HISTORICAL AND POLITICAL ROOTS OF ISLAMISM*

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This article is an account of the origins and evolution of Islamism in the context of the rise of European totalitarian movements. The first part demonstrates that Islamism arose in the same temporal space and nearly in the same geographical area as European totalitarian movements: Bolshevism, Fascism and Nazism. A comparative analysis of general reactions to World War I shows remarkable similarities between the anomie experienced by some Europeans and Muslims which gave rise to attempts to create an alternative politico-cultural order to existing modernity. The second part of the study examines the evolution of Islamism from being a marginal trend to becoming a major political force within Islam and world politics. To grasp the unique features of the evolution of Islamism, it is briefly compared with other political trends – liberal, democratic, socialist and authoritarian – in the Muslim world in general and in Middle Eastern societies in particular.

Islamism¹, as an ideology, as a movement, and as a political regime, has long been neglected. It was not until after the tragic events of 9/11 that the crucial importance of Islamism was broadly accepted. The neglect, or at least the underestimation, of the potential explosive power of Islamism is due to various factors. Explaining these factors from a historical and a political point of view is one of the objectives of this study, the question being where Islamism was before it caught our attention? For the sake of clarity and consistency, the rise of Islamism will be analysed in the light of the European totalitarian and extremist ideologies that emerged under identical historical circumstances. The study also deals with the variation in the evolution of Islamist movements (both Sunni and Shi'a) from 1928 up till now.

Based on these preliminary remarks, we explore the following propositions:

- 1) The demise of four major political regimes or 'empires' as a consequence of World War I created a generalised sense of disenchantment and historical crisis among Muslims and gave birth to longings to restore the golden age of Islam.

2) In contrast to European totalitarian movements, Islamism came to power a long time after it first originated. Because of this 'delay', the potential danger of Islamism has generally been neglected.

I

Demise of Empires, Disenchantment and Risorgimento

Empires rise, flourish and then perish. This has been the rule in history.² That several empires fall simultaneously is an unusual phenomenon. Nevertheless, this is what happened in the aftermath of World War I when four empires, located almost on the same continent (Europe), collapsed simultaneously: the German, the Austro-Hungarian, the Russian, and the Ottoman empires. It significantly weakened two other empires (the French and the British), and caused a deep crisis in recently united Italy.

An empire represents the core and a centre of an entire politico-cultural system. Consequently, the demise of an empire is always a highly dramatic event. It puts an end to a particular form of macro-political organisation – a state – which has often enjoyed a period of sustained power and cultural hegemony. When an imperial regime is defeated in one way or another, it directly affects and often dramatically changes the destiny of a huge number of people as well as the fate of a significant number of regions, provinces and territories. Usually, the fall of an empire is a violent event and provokes general chaos in the former empire as well as uncertainty and instability among its neighbours. One of the important functions of empires is to provide their subjects with an identity. Therefore, the demise of an empire creates a crisis of identity and hence a general state of what Émile Durkheim described as 'anomie'. The more powerful the empire, the more dramatic the experience of its fall, and the deeper the resultant crisis of identity among the ethnic and confessional groupings whose existence it once underpinned.

It is true that the crisis of Europe prior to World War I started as early as in the second half of the 19th century. When Nietzsche said, "Europe is sick" and "God is dead", many Europeans began to clearly perceive a 'sign of the expiration of their planetary centrality which they could understand only in terms of a modern mysticism'.³ World War I made the crisis irreversible, and the decline was no longer a future destiny, but the present reality of Europe.⁴ To François Furet, the impact of World War I on history is similar to the impact of the French revolution.⁵

A careful study of the historical facts does not leave any doubt that after the war, two different, but closely related feelings dominated the spirit of European intellectuals, particularly in the defeated empires. On the one hand, there was a feeling of 'disenchantment' and on the other hand, a strong will to 'restore' the empire or recreate the socio-political and nomic certainties bound up with the previous system. Translated into political terms this led to a wave of ultra-conservative (restorationist) and totalitarian (revolutionary) politic-cultural movements. Roger Griffin observes that 'the unprecedented depth that disenchantment had reached created a vast potential constituency of post-war individuals eager to re-erect the sacred canopy, "rebuild the house" on the rubble of the nineteenth-century world devastated by the war, and 'start time anew'.⁶

Post-war extremism moves in two diametrically opposed directions. The conservative right wing followed a 'nostalgic' path, the ultimate goal of which remained the restoration of past stability and nomic certainties within a new imperial order, albeit in a modernised form. In contrast, the revolutionary right and left wing chose a 'tragic' path of adventurism by struggling for the realisation of a new revolutionary project at any price which, in the case of Fascism and Bolshevism, ultimately led to inner collapse and, in the case of Nazism, to self-destruction as the result of the cataclysmic war it had unleashed.

Disenchantment was widespread and expressed very thoroughly, especially among German intellectuals. It was during this epoch that Oswald Spengler wrote his famous book *The Decline of the West* which was first published in 1918. Disappointment at the unsatisfactory outcome of the war had a decisive influence on sociologists such as Max Weber. The same year in which *The Decline of the West* was published, Weber spoke of the future in his two celebrated parallel lectures, 'Politics as a Vocation' and 'Science as a Vocation', as something far from "the flowering of summer but a polar night of icy darkness and hardness."⁷ In the second lecture, he noted that "the fate of our times is characterized by rationalization and intellectualization and *above all* by the 'disenchantment of the world'" (my emphasis).⁸ Although he was overtly referring to the impact of rationalisation on traditional society, the subtext was an observation of the anomic conditions of post-1918 modernity.

The 'disenchantment' was also felt by French and Russian intellectuals. In 1919, the French author Paul Valéry announced the beginning of a new Age of Anxiety and wrote an article with the title "The Crisis of the Mind", which was first published in a British review. According to Valéry, the crisis had deep roots in European civilisation itself. However, he saw World War I as a moment of revelation to Europe.⁹ In Paris, a group of writers and artists launched a protest against everything (Dadaism). Everything is nonsense: literature, art, morality, civilisation. Act is vain, art is vain, and everything is absurd. In 1923, the Russian writer Nicolay Berdyayev published a successful book entitled *The New Middle*

Ages. Like Spengler, Berdyayev combined all miseries of modernity: individualisation, the atomisation of culture, limitless desire, the growth of populations and needs, the decline of faith, and the growing sterility of spiritual life into an image of decline.¹⁰ At the same time, it is noteworthy that while Spengler, a German historian, talked about the decline of the West, his British colleague Arnold Toynbee claimed that the West was well-equipped to resist the temptation of despair in his monumental work *A Study of History* (1934-61).¹¹ It should be noted that Hasan al-Banna, the founder of *Ikhwan al-Muslimun* [the Muslim Brotherhood], had studied Spengler, Spencer and Toynbee. He was obviously unconcerned by the decline of the West. Neither did he differentiate between the victorious and defeated European countries. To him, the West represented a compact block without any possible differentiation. In his opinion, the most important aspects were, of course, the decline of Islam and the dispersion of Muslims under the domination of western powers.

The prevalence of disenchantment led to the rise of various types of extremism in Europe. This is what Hannah Arendt calls 'Pan-Movements'. In her view, "Nazism and Bolshevism owe more to Pan-Germanism and Pan-Slavism (respectively) than to any other ideology or political movement".¹² The same goes for Pan-Islamism which, from the end of the 19th century onwards, was thought to be an invariable claim and a fixed project of each and every Islamist movement. The primary goal of the Pan-Islamist movement was to unify Muslims against colonial rule; a necessary phase indeed in the process of reconstructing a new, powerful Islamic empire.

The European extremist movements took power, first in Russia in 1917, then in Italy in 1922, and finally in Germany in 1933. However, the flourishing of extremism was not limited to these countries; other countries were witnessing the same phenomenon: in Austria (*Heimwehr*), in Spain (*Juntas*, later *Falange Espanola*), in France (*Action Française*, among others), in Hungary, in Romania and elsewhere.¹³ In this context, we may claim that the rise of extremism clearly indicated that the war marked the end to an era dominated by the striving for gradual progress, rationalism and moderation born of the Enlightenment project. The crisis of the West was no longer a subjective matter for the intelligentsia, but an objective, concrete reality manifesting itself in every sphere of society. Totalitarian ideologues soon found their own explanation for the breakdown of history. To Hitler, the collapse of the German nation in the years following 1918 was bitter and manifest. He blamed the defeat on the German politicians and on Marxists and Jews in particular.

According to Italian Fascists, the war was a national necessity "in order to finally unite the nation through the shedding of blood".¹⁴ To Giovanni Gentile, one of the most famous ideologue of Fascism, the Great War was vital in order to bring the nation together – to turn it into a true nation, real, alive, capable of acting, and

ready to make itself valued and important in the world, and in order for Italy to enter into history with its own originality, never again to live on the borrowed culture of others.¹⁵ He evaluated the consequence of war for Italy in a positive manner, because the war gave birth to the new Italy of *Risorgimento*. However, he was not content to witness that the “Italian victory in the Great War was transformed into defeat”, not so much because of Italy’s military defeat, but because of the Italians’ increasing attraction to the democratic ideology, especially after the intervention of the United States in 1917 which “brought with it the acceptance of a democratic ideology of the worst kind, that of Woodrow Wilson”.¹⁶

Renzo De Felice once considered Fascism an exclusively European phenomenon (which can easily be extended to other forms of European totalitarianism), asserting that “no comparison can be made with situations outside Europe, whether of the same period or later, because of radical differences in historical contexts developed within the time span encompassed by two World Wars”.¹⁷ He also stresses that, though Fascism had pre-1914 “roots and preconditions”, these were “marginal” and that “nothing indicates that they would have developed without the direct and indirect trauma of World War I”.¹⁸

Yet while some post-1945 scholars have insisted on the uniqueness of Fascism, there were Fascist writers who, on the contrary, saw it as having profound historical parallels with other revolutionary movements in history. While some compared it to Bolshevism, Gino Cerbella, propagandist and assistant consul under Mussolini, argued intriguingly in his book *Fascismo e Islamismo* (1938/XVI of the Fascist calendar) that “Fascism can in a certain sense be called the Islam of the twentieth century”.¹⁹ In the first chapter, the author puts forth a series of arguments to underpin the claim that the action of Mussolini in the 20th century was comparable to the mission of Muhammad in the 7th century. The fusion of religion and politics in one single ideology constitutes the focal point of the comparison:

