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In his famous work *Umm al-Qura*, the fictional proceedings of a secret Pan-Islamic congress alleged to have been held at Mecca in 1898, Abd al-Rahman al-Kawakibi presents the "charter" of a permanent body which the "congress" had decided to establish.¹ Two from among the principles of that body, the *jam'iyyat ta'lim al-muwahhidin*, as laid down in the charter, relate to the existence of "schools" (*madhahib*) in Islam and to the attitude of the *jam'iyya* towards them. Paragraphs 16 and 17 read as follows:²

(16) "The Society (*jam'iyya*) is in no way affiliated to any particular *madhhab* or religious party (*shi'a*) of Islam," and (17) "The Society adjusts its religious course of action to the moderate Salafi school of thought (*mashrab*), to the rejection of every addition or innovation in [the realm of] religion, and to [the principle] to argue over (religious matters) only in the best [or: kindest] way possible (*illa bi-llati hiya ahsan*)" (see Qur'an 29:46).

There can be no doubt that at the turn of the century, when Kawakibi's book was published, there was a widespread feeling in the Muslim world—at least among the modern-educated urban elite (both Sunni and Shi'i)—that any dispute over religious issues should be avoided. If that proved impossible, it should at least be carried out in a spirit of Muslim solidarity. The main argument was that the enemies of Islam, i.e. western colonialism in all its different forms, would exploit the lack of Muslim unity in order to perpetuate its influence throughout the world of Islam. Even today, this is the standard argument used by all those who would like to see a friendly dialogue between Sunnis and Shi'is—and who would like that dialogue to result in a *rapprochement*.³

The argument that communal strife among Muslims is likely to invite outside interference is certainly not altogether unjustified. However, in the minds of some Muslim writers and of many of their readers this argument develops into something like an obsession. Communal strife cannot always be avoided, especially in countries with a confessionally mixed population such as India and Pakistan. When it happens, some spokesmen of both Sunni and Shi'i Islam are eager to prove that imperialism is always plotting

behind the scenes in order to split the ranks of the *umma*, using for its own purposes naïve or evil-minded elements from this or that Muslim community. For a number of reasons, conspiracy theories, i.e. speculation about the enemies of Islam hatching plots of all sorts against the *umma*, are very popular in the modern Muslim world. Many of these theories—if “theory” is the right word—are a strange mixture of more or less distorted views on:

- 1) The history of Islam and other religions;
- 2) Traditional ethnic and/or religious prejudice (more often than not corroborated by fragments of western ideologies, opinions of orientalist etc.); and
- 3) An exaggerated belief in the role and capabilities of secret services in international politics, past and present.

In the case of the precarious relationship between Sunnis and Shi’is in the 20th century, presumed foreign conspiracies are often cited to explain, or explain away, the many setbacks the Muslims suffered on the road to unity or, at least, to a mutual *rapprochement*.

Many of the more fanciful explanations may never appear in print, but some find their way into the vast (and in most Muslim countries semi-clandestine) market of booklets and periodicals where traditionalists, militant fundamentalists and secular chauvinists propagate their ideas. Many of these explanations remain unknown to the public at large. But spectacular events such as the bloody incidents of Friday, 31 July 1987 at Mecca, involving Iranian pilgrims (see chapter by Goldberg), do prepare the ground for media “disclosures” which, under other circumstances, would not have been made. This holds true both for the Iranian and the Saudi media.⁴ As an example from Iran, we may cite here an article published—a few weeks after the clashes at Mecca—in *Kayhan-e Hava’i*. It described the Wahhabiyya as a doctrine which British imperialism, represented by an agent of the East India Company, had instilled in its founder, Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab, with the aim of deepening the rift between Sunni and Shi’i Islam to the benefit of the British.⁵ The article seems to present the gist of a book first published in Persian whose author claimed that his information concerning that agent of the East India Company, one “Mister H-m-f-r,” was taken from an Arabic book printed many years earlier in Beirut.

Some Sunni polemicists, on the other hand, do not hesitate to portray Khomeini as a secret ally of the United States and Israel and to describe his revolution as part of an international “scenario.” In proof of that, the most far-fetched “clues” are offered not only by politicians and journalists, but also by academics and religious writers. For instance: an assistant professor of Islamic Studies at Yarmuk University tries to prove, in a book published in 1983, that an unnamed orientalist connected with Princeton University and working for the CIA is the real author of Khomeini’s famous booklet *Al-Hukuma al-Islamiyya*.⁶

Examples of this kind of wild speculation could easily be multiplied. But I only wanted to give an idea of the atmosphere in which *religious* polemic articles, pamphlets and books, in the present case against the Shi'a, are being written and distributed.

In what follows I would like to address myself to two subjects:

- 1) The main issue of Sunni-Shi'i controversy in modern times; and
- 2) the way in which the various topics of dispute are handled by Sunni polemicists, especially in recent years.

