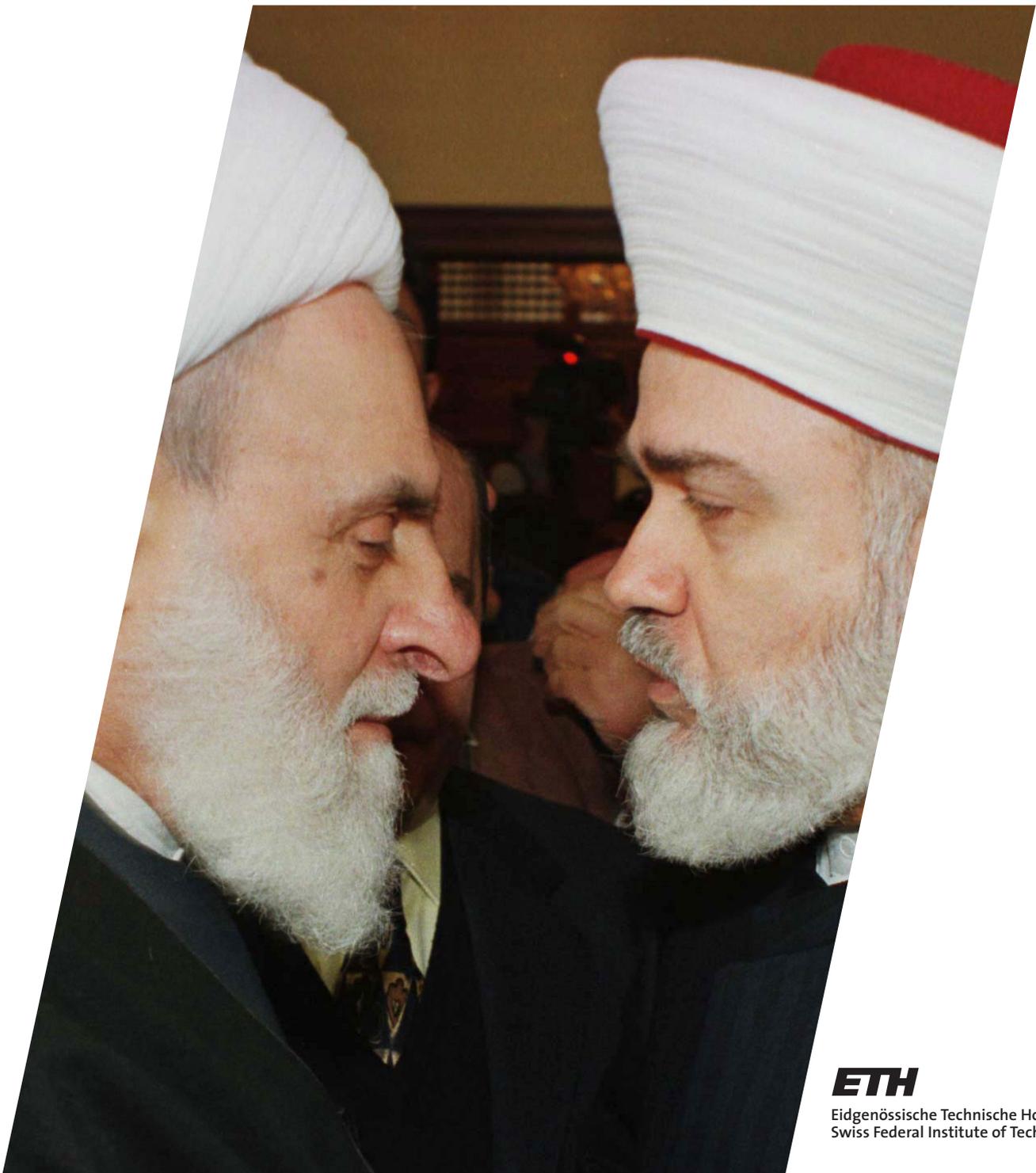


INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND SECURITY NETWORK

CONCEPTUALIZING THE SUNNI-SHI'I ENCOUNTER IN THE MODERN PERIOD



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Dr. Neguin Yavari



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CHURCH AND STATE IN ISLAM

The separation of church and state in Islam, or rather the lack of it, appears as an axiomatic truth in current political discourse. It is part and parcel of the frequently posed question: What is wrong with Islam? The formulation and the diagnosis are not just facile, but also disingenuous. Much of the discourse on the separation of church and state confuses description with prescription in attempting to account for the political in religious thought and to find ways to explain it. The notion itself is not an enlightenment value that, meteor-like, abruptly fell to Earth in Europe in the 18th century. It has its roots in almost 1,500 years of Christian political writing. The separation of church and state is also not the only way one can account for political thought endemic to religions. The biblical narrative of Exodus, for instance, has determined to a very large extent the general framework of contractual governance in European political thought from the 17th century onwards. It would be hard to find a separation of church and state in that account.

The “separation of church and state,” as indicated in Ernst Kantorowicz’s seminal study of the 1950s, is a way of telling the history of church-state relations in the European context. Although this has been a millennium long conversation, the advocates of separation, as well as its foes, have shared a common vocabulary. As the Bible spoke of “Pharaoh vs. God” and “Caesar vs. Christ,” and the Church conceived of itself as the “body of Christ on earth,” the dualist metaphor gained a foothold in Christian political writing. The separation of the body of Christ from his soul, which belonged to God and returned unto Him, and the ensuing dichotomous metaphors, “City of God” and “City of Earth,” bestowed on Christian political writers the basic vocabulary for writing on justice, good governance and temperate rule. The jurists and other lay scholars, likewise, wrote of tyranny as “godlessness”, and associated with it intemperate rule, disregard for ethical and moral values, abuse of power, arbitrariness and disdain for good counsel. Following in the footsteps of the Pharaoh, who according to tradition, turned a deaf ear to God and persisted in the enslavement of the Israelites, the tyrant transgresses the law and chides his own counselors. Regardless of the battle between the two camps, however, their vocabulary and basic theoretical framework share the same lineage. In the 17th century, for example, the rhetoric for prioritizing the secular over the