Like Muhammad, Mussolini is the founder of an empire and a religion. The first-mentioned gave his people the privilege of a superior religious faith; the second, the benefit of a superior political faith: both of them, while designing and carrying out territorial conquests, aimed above all at worldly and spiritual domination. Muhammad laid the foundation of a theocratic State; Mussolini the foundation of the State’s theocracy; thus, the first mentioned created the religious State; the second, the religion of the State. (p. 14)

Cerbella moreover insists on the process of elimination of all other convictions than this religious-political ideology:

The Arab prophet denied asylum to religious fetishism, the Italian one did not concede it to political idolatry. The Meccan preached to the Pagans the faith of

a single religion; the Italian, the religion of a single faith. Muhammad transformed the worshippers of all the gods into believers in the one and only God; Mussolini reduced the devotees of all the ideas into followers of the one and only Party. (p. 14)

Gino Cerbella moreover believes the methods of expanding both faiths present the following analogy: “The masses (...) knock down and destroy, with blood and in blood, the ancient faiths.” (p. 13). Although violence is seen as a legitimate means when spreading the new ideology, one remarkable exception crowns the experience of the two leaders: “The March on Mecca was like the March on Rome: the march of liberation. The two war captains conquered the mother-city of their own lineage, without shedding the fraternal veins’ blood.” (p. 17). The return to what Cerbella names the ‘mother-city’, Rome and Mecca respectively, also implies the symbolic transformation of a place:

The Ka’ba, which had hosted all the idols, became in one stroke the most venerated temple of Islamism; just like Montecitorio, which had witnessed the triumph of all faiths and the adoration of all the believers, became the sanctuary of the reborn Word of Rome. (p. 17)

Cerbella also sees a similarity between the lives of the founders of the ideologies, both in their childhood: “They both were born and lived in the misery which was their parent, even before their own mother”, and during the first steps of their mission: “The day of their first mission had more enemies than followers. Calumny and aversion, derision and insult of the majority, who in life are of minor worth, were for them the highest consecration.” (p.16). But the spiritual strength of the founder assured the final victory of the minority he was leading: “They kindled in the first core of believers the spark of Truth, which with the powerful blow of their passion became fire of the masses” (p. 16). Cerbella considers the missions of both Muhammad and Mussolini to be of a universal character: “Their life and their work do not only belong to the story of their country, but to the story of humanity” (p. 16).

It is important to stress that the nostalgia for a metaphysical home or ‘nomos’ experienced so keenly by Fascists after World War I, did not express itself in the bid to restore a lost golden age, but to realize a utopian future which often *drew* on the mythicized memories of a glorious past, whether Aryan, Roman, Elizabethan, Dacian, Turinian or whatever else fitted the narrative of national rebirth. In his new book, *Modernism and Fascism*, Roger Griffin argues that European fascism was born of an overwhelming sense of the unviability of civilization in its present form: To him,

it was not despair, or ‘cultural pessimism’ – except in the ‘strong’, Nietzschean, Dionysian sense of ‘active’ nihilism – that shaped and misshaped post-WWI Europe. Instead, it was the confluence and sometimes violent

interaction between a proliferation of utopian projects, revitalization movements, and ideological communities called into being by the urgent need of many millions of human beings who....risked in their own way becoming 'outcasts from Time' and 'flung back into an overwhelming loneliness'.²⁰

Griffin extends his argumentation to the Bolshevik Revolution, considering it "a *modernist* experiment in designing and building a new society carried out on an unprecedented scale of social, economic, cultural, and political transformation and regenerative zeal", to proactively "make history" by completing the transition of modernity to a "new era".²¹

Griffin's argument has important implications for the difference between European nostalgian conservatism and totalitarian utopianism on the one hand and Islamist nostalgia and utopianism on the other. While the European totalitarian utopia is oriented towards the future which needs to be realized, the Islamist 'utopia' has already been realized as the Medina model under the Prophet Muhammad. So, the future is nothing but the *reproduction* under modern conditions of the sublime model which must be re-constructed as closely to the original model as possible. In this respect, Karl Mannheim's double definition of 'utopia' satisfies both positions. On the one hand, "because the concrete determination of what is utopian proceeds always from a certain stage of existence, it is possible that the utopias of to-day may become the realities of tomorrow". On the other hand, "whenever an idea is labelled utopian it is usually by a representative of an epoch that has already passed".²²

With this important distinction in mind, it may be asserted that a significant constituency of Muslims reacted in the same way as Europeans to the cataclysmic events of 1918-1914 and their aftermath: with nostalgia, melancholia (*hüzün*), as the Turkish writer, Orhan Pamuk, winner of the Nobel Prize in Literature, describes Istanbul's state of mind, and a strong wish for the restoration of *nomos* to modernity. Though in their case, it was to be achieved through the restoration of the former power and glory of Islam.²³

The fall of the Ottoman Empire came as a shock to Muslims and particularly to the Sunnis who make up the great majority of Muslims. Up till then and since the death of Muhammad in 632, Muslims had had an empire and a metropolis with considerable political power and religious authority. Islam had enjoyed an impressive expansion, having conquered, among others, Persia, Byzantium, Syria and Egypt under the Rightly Guided Caliphs [*Khulafâ al-Rashidûn*] from 632 to 661. The rule of the Umayyads from 661 turned the Caliphate into an empire, with Damascus as its metropolis. Islam reached its zenith under the rule of the Abbasids (750-1258). Baghdad had become the centre of the Muslim world under this dynasty, if not the centre of the world at that age. Under the rule of the Fatimids (937-1171), Cairo became the great rival of the Abbasid capital for almost 200

years. In 1258, Baghdad was eclipsed as a cultural metropolis following the devastating blows of Hulaku, the Mongol Khan. Then the Ottoman Empire came into existence (approx. 1299) and remained officially intact until 1924. Constantinople was Islamised and became Islampol/Istanbul.²⁴ Despite the fact that Ottoman sultans, especially from the middle of the 19th century, were Caliphs of the Muslims only by name without any real religious or even moral authority, Istanbul represented, after all, the metropolis of Islam and the *Sublime Porte* (*Bâb-i ‘Âlî*) of the then most powerful Muslim state. Atatürk brought the Ottoman reign to an end, and the Islamic world lost its unique centre. It should be noted that in those days, a great majority of Muslim countries were either colonised or linked to Europe under a protectorate (with the exception of Persia). A number of them were, at least formally, part of the Ottoman Empire.

After the fall of the Ottomans, Muslims suddenly found themselves facing hard realities. Not only was there no longer an Islamic empire or a Muslim metropolis, but the state replacing it (Turkey) became secular, and Islamic law was replaced by European (non-Muslim) law. The reaction of a segment of the Muslim population to this new reality was similar to that of the German Nazis and Italian Fascists. At that time, revenge and the restoration of greatness were two key words for Nazis and Islamists alike: revenge on the Allies (France and Great Britain in particular) and the creation of a new Reich and *Gross-Deutschland* for the Germans and a renewed *Khalâfat* [Caliphate] for the Muslims, not to mention a Soviet empire in a version similar to the one Peter the Great dreamed of. Meanwhile, although Italy had been on the winning side of the conflict, the emulation of the greatness of Rome (*Romanità*) became a major theme of the Fascist project of national renewal.

Rashid Rida of Syria (1865-1935) is perhaps the first Islamist ideologue to advance the thesis of restoration of the institution of the Caliphate. His book, *Al-Khalâfat aw al-Imâmat al-Uzma* [The Caliphate: the Supreme Imamate] was published on the eve of the abolition of the Ottoman Caliphate (approx. 1922-23). In Rida's view, the remedy to the "decadence of Islam" is to "restore the dignity of the *Imamate* [Muslim Leadership], to re-establish the authority of the *ahl al-hall wa-l-'aqd* [Muslim decision-makers], (...) thus to restore the true Islamic state which is the best of states, not only for the Muslims, but for all mankind".²⁵ Rida's theory is summed up by Hamid Enayat in the following terms:

Rida brings up the subject of the Islamic state after dealing with the problems of the Caliphate. He does this in three stages: (1) first he traces the foundations of the Caliphate in Islamic political theory; (2) then he demonstrates the cleavage between that theory and the political practice of Sunni Muslims; (3) finally he advances his own idea of what an Islamic state should be.²⁶

Rida's ideal 'new' Caliphate is the return to the 'Arab' Caliphate instead of the 'Turkish' version.

