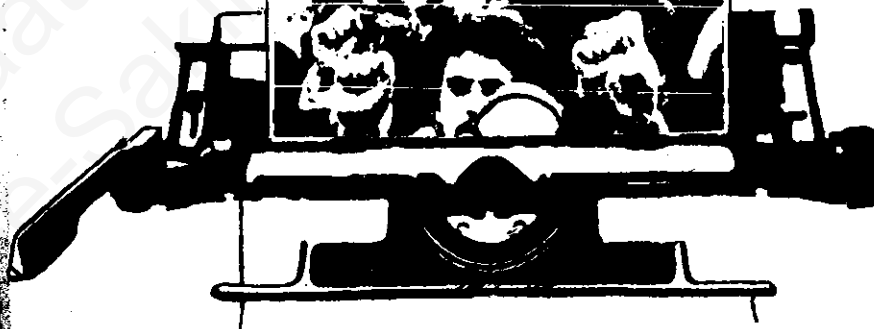THE
CONCEPT
OF
ISLAMIC
REPUBLIC

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PROBLEMS OF ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN SERIES

Translated and Edited, with an Introduction, by
Muhammad K. Ali

MURTAḌA MUTAHHARI

THE CONCEPT OF
ISLAMIC REPUBLIC

(AN ANALYSIS OF THE REVOLUTION IN IRAN

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THE CONCEPT OF ISLAMIC REPUBLIC
(AN ANALYSIS OF THE REVOLUTION IN
IRAN)

First in the Islamic Concepts Series

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I

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

Our intrinsic Islamic movement has brought to the world scene a revival of the historical impact of the Divine Messengers. It has given people everywhere a salutary foretaste of what Islam stands for, in terms of a responsive and harmonious government. Its tidings to the poor and the weak around the world promise a model of a government based on rectitude and justice.

The rest of the world is awaiting a governmental pattern such as developing in the Islamic Republic of Iran. Today's generations want to emulate a real, viable government model. The Muslim countries, or Muslims every where in the world, are looking forward to the same. For, they must overcome the constraints imposed by the Western and Eastern neo-colonialists. Their capability to obtain self-determination on Islamic lines must be enhanced.

They all want a benign and responsive system of self-government. They demand a system which is not devoid of the human values evolved and cherished by mankind as a whole. They seek an ideological framework the contents of which reach beyond materialistic concepts. In other words, they want to replace or avoid the models of Western/Eastern materialism, authoritarianism and disregard for morality, also found in the socalled «Third World».

In short, the world of the deprived, the exploited and the oppressed,Muslim and non-Muslim alike,is becoming increasingly aware of the potential for universal good that the Islamic Revolution offers. Their hopes and aspirations, too, must be accomplished. Accordingly, their interest in our experience is understandable.

Our Revolution has a long way to go. We have yet to fully overcome the hurdles placed on our way by the Satanic forces. We are still in the process of identifying and replacing the Satanic influences, so that the benign policies and endeavours of the Islamic Republic are fully sustained.

Even so, whatever we have been able to achieve so far has elicited the interest of the deprived and the weak around the world, even in idealistic terms.

The Publisher of this book, which is a non-profit-making Islamic foundation, feels encouraged by the responsiveness of the interested readers abroad. We deem it an honour to offer for the benefit of readers in English a series of Islamic conceptual translations in a readable and convenient format.

This book represents the first issue in the Islamic Concepts Series. For this, we have selected the concise explanations that the late Allama Shaheed Mutahhari gave in a television interview conducted by an University teacher. The interview was held at a time when public opinion was crystallizing in favour of the Islamic Republic, i.e just before the masses over- whelmingly voted for it — astounding the Satanic forces.

We hope that all readers, specially men of intellectual integrity everywhere will find the explanations concerning the revolution in Iran and the distinctiveness of the Islamic Republic quite interesting. These are offered without any reservations, so that the world at large is correctly and clearly informed about Islam and its practical manifestations, such as that of the Islamic Republic. We hope further that the

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weak and the deprived peoples everywhere will find our Islamic endeavour not only heartening but exemplary. We hope, too, some of the readers would like to republish this book, if necessary by translating into other languages, so as to further propagate its Islamic concepts.

Ali Islami
Bonyad Be'thet

Translator's Introduction

Nearly 2370 years ago, Plato founded a school of philosophy in a place called Academy, just outside of Athens. Its «curricula» were based on ideas enunciated by Socrates, in the context of training the minds of those who could become «just philosopher-rulers of an ideal city-state». Plato's Academy sought to improve upon the educational practices of the time (oriented to «gymnastic» for the body and «music» for the soul), with an overall emphasis on how to think in abstract terms.