If not stated otherwise, references to Shi'is will be to the *Shi'a Imamiyya*, (the Twelver Shi'a or *Ja'fariyya*)—by far the largest contemporary group of Shi'is.⁷ With regard to the topics chosen by today's Sunni polemicists, obviously a number of issues treated in great detail in mediaeval Muslim heresiography etc. are no longer discussed by present-day authors or have become marginal. This is true, e.g., of the problem of *mash ala al-khuffayn*, i.e. whether or not Muslims are allowed under certain circumstances to retain their footwear during the ritual ablution.⁸ From a comprehensive survey I made of Sunni polemical writings composed and published in Arabic from the beginning of this century onward, it becomes clear that one or two topics of dispute have become salient (at the expense of others) or rather, have acquired a new dimension as a result of modern developments. As will be shown presently, the question of prophet Muhammad's companions is a case in point. However, *all* these points of dissent have already been basic issues of dispute in the past. In other words: some *motifs* have passed into desuetude, but no new ones have been added.⁹

The live issues can be subsumed under the following general topics:

- 1) The Qur'an and its interpretation, as well as the integrity or alleged distortion (*tahrif*) of its text.¹⁰
- 2) The authenticity of the prophet's traditions (*hadiths*) and what Shi'is consider to be the *hadiths* of their Imams.¹¹
- 3) The image of the Prophet Muhammad's companions, the *sahaba*, including A'isha and the other "mothers of the believers."¹² The Shi'i view that the majority of the *sahaba* committed a grave sin by not supporting Ali's claim to the caliphate is unacceptable to Sunnis.¹³ Closely linked to this topic is the question of how to define the concept of the "people of the house" (*ahl al-bayt*).¹⁴
- 4) There is, next, the history and concept of the Imamate (*imama*)—in fact the central issue of controversy between Sunnis and Shi'is. All other points of dispute are derived, in one way or another, from it. The Shi'i belief in, and extreme veneration of, the Imams as leaders of the community, appointed by God, the belief in the Imams' infallibility and sinlessness (*isma*), in their potential knowledge of all hidden things past, present and future are all seen by Sunnis as

historically wrong and theologically untenable and dangerous, if not altogether too close to polytheism.¹⁵

- 5) The Shi'is' concept of the *imama* has direct repercussions on their view of history,¹⁶ including the question of legitimate power.¹⁷ But in a somewhat intricate way, it is also linked to
- 6) certain legal details such as the endorsement in Ja'fari law of temporary marriage (*mut'a*), a much-discussed topic in recent years.¹⁸
- 7) The example of the Imams is also the basis of the Shi'i theory and practice of *taqiyya*, i.e. the dissimulation of one's real religious belief in circumstances of danger.¹⁹ There is, finally,
- 8) The wide range of Shi'i lore and practice,²⁰ such as the processions and self-flagellations of Muharram or the holiday of Ghadir al-Khum etc., which most Sunnis see as unlawful innovations (*bid'a*) and as expressions of hatred against non-Shi'is.

To this list of main topics, I would like to add two observations: 1) The *motifs* mentioned here are all, in one way or another, inter-related. At their root lie different views of early Islamic history. Sunni-Shi'i disagreement on its interpretation appears to be as strong as ever—in spite of (or rather, because of) the fact that there have been certain pro-Shi'i tendencies in modern Sunni thought. By this I mean an inclination among Sunni writers, especially at the time of Jamal Abd al-Nasser, to defend and support contemporary revolutionary socialist policies by partially repainting the picture of early Islam. In this new picture, Ali and his supporters, especially Abu Dharr, became representatives of the "left," and the Umayyads with their allies were cast as the counter-revolutionary "right wing."²¹ As this interpretation touches directly on the image of the *sahaba*, it was, and is being, attacked by Sunni enemies, whether traditionalist or fundamentalist, of ideologies such as Nasserism. When these critics came to realize that the view of Islamic history propagated by the Sunni "socialists" was being applauded by Shi'i authors, they began to interpret it as a *de facto* move towards Shi'ism and as a betrayal of Sunni principles and presented it as a lamentable success for modern Shi'i writings. Abu Dharr—a companion of the prophet and a supporter of Imam Ali, a fierce critic of Mu'awiya and Uthman and the supposed founding-father of Shi'is in Syria and Lebanon—figures prominently in the religious propaganda of the Iranian revolution. Thus the old issue of the integrity of *all* the *sahaba* (despite the civil war in which they were involved) viz. the long-established Sunni opposition to passing a negative judgment on one or some of them, has become an issue of current political relevance. In other words: defending the religious and moral integrity of *all* the *sahaba* entails refuting the Shi'i view of history as well as that of the modern Sunni "Islamic-socialists" who, among other things, dare to criticize some of the most famous *sahaba* for the wealth they amassed.²² By citing from Shi'i works vilifying the first three caliphs and many prominent *sahaba*,²³ the polemicists hope to discredit the whole Shi'i (and, implicitly, the modern Sunni socialist) interpretation

of history. (Some of those vilifications, it must be said, are bizarre by any standard).

2) My second observation concerns the function of *taqiyya*. The lawfulness of *taqiyya* for Shi'is serves Sunni polemicists as the ultimate argument against all assertions (whether from Sunni or Shi'i supporters of a *rapprochement*) of there being a new, conciliatory attitude on the part of the modern Shi'a toward controversial issues. All statements made by Shi'i spokesmen to the effect that there is no disagreement on this or that issue (such as the integrity of the Qur'anic text in the redaction supervised by Caliph Uthman), that disagreements are a matter of the past, that they arose only from a misunderstanding or concern only minor points—all this can be discounted by pointing to the principle of *taqiyya*: whatever Shi'is might say, so the polemicists argue, they dissimulate and Sunnis cannot trust them.²⁴

