IN THIS ISSUE

ROOTS OF REVOLUTION IN QUR’AN

BY:

PROF. MUDDATHIR ABDAL-RAHIM

ISSUE-No. 3  RAJAB 1407 APRIL 1987
PRINTED BY

* AL-ASAALAH *

P.O.Box 3004 KHARTOUM SUDAN
CHIEF EDITOR
PROF. MUDDATHIR ABD AL-RAHIM
EDITORIAL SECRETARY
ABD AL-RAHMAN AHMAD UTHMAN
EDITORIAL BOARD

PROF. ABBAS AL-JARRARY
PROF. ALI MAZRUI
PROF. MAHDI ADAMU
PROF. YUSUF FADL HASAN
PROF. ABDAL LA AL-TAYYIB
PROF. MUHAMMAD IBRAHIM
ABU SALIM
PROF. UTHMAN SAYYID
AHMAD ISMAIL

DR. YUSUF AL-KHALIFA
ABU BAKR
DR. ALTYYIB ZAYN AL-ABIDIN
DR. ABD AL-RAHIM ALI
DR. AHMAD MUHAMMAD
ALI HAKIM
DR. ALI AL-KHATIM
USTAZ. MUHAMMAD ALKHAYR
ABD AL-QADIR
DIRASAT IFRIQIYYA
A RESEARCH JOURNAL PUBLISHED TWICE ANNNUALLY
BY THE ISLAMIC AFRICAN CENTER
DEPARTMENT OF RESEARCH AND PUBLICATION
P.O. Box 2469 KHARTOUM-SUDAN

***

VIEWS EXPRESSED IN ARTICLES PUBLISHED
ARE TOTALLY THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THEIR RESPECTIVE
AUTHORS AND DO NOT NECESSARILY REFLECT THE
OPinion OF THE JOURNAL OR OF THE CENTRE

PROF. ABD AL-KHALIQ

ABU BAKR

PROF. AL-MASRATI

ABDI AL-QADIR

PROF. MUHAMMAD AL-KHAYR

ABD AL-SALIM

PROF. UMARU AUGUSTA

AHMED ISMAIL
FOREWORD

Many Muslim scholars in Africa feel that there is a pressing need for a journal to bridge the academic gap between Africa and the rest of the Muslim world, and also to serve as a forum through which scholars can exchange ideas and develop research ties.

This project is being taken by the Islamic African Centre in Khartoum. This is an academic institution set-up for the purpose of strengthening Islamic culture in "Africa South of Sahara". One of the challenges which we have to face is the lack of accurate information about this area and the many misunderstandings about its history and societies. Such areas of study have, in the past, been the monopoly of a few western scholars who have not always been unbiased vis-a-vis Islam and African Muslims.

The time is now ripe for Muslim scholars, who specialize in this area, to come forward and bring some balance to the world of research.

We are accordingly inviting our readers, to join hands with us, so that we may set this project moving. We hope that you will be able to participate by sending papers on any of the subjects mentioned below. It will also help if you would kindly circulate this journal among your colleagues and (or) draw our attention to any scholars whom you feel will be able to help in realizing this project.

Dirasat ifriqiyya takes special interest in the following areas of specializations:

1. Islamic education in Africa.
2. The Arabic language in Africa.
3. The spread of Islam in Africa (historical as well as social perspectives).
4. Islamic Da’wah and Christian missionary activities in Africa.
5. The cultural background to African Muslim societies and their impact on African practice of Islam.
6. Social, economic and political relations between Africa and the rest of the Muslim World.
7. Institutions of scholarship in and (or) having to do with Africa.

Title: Dirasat Ifriqiyya. (African Studies).
Language: The journal will publish essays in either Arabic, English or French.
Duration: The journal will initially be published twice annually.
Selection of papers: Papers which are accepted by the editorial board will be published and the authors will be offered an honorarium in appreciation.
Guiding Notes to the Contributors:

(*) Papers should range between 3000/5000 words.

(*) Typing should be clear, double spaced and on one side of paper.

(*) A margin of 1 1/4 inches should be left on the right in case of Arabic on the left in the case of papers in either English or French.

(*) Sources and footnotes should be typed on a separate paper at the end of the paper, but reference to them should be indicated by numerical figures throughout the paper. The figures must also be between brackets.

(*) Maps, figures and tables should include all necessary explanation, they should not exceed the size of one page.