Its philosophy stressed «the eternal verities, the Ideas, or Ideals, comprehended by dialectic in the light of the Idea of the Good». («As the sun is to the world of sight, the Idea of the Good is to the world of mind.»). Plato's Academy sought to produce lovers of wisdom, who derived the «best pleasure» from «most of the unchanging world of truth and real being», followed by «the pleasures of victory and honour... and... gratified desire».[1]

According to the ideas of Socrates, a just philosopher-ruler represented a product of the ennobling process of a moral-oriented education —a process leading to assimilation of knowledge «purified of unwhole someness and extravagance.»[2] The indicated moral bias of subjects ranged.

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from ensuring a moral at the end of a nursery tale, to lending an overall human perspecive to any isolated understanding of concepts of a mathematical type that depend on given postulates.

In the context of «duly arranging» interplay of justice, Socrates drew a parallel between an individual soul's attributes and their counterparts in his society. Individual traits were divided into the reasoning, the spirited and the desiring parts. Their societal counterparts were: (1) a ruling class of philosophers (whose status was rather corruptible by any aristrocratic living), (2) an auxiliary, honour-loving (propertied, timocratic), warrior class, and (3) the oligarchical pleasure-loving class (capable of worsening the conditions of the poor, so as to result in their successful rebellion and futile experimentation with licentiousness in democratic freedom— only to suffer lustful tyranny once again).[3]

Naturally enough, Socrates believed in the superiority of the philosophical man. Yet, in support of wisdom-lovers' rule of a city, he seemed to envisage no more than «the mystical sanction of the myth of the three metals, gold, silver and iron»[4] No wonder, the philosophical statements attributed to him by his follower, Plato, remained inconclusive, except, probably, in so far as treating mind, not matter, as fundamental. Nevertheless, the thought-provoking impact of his enunciations has persisted to this day, even among his affiliated Western and Eastern European cultural entities and their offshoots in the Americas and elsewhere.

The modern educational and training institutions ought to draw further inspiration from the ancient Athenian Academy. One advanced course that they may well consider

introducing is that concerning Islam. After all, the comprehensive Islamic philosophy of man transcends not only materialism, but the tyrannical inclinations and corruptibility of the aristrocratic, timocratic, oligarchical and democratic or socialist man.

The concept of Islamic State should be of particular interest in the above context. To be more precise, the concept is one of Islamic Republic. For, in an Islamic State, none (a king, a dictator, a class of people, or an European-style «nation-state» as a whole) can lay any claim to sovereignty as a matter of absolute right. The Qur'an makes it clear that God created man (43:87) as His vicegerent (2:30) on His earth (29: 61 / 23:84, 85), and also provided for subservience of His cosmic creations (the sun, the earth, and the moon) to the vital needs of man (29:61, 63/23:88). Accordingly, the Divine Unity («Towheed») and His absolute sovereignty over His creatures and His creations are not to be contradicted by anyone or anything else's tenuous claim to any part of His sovereignty.[5]

In view of the above, the provision in the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the effect that no existing or proposed law should be repugnant to the Qur'anic injunctions and Islamic principles is of overriding importance. This is emphasized by Allama Mutahhari herein, in the context of the monitoring role of Wali Fakih (one who is popularly recognized as an outstandingly effective leader in the realm of Islamic jurisprudence, and in whom people of an Islamic society are assured of last recourse, so that anyone—a president or common man alike —can obtain and / or accept genuine Islamic ideological guidance from him).

Aside from specifying the role of Wali Fakih[6] in terms of ideological guidance, Mutahhari's answers to the elaborate questions herein revolve around the Islamic Republic (as distinct from «Islamic Democratic Republic»), and the Islamic nature, content and future of the revolution in Iran. He refutes an alleged tendency of an Islamic Republic to become a theological autocracy. He points out that the people remain crucial not only in electing an Islamic government and the Wali Fakih, but in enforcing the Islamic laws, which retain their intrinsic applicability and amenability to change in keeping with the Qur'anic requirements.

Among his other explanations, the detailed analysis of the meaning and significance of the terms: «*Inkilab*», or revolution, «*Beenish Fitri*» (personal outlook consistent with the higher human nature), and «*Beenish Abzari*» (an outlook oriented to tools and reflecting mechanical-minded or materialistic approach) are notable. His description of Imam Khomeini's popular appeal and leadership qualities that liberated the people's captive spirits, by transforming their historical sense of futility and self-defeat into a renewed awareness of their Islamic past and a deep sense of purpose towards reasserting themselves in Islam, deserves careful attention, too.

In translating the material from Persian into English, due care has been taken to avoid any need to literally construe, and to convey the intended or original sense. At the same time, coherence in the English rendering has been kept in view. The material used for translation is the same as that included in the book entitled: «*Peiramoon Inkilab Islami*».[1] It incorporated also the explanatory notes of Mutahhari taken from his earlier discourses at Tehran University College of Islamic Sciences, and at the Masjid Farishtey, Tehran.