religious gained additional luster when the phrase “the Divine Right of Kings” gained currency.

Sacred kingship had, of course, a much longer pedigree. As pointed out by Marc Bloch, it was only in the mid-18th century that the monarchy in England and France finally gave up on the claim to royal healing. But the concept of the divine right of kings, with its distinct religious overtones, was primarily employed to extend the power of the king rather than to fortify his connections with the church. Clearly couched in religious language, it served to bolster the ruler’s religious legitimacy independent of the religious establishment. Paradoxically therefore, by underlining the religious source of legitimacy for kingship and elevating it (by linking it directly to the divine), a completely antithetical historical trend, namely, the secularization of kingship, was born. Sacral and secular kingship were fully integrated in order for the secular to subsume the sacral. This is a process fundamental to the understanding not only of the role of the church in European society, but also of the overall role of politics in society in general.

The institution of kingship as a corporate entity, rather than a personal one, too, drew on the political language of Christianity. The two bodies of Christ, separate and united, created the metaphor most readily mobilized in the articulation of kingship, defined against the private body of the king. When in the 16th century, English crowds greeted the funeral of the king and applauded his successor in the same breath, chanting “the King is dead, long live the King,” they were recalling the separation of the body of the king from the office of kingship, and therein lay the birth of constitutional rule. The “separation,” therefore, was invoked, not to subordinate religious authority, but rather to domesticate it and bolster kingship with the same brushstroke. It was only by investing heavily in Christian concepts, albeit secularized, that advocates of constitutional rule secured their political victory: The body of the King was prioritized over the king himself, and made synonymous with the body politic.