(*) Authors are requested to indicate their qualifications their present occupation, address etc.

(*) The author should enclose with his paper a signed letter to certify that the paper has not been published in part or whole before. He should also undertake not to pass it to any other publisher before the journal decides on it. On the other hand the editors will decide whether or not the paper is accepted for publication not more than three months after it has received it.

(*) The author will receive 20 monograph copies of his published paper.

(*) The author will be offered an honorarium of $200 if the paper is published.

(*) The journal welcomes reviews of books recently published and in case the reviews are accepted the reviewers will be offered $100 Documentation work such as bibliographies will be treated as reviews if they include less than 3000 words but will be considered full papers if they contain 3000 words or more.

(*) All papers, reviews & documentary material should be mailed to the Editor-in-Chief of “Dirasat Ifriqiyya”, the I.A.C., P.O.Box 2469, KHARTOUM, SUDAN.

(*) When using transliteration, it is preferable to follow the system of the Encyclopaedia of Islam (new edition).

Editorial secretary
Abd al-Rahman Ahmed
DIRASAT IFRIQIYYA

Tres nombreux sont les chercheurs musulmans en Afrique qui eprouvent le besoin pressant d’un journal qui puisse jeter un pont sur le fosse academique separant l’Afrique du reste du monde musulman et qui serve de forum ou les chercheurs peuvent echanger les opinions et developper des liens de recherche. Le projet est maintenant pris par le Centre Islamique Africain de Khartoum. C’est l’institution academique specialement fondes dans le but de renforcer la culture islamique en “Afrique au Sud du Sahara” Parmi les defis auxquels nous devons faire face est le manque d’information exactes sur cette region ainsi que les multiples mal-entendus concernant son histoire et sa societe. Ces domaines d’etudes etaient, dans le passe, le monopole de quelques chercheurs occidentaux qui n’étaient pas toujours neutres vis-a-vis l’Islam et des musulmans Africains.

Il est temps que les chercheurs musulmans specialises dans ce domaine se montrent et etablisssent un certain equilibre dans le domaine de la recherche.

Nous vous invitons maintenant pour vous inviter, en tant que chercheur accompli, a nous donner la main pour relancer ce projet.

Nous esperons que vous pouvez y participer en envoyant des etudes consacres aux sujets mentionnes ci-dessous:-

- Il serait tres utile si vous pouviez faire circuler cette lettre parmi vos collegues et/ou vous signaler les chercheurs qui vous paraissent capables d’aider a la realisation de ce projet.

Les domaines de specialisation du journal sont les suivants—
1. L’Education islamique en Afrique.
2. La langue arabe en Afrique.
4. La Da’wah Islamique et les activites missionnaires chretiennes en Afrique.
5. Les relations sociales, economiques et politiques entre l’Afrique et le reste du monde musulman.
7. Les etablissements de Bourses en Afrique et/ou en rapport avec l’etique.
8. La cooperation afro-arabe.

Titre: “Dirassat Ifriquiya” (Etudes Africaines).
Langue: Les articles doivent etre rediges en arabe en anglais ou en francais.
Duree: Le journal sera publie, au debut, deux fois par an.

Selection des articles:
Les articles acceptes par le Comite de la redaction seront publies et leurs auteurs seront remuneres en guise de remerciements.

Dans l’attente de vous lire bientot nous vous remercions d’avance et nous vous prions d’accepter l’expression de nos sentiments distingués.
THE ROOTS OF REVOLUTION IN THE QUR'AN

BY

Professor Muddathir Abdal-Rahim

In trying to explain the contemporary Islamic revival and, more especially, the revolutionary aspects or expressions thereof, a remarkably large number of Western writers and commentators (echoed by their followers and disciples in various parts of the Muslim world itself) have tended to exhibit a peculiarly one-sided and persistent preoccupation with such pressures and crisis in the economic and social conditions of contemporary Muslim societies as are related to inflation, urbanization and rapid increases in population-to the almost complete exclusion of the vitally important role of Islam and its teachings in the formulation of attitudes and mobilization of individuals and groups for social and political action.1)

It is here suggested that a more balanced and accurate approach would take into consideration-not only economic and social factors which are undoubtedly basic in creating the conditions necessary for all kinds of mass movements everywhere-but also (and especially where consciously Muslim groups and societies are concerned) the role of values and ideas: and these not merely as echoes or reflections of economic and social conditions as is implicitly suggested or even explicitly stated in some of the writings which may be regarded as typical of the first approach,2) but as socially operative principles or factors which are important in their own right as well as in determining the character and direction of social action and historic change.

