Satan', pp. 191–217. Ayatollah Khomeini's usage of the term 'satanic' underscores the extent of the contradictory relationship between the two polar groups, and is to be understood as a reference to any condition that subverts the natural harmony between man and God. In the same vein as René Guénon, he used this term independently of any personalised idea that conformed with some theological outlook. As Guénon puts it: 'What has to be taken into account is, on the one hand, the spirit of negation and of subversion into which "Satan" is resolved metaphysically, whatever may be the

special forms that may be assumed by that spirit in order to be manifested in one domain or another, and, on the other hand, the thing that can properly be held to represent it and so to speak "incarnate" it in the terrestrial world in which its action is being studied ...'. René Guénon, *The Reign of Quantity* (Luzac, London, 1953), p. 291.

[84] Shahrough Akhavi, 'The ideology and praxis of Shi'ism in the Iranian Revolution', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, vol. 25, no. 2, April 1983, pp. 195–221, here p. 208.

[85] Michael M. J. Fischer, *Iran: From Religious Dispute to Revolution* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1986), pp. 74–83.

[86] Shariati makes a distinction here between an intellectual and a free thinker. To him every free thinker is an intellectual but not every intellectual is a free thinker; the intellectual at times being merely one who does mental work without necessarily being conscious of his society's culture or needs. See Ali Shari'ati, *From Where Shall We Begin*, translated by Fatollah Marjani (Free Islamic Literature, Houston, 1980), p. 8.

[87] Mangol Bayat-Phillip, 'Shi'ism in contemporary Iranian politics: the case of Ali Shari'ati', in Elie Kedourie and Sylvia G. Haim, *Towards a Modern Iran* (Frank Cass, London, 1980), p. 156.

[88] Asaf Hussain, *Islamic Iran* (Frances Pinter, London, 1985), pp. 79–80.

[89] Ali Shari'ati, *Fatima is Fatima*, translated by Laleh Bakhtiar (Shariati Foundation, Tehran, 1980), p. 65.

[90] *ibid.*, p. 66.

[91] Suroosh Irfani, *Revolutionary Islam in Iran* (Zed Books, London, 1983), p. 122.

[92] Shari'ati, *Fatima is Fatima*, p. 66.

[93] *ibid.*, p. 67.

[94] Ali Shari'ati, *Hajj*, translated by Somayyah and Yasser (Free Islamic Literatures, Ohio, 1978), p. 1.

[95] *ibid.*, p. 36.

[96] *ibid.*, pp. 28–29.

[97] *ibid.*, p. 62.

[98] Irfani, *op. cit.*, p. 123.

[99] *ibid.*, pp. 131–2.

[100] *ibid.*, p. 132.

[101] Shari'ati, *On the Sociology of Islam*, pp. 97–8.

[102] See Ali Shari'ati, *Marxism and Other Western Fallacies* (Mizan Press, Berkeley, 1980).

[103] Shahrough Akhavi, *Religion and Politics in Contemporary Iran* (State University of New York Press, Albany, 1980), p. 155.

[104] For a philosophical and religious perspective on the Islamic conception of the perfect man see Shaheed Ayatollah Motahhari's discourse in *Kayhan International*, 20 May 1989.

[105] Irfani, *op. cit.*, p. 131.

[106] *Kayhan International*, 10 June 1989, p. 6.

[107] Irfani, *op. cit.*, p. 133.

[108] *loc. cit.*

[109] On the differences between the two perspectives see Mortaza Motahhari, 'The nature of the Islamic Revolution', in Haleh Afshar, *Iran: A Revolution in Turmoil* (Macmillan, London, 1985), pp. 201–19.

[110] Afsaneh Najmabadi, 'Iran's turn to Islam: from modernism to a moral order', *The Middle East Journal*, vol. 41, no. 2, Spring 1987, p. 203.

[111] Imam Khomeini, *Islam and Revolution*, translated by Hamid Algar (KPI, London, 1985), p. 36.

[112] Norman Calder, 'Accommodation and revolution in Imami Shi'i jurisprudence: Ayatollah Khomayni and the classical tradition', *Middle Eastern Studies*, vol. 18, no. 1, January 1982, pp. 17–8.

[113] Najmabadi, *op. cit.*, p. 204.

[114] Jerrold D. Green, *Revolution in Iran* (Praeger Publishers, New York, 1982), p. 150.

[115] Howard Wiarda (ed.), *New Directions in Comparative Politics* (Westview Press, Boulder, 1985), p. xi.