AYATOLLAH KHOMEINI ON THE AUTHORITY OF JURISTS

Much in the same spirit was Ayatollah Khomeini’s (d. 1989) writing, and later actual execution of the concept of “vilayat-i faqih,” the custodianship of the jurist. It strove to enhance the power of jurists,

the would-be-ruling class in an Islamic republic, against centuries of Islamic political thought that had focused on proper etiquettes of kingship, as well as myriad contenders for authority, such as the military. Claiming in full the long-established authority of the imams (descendants of 'Ali b. Abi Talib, d. 660), considered the legitimate successors to prophetic authority in Shi'i creed, Khomeini succeeded in granting to the clerical establishment the authority to interpret God's will, with its radical implication, that is the authority to disregard precedence, both actual and theoretical, if it happened to go against the best interests of the state. In so doing, he would claim that he was not transgressing Islamic parameters, for he was merely employing the traditional concept of *maslahah* (pragmatism) in the implementation of the shari'a, almost a synonym, at this juncture, for governance.

By transferring, to a hitherto unprecedented extent, the authority of the impeccable imams as veritable successors of God's rule on earth to the jurists, Khomeini, like Bossuet in 17th century France, wrote to promote a political and ultimately, even secular agenda. Again, similar to the concept of divine right of kings, Khomeini's *vilayat-i faqih* was not a novel one. At least since the 18th century, Shi'i religious thinkers of various stripes wrote about jurists as legatees of the 12 imams, and temporary custodians of their divine authority. Khomeini's modest reinterpretation of the doctrine drew on traditional religious discourse to refashion the relationship between divine and human authority in an innovative fashion. He pointed out to the "historical" and therefore conventional bent of his discussion on the governance of jurists, "[a]s I stated previously, the subject of the governance of the *faqih* is not something new that I have invented; since the very beginning it has been mentioned continually."

Heavily steeped in Shi'i eschatology, and its intrinsic messianic component, Khomeini simultaneously made the *mahdi's* presence appear seemingly more tangible, his return all the more imminent and his authority more extensively delegated to his representatives on earth. A strong, powerful, and rejuvenated *mahdi* was presented, but his almost palpable presence meant that he could be distanced more than ever before. The authority of the jurists, exemplified by Khomeini himself, to interpret God's will, was achieved by uniting it with the authority of the imams. The "political" legitimacy of the jurists, then, was derived, like the authority of the

European kings, from its unison with, rather than a break away from the divine. As expressed regularly in medieval political tracts, implicit in the rhetorical twinning of kingship and religion were discursive mechanisms facilitating the shift in the balance in favor of autonomous political authority.

Khomeini's conceptualization of *vilayat-i faqih* is also expressed in "democratic" language. Leading jurists owe their political position to a certain degree on the popular will, as their rise through the Shi'i clerical hierarchy is dependent on the ability to attract a substantial following. As political doctrine, therefore, *vilayat-i faqih* works to indigenize political language, to mobilize the Islamic past to create political change, and to protect the Islamic public against totalitarian rule, to modernize, that is, the apparatus of governance. As the embodiment of the popular will, the doctrine also confers upon its authors the discursive apparatus to set themselves apart from other ideological and political contenders.

AUTONOMOUS POLITICAL AUTHORITY

Political legitimacy and autonomous authority are also the keys to explicating the by now notorious speeches of the supposed "hardliner" president of Iran, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. In his speech at the United Nations in September 2006, Ahmadinejad devoted a good number of minutes to the return of the Twelfth Imam, later claimed to have felt his presence in the room, and then launched into a prophecy depicting the downfall of the "Zionist state" and the disgrace of the Great Satan. By appropriating at once both the symbolic and rhetorical level the upper hand afforded by religious zeal, Ahmadinejad has, alone among Iranian presidents of the recent past, publicly challenged the will of influential religious leaders. Having anointed himself as the humble servant and therefore beneficiary of the Messiah's good will, Ahmadinejad has defied the ruling clerical establishment over the nuclear issue and Iranian policy vis-à-vis Israel and, at the same time, maintained his support among the population. Not the call for reform and tolerance, but rather the invitation to remain steadfast in the face of foes, again came to the fore as the formula for successful leadership. Courage, defiance, piety and probity, were combined in his presidential campaign to cast his main opponent, the powerful Ayatollah Rafsanjani, as corrupt and hypocritical, much the same vocabulary used by Khomeini to cast doubt on the legitimacy of the Shah. It was by

direct appeal to sacral rulership that Ahmadinejad embarked on his project to wrest power from the clerical establishment, and ironically, utilized successfully, the very religious rhetoric that the latter claims as the lynchpin of its authority.