Explanations given within parentheses are the translator's own. Where «(ص)» and «(ع)» are used, these denote Muslims' invocation of God's blessings and benediction on the Prophet of Islam, and His blessings on the other prophets, as well as the Imams, respectively. The invocations in Arabic are as follows:

sall allahu 'alayhi wa sallam   (ص) : صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم.

(May God's peace and benediction be upon him)

'alayhi al-salam (May Peace be upon him).   (ع) : عليه السلام.

The transliteration of Arabic and Persian terms is based on the following:

Consonant:	ث	th	ض	d	Long Vowel: « آ » as ā
:	خ	kh	غ	gh	
:	ذ	dh	ق	k	
:	ش	sh	و	w	

M. K. Ali
Tehran, Sh'aban 16, 1402.

1 John Clive Graves Rouse: Summary of The Republic (Book VI, IX), *Great Dialogues of Plato*, Translated by W.H.D. Rouse, The New American Library, Inc., New York, Twentieth printing, PP. 122, 124.

2 Ibid. (Book II), P. 119.

3 Ibid. (Book IV), P. 120; (Book VIII), P. 123.

4 Ibid. (Book IV), P.120.

5 The futuristic appeal of the concept of God's sovereignty is evidenced in the current science fiction, too. For instance, in part Three of his Dune Triology, Frank Herbert makes a «melange» of some Islamic concepts, as can be seen from the relatively «pure» one extracted below:

> «The Universe is God's. It is one thing, a wholeness against
> which all separations may be identified. Transient life, even
> that self-aware and reasoning life which we call sentient,
> holds only fragile trusteeship on any portion of the
> wholeness.»

Frank Herbert: *Children of Dune,* New English Library, London, 1977, P. 37.

6 Instances are not lacking where genuine Islamic concepts are misunderstood or misinterpreted by Western «analysts». For example, in a recent «analysis of Islam's confrontation with the Western World today», «Wilayat Fakih» is taken too literally and presumptuously to mean «The Government of the Theologians», and the socalled «Shia Islamic State» is branded as «hierocracy» or priestly rule. as in:

G.H. Jansen: *Militant Islam,* Pan Books Ltd., London, 1981, P. 178.

7. *«Peiramoon Inkilab Islami»*, Sadra Publications, Tehran.

1. What is an Islamic Republic?

Questioner: With the approaching referendum some ideological problems have received particular attention among people, specially the intellectuals. In this television interview, we seek your clarification of the most crucial questions.

The first question concerns the very basic concept of Islamic Republic. The concept is not probably well-understood by those who harbour only vague notions about it. For instance, some apparently feel that the meaning and significance of «Republic » is based on sovereignty in the hands of the «Public»—a kind of people's self-government. Actually, the Islamic ideological framework encompasses whatever is generally attributed to a republic. Accordingly, an explanation ought to cover both the Islamic criteria of a «Republic» and the popular notions about its democratic character. Specifically, we ask you:

What, in your considered opinion, is an Islamic Republic?

Mutahhari: We may not go into any elaborate description of an Islamic Republic. Nevertheless, we may mention that the two words: «Islamic» and «Republic» refer to a type of government and its ideological content, respectively. We all know about the various types of government in the past and now. Some were formed by heriditary monarchs, so that these can be termed as monarchical or imperial governments.

others are inclusive of autocratic, aristrocratic or oligarchical and capitalistic types.

Government by the common people is one type in which the latter elect their rulers. It does not involve any discrimination on grounds of one's beliefs, race and sex. There is only one general requirement that voters should be adults. Elections take place every few years, so that governments are formed on a temporary basis. The voters can re-elect the same office-holders once, twice, thrice or even four times, as the case may be, under the relevant constitutional provisions. They may instead choose others, who may be better suited for the public offices.

The adjective: «Islamic» signifies the nature and the content of a government. It suggests that the government should be one based on Islamic principles and regulations. Thus, the government's functions, too, revolve around the Islamic principles.

We know that Islam, as a religion, symbolises both a school of thought and a comprehensive ideology, at the same time. It embodies a planned way of human living in all its multi-dimensional and glorious aspects. Accordingly, Islamic Republic means a form of government the president of which is elected by popular vote for a temporary period, and the ideological content of which is Islamic.

The conceptual vagueness about an Islamic Republic often arises from the mistaken assumption that any rightful national sovereignty is equal to not adopting any specific policy, or ideology, and synonymous with not adhering to any particular set of intellectual principles concerning the world, and theoretical principles relating to a particular way of life.

Those who think in a mistaken manner, as indicated above, conclude that one is not free and democratic when identifying oneself with a specific party, ideology, a set of aims, or religion, and then seeking to obtain application of the relevant policies and regulations. A possible corollary of this mistaken thinking is that if a country is Islamic, represented by a majority, who are devout Muslims and / or deeply committed to Islamic principles—without any questioning, or trying to justify why—then, democracy is at stake.