A basic reason why this is particularly important in the case of Muslim as distinct from other human groups and societies is that in Islam, unlike many other systems of thought and ways of living, the material and the spiritual do not constitute dichotomous modes of experience but are regarded as a continuum and whereas, in the Western-Christian ethic for instance, religion and politics are seen as distinct and, on principle, separate spheres of life and social organisation,3) there is no such distinction or separation in Islam. Instead, all aspects of life and human experience-including political thought and action-are closely interrelated and the whole is infused with ethical meaning and religious significance.

It is in this context that revolutionary thought and action in Muslim societies-wheather historic or contemporary-can best be understood and their roots traced...
back to their origins in the teachings of the Quran which for Muslims, it should be remembered, is the final word of God to man. As such therefore it is the fount and principal source of all values whereby man can best strive for the achievement of happiness on earth and salvation in the hereafter; it is the criterion by which all action, whether personal or social, is ultimately, judged

**********

At the core of the politically significant teachings of the Qur'an is the notion that man-if he is to fulfill himself on earth and hope for salvation in heaven-must do all that is in his power in order to promote good and combat evil: not only within his own heart and mind as an individual, but also in society with all its facets and, indeed, throughout the world at large.

This conscious and constant striving for the promotion of what is good and right and for the dispelling and elimination of evil and wrong has been classically expressed by Prophet Muhammad in his famous saying:

"Whoever amongst you happens to see wrong should put an end to it (forthwith) and with his own hands; if he is unable (to act in this way) then (he should seek to do so) with his tongue (and words); if he is unable (to do even that) then (he should do it) in his heart-and that indeed is the very least (requirement) of (true) faith."

This commitment to active and unflagging struggle against wrong and evil and for the prevalence of right and good within one's own personality, in society and throughout the world-is the essence and meaning of the often misunderstood and misrepresented term Ḥijād. And it is the main reason why Muslims as a community of men and women who are so committed are (to the extent that they are true to their commitment) described in the Qur'an as an example for (or the best of) mankind:

"كم خير أمة أعجِبها للناس تأمرون بالمعروف وتنهون عن المنكر وؤمنون بالله وله أمل" أهل الكتاب لكان خير فما عليهم المؤمنون وأكبرهم الفاسقون آل عمران ١٠٠.
"You are indeed the best community that has ever been brought forth (the good of) mankind: you enjoin the doing of what is right and forbid the doing of what is wrong and you believe in God."

"Now if the followers of earlier revelation had attained (this kind of) faith it would have been for their own good (but only few) among them are believers, while most are iniquitous."

Consequently, it is natural indeed imperative for Muslims (and especially those of them who are conscious of their faith and their social commitment in the light of its teachings) to be, not only concerned with, but actively engaged in the unending struggle for the improvement, in accordance with the said teachings, of the economic, social and political (as well as the moral, artistic, intellectual and other) aspects of life: both locally and as far elsewhere as their abilities would allow them to be. To remain passive or inactive is to fall behind in the scale of excellence. For as the Qur'ān says:

\[ \text{لا يسوء القاعدون من المؤمنين غير أولى الضرر والاجهادون في سبيل الله بأموامهم ونفسهم فضل الله اجهاذهن بأموامهم ونفسهم على القاعدين درجة} \text{ ( النساء } 50 . \]

"Such of the believers as remain passive rather than the disabled cannot be deemed equal to those who strive hard in God's course with their possessions and their lives. God has exalted those who strive hard with their possessions and their lives far above those who remain passive."

Indeed, to remain passive because one is unconcerned or indifferent would in the words of another famous hadith of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) to becoming a renegade or altogether ceasing to belong to the community of Muslims:

\[ \text{هن من لم يهم بأمر المسلمين فليس منهم} \text{ (صحيح)} \]

Now, in accordance with the Qur'ān, a properly constituted (or Muslim) society would be based on a number of values which would together constitute "the setting of things right"—i.e. for good or virtuous living. Main among the said values are justice (economic, social and political as well as legal); equality (especially as between people of different ethnic and social backgrounds); and brotherhood (between all men regardless of differences of religion, race or status.)

By contrast arrogance (استكبار) and the tendency of humans (especially the affluent) to abandon themselves entirely to the pursuit of pleasure and plenty (سلف) are seen in the Qur'ān as among the primary factors which make for the spreading of corruption (فساد) in society.