The point here is not to exaggerate ideological differences among Iran's top leadership. To divide Khamenehi, Khatami, Rafsanjani and Ahmadinejad into hardliners or reformists obfuscates diverging political platforms in Iran. All four, for example, lay claim to the mantle of pragmatism. Rather, the point is that Ahmadinejad has utilized, successfully, politico-religious language to bolster the position of his office vis-à-vis that of the clerical establishment in the first instance. And by extension, the President of Iran is sending a signal to the Supreme Leader, suggesting that the claim to the *mahdi's* mantle, the very *raison d'être* of Khamenehi's office and the theological rationale for his uncontested authority, is a double-edged sword that can also be manipulated to undermine accommodationist clerics. If so understood, Ahmadinejad's strategy may also be taken to reflect his close ties with the military and para-military establishment in Iran, ostensibly, the very threat Khomeini had foreseen in the early days of the Islamic republic and hence his explicit condemnation of military involvement in political life. The Office of the Juriconsult, as implemented by Khomeini after the Islamic revolution, was considered by important Shi'i leaders, such as Ayatollah al-Khuyi (d. 1992) and his successor, Ayatollah Sistani, as an innovation that contravened Shi'i theological premises. Very much in Khomeini's iconoclastic footsteps was taken Ahmadinejad's invocation of the Twelfth Imam, as evidenced, for example, by the strong condemnation of important clerics in Qum, accusing pseudo-scholars of exploiting the religious fervor of the population and inciting public interest by adumbrating superstition and hallucination.

SYMBIOSIS

Or consider, as another example of obfuscation rather than explanation, the prevalent definition of *ijma'*, as the consensus of Muslim experts in religious studies (*ulama'*), held by most modern scholars of Islamic societies. *Ijma'*, we are told in almost every primer on Islam, is the third source, after the Qur'an and the custom (*sunna*) of the Prophet, for the derivation of Islamic law. How could one put one's finger on the consensus of scholars in a religious infrastructure, which while spread over vast areas and enjoying centuries of vigorous

scholarship, has no official ecclesiastical hierarchy, and is supremely decentralized? The consensus of whom, where and when, are only among the most implicit lacunae in this characterization. Instead, let us consider the meaning and role of *ijma'* in the formulation of Muslim creed in the late Ayatollah Tabataba'i's primer on Shi'i Islam. The discussion of *ijma'* in Tabataba'i's text is couched in the context of the succession dispute that engendered the Sunni-Shi'i split immediately after the Prophet's demise in 632. The Sunnis, wrote Tabataba'i, did not consult with members of Muhammad's household, presenting them, instead, with a chosen successor - a *fait accompli*. When members of the household confronted them, they were accused of harboring divisive and hostile sentiments.

It was this protest and criticism which separated from the majority the minority that were following Ali and made his followers known to society as the "partisans" or "shi'ah" of Ali. The caliphate of the time was anxious to guard against this appellation being given to the Shi'ite minority and thus to have Muslim society divided into sections comprised of a majority and a minority. The supporters of the caliph considered the caliphate to be a matter of the consensus of the community (ijma') and called those who objected the "opponents of allegiance." They claimed that the Shi'ah stood, therefore, opposed to Muslim society.

Thus contextualized, the politics of *ijma'* become clear. Both in its initial usage in the succession dispute following the Prophet's death in the seventh century and its later permutation as the consensus of scholars as a valid mechanism for legitimizing interpretation, *ijma'* is and will remain a thoroughly exclusivist mechanism. Much like the tenure process currently in place in universities, *ijma'* works to keep out undesirable elements, and political foes, rather than being a framework with clear rules and universal laws for initiating the novitiate into the academe. And *ijma'*, like the separation of church and state, and all political concepts, can only be understood when studied in a spectrum against its purported nemesis. Severed from the political context of the separation of the Shi'is from the nascent Muslim community, *ijma'* becomes yet another barren, legalistic, static, amorphous and protean proto-category, that can neither be grasped by "Westerners," nor "moderns", nor applied in the altered circumstances of the present world.