Democracy is necessarily related to an appropriate type of government. In a democratic government, people can undertake progress according to their own overall sense of destiny. However, it is not a concomitant that they should consider themselves exempt from striving to enhance any particular school of thought (or that one should close one's mind to any set of principles endorsed by a school of thought) or commit oneself to achieve the same without questioning.

In the above context, a few questions may be posed for answers by those gentlemen who do not seem to fully comprehend the meaning and significance of Islamic Republic:

First, do they subscribe to the view that every citizen ought to profess his own individual way of thinking, in order to be democratic? Conversely, do they suggest that no individual should accept and work for enhancing a particular school of thought, or one should simply ignore any principle basic to a school of thought?

Further, do they consider that any ready, or nonskeptical, acceptance of a set of logical, philosophical, scientific, or religious principles will mean something that vitiates democracy? Or, is what they consider to be undemocratic not that a person should refuse to believe in, or accept any majority view or action, which may be questionable in his own judgement—while not allowing others to question his own individual thinking and beliefs?

Whatever may be the answers to the above questions, it is to be recognised that for the majority of the people of Iran, adhering to one's faith, such as Islam, and believing firmly in the relevant principles (without subjecting themselves to any

inhibitive process of self - doubt or any overly skepticism) does not mean anything sinful or faulty. Perhaps, what may be construed as a sin or fault, on their part, is that they, who represent a Muslim majority, do not a allow any minority of non-believers to ask for any justification of the beliefs of the former.[1]

With regard to any judgement as to whether or not adequate freedom has been given to the opponents, it lies with the same people who consider democracy to be synonymous with not believing in one school of thought.

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1 Similar reservations can be found to be valid for non-Islamic societies, too. For example, communist societies may not consider any non-skeptical acceptance of Communism's principles as undemocratic. What goes against the democratic principle seems to be any answerability to non-Communists abroad (and some dissenters at home), who may ask for justification of Communist beliefs and actions (including, for instance, the Iron Curtain, or preventing any good neighbourly living with non-commanists.

2. Why not call it an «Islamic Democratic Republic»?

Questioner: In one of his discourses, Imam Khomeini mentioned that he would say no more and no less than that he would vote for «Islamic Republic». His saying: «no less» was apparently meant to emphasize «Islamic» part of the «Islamic Republic». This is indicative of the same point as you have made at the beginning of this discussion that «Islamic» signifies the ideological content of the «Republic». In other words, it specifies that Islamic principles will be acted upon by the proposed government.

With regard to Imam's saying «no more», one may infer that it apparently refers to the need to avoid confusion arising from using any additional word: «Democratic» in the nomenclature: «Islamic Democratic Republic». This may have been in order not to confuse the different meaning and significance of the term: «Democratic» in Western parlance with the Islamic conceptualization of democratic freedoms.

Please explain further and specify the difference in meaning, significance and connotation of the abovementioned words and phrases?

Mutahhari: I do not profess to explain all implications of the Imam's sayings. However, some of the implications that I believe to be identical with the Imam's views can, perhaps, be elucidated.

In Islam, democratic freedom can be enjoyed by

individuals, as you already know. However, it is not the same as that allowed in Western democracies. The difference arises from the way things are perceived in Islam and in Western ideologies.

In the phrase: «Islamic Democratic Republic», the word: «Democratic» is redundant. Moreover, in a hypothetical Islamic Democratic Republic, freedoms and democratic norms obtained by people may be wrongly attributed to the «Democratic» component. In other words, the aforecited nomenclature is suggestive of two bases of the Republic: Islamic and Democratic. One may assume further that matters pertaining to individual rights and democratic free-doms arise by virtue of democracy alone, or the democratic part of the nomen clature. Then, the «Islamic» part is taken to mean just a series of religious convictions, or traditional practices in terms of prayers and similar other religious rites.

We should emphasize the fact that Islam incorporates individual rights and democratic freedoms, and, as such, any indiscriminate use of both the terms («Islamic» and «Democratic») will be misleading. In fact, an Islamic society does not brook of any illconceived differentiation, such as indicated above. (As the saying in Persian goes: «When you have the hundred, (it means) you already have the ninety.»).

Furthermore, the conceptualization of individual rights and democratic freedoms in the sociopolitical philosophies of the West, as professed by non-Muslim Westerners (or Easterners), arises from ideological perspectives fundamentally different from that of Islam. Accordingly, we cannot overlook any subtle points of the ideological differences, or leave any scope for misunderstanding.

With regard to the derivation of the concept of individual freedom and rights, they say man was born free and, as such, is entitled to retain freedom. Asked why the same is not true of, say, a sheep, they give different replies. To the Western mind, individual freedom is derived from and rooted in the

human inclinations and desires. Where they talk about human will and determination, these are not really meant to be different from inclinations.

According to Western (materialistic) way of philosophising, man is an entity with a series of desires and wants, which represent the raison d'etre of his life. No wonder, the wants cannot be fulfilled without individualistic freedom of action. The only limitation on an individual's freedom of action is necessitated by other individuals' entitlement to the same, and not by any overall regulatory framework.