Nonetheless, beginning from the start of this century, Islam has witnessed a number of attempts by both Shi'i and Sunni *ulama*, intellectuals and politicians to achieve unity or, at least, a *rapprochement* (*taqrib* or *taqarub*) between the two communities. At the same time, however, some individuals and groups on both sides, but especially among Sunnis, have been campaigning against these efforts. It is interesting to note that Sunni and Shi'i critics and/or enemies of *taqrib* use similar arguments to defend their position. The most important one is that, while unity of the Muslim world must indeed be the aim, it can be arrived at only on the basis of what is religiously correct, not by a false compromise. Since, in the view of such critics, the topics of dissent between Sunnis and Shi'is are fundamental, in fact: irreconcilable, *taqrib* would mean that one of the two *madhhabs* must give up its doctrine more or less completely or, alternatively, that a new sect would arise from this ill-conceived attempt at compromise. The latter would mean a new evil for Islam.²⁵ Some Sunni polemicists who have been speaking out against the ecumenical movement in recent years tend to point to the experience of certain prominent earlier Sunni writers who worked for *taqrib* but finally became disillusioned. Muhammad Rashid Rida, the editor of *al-Manar*, and Mustafa al-Siba'i, the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood in Syria, are mentioned as typical examples, and their bitter comments on the failure of such ecumenical attempts are quoted with satisfaction by present-day Sunni enemies of *taqrib*.²⁶

It remains true, nevertheless, that at certain times in this century the Muslim ecumenical movement made some progress. Broadly speaking, one can say that until the mid-1920s, there was a widespread (but never undisputed!) readiness among Sunni and Shi'i religious leaders to unite under the banner of pan-Islam (until 1918 sponsored by Ottoman Turkey) and avoid controversy whenever possible. The public support shown by a number of Shi'i *ulama* for the Ottoman Sultan before World War I—some of them even addressed him as "caliph"—is a case in point.²⁷ The leading journal of the Sunni Salafiyya, *al-Manar* of Cairo, again and again expressed itself in favor of a *rapprochement*.

One should not forget, however, that this ecumenical spirit had no deep roots. When, in 1908, *al-Manar* published an article by an anonymous Iraqi

who, among other things, warned of the consequences of Shi'i missionary work among the Sunni tribes of his country, a Lebanese scholar, Sayyid Muhsin al-Amin, wrote a sharp reply.²⁸ In the twenties, we find the same person in the front line of those Shi'i authors who, from 1924/25 onwards, complained bitterly about the Saudi-Wahhabi takeover in the Hijaz and attacked those Sunni scholars and writers who (like Rashid Rida) were now coming forward in defence of the Wahhabis and their newly established rule over Mecca and Medina.²⁹ Even some friendly words and gestures at the pan-Islamic congress in Jerusalem in 1931 which was attended by a number of Shi'i religious leaders, could not heal the fresh wounds.³⁰ Not a few of the polemical works published by both Sunni and Shi'i authors in the second half of the 1920s and in the 1930s have been reprinted in recent years and are quoted at length by today's polemicists.

From the late 1940s to the 1960s, however, there was much hope that a *rapprochement* would be possible, and would include an understanding on theological as well as political issues. Some scholars and intellectuals from both sides did in fact enter into a dialogue, e.g. by exchanging letters on problems of dogma. Others composed fictitious protocols of imaginary ecumenical discussions.³¹

In 1948 a society was established in Cairo which for some time became the most important center of ecumenical activities: the *jam'iyyat al-taqrib bayn al-madhahib al-islamiyya*. With an Iranian divine, Muhammad Taqi Qomi, as its founder and secretary-general, it had the support of a number of prominent *ulama* of al-Azhar and also of some Egyptian politicians. Both Sunni and Shi'i authors published articles on religious topics in its journal, *Risalat al-Islam*, but for the most part avoided the most controversial ones.³² Until his assassination in 1949, Hasan al-Banna, the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood, was in contact with the *taqrib* society and even participated in some of its meetings.³³ Until today, Shi'i writers rarely fail to mention this when writing about the society and its work. Members and sympathizers of the Brotherhood, on the other hand, tend to pass it over in silence or explain it away.

The greatest success of *jam'iyyat al-taqrib* was a *fatwa* issued in the summer of 1959 by the then Shaykh al-Azhar, Mahmud Shaltut. It declared worship according to the doctrine of the Twelve Shi'a to be valid and recognized the Imamiyya as a *madhhab* within Islam.³⁴

From the very beginning of its activity, however, the *jam'iyyat al-taqrib* came under fire from several directions, and especially from Wahhabi-Salafi circles. The most radical spokesman of those circles was Muhibb al-Din al-Khatib (d. 1969), a Syrian-born publisher, journalist and editor of classical works living in Cairo (see below). For Khatib as well as his partisans and disciples, the *jam'iyyat al-taqrib* was nothing but a Shi'i missionary institution designed to make converts in Egypt and elsewhere, and its Sunni supporters no more than an unholy alliance of simpletons, opportunists or adventurers.³⁵

Among the things which embittered Khatib and like-minded men, was the fact that *Dar al-Taqrīb*, an institute established in Cairo by the *jam'iyya*,

started distributing Shi'i literature printed in Iran, Lebanon and Iraq. From the late 1950s onward, moreover, Shi'i books printed in Egypt itself appeared on the market there. There is, e.g., *Matba'at al-Najah*, a Shi'i publishing house (probably originating in Iraq) which has re-printed a number of modern Shi'i classics in Cairo. Among them were: Shaykh Muhammad Hasan Muzaffar's *Dala'il al-Sidq*, Sayyid Hasan al-Sadr's *Al-Shi'a wa-Funun al-Islam*, and Sayyid Abd al-Husayn Sharaf al-Din's *Muraja'at*. Also included were Tawfiq al-Fukayki's defence of temporary marriage (*mut'a*), and Shaykh Abdallah al-Subayti's *Tahta Rayat al-Haqq*, a scathing critique of what Ahmad Amin had written on the Shi'a in his *Fajr al-Islam*.³⁶ All these are apologetic Shi'i writings, and not a few of them are violently polemic.³⁷