Assuming animosity between Shi'is and Sunnis is another salient feature of Western scholarship on Islam. Sectarian conflict, very much modeled on Catholic-Protestant warfare of the 16th and 17th centuries in Europe, is invoked in almost every analysis of the political situation in Iraq in the aftermath of the US-led invasion. What is astounding is that even well-publicized events of the recent past, such as the lack of support for Iran among Iraq's Shi'i population during the Iran-Iraq war of the 1980s, seem to have little effect on the prevalence of the sectarian model for the explanation of political developments in the Islamic world. Although successfully contained by Khomeini throughout the Iran-Iraq war, and despite efforts by Ayatollah Sistani to curb sectarianism in Iraq following the US invasion in 2003, conventional wisdom has it that civil war between competing sectarian worldviews is an imminent prospect in much of the Middle East. Remove the brutal dictators and sectarian warfare will ensue.

Despite the pervasive rhetoric of US administration officials and many scholars that Iran is meddling in Iraqi affairs, and that at the expense of the Sunni community, relations between Iran and that arch supporter of Sunni Islam, Saudi Arabia, are warmer now than any point in the past 50 years. How can we begin to understand this seeming contradiction? Or the contradiction between the surge in sectarian violence in Iraq, Pakistan and other Islamic societies today, and the intensified cross-fertilization between Sunni and Shi'i scholars, as evidenced by the issuance of a *fatwa* by leaders of what has been termed as the "eight schools" of Muslim jurisprudence, positing that:

Whosoever is an adherent of one of the four Sunni Schools of Jurisprudence (*Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi'i and Hanbali*), the *Ja'fari* (Twelver Shi'is) School of Jurisprudence, the *Zaydi* (Fiver Shi'is) School of Jurisprudence, the *Ibadi* (*Khariji*) School of Jurisprudence, or the *Zahiri* (Literalists) School of Jurisprudence is a Muslim.

Declaring that person an apostate is impossible. Verily his (or her) blood, honour and property are sacrosanct. Moreover, in accordance with what appeared in the *fatwa* of the Honourable and Respectable Shaykh al-Azhar, it is not possible to declare whosoever subscribes to the *Ash'ari* creed or whoever practices true Sufism an apostate. Likewise, it is not possible to declare whosoever subscribes to true Salafi thought an apostate.

Equally, it is not possible to declare as apostates any group of Muslims who believes in Allah the Mighty and Sublime and His Messenger (may Peace and Blessings be upon him) and the pillars of faith, and respects the pillars of Islam and does not deny any necessary article of religion.

The Amman Declaration also denounces the propagation of religious rulings by laymen. "No one may issue a *fatwa* without the requisite personal qualifications that each school of jurisprudence defines. No one may issue a *fatwa* without adhering to the methodology of the schools of jurisprudence. No one may claim to do absolute *Ijtihad* and create a new school of jurisprudence or to issue unacceptable *fatwas* that take Muslims out of the principles and certainties of the Shari'ah and what has been established in respect of its Schools of Jurisprudence."

Amidst the intensification of sectarianism, the traditional authors of the Islamic shari'a, the '*ulama*', are converging to rescue Islam from the very Islamism that has been misunderstood in the vast majority of academic writing on the subject. Khomeini had warned of the dangers implicit in lay religious interpretation back in the 1980s, following the success of the Islamic revolution in overthrowing the Pahlavi monarchy:

"Recently, people have appeared who, without the slightest qualification for interpreting the Qur'an, try to impose their own objectives and ideas upon both the Qur'an and the Sunna, even a group of leftists and communists now claims to be basing themselves and their aims on the Qur'an. Their real interest is not the Qur'an or its interpretation, but trying to convince our young people to accept their objectives under the pretext that they are Islamic. I emphasize, therefore, that those who have not pursued religious studies, young people who are not well grounded in Islamic matters, and all who are uninformed concerning Islam should not attempt to interpret the Qur'an."