DIRASAT IFRIQIYYA (II)
Numerous Qur’anic parables and stories—about Iblis, Pharaoh and the people of Cad, among others—reveal arrogance as the root cause of such grossly sinful (and politically explosive) forms of corruption as denial of truth, offence against right, tyranny and injustice.⁹

The corrupting and no less politically explosive nature of جر or the abandoning of self to the pursuit of pleasure and plenty is equally evident in the Qur’an where it is indeed depicted as a veritable law of human society:

"For (thus it is:) whenever we sent a warner to any community, those of its people who had lost themselves entirely in the pursuit of pleasures would declare, Behold, we deny that there is any truth in (what you claim to be) your message!—and they would add, Richer (than you) are we in wealth and children, and (so) we are not going to be made to suffer."¹⁰

"And thus it is: whenever We sent, before thy time, a warner to any community who had lost themselves entirely in the pursuit of pleasures would say, Behold, we found our forefathers agreed on what to believe and, verily, it is but in their footsteps that we follow."¹¹

There are literally hundreds of passages in the Qur’an in which the faithful are urged to do all they can in order to promote those values and behaviour patterns (including, especially, justice, brotherhood and equality) which would have the effect of "setting things right, for good living and to combat those (such as arrogance, tyranny, injustice and self-abandonment) in the pursuit of pleasure and plenty) which would naturally breed wrong and spread corruption.

In a properly constituted (Muslim) society, these will be the essential values by which both society and the state will be led. The conduct of public (as well as private) affairs will thus be based on the Qur’anic principles of “consultation” and “bearing witness to the truth in all equity; and never let hatred of anyone lead you into the sin of deviating from justice.”¹²

Wealth will be distributed in such a manner “that it may not be (a benefit) going round and round among such of you as may (already) be rich.”¹³

Citizens and others—regardless of differences in faith, sex, social status or ethnic origin—will be treated in a manner consistent with the dignity and human worth which has been conferred upon them by God: “Indeed, we have conferred dignity on the children of Adam (entire).”¹⁴

In such circumstances it would be the obligation (legal, moral and religious) of all
citizens to obey laws and to aid and cooperate with those in authority whose func-
tion it is to enforce laws:

- "pay heed unto God, and pay heed unto the Apostle and unto those from among
you who have been entrusted with authority"(15).

- And "help one another in furthering virtue and God-consciousness and do not
help one another in furthing evil and enmity"(16).

Citizens would also have the duty to play a full and responsible part in the process
of "Shura" consultation which, enjoined in the Qur'an, is universally regarded
among Muslims as the cornerstone of all properly constituted polities, by giving
good counsel and constructive criticism to rulers and fellow citizens alike.

Rulers, for their part, would have the duty to facilitate the giving of such counsel
and to accept criticism in good spirit.(17) An excellent example of this (and one
which has the weight and status of a constitutional precedent in Islamic jurisprudence) was given by the first Caliph, Abu Bakr, in his short and pithy in-
augural address:

"If I go along the right path, help me; if I go astray, put me right. The weaker
amongst you is the strongest in my eyes and I shall, by the grace of God, see that he
secures his rights. And the most powerful (and aggressive) amongst you is the
weakest in my eyes and I shall take away what is not his by right. A nation that gives
up Jiha'd will be trodden upon, and a nation that becomes immoral and corrupt will
be destroyed by God. So long as I obey God and His Apostle follow me. But if I
deviate from the way of God and His Apostle, I have no right to your allegiance."

The last phrase signifying that obedience to rulers is conditional and dependant on
the extent to which the exercise of the powers which are entrusted to them is judged
by the Umma (or the nation) to be consistent with the rules of Islam—is of key
importance in the context of our present discourse.

For government in Islam-as will be readily seen from the preceding paragraphs
and citations from the Qur'an-is essentially a contract in accordance with which
rulers are obeyed and vested with certain powers so that certain functions and duties
will be carried out and fulfilled. If these are judged by the Umma in due process of
consultation to have been properly attended to by those who are in authority, then
obedience and support are due to them and obligatory on the Umma. Otherwise
obedience and support will be forfeited and the deviant or failed rulers will have to
go and relinquish power. Should they refuse to do so and persist in either misusing
the powers with which they are entrusted by the Umma, or simply insist on hang-
ing on to these powers when they have failed to effectively exercise them in fulfilment of the stipulated functions, the Umma will then have not only the right, but the obligation, to remove them by force. Revolution will, in such circumstances, be the appropriate and necessary form of Jihād ie the struggle or, literally, the exertion of will, body and intellect in order to promote what is good and right and to combat and eliminate that which is wrong and evil.