Thus, it was in a time of 'Pan Movements' that Islamism as a political movement and organisation (*Ikhwan al-Muslimun*) was founded by Hasan al-Banna in Egypt in 1928, four years after the official dissolution of the Ottoman Caliphate by Mustafa Pasha (later Atatürk), four years after the publishing of *Mein Kampf* by Hitler, six years after Mussolini's March on Rome and less than 11 years after Lenin's coming to power. Hasan al-Banna, the most influential ideologue of the Muslim intelligentsia at the time, was convinced that the defeat of the Ottoman Caliphate was the result of a conspiracy formed by the European powers. He writes:

Europe began to work earnestly at dismembering the powerful, far-flung Islamic state [Ottomans] and to lay numerous plans toward this end, referring to them at times as "the Eastern question" and others as "dividing up the inheritance of the Sick Man of Europe". Every state proceeded to seize the opportunity as it arose, to adopt the flimsiest excuses, to attack the peaceful, negligent Islamic state, and to reduce its periphery or break off portions of its integral fabric. This onslaught continued over a long period of time, during which the Ottoman Empire was stripped of many an Islamic territory which then fell under European domination... Although these steps led to the concept of local nationalism, with each nation demanding its right to freedom as an independent entity, and while many of those who worked for this revival purposely ignored the idea of unity, nevertheless the outcome of these steps will be, without a doubt, consolidation and resurrection of the Islamic empire as a unified state embracing the scattered peoples of the Islamic world, raising the banner of Islam and bearing its message.²⁷

What is particularly striking in this account is that an Egyptian citizen deplores the fall of the Ottoman Caliphate; the very Caliphate that annexed Egypt and dominated it for centuries. A variety of factors explain why the first Islamist movement was formed in Egypt and not in Turkey. First, the transformation of the Ottoman Caliphate into the new Turkey was in fact the result of successive modernisation waves during the 19th century. *Tanzimat* [Re-adjustment/Restructuring] "had made possible the emergence of a well-educated bureaucracy, trained as civil servants at the *Mulkiye* [civil administration], and a highly professional officer corps, graduates of the war college, the *Harbiye* [military academy]".²⁸ In contrast to Turkey, Egypt was colonised by the British Empire at that time, without enough room for manoeuvre to produce a civil and military elite equivalent to the Turkish one. Muhammad Ali (r. 1805-48), the modernist ruler of Egypt, had sought to introduce new forms of education and social organisation in Egypt, but his secular reforms were not particularly successful because of the opposition from the caste of *Ulama*, whose interests

were threatened by the modernisation of the Egyptian society. Furthermore, Egypt did not have a charismatic and decisive leader such as Atatürk. The organisation that came into existence to work for Islam's renewal was made up of army officers led by Urabi Pasha, a young and dynamic colonel in the 1880s. This group emerged with the slogan 'Egypt for the Egyptians', speaking in the name of the people, asking for a constitution and a change of government, in the sense not of secular reform, but of the restoration of the Islamic state, an early form of Islamism. Thus, Urabi, different from Atatürk, was not a lay officer; he couched his call for reform in terms of Islamic renewal. Urabi's army (approx. 10,000 men) did not have the same military success as that of Atatürk, and it was crushed by the British occupying forces in 1882. One important factor in the rise of Islamism in Egypt was the location of the Al-Azhar University in Cairo. This university is the oldest (created in 970 AD) and most important Islamic university in the world. The presence of Al-Azhar on Egyptian soil has turned this country into the religious and spiritual centre of the Muslim world. Therefore, it was more likely that an appeal to the people to adhere to the Islamic creed and return to the golden age of Islam would be heard and responded to in a positive manner in Egypt rather than in Turkey.

Apart from these factors, the most powerful explanatory element lies in the highly profiled *Nahda* [Movement] and the *Salafi* [Return to the Prime Period of Islam] movements in Egypt in the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries. In this connection, two leaders played a major role, not only in Egypt, but also in the rest of the Muslim world: Jamal al-Din Al-Afghani (1838-97) and his disciple Muhammad Abduh (1849-1905). In our day, they continue to be considered the most authentic references for a reform movement in Islam, and Islamists of different persuasions acknowledge them as sources of inspiration. Since then, these trends have been clearly visible in all Islamist movements from the Muslim Brotherhood to Khomeinism. The salient points of their thinking which were to leave their stamp on present-day Islamism are

1) the idea of Pan-Islamism, which can only be realised after the liberation of Muslim territories from the yoke of colonialism and domination; 2) the return to the purest sources of the first age of Islam; and 3) the selective appropriation of western technology and social institutions.

There is still another explanation and justification of the centrality of Egypt. "Egypt", wrote al-Banna to King Faruq, is "at the crossroads", facing two directions: "the way of the West" and "the way of Islam". "The Muslim Brothers, true to the faith, plead that the nation be restored to Islam. Egypt's role is unique, for just as Egyptian reform begins with Islam, so the regeneration of Islam must begin in Egypt, for the rebirth of 'international Islam'".²⁹ All these factors explain why Islamism arose in Egypt in the first place. Yet the creation of the Muslim Brotherhood did not attract much attention from the Europeans, presumably

because the Muslim Brotherhood, in contrast to Fascism, Nazism and Bolshevism, did not succeed in gaining power as fast as other extremist movements. After remaining a radical protest movement for almost 50 years, Islamists first came to power in 1979. Moreover, they did so, not in Egypt, but in Iran under the leadership of Ayatollah Khomeini, and 17 years later in Afghanistan under the Taliban.

Figure 1. The rise and fall of totalitarianism in the 20th century

The assertion that Islamism did not come to power until 1979 needs to be qualified, however. In 1932, Saudi Arabia was founded as an independent state, and adopted Wahhabism as its official religious ideology. There is no doubt that Wahhabism, both in terms of its foundational principles and its theoretical genealogy (Ibn Taymiyya: 1263-1328 and Muhammad Abdul Wahhab: 1703-92), contains a number of elements that are representative of contemporary Islamism.³⁰ However, when we look at the temporal circumstances as well as the external behaviour of Saudi Arabia between 1932 and 1979, it can be seen that Wahhabism has been primarily an expression of Saudi national identity and an instrument for creating/consolidating cohesion among ethnically and tribally diverse peoples of the peninsula. In contrast, the Muslim Brotherhood is an ideology proposing the returning to power of the Caliphate as a militant institution and the Islamisation of the world. Later on, while Khomeini pursued an aggressive policy both against the United States and a majority of Muslim states which he held to be corrupt, Saudi Arabia chose an almost quietist foreign policy line and proclaimed an alliance with the United States. It was only with the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 that a gradual change in the traditional policy of Saudi Arabia took place with regard to the propagation of Wahhabism, leading to vast financial support being given to

pro-Wahhabi movements (Afghans, Pakistanis, Chechens, Bosnians, etc.). The appearance of Osama Bin Laden, Wahhabi and a Saudi, as the leader of *Al-Qaida* dramatically changed the image of Wahhabism.

Therefore, it is reasonable to argue that the Islamist revolution in Iran in 1979 marked the first establishment of an Islamist regime. As a further substantiation of this claim, it should be noted that the independence of Saudi Arabia in 1932 was, at that time, a somewhat minor event in scope compared to the complexities and the range of national and international implications brought about by the revolution of Khomeini in 1979. In this context, a significant collateral consequence of the fall of the Sunni Caliphate of Istanbul should be noted, a consequence which has profoundly transformed the Sunni-Shi'a relations in the 21st century. As long as a Sunni Caliphate existed, the Sunni community enjoyed a broad monopoly in the Islamic legitimacy of power. It is true that Shi'a Persia also existed as a relatively strong state, in parallel with and often in antagonistic relations with the neighbouring Ottoman Empire. But the basis of Persian legitimacy diverged significantly from the Ottoman one. While the latter clearly derived its legitimacy from the Caliphate principle, the foundation of the former was not religious. As a Shi'a country, Persia had a Shi'a king, but the legitimacy of the political regime emanated from the traditional sovereignty of the monarchy rather than from Shi'a political theory (the Imamate). The end of the Sunni Caliphate in 1924 introduced a radical, qualitative change in the concept of Sunni political legitimacy. In other words, once the Sunni Caliphate disappeared, the monopoly, or at least the supremacy, of the Sunni political legitimacy also disappeared. The transformation of the vertical, hierarchical Sunni-Shi'a relations into dynamic, horizontal relations represents a historical and political *rupture* in Islamic history. From this moment, the road to 'sectarian relativism' was opened, and the Sunni and the Shi'a political legitimacy became – for the first time in history – potentially equal. It is in the alteration of the Sunni political doctrine that the Shi'a Islamic revolution of 1979 should be understood. Similarly, the Shi'a Revival³¹ at the beginning of the 21st century, especially in connection with the civil war in Iraq and the rise of Hezbollah in Lebanon, at the same time represents the 'Revenge of the Shi'a' after a millennium of Sunni domination.

For more than 50 years, from 1928 to 1979, Islamism was merely an agglomerate of latent and diffuse extremist movements always operating in opposition to their respective national regimes. In this period, the year 1948 is of crucial importance with regard to the expansion of Islamism, for the creation of the State of Israel in 1948 provided Islamism with a new vitality as well as a new *raison d'être*. From that time on, Israel was perceived as the creation of the West which overnight placed the physical, political, ideological, and religious enemies of Islam at the very heart of Islamic territories.

II

Evolution of Islamism: from Latency to Action

To better grasp the evolution of Islamism, we have to locate it within its historical and political context. The general context of the post-World War I era shows that Islamism, despite its importance, was not the only major form of development in the Muslim countries. In the early 20th century Muslim countries were either colonised or under western domination and tutelage. The political and economic marginalization of Muslim countries had resulted in a substantial difference between them and the European societies. In the latter, the general social structure had been clearly and recognisably shaped in terms of class formation, especially due to the industrial revolution and social turmoil in the 19th century. There were the working class, farmers, industrialists and commercial classes, which were represented by corresponding ideologies and political doctrines such as socialism, liberalism, communism, conservatism, and eventually fascism. Unlike this situation, the Muslim societies did not have the possibility of experiencing the same evolution. At this time, the working class as a homogenous and conscientious social realm either did not exist or was very weak and elusive. Farmers were not organised, and the middle class was still in its infancy and unable to formulate new claims and initiate change and reforms. This is why applying a range of ideological and political doctrines to developments in Muslim societies does not make sense in the same way as it does applying them in the context of European societies.³² Nevertheless, the end of the 19th century and especially the period after World War I witnessed a corresponding use of traditional terms (often Islamic) such as *usuli* and *akhbari*, *islahi* and *salafi* on the one hand to describe modern socio-political developments, and, on the other hand, the introduction of new concepts borrowed from the Europeans such as socialist, liberal, communist and social democratic. Bearing this in mind, we can suggest that the Muslim political arena was occupied by four major trends that worked in an antagonistic relation to each other. These trends are *authoritarianism*, *liberal democracy*, *socialism* and *Islamism*. In political terms, the real struggle occurred between authoritarianism and Islamism. This struggle is still going on. The liberal-democratic and the socialist trends being weak, they merely played a marginal role in the Muslim political arena. While the first three trends were in power in the period between 1918 and 1979 (at least for some time), Islamism did not come to power until 1979. Until this date, Islamism took the form of various anti-systemic organisations and parties, but not as a government. It is also important to note that the existence of the liberal-democratic trend in a governmental form has been very short-lived (only four to five years) and has geographically been limited to Egypt and Iran.