Earlier in the discussion, Khomeini had singled out Sayyid Qutb (d. 1966) as a benighted interpreter who claimed to know the Qur'an, but "he could interpret only a certain aspect of the Qur'an, and do that much only imperfectly." How surprised would our Islam experts be to discover that Khomeini did not regard Sayyid Qutb as a legitimate interpreter of the shari'a? Unskilled interpreters of the Qur'an, Khomeini wrote, were vulnerable to extremist

positions and to subordinating the meaning of the text to the furtherance of a political agenda. In the post-September 11 world, the wisdom of the Ayatollah is self-evident. Still, he remains inextricably tied to 'Usama bin Ladin in the Western imagination, and "Islam" is blamed for the fostering of violence and radicalism.

These and other seeming inconsistencies and apparent contradictions are part and parcel of systemic misunderstanding. The secular, or political in Islamic political discourse, needs to be understood on its own terms, without translation, or reliance on parallels or equivalencies. Despite growing sectarianism evidenced in key Muslim societies, the general trend of religious scholarship in the Islamic world seems to promote Sunni-Shi'i reconciliation. How can this rapprochement be politicized and contextualized, for it to explain in a meaningful manner, Sunni-Shi'i relations in the modern period? What aspects of Sunni thought are read and debated in Iran, and how do Iranians write of the Sunni creed? To that end, I have studied several works on Sunni political theology that have been translated into Persian recently.

CONFLUENCE

In this regard, the works of the Shafi'i Syrian 'alim, Shaykh Muhammad Sa'id Ramadan al-Buti, are instructive. Shaykh al-Buti appears in all the media in Syria, and his Friday sermons in the Jami' Mawlana al-Rifai'i Mosque are attended by hundreds of people, many of them standing in the mosque courtyard. A professor at the University of Damascus, al-Buti has a considerable influence on the future generations of teachers who will teach religion and Islamic law in state primary and secondary schools. Against the grain of Sunni supremacist (*takfiri*) thinkers who, since at least the time of Muhammad 'Abduh (d.1905), have argued for the cleansing and purification of Islam, the purging of sectarianism and syncretistic elements from the pure Islam of their forefathers, al-Buti preaches on national Syrian TV, for the strengthening of the clerical class, and for enforcing their authority to engage in *ijtihad*. Strictly within the perimeters of traditional scholarship, he has denounced the *salafiya*, accusing them of trying to "simplify the complicated demands of Islamic reasoning." Here, al-Buti is referring to the position advocated by Salafis that all Muslims must acquire religious knowledge and serve as their own interpreters of the shari'a, which when contextualized properly reveals primarily an anti-Shi'i stance. For one of the principal points of divergence between the two

communities has been the scope and function of the clerical class in interpreting the shari'a.

An in-depth analysis of al-Buti's work will demonstrate that contrary to convictions adumbrated by the Western academy, Muhammad 'Abduh and his salafi followers were not in fact modernist Muslims who advocated a break with tradition and the rejuvenation of Islam along the exigencies of modern life. On the contrary, *salafi* thought advocates a rigid, well-defined, scientific understanding of religion, one which attempts to define it with tools and concepts drawn from the exact sciences, and has been immensely instrumental in the fostering of *jihadi* and *takfiri* organizations in the Arab world that are especially crudely on display in South Asia. Ayman al-Zawahiri and the recently assassinated Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi are only the more notorious leaders of such movements. To bring to the fore the reactionary core of 'Abduh's alleged modernity, his discussion of *tawhid* (unity of God), an important pillar of Muslim political theology, should be contrasted with the writings of Khomeini and perhaps even several medieval Sunni theologians, such as al-Ghazzali (d. 1111), Juwayni (d. 1085) or al-Mawardi (d. 1058), on the same subject. In *salafi* writings, *tawhid* is the unity of God reflected in the one Muslim nation, unified in creed and practice, free of historical accretions, local variations and deviant proclivities. In the hands of the politically astute Khomeini, *tawhid* was a call for Muslim unity amidst differences, an inclusive call for tolerance rather than divisiveness. Perhaps deliberately contradicting Wahhabi ideology, Khomeini repeatedly called for the inclusion of Sufis in Islamic orthodoxy, and putting aside sectarian squabbles that detract attention from more pressing concerns.