Revolution however is not to be lightly contemplated or undertaken. It should be considered or launched only as a matter of last resort. For it can easily get out of hand and unleash unforeseen forces and conflicts which could destroy the entire social fabric and thus precipitate Fitna: a Qur’anic phrase which literally means “temptation to evil” but, depending on the context, also signifies bitter trial, grievous suffering or oppression.¹⁸

It was with a view to averting Fitna and all its consequences that many distinguished thinkers and jurists in the history of Islam including the illustrious Abu Ḥanīfah al-Mawardi and Abu Hamid al-Ghazali argued (somewhat like Hobbes) that even a usurper should be obeyed and accepted as a legitimate ruler so long as he is able to maintain law and order and does not actually interfere with the performance by Muslims of their prescribed duties of formal worship.¹⁹

While it may indeed be possible to understand and fully appreciate the historical conditions and political circumstances which influenced these men to think in the way they did, it is clear that government by usurpation is - by definition - contrary to the basic tenets of the Qur’an and the Shari’ah and could by no means be regarded as legitimate or acceptable.

Be that as it may it is generally agreed that al-amr bil-māruf wal-nahy an al-munkar ie enjoining the doing of what is right and forbidding what is wrong vis-à-vis deviant or incompetent rulers must, in the context of Shūra or consultation precede resort on the part of the aggrieved Umma or citizenry to such drastic measures as insurrection and revolt.

It will be remembered furthermore that the Qur’an prescribes that al-amr bil-māruf wal-nahy an al-munkar should always be practiced wisely and with due consideration to the feelings of the person addressed be he ruler or ruled:

“Call thou (all mankind) unto thy sustainer’s path with wisdom and godly exhortation, and argue with them in the most kindly manner.”²⁰

DIRASAT IFRIQIYYA(14)
And "(since) good and evil cannot be equal, repel then (evil) with something that is better and lo! he between whom and thyself was enmity (may then become) as though he had (always) been close (unto thee), a true friend."(21)

Even where Pharaoh who, according to the Qur’an had transgressed all bounds of equity was concerned, Moses and his brother were directed to speak gently and in a kindly manner:

"go forth, both of you, unto Pharaoh: for, verily, he has transgressed all bounds of equity but speak unto him in a mild manner, so that he might bethink himself or (at least) be filled with apprehension"(22).

Should all that prove ineffective however, and the deviant ruler arrogantly persist in the misuse of the powers which had been entrusted to him to impose a tyrannical or unjust regime, it will be justifiable indeed imperative-according to the Qur’an, for the Ummah to rise in revolt and seek to restore, by force, that which it had not been allowed to enjoy by means of peaceful consultation and gentle exortation: ie a responsible government which is sensitive to the needs of the nation and willing, in particular, to abide by the rules of justice, mutual aid and due process of consultation (Shura) all of which are enshrined in the Qur’an:

"Hence, let them fight in God’s cause all who are willing to barter the life of this world for the life to come; for unto him who fights in God’s cause, whether he be slain or be victorious, we shall in time grant a rich reward.

And how could you refuse to fight in the cause of God and of the utterly helpless men and women and children who are crying, “O our Sustainer! Lead us forth (to freedom) out of this land whose people are oppressors, and raise for us, out of Thy grace a protector, and raise for us, out of Thy grace, one who will bring us succour."(23)

Those who are unable to contribute positively to the struggle against tyranny and injustice are expected-unless they happen to be utterly weak and helpless-or to, at least, remove themselves from the domain of evil and oppression to other parts of the world where they can be fully themselves and freely practice their faith. Should they willingly choose to remain under conditions of tyranny and injustice which they are unable to resist however, they will be regarded, in the Qur’anic phrase as “sinners against themselves” who-like other sinners-will be subject to divine wrath and severe punishment.

“Behold, those whom the angels gather in death while they are still sinning against themselves, (the angels) will ask, «What was wrong with you?» They will answer,
«We were too weak on earth», (The angels) will say” Was, then, God’s earth not wide enough for you to forsake the domain of evil?”