Individual freedom in the sense explained above, i.e. its conceptualization on the premise that man, born free, is naturally characterised by inclinations and desires and, as such, he should remain free (as in a natural park—analogous to a «nation - state»).

Nevertheless, the fact remains that man has, indeed, an animal - like nature to cope with. For, man is a human being and a virtual animal at the same time. As a human being, he is endowed with a critical faculty, or the highest intelligence among the terrestrial creatures.

Accordingly, he is susceptible to abstract thought, and capable of exerting a salutary influence on his animal instincts and desires. He can refine and cope with his raw instincts, or concupiscent desires, or selfcentred inclinations, in a really human manner.

No doubt, man is capable of enhancing the quality of accomplishment of his inborn desires and proclivities. At the same time, he can perceive typically human traits or values, such as Truth, Beauty, Morality and similar others, and reflect the same in his life's endeavour.

There is an inverse relationship between the animal and human characteristics that invariably affect man's natural existence. According to the Glorious Qur'an, man's bipolar nature is oriented to (the wisdom) of his rationality and (the

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quality) of his carnality, respectively. In other words, it is oriented to man's spiritual derivation of life as a meaningful reality from the Supreme Being on one side, and its carnal manifestation, on the other.

Accordingly, it is absurd to think that one part of human nature can be set absolutely free from the other. This is irrespective of whether or not what is retained is the precious and sublime one. Any attempt to nurture one part of human nature (spiritual, or carnal) in isolation will inevitably mean a corresponding neglect and the consequent weakening of, or conscious limitation on, the other.

Where the carnal side of the basic human nature is recognised in isolation as a paramount one, so as to allow its freeplay on the basis of individual rights in a democracy, it is inevitable that we should come across such acts as legalization of homosexuality by majority vote in (the U.K.) parliament. This shows that, majority opinion can make homosexuality to be a respectable part of democratic living!

The abovementioned legal recognition of homosexuality is indicative of two things. Firstly, it has confirmed the fact that the majority of people themselves were not averse to the prevalence of homosexual practices among them. Secondly, it has established the fact that democracy makes it incumbent on the official decision-makers and the ratifiers to make legal provisions for whatever the majority wanted.

Furthermore, the democratic sanction of homosexuality must have assumed that there could be no straight path *(Sirat Al-Mustakim),* or evolution of intrinsically sound and logically positive criteria for determining whatever is natural in terms of human behavioural norms. For, in the event of application of intrinsically sound criteria, the resultant action would have been in terms of the necessary correction of, and guarding against, any human inclination to perversion.

In order not to give rise to objections on moral grounds, they find it expedient to say that no intrinsically right, or straight, path exists. Instead, they claim that whatever path a majority of people choose ought to be th right one. This kind of logic is reminiscent of a repy that Mulla Nasr Al-Deen once deemed fit to give. He was riding a mule, when someone asked where he was going to. He promptly replied by saying that he was heading the same way as the mule! In the same vein, one might ask where the followers of Western democratic standards heading to? Evidently, the reply would have indicated the direction of their instincts!

The kind of democracy and individual freedom envisaged in Islam is directly opposite to that evolved in the West. Islamic democracy is based on integrity of human freedom and individual rights. It does not add upto any perversion of human sensibility into utter sensuality.[1]

On the other hand, Islam does not favour ascetic life. It does not advocate undue repression of human concupiscence. Instead, Islam helps individuals to organise and manage their lives in a physiologically, intellectually, or spiritually and sociologically harmonious manner. Its followers are able to regulate their baser instincts in rather a humane manner.

Islam seeks to enhance human endeavour towards selfimprovement and humanization, in terms of cultivating the higher nature, instincts and feelings peculiar to human beings. When we say that democracy is an integral part of Islam, we mean that Islam tries to ensure genuine freedom for one to act and interact like a real human being, without in any way subjecting oneself to one's carnal dictates.

In other words, Islam seeks to liberate one's sense of being human and sets appropriate limits to one's carnal behaviour. This point can well be judged by a discerning observer on the basis of two contrasting examples from history.

Cyrus's conquest of Babylon was followed by his decree that the subjugated people should be allowed to practise freely whatever they believed in, such as idolatery and

paganism. The unlimited freedom of worship bestowed on the polytheistic Babylonians was of a kind that could meet the criteria of Western democratic freedom. Accordingly, it will not be surprising if Westerners regard Cyrus to be a great lover of freedom, one who respected other's inborn desires and feelings. For, the freedom granted to the Babylonians and that cherished by Western democracies both underline personal inclinations.

In contrast, we may recall another example from history. It concerns the Prophet Abraham (ع)'s conscientious (as distinct from condescending) approach to the problem of deification of idols. He wanted to liberate them from the evil consequences of their ignorance. He did succeed after eventually destoying the idols and guiding them back towards the same exalted human path of self-recognition as indicated in the Qur'an.