In his writings, al-Buti draws on the work of al-Shatibi (d. 1388), the famous 14th century 'alim who argued for a clear articulation of a normative basis for the shari'a. The shari'a, al-Shatibi had argued, is a code of law and thus responsive to societal exigencies and changing historical circumstances. Al-Buti, much like his Shi'i counterparts, Ayatollah Burujirdi (d. 1960) and Ayatollah Khomeini, supports the centralization of religious authority in the Islamic world, and the establishment of a recognized hierarchy among the clerical class. His advocacy of change is carefully grounded in traditional language: "Rearrangements of the law of Allah mean only the abuse of it, do they not?"

What al-Buti recommends is the establishment of a supreme religious council, composed of scholars from all schools of law, vested with the mandate to declare authoritative interpretations of the divine will. He writes disparagingly of the *salafis*, and people who are insufficiently trained in Islamic law but take it upon themselves to declare legal rulings.

Departure from traditional jurisprudence is also encouraged by Ayatollah Rafsanjani, one of Iran's most influential clerical and political leaders, who advocates the establishment of a "Fatwa Council" to accommodate demands placed by modern governance on the corpus of traditional Islamic jurisprudence. Shi'ism is a minority religion, Rafsanjani has argued, and historically isolated from political power. As such, areas such as political and public law have received scant attention in the past. While Shi'ism accommodates legal interpretation and the application of rational reasoning to the derivation of law to a larger extent than the four schools of Sunni law, the Shi'i juridical establishment needs to expand its curriculum to include topics such as governance and *vilayat-i faqih*, legislation, elections, the rights and responsibilities of the government and the public, political parties, media, internet and satellite communication, art, foreign policy, ethnic and religious minorities, federalism, international relations, international organizations, non-conventional weapons, epidemic diseases, social security, inflation, insurance, banking, copyright, citizens' rights, population control and the environment.

The revitalization of the study of Islam is among the major ramifications of the Iranian Revolution of 1979. Apart from "unleashing" successive waves of Islamist militancy, the architects of the revolution have succeeded in re-establishing Iran and Shi'ism as a crucial component of Islamic ideology. Succinctly described in Richard Bulliet's *Islam: The View from the Edge*, the historical peripheries of the Islamic world, namely Iran and Algeria, have emerged in the second half of the 20th century as its veritable centers. The centering of Iran and of Shi'ism has brought into acute focus the political theology of Islamic precepts. Once again, as perhaps akin to the Islamic ideological landscape of the ninth and tenth centuries, the Sunni creed is compelled to reckon with its severed half, namely Shi'i politico-religious doctrine. The success of the Iranian revolution, not just in the promotion of Islam, but also in carving an independent sphere for political development outside the matrix of Eurocentric ideologies, has

compelled Sunni thinkers to reevaluate the role of Islam and its erstwhile proprietors in the modern world.