That these works were reprinted in Cairo before and/or after the Iranian revolution is worth noting. So is the parallel development of the formation of religious circles which, in one way or another, seem to support Shi'i missionary work or at least actively to propagate a Sunni-Shi'i *rapprochement*. While *Dar al-Taqrīb* had already lost much of its momentum in the second half of the 1960s and quietly disappeared from the stage after the departure from Egypt of Shaykh Muhammad Taqi Qomi about 1979, some new, though smaller, institutions appear to carry on at least part of its mission. There is, e.g., *jam'iyyat ahl al-bayt*. A Sunni author, As'ad Sayyid Ahmad, expressly mentions its activities in Cairo—where he says it has been registered since 1974—as one reason for his editing a series of pamphlets defending the *sahaba* against what he considers to be slanderous Shi'i attacks. The series is called *Ma ana alayhi wa-Ashabi*. In his foreword to pamphlet No. 3 in the series, a booklet by Muhammad Malallah, Ahmad puts Shi'i religious and cultural activities in Cairo into the wider—and rather fanciful—perspective of an international conspiracy. For this he sees proof in a general Shi'i congress alleged to have convened in Paris in 1973, and, of course, in the victory of the Iranian revolution and in some of the circumstances attending it.³⁸

With the outbreak of the Gulf War in 1980 and the political developments resulting from it, some Sunni polemicists found it necessary to point to what they see as bridgeheads of Shi'i influence in the realm of Sunni Islam. In a book published in Cairo in 1983, *Wa-ja'a Dawr al-Majus*, Abdallah Muhammad Gharib presents a detailed account of the number of Shi'i mosques, *husayniyyas* and bookshops in Kuwait, mentioning names, addresses etc.³⁹ Given the general tendency of the book—the author claims that the Shi'a of modern times is even more dangerous to "true" Islam than the Shi'a of the past—this sub-chapter amounts to an outright denunciation of the Shi'i community in Kuwait as a dangerous "fifth column."⁴⁰

Another aspect of recent Sunni polemical writing is caused by the apparent fascination of not a few—especially younger—members of radical "Islamist" Sunni movements with Khomeini's achievement. Moreover, many members of those movements have become aware that Hasan al-Banna, Sayyid Qutb and other Sunni Muslim radicals of the past are considered there as being among the martyrs who prepared the ground for Iran's "Islamic Revolution."⁴¹

After some initial hesitation, however, the leadership of most of the Sunni "Islamist" movements turned critical of, and finally attacked Khomeini, his regime and his ideas, thereby, so they claim, "opening the eyes" of their followers to the "reality" of Shi'ism.⁴² This decision was of course influenced by developments in Syria, i.e. by what most Sunni "Islamists" view as the suppression of the Sunni majority of that country by a Shi'i regime in alliance with Iran. Not a few of the anti-Shi'i books and pamphlets published in recent years in Jordan, Egypt and elsewhere were obviously written by persons belonging to (or connected with) the Syrian Islamist groups in exile. One feature they have in common is that they equate—and denounce—all Shi'i groups, past and present. In other words, they totally deny any real difference between the Imamiyya on the one hand and "extremist" sects (*ghulat*) such as the Nusayris or Alawids of Syria on the other.⁴³ All statements to the contrary by Imami or Sunni authors are dismissed as a result of *taqiyya* or, on the part of the Sunnis, *naïveté*.

Another cause of embarrassment for the polemicists lies in the fact that books and articles in favor of *taqrib* are still being published by Sunni authors not belonging to any of the Islamist movements who are therefore not easily impressed by arguments appealing mainly to a fundamentalist frame of mind. Rather, their authors appear to be "moderates" with both a traditional Muslim and a western education. To illustrate: in 1984, Dr. Abd al-Wahid Wafi, an Egyptian sociologist and educationalist, published a book called *Al-Shi'a wa-ahl al-Sunna*;⁴⁴ also in 1984, Dr. Mustafa al-Rafi'i, a Lebanese judge, diplomat and scholar, published *Islamuna fi al-tawfiq bayn al-Sunna wal-Shi'a* which calls for a renewed ecumenical effort.⁴⁵ Both authors, incidentally, studied in Paris.

Wafi's book was fiercely attacked by a Pakistani author who can be described as the most prolific Sunni polemicist in recent years: Ihsan 'Ilahi Zahir, the editor of a religious journal called *Tarjuman al-Hadith* (published in Lahore). He was fatally wounded in March 1987 when a bomb exploded in Lahore during a rally of *jam'iyyat ahl al-Hadith*, a Wahhabi movement of which Zahir was secretary-general. He died a few days later in Riyadh, where he had been flown for treatment, and was buried at Medina.⁴⁶

Zahir seems to have considered himself to be the heir of Muhibb al-Din al-Khatib as a campaigner against the Shi'a and against all Sunni sympathizers of *taqrib*.⁴⁷ He [Zahir] describes Wafi as someone who, at best, is ignorant of real Shi'ism and who has fallen into the trap of modern Shi'i apologetics. Zahir claims that Wafi never read a single line of the mediaeval Shi'i works which he mentions in the bibliography of his book. And it is these works one has to know in order to understand Shi'ism and its danger for true (Sunni) Islam—not only the modern Shi'i apologetical writings which are all designed to lead naïve Sunnis astray.⁴⁸