The Prophet Ibrahim Khaleel's above action represents someting of a deviation from the principles of freedom and democracy as construed in the West. For, the Western democracies would rather allow men to practise whatever they believe in, as a part of the latter's entitlement to individual freedom.

Clearly, the logic of the protagonists of Western type democracy is opposite to that of the prophets. After all, the last Prophet Muhammad (ص), on his triumphant return to Makka, did not say: «Let the Makkans persist in doing whatever they have already chosen to do, which is no longer any of my business.». He did not tolerate idolatery on the ground it represented their free choice and, as such, worthy of respect and continued freedom.

Instead, didn't, the Prophet of Islam show the real significance of being human and free when he dismantled the idols in Kaaba? If so, whatever can be adjudged as signifying individual rights and democratic freedom ought to be based on the fundamental need for constantly promoting man's allround evolution and progress in a, necessarily human manner. Further, individual rights are part of human rights, arising from the humanness of mankind, and not from any individualistic liberation of man's inborn desires and urges.

According to Islam, any democratic situation must always consider the overall need to liberate and safeguard the humanness of mankind. This is necessary to avoid the evil consequences of any self-centred and/or vicariously negative living practised by individuals and societies. In contrast, a society in the Western democratic context tends to aim at no more than promoting its members' natural talents for deriving the utmost satisfaction from their unhindered biological existence.

The word: «Democratic» was omitted in the explicit reference to the «Islamic Republic» by the Imam, probably because of his well-known aversion to following Western patterns in a blind manner. The Imam always considered it inappropriate for our people to look upto the West for inspiration. He viewed any aping of the Westerners as undesirable, since it would lead to utter weakening of the people's morale and their own revolutionary spirit.

The Imam might have even felt that any use of the word: «Democratic» would be tantamount to betrayal of the people' continuing struggle for reestablishing their own cultural identity. For, our own culture already incorporates the essence of democratic freedom and, as such, there is no need for us to assimilate the same from others.

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1 In the case of one Western «land of liberty», we have heard that a public demonstration took place against subjecting homosexuals in Iran to exemplary punishment under the Islamic laws. They were protesting against the Islamic punishment saying that it went against their concepts of individual freedom and democracy!

Actually, from the Islamic point of view, the kind of freedoms leading to tolerance of homosexuality in the West, portends to debase and imperil the basic human freedom itself. For, they release the sheer animality in man, so that it overcomes and makes a prisoner of the sublime human spirit.

The Qur'an says that those who think and seek nothing but crystallisation of their freedoms in the direction of sensual enjoyment, or pandering to one's carnality, have actually lost their identity as human beings, which happens once they allow themselves to forget God. In other words, they have given up their devotion to God and, consequently, their own selves, as pointed out in the following Qur'anic verse:

«And be not like these who forsook God! So He made them forsake their own selves. Those are the transgressors. »

— Qur'an, 59:19

3. What happens to people's democratic rights, if and when Islamic Republic, guided by Wali Fakih, turns into a theocracy?

Questioner: In your above explanations, you have given the impression that a democratic government is based on the people's supremacy, which, as we all know, has been one of the most valuable outcomes of a democratic revolution. If so, don't you think that any advancing of the concept of Islamic Republic (in place of any unconditional democracy), which may eventually lead to theocracy, will be tantamount to suppressing the people's right to national sovereignty?

In other words, do you not consider that any progressive view that a country's power and strength is derived from the sovereignty of the people deserves to be readily endorsed, without going into an apparently obscure discussion about any supreme role of Wilayat Fakih, as envisaged in an Islamic Republic.

Mutahhari: Your argument, in brief, is that all the people of Iran, in a constitutional revolution, have a right to be the inexorable source of legislative, judicial and executive powers. So, it will not be reasonable to entrust the aforementioned right to one person, or a group of persons, Further, you have stated that in an Islamic Republic, the right is bestowed on the theologians or, in the words of some, on a theological autocracy. You have concluded that an Islamic Republic leading to theological autocracy will be against the people's right to supremacy at the national level.

and, as such, it will be construed as a reactionary act.

In reply, it must be pointed out that the people of Iran can always retain their inalienable right to supremacy at the national level, acquired through their constitutional revolution. It is so because they can never be expected to consider the need to re-orient and conform the existing/pre-Revolutionary laws by adoption of the basic Islamic principles and standards, as repugnant to their right to supremacy at the national level.

Accordingly, the necessity of reorienting the existing laws to Islam has been emphasized in the text of the Constitution. In fact, the Constitution specifies that no law should prevail that can be construed as repugnant to Islam. The Council of Guardians, including five preeminent theologians, has been envisaged in the Constitution for this very purpose. The people responsible for bringing about the Revolution have not in any way objected to the Islamic stipulation and directives in the Constitution. And, what is more, they (the common men) neither professed to be constitutional experts, nor did they show themselves to be capable of any legal tricks. No wonder, they preferred (through their votes) to obtain conformability of the existing laws with the unimpeachable Islamic principles.