The rise of Islamist politics in the second half of the 20th century has also demonstrated the necessity of paying attention to what these groups are actually saying, rather than translating them into the modernizing discourse of the West, as Timothy Mitchell has pointed out. The mobilization of the Islamic past, as we have seen, is an integral component of political change in this period, and Sunni-Shi'i dialogue at its very heart. Reinhard Schulze has commented on the gradual waning of the primacy of *hadith* among Islamist thinkers of the globalization era, and the increased reliance of such authors on the Qur'an as a proof text. The gradual shift from *hadith* to Qur'an, will bring, in very broad terms, the Sunni creed in line with the Shi'i, wherein albeit very modestly, there is more room for the application of reasoning and juristic interpolation in the interpretation of the divine will. If one of the main differences between Shi'is and Sunnis in the modern period has been the gradual emergence of a religious hierarchy among the Shi'a, wherein an official infrastructure for the recognition of clerical authority was put in place, then the snail-paced veering of Sunni thinkers away from the disparate, non-narrative and unauthored *hadith*, and in the direction of the Qur'anic text, will undoubtedly work to promote the emergence of a Sunni religious hierarchy, where mechanisms will emerge to ensure that one interpretation would be superior to the other, much in the same way that *hadith* were graded in the medieval period. In the gradual waning of the popularity of *hadith* in Islamic political discourse, the Sunni creed will resemble its Shi'i counterpart to a larger degree. It will witness an increased number of authored positions, where interpretation will be more substantive and the authority of the individual jurist more prominently on display.

Although issues of succession and of the imamate will probably never be resolved, the increased cross-fertilization among Sunni and Shi'i thinkers will result in a homogenization of their interpretive infrastructure. An essential restructuring of the study of Islamic societies is thus the underlying premise of this historic current.

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ENDNOTES

- ¹ Ernst Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957)
- ² Ruhollah Khomeini, *Islam and Revolution*, Vol. I, ed. & tr. Hamid Algar (Berkeley: Mizan Press, 1981), pp. 55-110
- ³ Khomeini, p. 124
- ⁴ For more on the genealogy of political thought and the meaning of the twinning of religion and kingship, see my, "Mirrors for Princes or a Hall of Mirrors? Nizam al-Mulk's *Siyar al-muhik* Reconsidered," *Al-Masaq: Islam and the Medieval Mediterranean*, 20:1 (2008), pp. 47-69
- ⁵ Interpreting Ayatollah Khomeini's view on the intervention of the military in political life was the main point in a controversial speech delivered in February 2008 by Hasan Khomeini, the late Ayatollah's grandson, who heads the Center for the Compilation and Publication of Imam Khomeini's Work. "If a soldier wants to enter into politics, he needs to forget the military and the presence of a gun in politics means the end of all dialogue," said Sayed Hassan Khomeini, a mid-ranking cleric in charge of his grandfather's mausoleum, in a rare public comment." See "Iran Debate: Who Owns the Revolution?" <http://www.csmonitor.com/2008/0307/p01s02-wogn.htm>
- ⁶ Frances, Harrison, "Row over Ahmadinejad Imam Beliefs." http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/newsid_7255000/7255602.stm
- ⁷ Sayyid Muhammad Husayn al-Tabataba'i, *Shi'ite Islam*, tr. & ed. Sayyid Hossein Nasr (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1977), p. 76
- ⁸ The recent literature on growing sectarianism, and the need to partition Iraq into three separate nations, is gaining ground in the American political establishment. One of the more popular among them is Vali Nasr's *The Shi'a Revival: How Conflicts Within Islam Will Shape the Future* (New York: Norton, 2006)
- ⁹ http://ammanmessage.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=20&Itemid=34
- ¹⁰ Andreas Christmann, "Islamic Scholar and Religious Leader: Shaikh Muahmmad Sa'id Ramadan al-Buti," in *Islam and Modernity: Muslim Intellectuals Respond*, ed. John Cooper et al. (London: I B Tauris, 1998), pp. 57-81, quotation is on page 67.
- ¹¹ "Reconstructing Political Theology: An Interview with Ayatollah Hashemi Rafsanjani," *Shahrvand-i emruz*, 57 (13 Mordad 1387/3 August 2008), p. 112.
- ¹² Richard Bulliet, *Islam: The View from the Edge* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994).
- ¹³ Timothy Mitchell, "The Middle East in the Past and the Future of Social Science," UCAS Ed. Vol. 3, *Politics of Knowledge: Area Studies and the Disciplines* (2003), p. 22. <http://www.repositories.cdlib.org/uciaspubs/editedvolumes/3/3/>

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