The accusation of ignorance, as far as mediaeval Shi'i sources are concerned, may not be wrong in the case of Wafi. The same could, however, also be said of quite a few partisans of Khatib and Zahir, i.e. hardline Sunni polemicists of today, since it is obvious that many of them draw most of

their information on Shi'i belief and practice from a rather limited selection of Sunni sources. They may possibly include a few classical works such as Ibn Taymiyya's *Minhaj al-Sunna*, alongside a small number of 20th-century polemical writings. Of special importance in this respect are Khatib's commentaries on two mediaeval works he edited, namely: *Al-Awasim min al-Qawasim* by the Andalusian *qadi* Abu Bakr Ibn al-Arabi (d. 1148), and Dhahabi's *Muntaqa min Minhaj al-I'tidal*, a *mukhtasar* of Ibn Taimiyya's *Minhaj al-Sunna*. Together with Khatib's *Khutut Arida*—a pamphlet seething with hatred, in which he describes the Shi'a as another religion (*din*), not just a *madhhab* within Islam⁴⁹—these are the main sources of information for many Sunni polemicists.⁵⁰ While Zahir had read widely in both mediaeval and modern Shi'i literature, including some works in Persian, the majority of contemporary Sunni polemicists look somewhat amateurish in their attempts to corroborate their judgments on Shi'ism by quoting Shi'i sources. The same holds true for their writings on the history of Iran, the place of the Shi'a in Iranian history and the roots of Khomeini's revolution. Even their description of what they call the plight of the Sunnis in post-revolutionary Iran is, in general, rather sketchy.⁵¹ An additional reason for that may be the fact that almost all the Sunni polemicists have fundamentalist convictions. They must therefore be critical of all manifestations of secular nationalism within Islam and prefer not to touch on them. They do not, for instance, deal with Kurdish nationalism. Were they to do so, they would have to admit that—much like under the shah—the situation of the Kurds in the Islamic Republic cannot be described solely, or even mainly, in terms of a sectarian clash between Sunni Kurds and Shi'i "Persians." But to support the Kurdish movement for what it is, i.e. a largely secular-nationalist movement, is something they cannot bring themselves to do.

To end this survey, I would like to say a few words about the Iranian Islamic constitution of 1979 as seen by Sunni observers, even though a full discussion of this issue cannot be given here.

Many Sunni polemicists content themselves with showing that the figure of the *rahbar* (leader) and the concept of *velayat-e faqih* are deeply rooted in Shi'i thought and/or Iranian tradition, and are therefore altogether unacceptable to Sunnis.⁵² Some of them were delighted to discover that even some Shi'i divines such as Ayatollah Kazem Shari'atmadari and the Lebanese scholar Muhammad Jawad Mughniyya have criticized Khomeini's interpretation of *velayat-e faqih*.⁵³ One Iraqi polemicist hints at the fact that Khomeini has been accused of plagiarizing (in a distorting way) the main points of his theory from an Iraqi Shi'i scholar, Ali Kashif al-Ghita.⁵⁴ (Cf. chapter by Baram).

A rather interesting criticism of the 1979 Iranian constitution was published by the Islamic Liberation Party (*hizb al-tahrir al-Islami*) in August 1979, only a few days after the *Majles-e Khebreghan* in Tehran began its discussions of the original draft.⁵⁵ In a memorandum, *hizb al-tahrir* (a somewhat old-fashioned, Sunni pan-Islamic movement) objected to a number of basic principles and fundamental statements in the draft, including the fact that

the constitution was obviously meant for Iran as a national entity. It assumes a state capable of concluding treaties with other Muslim and non-Muslim states; it declares Persian (rather than Arabic) to be the official language and the Twelver Shi'i *madhhab* to be the official religion of the country; and it stipulates that only an Iranian can be president. (For all these points, see chapter by Menashri). Furthermore, *hizb al-tahrir* criticizes the draft for clearly being inspired by western concepts such as "democracy," "republic," "public opinion" etc. A real Islamic constitution, it argues, would be based on truly Islamic principles, be structured according to classical (Sunni) law and place the caliphate at the center of the state.⁵⁶

The document is not polemic in its tone, but rather written in a mood of disappointment. Earlier in 1979, representatives of the Liberation Party—which is banned in all Muslim countries because of its radical rejection of the national state and its institutions—had made contact with Khomeini and other leaders of the revolution in order to look for common ground in an attempt to re-establish the universal caliphate. Their critical memorandum may be seen as a last attempt to influence developments in Iran.

It is evident that the memorandum of *hizb al-tahrir*, critical though it is, was still written in a spirit of basic solidarity. Since then, it seems that hard-line polemicists have gained the upper hand and may have it for some time to come—even after the cease-fire in the Gulf war. Kawakibi's appeal, based on a verse of the Qur'an, "to argue over religious matters only in the best [or: kindest] way possible," now appears a far cry from reality. Perhaps it will not be forgotten altogether.

Notes

1. Martin Kramer, *Islam Assembled: The Advent of the Muslim Congresses* (New York: 1986), 30–35.

2. Muhammad Imara (ed.), *Al-A'mal al-Kamila li-Abd al-Rahman al-Kawakibi* (Cairo: 1970), 282–83.

3. For a general survey of the attempts to reach a *rapprochement*, see Werner Ende, "Sunniten und Schiiten im 20. Jahrhundert," *Saeculum*, Vol. 36 (1985), 187–200; also Hamid Enayat, *Modern Islamic Political Thought* (Austin: 1982), 18–51.