That law enforcement should vest in the people themselves is the most important consideration. They may suitably enforce the present laws, or those which they have themselves caused to be formulated in an appropriate manner. They can conceivably accept a law drafted by a philosopher, not to speak of the Divine-inspired teachings of Islam, all in good faith.

In view of the foregoing, any Islamic characterisation of democracy will not be in any way incompatible with the people's sovereignty, which you have indicated to be revolving around the Constitution. Or, for that matter, its impact will not be negative on even the whole spectrum of democracy. This is so also because no democratic principle demands that a society adhering to the same should not govern itself in the light of a particular ideology or school of thought.

Actually, we see that political parties ordinarily align themselves with a particular ideology, and they do not consider this fact to be in any way contradictory to any democratic principles, which they may hold in great esteem.

Moreover, the wrong notion that any Islamic characterization of democracy is repugnant to the spirit of the latter arises from the possibility that their concept of democracy might well be the one popular in the eighteenth century. In that century, democracy focused on human rights. The latter were basically construed as pertaining to the actual problems of living, including those of food, shelter and clothing, and concentrated on what amounts to freedom of choice with regard to material needs of human life.

Those who harbour the wrong notion indicated above, tend to forget that human rights can well encompass people's inclinations towards human spirituality, in terms of faith, beliefs and (material-cum-spiritual) aspirations. They seem to overlook also the position that the climax of human achievement occurs beyond merely coping with the physiological instincts, or even beyond any subservience to physical and socioeconomic environmental requirements. Human excellence can as well lie in the spiritual realm of faith, beliefs and extramaterial yearnings.

Their mistake is the opposite of that made by the **Kharijites,** who misconstrued the Qur'anic reference to the (ultimate) authority and the (absolute) power to decide resting with Allah only, in Sura Yusuf («... اِنِ الْحُكْمُ اِلَّا لِلّهِ ...» / 12:40). They gave the impression that even the very down-to-earth human task of selfgovernment was a Divine function. As pointed out by Hazrat Ali(ع), Allah's Sovereignty (حاكميت), as asserted in the Qur'an, did signify a fundamental principle.

However, any inference drawn from it, so as to nullify human self-government (حکومت), would only amount to a misinterpretation of the intrinsic meaning and significance of the aforementioned Qur'anic principle. «کلمه حق يراد بها الباطل»

Those gentlemen who presuppose existence of a contradiction in the principles governing national sovereignty on one hand, and those reflected in the formulation of a particular school of thought, on the other, are mistaken, too. For, they must necessarily be imagining that the explicit Constitutional provision that no law should prevail,so as to be repugnant to the letter and spirit of Islam,is something illegal. If so, their attitude is against the spirit of Constitutionalism and that of even national sovereignty.

Yet, since your question mentions an allegation that an Islamic Republic would cause the people's right to national sovereignty to be trampled upon, as you have put it, I must say that a definitive majority of the Iranian people have stamped their future governmental pattern of the country to be Islamic in nature and content.

The Iranian peoples struggle has not been merely against political domination and colonialistic exploitation of the economy. It was equally a stand against the cultural penetration of the Western ideologies, under the seemingly innocuous and actually misleading captions of «freedom», «democracy», «socialism», «civilisation» or «great civilisation», «progress» and «modernism», among similar others.

The millions of Iranians who raised the slogan of «Islamic Republic» in the historical demonstration against the former regime, surely wanted to put their stamp—rather that of their own culture—on the (on-going) Revolution. We have known that a nation's own cultural identity is one which is deeply rooted in its very soul, and these struggling people's own cultural identity has been Islam. Those who have estranged themselves from Islam, continue to be part of our society and,

as such, avail its protection. In fact, they are often no more than the estranged ones, who have got themselves divorced from the people's own culture, soul and aspirations.

If the people's own demand, i.e. Islamic Republic, does indeed adversely affect their national sovereignty, then, we must say that a republic is an impossible proposition, because its continuance always involves some contradition or the other. Nobody wants to impose any Islamic character on a republic against the people's will. The people themselves have demanded it.

Actually, the popular movement for an Islamic Republic became ascendent, and began to be sustained by people's fervour, from the abovementioned historic day (day of the greatest public demonstration). The insistent public demand and their dynamic campaigning eventually led to the establishment of the Islamic Republic. The Islamic Republic has come to signify two major changes which effectively dealt with one negative situation and the other positive requirement. The former was evidenced by the toppling down of a 2500-year-old monarchical tradition, and the latter was represented by the ongoing process of restoring the monotheistic Islamic values.

The position concerning Wilayat Faḳih and its role in an Islamic Republic, is similar to that explained above. Wilayat Faḳih is not meant for introducing the Faḳih as head, or chief executive, or an actual ruler, of an Islamic government.