The main characteristics of the four trends are as follows:³³

The authoritarian trend, in its diverse forms, represents the most powerful and durable trend in the Muslim countries. The authoritarian leaders believed that carrying out the modernising policy by force was the most appropriate way to lead their countries to progress and prosperity. Continuing their authoritarian modernisation, they arduously fought the democratic forces and brutally repressed every protestation coming from liberals or Islamists. At the same time, they ceaselessly looked for western support in order to reach their goal. Indeed, they often found this effective support, overtly or discretely. However, authoritarian regimes are not solid entities. They are divided into different categories with main distinctions between secular and religious regimes, between socialist and anti-socialist and between pro-western and anti-western regimes. Among the authoritarian, secular leaders, Mustapha Kemal (Atatürk), of course, takes up a very special place. He was the first leader in the Muslim countries who not only dared put an end to the Caliphate, but also replaced it with a secular regime in Turkey. Reza Shah (r.1925-41), his son and successor Muhammad Reza Shah (r. 1941-79) in Iran, and Amanullah Khan (r.1919-25) in Afghanistan were, in their own manner, disciples of Atatürk. Ahmad Sukarno of Indonesia, Anwar el-Sadat and Hosni Mubarak in Egypt as well as the Tunisian regime under Habib Bourguiba and his successor Zine el Abidine Ben Ali belong to the same group. The Moroccan regime is a combination of a secular and a religious, authoritarian regime. On the one hand, the King is considered the Prince of Believers [*Amir al-Mu'minin*] and on the other hand, the kingdom is open to some secular reform of especially the law on family matters and the statute of the women. The Kingdom of Jordan has many resemblances to Morocco, and it is fair to consider both of them to be traditional kingdoms (in Weberian terms) rather than secular or religious ones.

Among the religious, authoritarian regimes, Saudi Arabia and various Arab emirates in the Persian Gulf can be mentioned. These regimes, tribal in essence and traditionalist in nature, have adopted two totally parallel, but contradictory lines of conduct. From the strategic point of view, they rally round western powers, above all the United States. On the other hand, they categorically reject the western philosophical, moral and political models. Endeavours to introduce parliamentary regimes into Kuwait and Bahrain were extremely slow and unclear. The Saudi Arabian consultative assembly [Shura], with the Koran as its Constitution, is a tribal institution rather than a parliamentary assembly, whereas the Pakistani regime is an intermediate regime between two types of authoritarianism: the secular and the religious one.

A great number of the above-mentioned regimes continue to govern the Muslim countries, except for the regime of the Shah in Iran and the Amanullah regime in Afghanistan. The former collapsed after 50 years with the Islamist revolution in 1979, and the latter after a short period of reign ending as early as 1925. While the

secular, authoritarian regimes generally repress both democratic and religious forces, the religious, authoritarian regimes repress both democratic and secular forces. The common trends among all these regimes are found in their strongly pro-western and anti-democratic character; the latter in various degrees, depending on the general hardness or softness of the governments towards their opponents: in Jordan softer than in Syria, and in Iran harder than in Indonesia.

The liberal and democratic trend was composed of the best educated sections of the population, senior civil servants and university professors, supported by a number of intellectuals and writers - in short, an agglomerate of genuinely liberal forces (both lay and liberal Muslims) together with those who can be labelled as social democrats.³⁴ This faction considered the West (i.e. Europe at this time) to have two dimensions: a harmless and a harmful one. The harmless dimension, and in their eyes the most important one, refers to the foundations of western political and social philosophy. Freedom, progress, democracy, the separation of powers, the separation of state and religion as well as social well-being were the norms and principles considered to be the ones followed by proponents of this trend. Moreover, they were planning to realise the same model in their own societies. The harmful dimension of the West spoke for itself in the policies applied towards non-European countries. Liberal Muslims fought this line of policy because, along with their countries, they saw themselves as the direct long-term victims of this very policy. Therefore the road to follow was to stay loyal to the foundation principles of the West. Those principles seemed to have proved their worth in bringing happiness to Europe. On the other hand, it was necessary to resist western politics. Liberal Muslims were patriots (in order not to use the label 'nationalist') who were dedicated to the struggle for national liberation. Let us recall two well-known examples of this trend. We are referring to the *Wafd* party in Egypt under the leadership of Zaghlul Pasha and the National Front of Iran led by Muhammad Mosaddeq. These two political groupings both struggled against the British empire (the *Wafd* party from the end of World War I and the Versailles Conference in 1919), and both gained political power in their respective countries. The *Wafd* party from 1930 to 1952, and the National Front from 1951 to 1953 and then again just for a short period of time before Ayatollah Khomeini came to power. Egyptian free officers overthrew both King Farouq and his *Wafd* government in July 1952. Having dared to nationalise the oil industry in Iran, Mosaddeq was overthrown by the CIA with the Shah's collaboration (August 1953). The very last National Front government under Shapour Bakhtiar (in 1979) was also overthrown in turn by Khomeini's Islamist revolution. To sum up, the liberal and democratic Muslims had quite a difficult task to accomplish: applying western democratic values in their own countries, while fighting western imperialism. The West, ruthlessly pursuing its short-sighted economic interests, totally ignored the liberal Muslims' ideals and did everything possible to weaken them and overthrow their freely and democratically elected governments.

The socialist trend emerged in the Middle East after the success of the Bolshevik revolution in Russia. The Iranian Communist Party held its first congress in 1920, and the Tudeh Party, created in 1946 as the successor of the Communist Party, has played an important role in Iranian political life before and even after the Islamist Revolution of 1979. The Syro-Lebanese Communist party was founded in 1936, and other communist parties were present in all Muslim countries except for countries like Saudi Arabia and the Emirates. Their activities often took place clandestinely, but were tolerated in some countries like Sudan, Iraq and Syria.³⁵ Despite their presence and their influence among fractions of intellectuals and workers, they have never succeeded in establishing a communist regime in a Muslim country. Those who governed in the name of socialism were all authoritarian and pro-Soviet even if they claimed to be social-democrats. Gamal Abd el-Nasser of Egypt stands as the main proponent of Arab Socialism and the hero of Arab Nationalism. Nasser turned to the Soviet Union after the American refusal to grant a loan in connection with the construction of the Aswan dam. This line of conduct was quickly changed by his successor: Anwar el-Sadat. The Ba‘th party in power in Syria and under Saddam Hussein in Iraq is also a member of the socialist authoritarian club. The Ba‘th party, with its secular origins and aspirations, exercised military power with an iron hand both in Damascus and Baghdad. The attitude of this party towards the West has varied from ambivalence (in Syria) to overt hostility (in Iraq). Furthermore, leaders like Huari Boumedienne of Algeria and also the radical socialist regime of South Yemen (Aden) in the 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s belong to this group.

The Islamist trend came about in Egypt in 1928 and extended to all Muslim countries (e.g. the *Jama‘at-e Islami* [Islamic Organisation] in India and the *Fadayian-e Islam* [The Devotees of Islam] in Iran) in the 1940s in its diverse forms and interpretations.³⁶ This current always seemed and still seems to prosper in essentially traditionalist urban, lower and middle class strata. These strata embrace a large jumble of different categories such as school teachers, lower civil servants, technicians, a few young priests, certain young officers, and particularly shopkeepers, merchants and tradesmen. In spite of their diversity, these groups can very easily be mobilised. Mosques and numerous religious centres and societies (*dawrah* and *halqah*) serve as their favourite meeting spots.

The most remarkable aspect of this current is its theoretical position in relation to the West. We have seen that liberal Muslims always drew and still draw a delicate distinction between western philosophical and political foundations and real politics of the West. We have also noted that many authoritarians focus on the material achievement of western civilisation as illustrated by technical, industrial and social progress. Islamists adopt a totally different attitude. They consider the position of the liberals as deceptive and interpret the authoritarians’ position as dictated by western powers. To them, the West represents one single block without

any differences or variations whatsoever. In their reasoning, western policies towards Muslims and other oppressed peoples are a direct product of the philosophical and theoretical foundations of the West. In this perspective, secularisation and modernity are perceived as ‘cultural invasion’ [*hujum-e farhangi*], being part of a western project or even a western plot against Islamic values and culture, and at bottom instruments designed to eradicate Islam as a religion. Consequently, in order to successfully fight against these political doings, Islamists must attack and reject the western theoretical foundations. This kind of discourse is to be found in the works of Hasan al-Banna, Mawdudi, Sayyid Qutb, Hasan al-Turabi and Ayatollah Khomeini, to name only the most important theoreticians and practitioners of Islamism.³⁷ Symptomatic of Islamism in this respect is Mawdudi’s assertion:

[we] aspire for Islamic renaissance on the basis of the Koran. To us the koranic spirit and Islamic tenets are immutable; but the application of this spirit in the realm of practical life must always vary with the change of conditions, increase of knowledge...We have to arrange these ideas and laws of life on genuine Islamic cross lines so that Islam once again becomes a dynamic force; the leader of the world rather than its follower.³⁸

Sayyid Qutb follows the path of his mentor (Mawdudi) by saying:

The enemy, by changing the nature of struggle, intends to deprive [the Believers] of their weapon of true victory...the truth of the matter is that the later-day imperialism is but a mask for crusading spirit, since it is not possible for it to appear in its true form, as it was possible in the Middle Ages.³⁹

It is in the same spirit, but in more virulent terms, that Ayatollah Khomeini already declared in the first years of his government that

Muslims the world over who believe in the truth of Islam, arise and gather beneath the banner of tawhid (divine unity) and the teachings of Islam! Repel the treacherous superpowers from your countries and your abundant resources. Restore the glory of Islam, and abandon your selfish disputes and differences, for you possess everything! Rely on the culture of Islam, resist Western imitation, and stand on your own feet.⁴⁰

At the end of this part of the study, we have to emphasise that it was only in the 1960s that Islamism as an *ideology* and as a *movement* became hegemonic. Until then, as we have explained, authoritarianism, liberalism, nationalism and socialism represented the main political streams in the Muslim societies. The first blow to the above trends happened with the unrest in Iran under the leadership of Ayatollah Khomeini (June 1963). This unrest was directed against the Shah’s reform program, consisting, among others, of a land reform and women’s right to vote. It was at that time that Ayatollah Khomeini became the undisputed political

figure against the Shah. As a consequence of this event, the liberal and democratic movements under the moral leadership of Mohammad Mosaddeq lost their position as alternatives to the Shah's authoritarian regime. The second and far more devastating blow, especially for the Sunni Muslims, occurred in 1967 with the Six-Day War which put an end to the Pan-Arabism of President Nasser of Egypt. From this date, the highly profiled discourse on Arabism changed into being only an illusion without a political future. Arabism was quickly replaced with the discourse of Islamism, especially in its most radical version, namely the version propagated by Sayyid Qutb before his execution in 1966. So, it is no exaggeration to say that Khomeini's rebellion in Iran and the fiasco of Nasser in Egypt which dealt such a hard blow to Arabian self-confidence, were turning points and put an end to one era and started a new era dominated by Islamism.