4. As an example see the many reports in the Saudi daily *al-Jazira* concerning an alleged alliance (not only an arms deal) between revolutionary Iran and Israel (e.g., 26 September 1987 and 4 October 1987), and the summary of a panel discussion organized by that paper on the topic of Khomeini's "extremism" and its roots (*al-Jazira*, 21 September 1987). See also *ibid.*, 17 and 28 February 1988.

5. *Kayhan-e Hava'i*, 9 September 1988: article by M. H. Rajabi, "Wahhabiyyat, Armaghan-e Este'mar."

6. Dr. Mahmud al-Khalidi, *Naqd Kitab al-Hukuma al-Islamiyya lil-Khomeini* (Amman: 1983), 56 ff. This view is also often taken by Iranian opponents of Khomeini.

7. Moojan Momen, *An Introduction to Shi'i Islam: The History and Doctrines of Twelver Shi'ism* (New Haven: 1985).

8. The Sunni *fuqaha* allow this. Zaydi and Imami Shi'is as well as the Kharijists reject it. See Rudolf Strothmann, *Kultus der Zaiditen* (Strassburg: 1912), 21–46. For modern Shi'i statements see Najm al-Din al-Askari et. al (ed. Murtada al-Radawi

al-Kashmiri), *Al-Wudu fi al-Kitab wal-Sunna* (Cairo: 1961), 125–160; Abd al-Husayn Sharaf al-Din, *Al-Mash ala al-arjul* (etc.). The same also in idem, *Masa'il Fiqhiyya* (Sidon: 1951; and other editions).

9. A survey of these issues—as seen by a Sunni polemicist—is to be found in Saeed Ismaeel, *The Difference between the Shi'i and the Majority of Muslim Scholars*, ed. by "A Muslim Group" (Carbondale: 1983?).

10. Etan Kohlberg, "Some Notes on the Imamate Attitude to the Qur'an," in S. M. Stern, A. Hourani and V. Brown (eds.), *Islamic Philosophy and the Classical Tradition. Festschrift for Richard Walzer* (Oxford: 1972), 209–24; see also Momen, op. cit., 172–73. One of the many recent Sunni polemics concerning the alleged Shi'i belief in alteration of the Qur'anic Text is Muhammad Malallah, *Al-Shi'a wa-Tahrif al-Qur'an* (Amman: 1985), preface by Dr. Muhammad Ahmad al-Najafi [sic]. Almost all the Sunni Arab polemical writings mentioned in the following footnotes contain sections on *tahrif*.

11. For the Shi'i definition and point of view see Seyyed Hossein Nasr's introduction (5–11) to William C. Chittick, *A Shi'ite Anthology*, selected by Allamah Tabataba'i (Albany: 1981); see further Momen, op. cit., 173–75. Sunni polemics against the Shi'i *hadith* collections (and also against the way in which Shi'i scholars are using Sunni *hadith* literature in order to corroborate their own interpretation) can be found in many of the books and pamphlets mentioned in the footnotes below, especially Nos. 13–15.

12. Etan Kohlberg, "Some Imami Shi'i Views on the Sahaba," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam*, V (1984), 143–75; for Muslim discussions of this issue in the 20th century, see Werner Ende, *Arabische Nation und islamische Geschichte* (Beirut and Wiesbaden: 1977), 53–55, 92–94, 129.

13. For the Sunni point of view see, e.g., Muhammad al-Arabi al-Tabbani, *Ithaf Dhawi al-Najaba bi ma fi al-Qur'an wal-Sunna min Fada'il al-Sahaba* (Cairo: 1949, reprinted Cairo about 1982 by Dar al-Ansar); Muhibb al-Din al-Khatib, *Hamalat Risalat al-Islam al-Awwalun* (Cairo: al-Matba'a al-Salafiyya, numerous editions); Abu Mu'awiyya ibn Muhammad (a pseudonym), *Hukm Sabb al-Sahaba* (based on Ibn Taymiyya and others; Cairo: 1978); Abd al-Muta'al Muhammad al-Jabri, *Hiwar ma'a al-Shi'a hawla al-Khulafa al-Rashidin wa-Bani Umayya* (Cairo: 1985); Ali Umar Furayj, *Al-Shi'a fi al-Tasawwur al-Islami* (Amman: 1985); Abu al-Hasan al-Nad(a)wi, *Suratan Mutadadatan (. . .) inda Ahl al-Sunna wal-Shi'a al-Imamiyya* (Cairo: Dar al-Sahwa, 1985); Muhammad Ibrahim Shaqra, *Shahadat Khomeini fi Ashab Rasul Allah* (Amman: 1987?).

14. Ihsan Ilyahi Zahir, *Al-Shi'a wa-Ahl al-Bayt* (Lahore: 1982). About the author, see below.

15. This is the central thesis of a number of polemic works such as Ali Ahmad Salus, *Athar al-Imama fi al-Fiqh al-Ja'fari wa-Usulih* (Cairo: 1982).

16. Ende, *Arabische Nation*, 113–69.

17. Anne K. S. Lambton, *State and Government in Medieval Islam* (London: 1981), 219–41; for modern developments and discussions see Tilman Nagel, *Staat und Glaubensgemeinschaft im Islam* (Zurich and Munich: 1981), Vol. II, 266–329; Enayat, op. cit.; Karl Heinrich Goebel, *Moderne schiitische Politik und Staatsidee* (Opladen and Hamburg: 1984); N. R. Keddie (ed.), *Religion and Politics in Iran: Shi'ism from Quietism to Revolution* (New Haven: 1983). For recent Sunni polemics against Twelver Shi'i legal and political theories in general and Khomeini's views in particular, see note 42 below.