“For Such then, the goal is hell- and how evil a journeys end”, But excepted shall be the truly helpless-be they men or women or children-who cannot bring forth any strength and have not been shown the right way: as for them, God may well efface their sin-for God is indeed an obsolver of sins. much-forgiving

“And he who forsakes the domain of evil for the sake of God shall find on earth many a lonelyroad, as well as life abundant. And if any one leaves his home, fleeing from evil unto God and His Apostle, and then death overtakes him-his reward is ready with God: for God is indeed muchforgiving, a dispenser of grace.”[24].

Apart from the classic reasons of revolt-ie oppression and injustice there is another (worthy of special consideration in these days of neo-colonialism and domination of small nations by bigger ones as well as by multinational corporations) for which a government can, according to the Qur’an, forfeit the allegiance of its subjects and latter would have the right and the duty-to rise in revolt: namely, the transfer of loyalty and service (whether for money or other favours) from the Umma and the interests of its people to other, possibly hostile, quarters-to the detriment of the former.

While uncompromisingly rejecting xenophobia, parochialism and all other forms of arrogance and recommending, instead, free and brotherly intercourse between all peoples of the world regardless of religious, racial or other differences, the Qur’an strongly condemns treachery and acts of betrayal to the Umma by any of its members whether they happen to be leaders or ordinary citizens.

The following passage may be regarded as representative of the many statements and exhortations which the Qur’an makes with reference to these two points:

«As for such (of the unbelievers) as do not fight against you on account of (your) faith, and neither drive you forth from your homelands, God does not forbid you to show them kindness and to behave towards them with full equity: for, verily, God loves those who act equitably.

God only forbids you to turn in friendship towards such as fight against you because of (your) faith, and drive you forth from your homelands, or aid (others) in driving you forth: and as for those (from among you) who turn towards them in friendship, it is they, they who are truly wrongdoers’”[25].

It is important to note in this connection that all the major contemporary Islamic revolutions or attempted revolts-including those in Iran, Afghanistan and Egypt-have occurred in situations which have been perceived by many conscious Muslims as desperately unsatisfactory and not only on account of tyranny, corruption and social injustice (damning though each one of these is) but also, and most significant-
ly in the context of the present discourse, because the regimes in question have been judged to have capitulated to hostile foreign pressures and to have betrayed their own people in the interest of one or other of the superpowers and their local agents in the Muslim world.

This dimension of the subject like the role of Islam as a system of socially operative values and principles has however been seriously underrated, if not totally disregarded, in the writings of many Western and Western oriented commentators on the various revolutionary movements and trends which dominate the contemporary scene in the Muslim world. So long as the global conflict between the superpowers continues (with all its repercussions and ramifications for the Muslim world and its peoples), and until these peoples and countries have finally escaped from the state of dependency and weakness which has for decades now made them into mere objects of international history and politics—protest against foreign domination and exploitation (as well as local acts of betrayed and capitulation) is likely to remain a major source of popular resentment which would feed revolutionary movements and tendencies in the Muslim world, whether they happen to be specifically Islamic in orientation (as is increasingly the case), or otherwise.

Under such conditions (of internal oppression and corruption coupled with external exploitation and domination) revolution—whatever the risks involved or the reservations with which it has traditionally been hedged in Muslim societies—may quite naturally and spontaneously be perceived by thoughtful and conscious Muslims as the only possible course of action whereby some hope can be restored to an otherwise hopeless situation. For after all (as it is repeatedly pointed out in the Qur'an) the unflagging struggle (or Jihad) against evil and wrong and for the prevalence of right and good—whether individually within one's own mind and heart, or socially for the achievement of political freedom and human dignity and in self defence against tyranny and injustice—is the key to man's destiny in history, and the only way whereby humanity can hope for salvation: whether in the political or the religious senses of the world.

«... if God had not enabled peoples to defend themselves against one another, corruption would surely overwhelm the earth...»(26).

And «... it is by turns that we apportion unto men such days (of fortune and misfortune); and (this) to the end that God might mark out those who have attained faith, and choose from among you such as (with their lives) bear witness to the truth... and that God might render pure of all dross those who have attained to faith, and bring to naught those who deny the truth.