Now, we turn to an analysis of Islamism's evolution from being a latent and nearly insignificant phenomenon to becoming a highly terrifying global actor. Our account of this complex subject divides the process into three distinct periods, and focuses on the main terrorist strands of the movement, leaving aside a detailed study of various Islamist personalities and groups.

First Stage 1928-78: the Era of Hasan al-Banna and Mawdudi

The first stage of Islamist terrorism lasted just over half a century. A number of groups and associations of Islamist allegiance flourished during this period. Most of them were latent, remaining behind the scenes. As we shall see, they became active in the second stage: *Ikhwan al-Muslimin* in Egypt (1928), *Fadayan-e Islam*, created in Iran in 1941/1942,⁴¹ and *Jama'at i-Islami* [The Islamic Organisation], established in Lahore (Pakistan) in 1941, were the three most active of these organisations.

The first two organisations had important common features. Not only had they implanted themselves in the two most populated countries of the region, but they also had a common objective.⁴² This was the reunification of the Islamic world under one government and a single flag. They also agreed on how to reach this goal. The unified government of Islam would be achieved by overthrowing the 'corrupt' governments who unfairly intruded on Muslim countries, legitimising the use of violence. There were natural differences between them. The *Ikhwan* was Sunni and the *Fadayan* was Shi'a. However, this difference was of secondary importance and did not change their essential goals. The other difference resided in their organizational structure. The *Ikhwan* had established various networks covering domains such as education, propagation, and financial investment. What particularly strengthened the position of the *Ikhwan* and enabled their in-depth infiltration of society was to be found elsewhere. Their network of social help

brought them a particular kind of prestige. These networks covered important sectors (medicine, matrimony, financial loans, legal aid, education and so forth). This enabled the *Ikhwan* to recruit new disciples by having them enrolled in activities and operations controlled by *Ikhwan* authorities. On the other hand, the range of activities of the *Fadaiyan* was extremely limited and included only two areas: propagation and terrorism. We will now proceed to analyse the characteristics of this first stage of Islamist terrorism.

Sayyid Abul ‘Ala Mawdudi (1903-79), the founder of *Jama‘at-e-Islami*, is one of the prominent and influential leaders of Islamism in the 20th century.⁴³ Mawdudi’s general position is very similar to that of the Muslim Brothers, both in ideological terms and in terms of the use of tactics to achieve the re-establishment of the Caliphate and hegemony of Islam worldwide. Mawdudi played a key role in the debates that preceded independence of Muslim South Asia from British rule and the following partition of India and the creation of Pakistan. As a Sunni leader, he was convinced that the regaining of power would only be possible through a revival of the Medina model under the prophet Muhammad, and he dreamt of the return of the glorious days of Islam in India under the Mughal. In the beginning of the 1920s, when the Ottoman Caliphate entered a serious crisis, he became involved in the Caliphate movement whose goal it was to rescue the morbid institution. Once the Caliphate was abolished, he wrote a book with a suggestive title: *Al Jihad fil-Islam* [Jihad in Islam]. This book was published in 1929, which was only one year after the foundation of the Society of Muslim Brothers by Hasan al-Banna.

From Hasan al-Banna’s perspective, the fusion of religion and political ardour is a constant theme in Mawdudi’s writings, as he states in *The Islamic Way of Life* that “the *chief* characteristic of Islam is that it makes no distinction between the spiritual and the secular life”.⁴⁴ Compared to Hasan al-Banna, who insists on the revolution of the individual as the first step towards revolution of society, Mawdudi focuses more on a ‘top-down management process’ as stated in his work *Inqilâb-e Imâmat* [Revolution in Leadership]: “it is not the people’s thoughts which changes society... but the minds of the society’s movers and leaders.”⁴⁵

The major characteristics of this period are the following:

Apart from Mawdudi’s movement, which had chosen a political way for the establishment of the “Holy Community” and “his call for cultural break with the past [which] was not an incitement to social revolution so much as a call to take part in the political institutions”,⁴⁶ Islamist movements did not refrain from the use of political violence and terrorist actions. Terrorist acts were initially directed exclusively against Muslims. In other words, during this particular period, Islamist terrorism was ‘internal terrorism’. According to our investigations, no assassinations were carried out by Islamists in western countries, not even on

Muslims living in these countries. In addition, the purpose of Islamist terrorism was not to spread terror, but rather to eliminate political adversaries. Political assassination was used in order to destabilise regimes in power, judged by Islamists as being corrupt and accused of being puppet governments. In some cases, 'heretical' Muslims were eliminated by Islamists. This was the case with the assassination of Ahmad Kasravi, a well-known Iranian author (in 1946). However, political figures were by far their favourite victims. In Egypt, Prime Minister Nuqras Pasha was assassinated by the Muslim Brothers in 1948, and in 1954, a terrorist assassination of President Nasser was planned, but the terrorists did not succeed. Again in 1964, the Egyptian police revealed a new plot against President Nasser. The alleged instigator of the failed assassination plot, Sayyid Qutb of the *Ikhwan*, was arrested in 1966. In 1981, President Anwar el-Sadat of Egypt was assassinated by the *Jihad* group, whose members were dissidents from the *Ikhwan*.⁴⁷ In Iran, two Iranian prime ministers were assassinated (General Haj Ali Razmara in 1951 and Hasan Mansour in 1965). In 1949, Abdul Hussein Hajir, Minister of the Court and regarded as a member of the Baha'i sect, was assassinated. In 1952, one member of the Fadayian, a boy of only 15 years of age, shot and wounded Hussein Fatemi, Minister of Foreign Affairs. Again in 1955, Hussein Ala, the Prime Minister who was preparing to depart for Baghdad to sign the Pact of the same name, narrowly escaped death from bullets fired by a young worker. All these terrorist actions were perpetrated by the Fadayian.

Faced with the chain of Islamist political assassinations, the authoritarian regimes' reaction was equally violent. Hasan al-Banna, the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood, was assassinated by the Egyptian secret police in 1948.⁴⁸ Nawwab Safavi and three of his disciples from the Iranian *Fadayian-e Islam* were sentenced to death and executed in 1956, as well as Sayyid Qutb in Egypt in 1966.

Furthermore, terrorist actions of this period were not acts of suicide. No such actions had ever been carried out by Islamists. Suicidal terrorism stems from the second period examined below. Another characteristic feature of the first stage is the lack of terrorist acts against civilians. In fact, they were acts of 'discriminatory' and well-targeted terrorism aimed at high-ranking politicians. This type of terrorism strangely reminds us of the *Assassins* of the Middle Ages, the disciples of Hasan al-Sabbah in the 12th century AD, except that they did assassinate a non-Muslim, namely Conrad de Montferrat, the Latin king of Jerusalem (in 1198).⁴⁹ This is to say that Islamists refrained from assassinating non-Muslims until the end of the 1970s.

Second Stage 1978-90: the Era of Ayatollah Khomeini

The second phase of Islamist terrorism starts off with the Islamist revolution in Iran. It was the first time Islamists acceded to power. This revolution had a tremendous impact on other serious events in the region such as the devastating

war between Iran and Iraq from 1980 to 1988, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 and the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq in 1990 just to mention a few. In addition to these events, the Islamist revolution had a direct and immediate impact on the emergence and radicalisation of Islamist movements all over the world. They saw how, despite being heavily armed and supported by the West, the Shah's regime was overthrown by Ayatollah Khomeini, head of the Shi'a community. In reality, those who effectively took power in Iran were Islamic factions coming from the *Fadayian-e Islam* as well as from other groups, which directly or indirectly had taken part in terrorist activities since 1945. Khomeini attempted not only to spread his revolution to non-Iranian Shi'a but also to Sunni populations. This is the reason why he avoided bringing the Shi'a aspect of the revolution into the open and insisted on Islamic ecumenicalism. Let us now examine the major aspects of this phase.

First of all, Islamist terrorism changed. Up to this period, the terrorist acts of the Islamists had been carefully selected and person-specific, avoiding any repercussions on civilians. This line of conduct was interrupted in the process of the Islamist revolution in 1978. In order to bring about chaos in Iran and in order to destabilise the regime of the Shah, Islamists set a cinema on fire (18 August 1978), the Rex Cinema in Abadan (oil-producing city). About 400 people were killed.⁵⁰ This tragic event proved to mark the starting point of a new tactic: to attack civilian as well as military targets. From then on, Islamist terrorism turned into blind, generalised, and non-discriminatory terrorism, the consequences of which were immeasurable and tragic on regional as well as world scale, in Lebanon as well as in New York, Washington D.C. and Virginia.

Yet another innovation was the capture of foreign hostages. This also started in Iran with Khomeini's blessing. So-called student groups of the 'Line of the Imam' [*Khatt-e Imâm*] occupied the American Embassy in Tehran, holding people hostage for 444 days (from 4 November 1979). This event was also the model for the capture of hostages in Lebanon. The third and without a doubt the most important innovation during the second phase is 'suicidal terrorism'. Up to 1983, Islamists were concerned with preserving their own lives. The first Islamist suicidal terrorist act was committed by the Lebanese Hezbollah in Beirut on 23 October 1983. Trucks filled with explosives smashed into the barracks occupied by American and French soldiers, killing the suicidal terrorists as well as western officers and soldiers (241 American marines and 58 French paratroopers).⁵¹ Inspired and encouraged by the surprising Islamist conquest in Iran, numerous Islamist groupings, Shi'a as well as Sunni, rapidly formed in the Middle East. Nonetheless, it can be affirmed that during the 1980s, Islamist terrorism of Shi'a inspiration was dominant. This is based on two major events: the war between Iraq and Iran and the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1981, followed by the occupation of southern Lebanon by Israel until 2000.