18. Werner Ende, "Ehe auf Zeit (*mut'a*) in der innerislamischen Diskussion der Gegenwart," *Die Welt des Islams*, XX (1980), 1–43 (mentioning, *inter alia*, Sunni

polemics); Shahla Haeri, "Power of Ambiguity: Cultural Improvisations on the Theme of Temporary Marriage," *Iranian Studies*, XIX (1986), 123–54.

19. Etan Kohlberg, "Some Imami Shi'i Views on Taqiya," *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, V (1975), 395–402; Egbert Meyer, "Anlass und Anwendungsbereich der taqiyya," *Der Islam*, 57 (1980), 246–80; for recent Sunni polemics, see note 24 below.

20. Momen, op. cit., chapter 13 (*The Popular Religion*, 233–45); for Muharram practices and burial regulations see Jean Calmard, "Azadari," in E. Yarshater (ed.), *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, III, fasc. 2 (New York: 1987), 174–77 and the literature mentioned there.

21. Ulrich Haarmann, "Abu Dharr—Muhammad's Revolutionary Companion" in *Muslim World*, 68 (1978), 285–89.

22. Ende, *Arabische Nation*, 210–21.

23. See the publications mentioned in note 13.

24. See, e.g., Khatib, *Al-Khutut* (note 49 below), 9, 14, 31; Zahir (notes 47 and 48), passim; Furayj, op. cit., 150–67.

25. Khatib, *Al-Khutut*, passim; Muhammad Rashad Salim, introduction to his edition of Ibn Taymiyya, *Minhaj al-Sunna* (Beirut: 1962) Vol. 1, 50–59; according to a Lebanese Shi'i scholar, fear of a total disappearance of the Shi'a as a result of *taqrib* does exist among Shi'is; see Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah, "Al-Shi'a wal-Wahda al-Islamiyya," *al-Irfan*, Vol. 71, No. 7 (September 1983), 3–14, esp. 5–6; also in *al-Tawhid* (Tehran), Arabic ed., Vol. 2, No. 7 (1404hq), 120–26. (For Fadlallah's role in Lebanon, see chapter by Kramer).

26. Abdallah Muhammad Gharib (see note 39 below), *Wa-ja'a Dawr al-Majus*, 146 ff., 149–51; also Zahir, *Al-Radd* (note 42 below), 22–24.

27. Abdul-Hadi Hairi, *Shi'ism and Constitutionalism in Iran* (Leiden: 1977), 88–90, 125, 242 f.; Werner Ende, "Iraq in World War I: The Turks, the Germans and the Shi'ite Mujtahids' Call for Jihad," in Rudolph Peters (ed.), *Proceedings of the Ninth Congress of the Union Européenne des Arabisants et Islamisants* (Leiden: 1981), 57–71.

28. Al-Sayyid Muhsin al-Amin (al-Husayni al-Amili), *Al-Husun al-Mani'a* (Damascus: 1910, reprinted in Beirut: 1985).

29. Al-Sayyid Muhsin al-Amin, *Kashf al-Irtiyab fi Atba Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab* (Damascus: 1927/28); a reply to Rashid Rida's *Al-Wahhabiyyun wal-Hijaz* (Cairo: 1926). Sayyid Muhsin's book, in turn, was fiercely attacked by the then Wahhabi writer Abdallah al-Qasimi, *Al-Sira bayn al-Islam wal-Wafaniyya*, 2 vols. (Cairo: 1938; reprinted Cairo 1982—probably without the author's consent—with a passage on the title page appealing to Khomeini and his followers to read this book carefully).

30. Kramer, *Islam Assembled*, 132 f.; Ende, *Arabische Nation*, 117.

31. One of the less known examples is Khalil Azmi, *Bayn al-Shi'a wal-Sunna* (Baghdad: 1952).

32. Ende, *Arabische Nation*, 117 f., and idem, *Sunniten und Schiiten*, 196–200 and the literature mentioned there.

33. A photograph showing Banna together with al-Hajj Amin al-Husayni and some other Muslim dignitaries at *Dar al-Taqrīb* in Cairo is to be found in a volume edited by Abd al-Karim Bi-azar al-Shirazi, *Al-Wahda al-Islamiyya aw al-Taqrīb bayn al-Madhahib al-Islamiyya* (Beirut: 1975), 17.

34. Arabic text in Shirazi, *ibid.*, 22; an English version was published by Dar al-Taqrīb, *Two Historical Documents* (Cairo: 1963/64).

35. See al-Khatib's article "Kalam Sarih wa-Kalam Mubham" in *al-Fath*, Vol. 18, No. 862 (October 1948), 3–6.

36. These books are advertised at the end of Sayyid Murtada al-Radawi, *Ma'a Rijal al-Fikr fi al-Qahira* (fourth edition; Cairo: 1979).

37. For more information about the authors and titles mentioned, see Ende, *Arabische Nation*, index, and (concerning Fukayki) *idem, Ehe auf Zeit* (note 18 above), 18–21.

38. *Matariq al-Nur Tubaddid Awham al-Shi'a* (Cairo: 1979), "Fatihat al-Kitab," 3–13.

39. *Wa-ja'a Dawr al-Majus* (Cairo: 1983), 319–35.