«Do you think that you could enter paradise unless God takes cognizance of your having striven hard (in His cause), and takes cognizance of your having been patient (in His Cause), and takes cognizance of Your having been patient in adversity?»(27).
In the light of the above discussion it should be clear that Islamic revolutions, whether contemporary or historic (and there have been many which resulted, inter alia, in the creation of powerful states such as those of the Mūrabītūn and the Muwahhidūn in North Africa and Spain) are deeply rooted in the teachings of Islam as a comprehensive (religious and secular) system of socially operative values and principles and more especially— in the Qur'an as the fountain head and primary source of these values and principles.

Economic and social conditions and crisis naturally play important roles in creating and shaping the social and political contexts in which all revolutions, whether Islamic or otherwise, take place. But they, by themselves, cannot (especially where Muslim societies and revolutions are concerned) be regarded as sufficient causes or adequate expantions of revolutionary changes and uprisings. For the specifically Islamic values and principles which have been outlined in the preceding paragraphs do not only give meaning and significance to the objective realities of life for the Muslim persons or groups concerned at any given time and place, but also, and more importantly, play decisive roles in shaping particular strategies and reactions on the part both of individuals and groups for handling or dealing with the said situations or crisis. Unless the values and principles in question are properly understood and fully taken into consideration therefore, the real nature and significance of Islamic revolutions (including the first and greatest which was led and directed by Prophet Muhammad himself) cannot be adequately explained or fully appreciated. And in this regard as well as in all other matters concerning the nature of Islam and the dynamics of Muslim societies the Qur'an is, of course, the key to, and the starting point of serious comprehension.
NOTES AND REFERENCES


(2) Thus in his above mentioned article P.J. Vatikiotis writes: «In the face of the mounting, and apparently insoluble economic and social problems caused by rapid change, it is not so extraordinary that people should seek other-worldly formulae of escape», p.195.


(4) The word Jihad, from the verb Jahada (to struggle, strive hard or exert oneself in a good cause and against evil) denotes «striving in the cause of God» in the widest sense of this expression— including, not only physical striving in, for example, warfare, but also more especially all forms of moral or intellectual struggle or striving for good and righteous causes and against evil and wrong.


(7) In the Qur'an the word Muslim is used with reference to all those who have recognized God and positively responded to the calls of successive prophets from Adam, through Abraham, Moses and Jesus to Muhammad, to mould their lives on earth in accordance with that faith. The followers of prophet Muhammad are described as Muslims (par excellence as it were) because his messans as described in the Qur'an is the culmination and perfection of all those which preceded it and, as such, is the final word of God to man.

(8) Many books have been devoted to this theme. Among these is the clear and concise Islam-Its Meaning For Modern Man (London, 1960) which was written by the late Sir Muhammad Zafrulla Khan.

(9) See for example Asad pp 9, 732 and 221.

(10) Asad’s translation of Saba (Sheba) 35, pp 661-62.

(11) Asad’s translation of Al Zukhruf (Gold) 23, p752.

(12) Asad’s translation of Al Maidah (The Repast) 8, p 143.

(13) Asad’s translation Al Hashr (The Gathering) 7, p 851.

(14) Asad’s translation Al Isra‘ (The Night Journey) 66, p 429

(15) Asad’s translation An-Nisa‘ (Women) 59, p 115

(16) Asad’s translation Al Maidah (The Repast) 2, p 140
(17) Even Prophet Muhammad himself was, despite his leading position and the fact that he had divine backing (or Wahy) behind him, was enjoined by the Qur'an to abide by *Shura* and consult his companions in all matters of public import.

(18) See the different renderings of the word *Eitna* and its derivatives in Asad's translations of Al Baqarah (The Cow) 193, p. 41, Al Nur (The Light) 61, p. 548 and Yunus (Jonah) 85, p. 304-5.

(19) See Al-Mawardi's al-Ahkam al-Sultaniyya (especially the chapter on government by usurpation) and Al Ghazali's Al Iqsiasad fil Iqsiqad, al-Ihya and Fada'il al Batinyya.

(20) Asad's translation of An Nahl (The Bee) 125, p. 416.

(21) Asad's translation Fussilat (Clearly spelt Out) 34, p. 735

(22) Asad's translation Taha (O man) 34, p. 473

(23) Asad's translation An Nisa (Women) 74/75, p. 118

(24) Asad's translation 97-100, pp.124-25

(25) Asad's translation Al-Mumtahanah (The Examined One) 8-9, pp. 856-7

(26) Asad's translation Al Bacara (The Cow) 250, p. 56

(27) Asad's translation Al Imran (The House of Imran) 140-142, p. 88