The Iraq-Iran war, which started in September 1980 and lasted eight years, turned out to be one of the bloodiest wars since World War II, and its consequence was a backlash of terrorist activities. In its aggression against Iran, Iraq received direct and indirect support from western powers. Saddam Hussein had been provided with an arsenal of chemical weapons from Germany, as well as with *Mirages* and other sophisticated weapons from France. The Americans brought their indirect support to Baghdad, thus hoping to destabilise revolutionary Iran. The ayatollahs of Tehran, who were very annoyed with this support, resorted to a number of terrorist actions in Paris, assassinating and wounding several dozens of civilians. These actions resulted in the spreading of a climate of terror and panic among the French population. In order to put an end to the series of assassinations, President Chirac (prime minister from 1986 to 1988) negotiated with Tehran through Charles Pasqua, Minister of the Interior, in order to reach a *modus vivendi* with the ayatollahs. He succeeded in reaching an agreement with the Iranians. Part of the agreement was to cease terrorist actions on French territory. The other part was to cease arms transfers to Iraq and to hush up the accusations against the presumed *chief of activities*, Gorji, at the Iranian embassy in Paris. Despite the evidence of his involvement in planning terrorist actions, Gorji was safely returned to Iran.

Furthermore, the French government promised to release an Islamist terrorist from prison, Anis Naccache, who carried out the first attempt to kill Chapour Bakhtiar, Iran's last prime minister before the Revolution of 1979. Naccache was released in 1990 and sent back to Iran. One year later, Bakhtiar was assassinated by Iranian agents (August 1991). The capture of hostages in Lebanon was another method used by the ayatollahs to exercise pressure on the United States. They got substantial support for this venture from the Hezbollah, who were also annoyed with the Israeli occupation of Lebanon. This occupation of Lebanese territory by Israel provided additional grounds for the growth of Islamist terrorism. The Lebanese Hezbollah increased its activities by attacking western soldiers as well as the American embassy in Beirut (September 1984), capturing hostages and firing rockets at Israeli villages. Here, a delicate question arises: the distinction between a terrorist act and an act of resistance. The Shi'a of southern Lebanon justified their actions with the legitimate right to fight against the occupier (bearing in mind that the Hezbollah is particularly active in southern Lebanon). When the occupation resumed as of June 2000, there was a clear reduction in Hezbollah actions against Israeli territory until the summer of 2006, when Hezbollah fired rockets at northern Israel followed by their capturing of two Israeli soldiers on Israeli soil and the killing of others (July). These attacks provoked Israel's war against the Hezbollah.

When examining Islamist terrorism of Sunni allegiance, we find that there has also been a large number of murderous activities in Egypt. Two terrorist organisations took centre stage. One was the *Jama'at-e Islami* [The Islamic Association] and the

other *Al-Jihad al-Islami* [Islamic Holy War]. Both movements emanate from the *Ikhwan* and became active at the end of the 1970s. This was a consequence of the double influence of the peace settlement between Egypt and Israel as well as the Islamist revolution of Khomeini. In 1979, peace with Israel brought about a new sense of fundamentalist outrage. In his anxiety to sustain the momentum of his peace policy, President Sadat closely identified with American policy. Thus, in the minds of the Islamists, he personified domestic failure and external betrayal. He was seen as neglectful of his Arab neighbours, favouring closer ties with the West, particularly with Israel and the United States. The assassination of President Sadat in October 1981 by members of the *Jihad* group implied that Islamic militants were able to strike at the very heart of the Egyptian power structure. At the same time as the peace treaty was signed, Khomeini was successful in Iran which showed that the 'impossible was possible' and that a regime as powerful as that of the Shah could be overthrown. This was probably the reason for a renewed outbreak of terrorist activities in Egypt. Sheikh Umar Abd al-Rahman, the instigator of the bomb explosion in the World Trade Center in 1993, is acknowledged to be the supreme chief of the *Jihad* group and of *Jama'at-e Islami*.

Third Stage 1990-?: the Era of Osama Bin Laden

This phase of Islamist terrorism is the most critical and spectacular of all. The unprecedented scope of the terrorist attacks of 9/11 in New York and Washington D.C. flagrantly shows the substantial changes that have occurred in Islamism. To better comprehend the reasons for the escalation of this radicalisation, we should, besides the specific Palestinian issues, take into account two factors: 1) the victory of the Mujahidin in Afghanistan in 1989, and 2) the settlement of American troops in Saudi Arabia in 1990.

The success of the Islamist revolution in Iran occurred the same year that Afghanistan was invaded by the Soviet Union (29 December 1979). A fierce resistance to this invasion developed. The resistance was a coalition of three factions: 'Afghans', 'Arabs' and 'Americans'. The first two groups constituted what we call the *Mujahidin* [Muslim fighters]. During ten years of warfare, the Soviet Union suffered heavy losses, and estimations claim that there was over a million losses on the side of the Mujahidin.⁵² The true impact of warfare against Islamist terrorism started with the forced withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan (15 February 1989). The Arab Mujahidin originated from various countries, but in particular from Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Egypt and Algeria. Once the war was over, these thoroughly hardened groups, now experienced in guerrilla warfare, returned to their respective countries.

Following their return, there was a renewed and unprecedented backlash of terrorist activities in Egypt as well as in Algeria. Hence, the terrorist activities of these groups were no longer limited to the geographical limits of their respective

countries. The so-called 'Afghani' from Algeria extended their terrorist activities to Europe, particularly to France. Nonetheless, Egyptian terrorist groups such as *Al-Jama'at-e Islami* and *Al-Jihad* resorted to 'wild' terrorism whose range of action increasingly exceeded geographical boundaries. From February 1993 to November 1997, i.e. before the constitution of the *Al-Qaida* movement, *Al-Jama'at* claimed responsibility for 13 different Islamist bomb attacks, most of which occurred in Egypt, but also in Pakistan (Islamabad, 9 November 1995), in Croatia (Rijeka, 20 October 1995) and in Ethiopia (Addis Ababa, 26 June 1995). There were other unclaimed murderous bomb attacks by Egyptian groups to be added to those cited above. The first among these is the attack on the World Trade Center (February 1993). During the subsequent legal proceedings, a tribunal drew the conclusion that Sheikh Omar Abdel Rahman, spiritual leader of the *Jihad* as well as the *Jama'at*, and several members of these two associations were directly involved. In addition to this spiritual leading figure, now imprisoned in New York, another figure came to play a very important role next to Osama Bin Laden: Ayman Al-Zawahiri, head of *Al-Jihad* (from Egypt). In the 1990s, the Egyptian *Jihad* group carried out attacks on Egyptian officials. Among the group's targets were the chairman of Parliament (1990), and the Minister of the Interior (1993). In 1995, the *Jihad* orchestrated attacks outside of Egypt on the Egyptian attaché in Switzerland and on the Egyptian Embassy in Pakistan, resulting in the deaths of 15 people.

On 18 April 1999, one of the largest anti-terrorism trials in recent years wound to a close in Egypt. The trial involved 107 Islamists, 63 of whom were tried *in absentia*. Al-Zawahiri was also one of those sentenced to death. Al-Zawahiri, who had been living underground, rejoined Osama Bin Laden in Afghanistan. It should be noted that everything began in Afghanistan and returns to this very same place. This is why we can assert that Afghanistan, especially after the coming into power of the Taliban in 1996, had a definite impact on Islamist terrorism.⁵³ This impact leads, on the one hand, to the radicalisation of Islamist terrorism and on the other hand, to its true globalisation.

The presence of American troops in Saudi Arabia has been used by *Al-Qaida* as justification for further radicalisation of its actions. Through a widened interpretation, Muslims consider Saudi Arabian soil as their Holy Land. Islam was born in Mecca where the *Ka'ba* is to be found, and the Prophet Muhammad formed his government in Medina where he is buried. Military presence by non-Muslim troops on this soil and particularly the indefinite prolongation of their presence are judged by certain Muslims, particularly by Saudis, to be a flagrant attack on their Holy Land by *infidels*. To them, this presence is seen as a plot developed by the West in collaboration with the Saudi Arabian government. In their opinion, the West has always tried to reoccupy Muslim territory; and this time not just with the aim of becoming completely dominant, but simply of

eradicating Islam. It is therefore logical that the one who headed the revolt against the foreign, non-Muslim occupation was no other than Osama Bin Laden, a Saudi subject and a 'veteran Afghani'. Retaliation against this occupation came about swiftly. The Gulf War came to an end in April 1991, and the World Trade Center bombs exploded in November 1993. The same year, Bin Laden was involved in operations against Somalia. In a similar set of actions/reactions, the Riyadh terrorist assassination occurred in 1995, and so did the explosion of the bombs in Khobar, one of the military bases in Saudi Arabia, resulting in several casualties among the American military. However, 1998 saw Islamist terrorism with Bin Laden's hallmark undergo a new and dramatic transformation owing to the unification of a number of Islamist movements into a single organisation.