40. This term (in Arabic: *tabur khamis*) is already used by Khatib, *Al-Khutut* (see note 49 below), 28.

41. Concerning Qutb, see, e.g., article "In Memory of Seyyed Qutb," *Echo of Islam*, Vol. 7, No. 1 (June 1987), 12–13 (showing a postal stamp issued in 1984 "on the memory of the Seyyed Ghotb's martyrdom" [sic]).

42. See, e.g., Furayj, op. cit., 11; Dr. Ahmad al-Afghani, *Sarab fi Iran; Kalimat Sari'a hawl al-Khomeini wa-Din al-Shi'a* (N.p.: 1982), 13–16, 54–62. For the term *sarab* in the Arabic title see Qur'an 24:39. See further Dr. Muhammad Ahmad al-Turkumani, *Ta'rif bi-Madhab al-Shi'a al-Imamiyya* (Amman: 1983), and Gharib, 105–13; Shaykh Muhammad Manzur Nu'mani, *Al-Thawra al-Iraniyya fi Mizan al-Islam* (Amman: 1987), foreword by Muhammad Ibrahim Shaqra, 5–10. (Nu'mani is a Sunni Muslim scholar from India). Also Ihsan Illahi Zahir, *Al-Radd ala al-Duktur Ali Abd al-Wahid Wafi fi Kitabih* "Bayn al-Shi'a wa-Ahl al-Sunna," (Lahore: 1985), 14 ff. For general surveys of Arabic literature concerning revolutionary Iran, see Rudolph Matthee, "Arab Commentaries on the Iranian Revolution," *Iranian Studies*, Vol. 17 (1984), 303–12, and *idem*, "The Egyptian Opposition on the Iranian Revolution," in Juan R. I. Cole and Nikki R. Keddie (eds.), *Shi'ism and Social Protest* (New Haven: 1986), 247–74.

43. Two examples from among many are Yusuf Darwish Ghawanma, *Ghulat al-Shi'a al-Batiniyya fi Bilad al-Sham* (Amman: 1981), and al-Husayni Abdallah, *Al-fudhur al-Tarikhiyya lil-Nusayriyya al-Alawiyya* (Cairo: 1980). For a background analysis see Martin Kramer's "Syria's Alawis and Shi'ism," in Kramer (ed.), *Shi'ism, Resistance, and Revolution* (Boulder: 1987), 237–54.

44. The book was published in Cairo by Dar Nahdat Misr. For some time the author was dean of the Faculty of Education, al-Azhar University.

45. The book was published in Beirut by Mu'assasat al-A'lami; a short biography of the author is to be found in pp. 5–8.

46. *Arab News*, 31 March, p. 2, and 1 April 1987, p. 2.

47. His first book on the issue of Sunni-Shi'i relations, *Al-Shi'a wal-Sunna* (Lahore: 1973), is a response to Lutfallah al-Safi, *Ma'a al-Khatib fi Khututihi al-Arida*. Safi's *radd* was written about 1962/63 and has since been reprinted several times. See also his *Sawt al-Haqq wa-Da'wat al-Sidq* (Beirut: 1977). An English translation of Zahir's book was printed at Lahore in 1984 (Ehsan Elahi Zaheer, *The Shi'ites and the Sunna*).

48. Zahir, *Al-Radd* (note 42 above), 8–9, 211–12.

49. First Arabic edition (there was an earlier one in Urdu), Jeddah 1960/61, several reprints in Cairo, Riyadh and elsewhere.

50. About Khatib and his "school" see Ende, *Arabische Nation*, 91–110.

51. Gharib, 478–81.

52. Dr. Ahmad Matlub, Shaykh Amin al-Naqshbandi et al., *Nahj Khomeini fi Mizan al-Fikr al-Islami* (Amman: 1985); Sa'id Hawwa et al., *Fada'ih al-Khomeiniyya* (Baghdad: 1987; this is a publication of Munazzamat al-Mu'tamar al-Islami al-Sha'bi). Further

Nu'mani, *Al-Thawra al-Iraniyya*. There is also a translation (by one Muhammad al-Bundari) of Khomeini's *Kashf-e Asrar* into Arabic, with polemical commentaries by Salim al-Hilali and an introduction by Dr. Muhammad Ahmad al-Khatib, a member of *Kulliyat al-Shari'a*, University of Jordan (Amman: 1987).

53. Mughniyya, *Al-Khomeini wal-Dawla al-Islamiyya* (Beirut: 1979); see Goebel, *op. cit.*, 128–37.

54. Abd al-Jabbar al-Umar, *Al-Khomeini bayn al-Din wal-Dawla* (Baghdad: 1984), 5; concerning Mughniyya's and Shari'atmadari's criticism, see *ibid.*, 46 ff. and 144 ff., respectively.

55. Fritz Steppat, "Islamisch-fundamentalistische Kritik an der Staatskonzeption der Islamischen Revolution in Iran," in Hans R. Roemer and Albrecht Noth (eds.), *Studien zur Geschichte und Kultur des Vorderen Orients. Festschrift für Bertold Spuler zum siebzigsten Geburtstag* (Leiden: 1981), 443–52.

56. For a preliminary study of the genesis of the constitution see Silvia Tellenbach, *Untersuchungen zur Verfassung der Islamischen Republik Iran vom 15 November 1979* (Berlin: 1985), with German translation of the first draft (11–46) and of the final text (47–107). See also Hamid Algar (trsl.), *Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran* (Berkeley: 1980), preface (7–10).