At this point, the chronology becomes significant and revealing. Four Islamist groups united under Bin Laden into a new organisation. This one took the name of the 'World Islamic Front', later known as *Al-Qaida*. Only a few months later, on 7 August 1998, both the American embassies of Kenya and Tanzania became the targets of *Al-Qaida* causing the deaths of 224 people, including 12 Americans, and wounding over 4,000 people. The suicidal terrorist attack on the American cruiser USS Cole in Aden occurred two years later, causing the deaths of 17 American Marines (12 October 2000).⁵⁴

Among the four reunited organisations were the *Al-Jihad* of Egypt whose emir was no other than Ayman al-Zawahiri, the Islamic group of *Ahmad Taha* (Egypt), Sheikh Mir Hamza, secretary of the *Jama'at al-Ulama* of Pakistan and Fazul Rahman, leader of the *Jihad* Movement of Bangladesh. There are no ambiguities whatsoever in a clear declaration published on 23 February 1998. It entails a 'justification' and a 'mode of action'. The declaration argues, with the support of several Koran verses, that Muslims are under attack from the United States and Israel.⁵⁵

What mode of action is necessary to counteract the American 'attempts'? The answer is clear and unambiguous:

in compliance with God's order, we issue the following fatwa to all Muslims: The ruling to kill the Americans and their allies – civilians and military – is an individual duty for every Muslim who can do it in any country in which it is possible to do it, in order to liberate the al-Aqsa Mosque and the holy mosque [Mecca] from their grip, and in order for their armies to move out of all the lands of Islam, defeated and unable to threaten any Muslim.⁵⁶

For the first time in the over fourteen century-old Muslim history, a group of Muslims widely allows the assassination of civilians (Christians and Jews) everywhere in the world. Not only is assassination considered lawful, it is also decreed as an individual and an obligatory duty.

The proliferation of terrorist activities which occurred in the post-9/11 era, particularly after the war on Afghanistan and on Iraq raises basic questions about the future development of this new global terrorism. Should we expect the appearance of a 'fourth phase' of Islamist terrorism, or should we expect the end of it, or as Audrey Kurth Cronin puts it: "How al-Qaida Ends".⁵⁷ She argues that "terrorism, like war, never ends; however, individual terrorist campaigns and the groups that wage them always do".⁵⁸ Surely, Islamist terrorism will end some day. But, before its extinction, will the world witness a new wave of this kind of terrorism and if so, what will differentiate the new phase from the three above? The short answer to this question would be the biological and/or atomic weapon. According to the report of British MI5 (November 2006), there are some 1,000 young Muslim extremists in the United Kingdom suspected (at least some of them) of trying to make the 'dirty bomb' and chemical weapons.⁵⁹ If we add to this element the obvious Iranian ambition to acquire atomic weapons, we come to the conclusion that there is a potential risk that the fourth phase may become an 'atomic' one.

Conclusion

This historical sketch leads to the conclusion that the eruption of contemporary Islamism has parallels with the genesis of Bolshevism, Fascism and Nazism in that it can be traced back to World War I and the profound structural crisis it precipitated and, , in the context of Islamism, particularly the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. Disenchantment, anomie, and the desire for radical restoration or radical renewal are common trends in all extremist and totalitarian movements, although they are expressed in profoundly different ways. The time that elapsed between the formation of contemporary Islamism as a movement in 1928 and its access to government in 1979 helps explain why the affinities in the origins of Islamism and European totalitarianism have been generally overlooked. Three other major factors are that as a movement (in various forms) and as a political regime, Islamism was established outside the European continent especially in the Arab world, in India, then in Pakistan and in Iran. The establishment of Islamism was considered to be marginal to world politics. Secondly, none of these entities were, individually and collectively, equivalent to powerful totalitarian regimes such as Nazi Germany and the Soviet empire. Therefore, in terms of power and military capability the reflection that we have of Islamist movements and Islamist regimes is not comparable to the stereotype image of 'genuine' totalitarian powers. Thirdly, the fact that totalitarianism is widely associated with secular forms of politics has played a role in the exclusion of religious regimes from totalitarianism. But if there is any novelty in the study of the new development of totalitarianism, the novelty lies in the fact that as a political phenomenon, totalitarianism can also emerge from a religion. In this respect, we arrive at the identification of four

different religions: 1) *a-political religion*, 2) *political religion*, proper to secular, totalitarian regimes, 3) *civil religion*, proper to plural democracy, and 4) *ideologized religion*, proper to Islamism.⁶⁰

It also appears evident that totalitarian movements and regimes are different and there is no definitive ideal type of totalitarianism. Or even, as Salvatore Lupo puts it, a totally totalitarian regime does not exist in reality. What we have are various realizations of a totalitarian utopia.⁶¹ In this picture, Islamism stands as one particular form of totalitarian utopia. Therefore, each of these four totalitarian ideologies has its own specificities which make it different from the others. For example, Fascists emphasize a strong 'state', Nazis believe in the superiority of one 'race' over others, Bolsheviks focus on a specific 'class',⁶² while the Islamists' ideal is the realization of a worldwide Pax Islamica. Nevertheless, their common denominators are at least as substantial as their differences with regard to their origins, in a sense of historical crisis, their utopian aspirations, their forms of leadership, and their cult of violent action.

Once the genesis of Islamism, in the form of both a movement and a political regime, is seen mainly as a consequence of World War I, it is easier to understand the frustrations of some contemporary Muslims. In fact, the violent reaction of Islamism against liberal democracy today resembles the violence of European totalitarian movements directed at parliamentary democracy immediately after World War I. It seems as if, mentally, Islamists do not live in the 21st century but rather in the period between 1918 and 1945. In contrast to Bolshevism, Fascism and Nazism, whose final destinies are known, the fate of Islamism still remains one of the great unresolved questions of our time and, consequently, a subject of preoccupation. We may know much about how extremism arises, but we do not know how it will end.

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Notes and References

- ¹ Islamism is a vast and very complex subject the roots of which go back to the High Middle Ages. Therefore, our enquiry has been limited to contemporary Islamism which stems from around the 1920s. By 'Islamism', I mean a "religious ideology with a holistic [totalitarian] interpretation of Islam whose final aim is the conquest of the world by all means". See Mehdi Mozaffari, "What is Islamism? History and Definition of a Concept", *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions*, Vol. 8, No. 1, 17-33, March 2007; p. 21.
- ² Jean-Baptist Duroselle, *Tout Empire Périra* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1992).
- ³ Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000), p. 373.
- ⁴ Ibid, p. 380.
- ⁵ François Furet writes: "La guerre de 1914 a pour l'histoire du XXe siècle le même caractère matriciel que la Révolution française pour le XIXe. D'elle sont directement sortis les événements et les mouvements qui sont à l'origine des trois 'tyrannies' dont parle en 1936 Élie Halévy... Elle laisse supposer une communauté d'époque entre les passions soulevées par ces régimes inédits, qui ont fait de la mobilisation politique des anciens soldats le levier de la domination sans partage d'un seul parti." *Le passé d'une illusion: Essai sur l'idée communiste au XXe siècle* (Paris: Robert Laffont/Calmann-Lévy, 1995), p. 194.
- ⁶ Roger Griffin, *Modernism and Fascism* (Hampshire and New York: Palgrave, 2007), p. 162.
- ⁷ Max Weber, "Politics as a Vocation", in H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills (eds.), *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* (London: Routledge, 1991), p. 128, and in Peter Lassman and Ronald Speirs (eds.), *Weber Political Writings* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 368.
- ⁸ Max Weber, "Science as a Vocation", in Peter Lassman & Irving Velody (eds.), *Max Weber's 'Science as a Vocation'* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989), pp 13-14, and in Gerth and Wright Mills, *From Max Weber* (note 7), p. 139.
- ⁹ Jan Iversen, "The Crisis of European Civilization", in Mehdi Mozaffari (ed.), *Globalization and Civilizations* (London & New York: Routledge, 2002), pp.152-54.
- ¹⁰ Ibid, p. 160.
- ¹¹ Arnold Toynbee, *A Study of History* (London: Oxford University Press & Thames and Hudson, 1995).
- ¹² Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York and London: Harcourt Brace & Company, 1975), Chapter eight, p. 222. In the same chapter, the reader will find Arendt's brilliant analyses on differences between Pan-Germanism and Pan-Slavism, pp. 222-302.
- ¹³ Walter Laqueur (ed.), *Fascism: A Reader's Guide* (London: Penguin Books, 1982); George L. Moss, *Masses and Man* (New York: H. Fertig, 1980); Stanley G. Payne, *A History of Fascism 1914-45* (London: Routledge, 2001).
- ¹⁴ Giovanni Gentile, *Origins and Doctrine of Fascism* (London: Transaction, 2002), p.2.
- ¹⁵ Ibid.
- ¹⁶ Ibid, p. 15.
- ¹⁷ Renzo De Felice, *Interpretation of Fascism* (Cambridge, M.A.: Harvard University Press, 1977), p. 175.
- ¹⁸ Ibid.
- ¹⁹ Gino Cerbella, *Fascismo E Islamismo* (Tripoli: Maggi, Stampatore Editore, 1938-XVI). Quotations are translated from Italian into English by Tina Magaard.
- ²⁰ Roger Griffin (note 7).
- ²¹ Ibid, pp. 167-68.
- ²² Karl Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia* (New York: Harvest Book, 1936), p. 203.

23 At the end of World War I, only few Muslim countries were independent, and many of them
 were still colonised. Therefore, the word ‘Muslims’ refers to those Muslims, primarily of
 Sunni persuasion, who took an active part in political activities, often with religious
 convictions and motivations.

24 It is also likely that Istanbul is derived from *eis tên polin* which means ‘going to the City’.

25 Rashid Rida, *Al-Khalâfat aw al-Imâmat al-Uzma*, translated by Henri Laoust into French;
 see *Le Califat dans la doctrine de Rashid Rida* (Paris: J. Maisonneuve, 1986), p.116.

26 Hamid Enayat, *Modern Islamic Political Thought* (London: Macmillan, 1982), pp.70-1.

27 Hasan al-Banna, *Majmu’a Rasâ’I al-Imam al-Shahid: Hasan al-Banna* (Cairo: Dâr al-
 Tawzi’ wal Nashr el-Islâmiyya, 1992), pp.99-100. /*Five Tracts of Hasan al-Banna*, translated
 by Charles Wendel (Berkeley: University of California, 1978), pp.22-4.

28 Alan Palmer, *The Decline and Fall of the Ottoman Empire* (London: John Murray, 1992), p.
 266.

29 Quoted by Richard P. Mitchell, *The Society of the Muslim Brothers* (Oxford: Oxford
 University Press, 1993), p. 232.

30 Ibn Taymiyya, a front figure of the Hanbali School, is a prolific author whose main political
 ideas are formulated in his work *Siyâsa al-Shar’iyya* [Religious Politics]. This book has been
 translated into French by Henri Laoust, see *Le Traité de droit public d’Ibn Taimîya* (Beirut:
 Institut Français de Damas, 1948). Muhammad Abdul Wahhab, also from the Hanbali School,
 is the founder of the Wahhabiyya movement. His treaty *Kitâb al-Tawhid* [The Book of the
 Unity of God] (Paris: Al-Qalam, 2001) represents the leading theoretical work of
 Wahhabiyya.

31 See Vali Nasr, *The Shia Revival* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2006) and Yitzhak Nakash,
Reaching for Power: The Shi’a in the Modern Arab World (Princeton: Princeton University
 Press, 2006).

32 For further information on social and political strata in the Arab World before and especially
 after WWI, see among others Albert Hourani, *A History of the Arab Peoples* (London: Faber
 and Faber, 1991), chapters 19-22 and Nazih Ayubi, *Overstating the Arab State: Politics and
 Society in the Middle East* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1995), chapters 5-8. Ayubi’s classification of
 political trends in Arab societies is related to a general classification of political regimes,
 divided into two major types: the Radical, Populist republic on the one hand and the
 Conservative, Kin-Ordered monarchies on the other.

33 Note that the review of the four outlined trends is not exhaustive, but representative. There
 were other trends in between. For example, there were social democrats (e.g. ‘the Third Force’
 [Niruouy-Sewum] in Iran under the leadership of Khalil Maleki in the 1950s and 1960s.
 Similarly, there were and still are some Muslims who claim to be liberal (e.g. ‘the Liberation
 Movement of Iran’ [Nehzat-e Âzadi-e Iran] under the leadership of Mehdi Bazaragan (first
 Prime Minister of Ayatollah Khomeini) or even the Muslim Brothers in Jordan. Liberal
 Muslims have also been represented by thinkers like the Egyptian Ali Abd al-Raziq, the
 author of *Islam and the Sources of Political Authority* [*Al-Islam wa Usul al-Huk* (Cairo: Al-
 Hay’at al-Mesriyyah, 1993)], who denied that Islam is a specific political regime. Abd al-
 Raziq argues that “the Prophet was not a political leader, and that the caliphs were not
 successors of the Prophet... It further appears that he believed that the religious community
 constituted of common belief by means of the Prophet’s mission did not have a political
 dimension.” (Leonard Binder, *Islamic Liberalism* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press,
 1988), p.131). Under the same liberal rubric, we have to add other personalities like Taha
 Hussein, the famous Egyptian writer, as well as Naguib Mahfouz, another Egyptian novelist
 and winner of the Nobel Prize in Literature. See Tarek Osman “Mahfouz’s grave, Arab
 Liberalism’s death”, *Open Democracy*, 23 November (2006). Albert Hourani uses another

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- classification of political and intellectual trends: Ottomanism, Islamic reformism, nationalism and traditionalism. See Hourani (note 33), pp. 311-14.
- 34 Albert Hourani resumes very well the general position of Arab Liberals vis-à-vis European civilisation. He writes: "In general, a certain definition of European civilization was accepted: Europe was taken at the value it put upon itself, or more specifically, the value put upon it by the liberal thinkers of the nineteenth century. The bases of European civilization, the 'secret' of its strength and prosperity, were taken to be such factors as these: the existence of the national community, ruling itself in the light of its own interests; the separation of religion and politics; the democratic system of government, that is to say, the prevalence of the general will as expressed by freely elected parliaments and ministries responsible to them; the respect for individual rights, particularly the right to speak and write freely; the strength of the political virtues, of loyalty to the community and willingness to make sacrifices for it; above all, the organization of modern industry and the 'scientific spirit' which lay behind it, Albert Habib Hourani, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age: 1798-1939* (London: Oxford University Press, 1983), pp. 324-25.
- 35 Maxime Rodinson, *Marxism and the Muslim World* (London: Zed, 1981), pp. 60-75.
- 36 For a detailed study of the expansion of the Islamic movements in different Muslim countries, see Nazih Ayubi, *Political Islam: Religion and Politics in the Arab World* (London: Routledge, 1991), chapters 4-5, pp. 70-119.
- 37 Nazih Ayub has presented a short, but very useful analysis of intellectual sources of the prominent figures of Islamism, in his *Political Islam*, (note 35), Chapter 6, pp. 120-157.
- 38 Quoted in Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr, *Mawdudi and the Making of Islamic Revivalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 51. A similar version of the same discourse is found in Abul 'Ala al Mawdudi, *Minhaj al Enqilâb el-Islâmi* [The Path of the Islamic Revolution] (Cairo: Dar al-Ansar, 1977), p. 17.
- 39 Sayyid Qutb, *Ma'âlim ul-Tariq* [Milestone], English translation (USA: The Mother Mosque Foundation, no date of publication, ISBN: 0-911119-42-6), pp. 159-160.
- 40 Quoted in Hamid Algar, *Islam and Revolution: Writings and Declarations of Imam Khomeini* (Berkeley: Mizan Press, 1981), p. 304.
- 41 On Fadayian-e Islam, see, among others: Farhad Kazemi, "The Fada'iyan-e Islam: Fanaticism, Politics and Terror", in Said Amir Arjomand (ed.), *From Nationalism to Revolutionary Islam* (New York: University of New York Press, 1984), pp. 158-76.
- 42 On relations between Ikhwan and Fadayian, see Abbas Khomeh Yar, *Iran wal Ikhwan al-Muslimin* (Beirut: Markaz al-Dirâsât al-Istrategiyyeh – Al-Ahram, 1997).
- 43 On the history of Mawdudi's movement and his influence, see Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr, *The Vanguard of the Islamic Revolution: The Jama'at-I-Islami of Pakistan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).
- 44 Quoted in Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr, *Mawdudi and the Making of Islamic Revivalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 80.
- 45 Ibid, p. 77.
- 46 Gilles Kepel, *Jihad: The Trail of Political Islam* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2004), p. 36.
- 47 In 1977, the Excommunication and Emigration [Takfir wal Hijra] group assassinated the former Minister of Religious Endowment, Sheikh Hussein Al Zahla. In 1954, Muslim Brothers assassinated a prominent judge, Ahmed Khazender, and the Brotherhood was accused of being involved in at least two other incidents in which prominent figures, the chief of Cairo Police and the sultan of Yemen and his three sons, were murdered. In 1954, Prime Minister Ahmed Maher was shot by an assassin from a group connected to the Muslim Brotherhood. See David C. Rapoport, "Sacred terror: A contemporary example from Islam", in Walter Reich (ed.), *Origins of Terrorism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p. 126, note 73. Furthermore, for a detailed analysis of the evolution of Islamist groups in

Egypt, see Johannes J.G. Jansen, *The Neglected Duty: The Creed of Sadat's Assassins and Islamic Resurgence in the Middle East* (London: Macmillan, 1986).

48 Despite the death of Al-Banna, his legacy remained intact and was even reinforced and extended to all Muslim societies. Therefore, the era of Al-Banna is the longest compared to Khomeini and Bin Laden.

49 Lewis Bernard, *The Assassins* (London: Al Saqi Books, 1985), pp. 4 and 112.

50 This tragic event was not covered promptly and extensively by the international media. It was not until a few days after the event that the echo of the catastrophe reached the international public. Washington Post, 26 August 1978.

51 Taheri Amir, *Holy Terror: The Inside Story of Islamic Terrorism* (London: Hutchinson, 1987), p. 123.

52 Zahir Tanin, *Afghanistan dar qarn-e bistom* [Afghanistan in the 20th century] (Tehran: Shabak, 1384/ 2004). Tanin mentions "hundred thousands Afghans dead and thirteen thousands Soviet dead", p. 336. Some other sources estimate that "approximately 1 million Afghans had died during the war, along with 15,000 Soviet soldiers"; see *Encyclopedia of Conflicts since World War II* (edited by James Ciment), (Chicago: Fitzroy Dearbon, 1999), vol. 1, p. 236.

53 Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Game in Central Asia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2000).

54 Peter L. Bergen, *Holy War: Inside the Secret World of Osama Bin Laden* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2001), Chapter 9.

55 Yonah Alexander and Michael S. Swetnam, *Usama bin Laden's Al-Qaeda* (Ardesley: Transnational Publishers, 2001) and Simon Reeve, *The New Jackals* (London: André Deutsch, 1999).

56 Declaration of al-Qaida, "1998 Fatwa",
<http://www.representativepress.org/1998Fatwa.html#fatwa>

57 Audrey Kurth Cronin, "How al-Qaida Ends", *International Security*, Vol. 31, No. 1 (Summer 2006), pp. 7-48.

58 Ibid, p. 48.

59 See <http://www.mi5.gov.uk/output/Page25.html> (last accessed November 2006).

60 Emilio Gentile makes a subtle distinction between 'civil religion' and 'political religion'. "Civil religion is the conceptual category that contains the forms of sacralisation of a political system that guarantee a plurality of ideas, free competition in the exercise of power, and the ability of the governed to dismiss their government through peaceful and constitutional methods". Political religion is, on the contrary, "the sacralisation of a political system founded on an unchallengeable monopoly of power, ideological monism, and the obligatory of its code of commendments", *Politics as Religion* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), p.xv.

61 Salvatore Lupo, "L'utopia totalitarian del fascismo in Storia d'Italia", in Maurice Aymard and Giuseppe Giarrizzo (eds), *Storia d'Italia. Le regioni dall'unità ad oggi. La Sicilia* (Torino: Einaudi, 1987), pp. 371-482.

62 Juan J. Linz, *Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2000), pp. 116-28. Also see Bassam Tibi, "The Totalitarianism of jihadist Islamism and its Challenge to Europe and to Islam", pp. 35-54 as well as Hendrik Hansen and Peter Kainz, "Radical Islamism and Totalitarian ideology: A Comparison of Sayyid Qutb's Islamism with Marxism and national Socialism", both in *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religion*, Vol. 8, issue 1, March 2007, pp.55-76.