The role of the Faḳih in an Islamic country (i.e. a country where the people are committed to, and united in, their acceptance of Islam as an ideology) is that of an ideologue, and not that of a ruler. The duty of an ideologue is to supervise and monitor proper and correct implementation of the ideology. This he is in a position to ensure by virtue of his ideological proficiency, so as to evaluate and monitor a candidacy for, and incumbency of, the post: Head of an Islamic Government, which carries a primary responsibility

that government work and performance conform, in all respects, to the Islamic ideology.

The visualisation of the role of Wilayat Fakih, on part of the earlier generations (of the Constitutional days) and our present ones, has not been that Fakihs are the ones to take upon themselves the tasks of ruling and administering an Islamic country. In fact, throughout the centuries, people thought of Wilayat Fakih as a determining factor regarding the competence or otherwise of the public functionaries of an Islamic government concerned with promulgation or implementation of Islamic laws and criteria.

Accordingly, Imam Khomeini mentioned in an order addressed to the Prime Minister of the Provisional Government: «... Persuant to the Shariat Law and in accordance with the confidence reposed in me by a clear majority of the people, I shall appoint a head of the government. ....»

Wilayat Fakih is an office with ideological jurisdiction. Basically, it is the people who elect their Fakih. This fact in itself manifests democracy. Had it been the case that the appointment to the office of Willayat Fakih was by selection, or had it been possible for one Fakih to be succeeded by his nominee, we could well say that these practices would be against the democratic principle. However, the fact is people do elect a seasoned *Marj'a* (Consultant Fakih) for the public office of Wilayat Fakih.

The Imam (Fakih)'s Sharia authority manifests itself when induced by people's decisive commitment and adherence to Islam as a distinctive school of thought and as an equally well-defined ideology. The people corroborate his jurisdiction and repose confidence in his special competence to discern the Islamic nature and content of other's performances.

Actually, the *Sharia* authority, or guardianship, should represent the ideological guarantee for the people. A right

under Common, or secular, Law (حق عرفی) is represented by that of national sovereignty, or supremacy, of the people. It is the same right as the one which provides for their election of government leaders, who may deserve their vote of confidence.

You have mentioned about the possibility, if any, of the Islamic Republic becoming what you term as a government by theologians. There could be a mistake as between a government which is Islamic and that which is run by a class of theologians. May I ask how can the word: «Islamic» be given the connotation of any rule by the clergy? Does Islam represent an ideology, or a prerogative of any of its theological specialists? Or, doen't Islam focus on man and the universal human perspective?

Or, is it really the case that whenever our progressive thinkers come face to face with the concept of Islamic Republic, or hear about it, the bell that rings in their mind is that it is practically synonymous with a republic of the *Akhoonds* or Mullahs? Are these gentlemen not taking for granted that any difference between an Islamic Republic and other republican systems is only one and that, too, attributable to the former as a republic in which Mullahs seek positions of leadership and occupy various posts?

If what they attribute to an Islamic Republic, by way of assumption, is due to their not knowing about anything better concerning the same, one can only express surprise. However, if they do so as knowledgeable persons, who deem it expedient to underrate, or even reverse, whatever objective view they may have formed about the matter, one can only feel a thousand pities for them.

Today, every school-going youngster knows this much that an Islamic Republic pertains to an Islamic sjociety's republican regime. He knows that an Islamic society is one based on the concept of God's unity (توحید).

To him, the absolute singleness of God means that every

thing in the natural world is derived from Him and reverts to Him. It is common knowledge that this monotheistic perspective of Islam is substantiated by a comprehensive ideology, which reflects tthe concept of God's unity.

The concept of God's unity, as reflected in the Islamic ideology, constitutes the basis of identical conceptual frameworks for bringing about unity and integrity of human behaviour at the individual and social levels.

The need to bring about human unity has been emphasized by the Prophet (ص) in his introductory letters to many different world personalities of his time, which carried the message of the Holy Qur'an, as follows:

«قُـلْ يَـآ أَهْلَ الْكِتَـابِ تَعَالَـوْا إِلَى كَلِمَةٍ سَوَآء بَيْتَنَاوَبَيْتَكُمْ أَلَّا نَعْبُدَ إِلاَّ اللَّهِ وَلاَنُشْرِكَ بِهِ شَيْئاً وَلا تَتَّخِذَ بَعْضُنَا أَرْبَاباً مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ...»

«Say: O people of the Book; Come ye to a Word common between us and you that «we worship none but God and shall not associate anything with Him and (that) some of us take not any others for lords, other than God»; and if they turn back, then, say ye: «Bear witness that we are Muslims (those surrendered unto Allah).»

- Qur'an, 3:63

The phrase: « تعالوا الى كلمة سواء بيننا وبينكم »points to the equal applicability to peoples of the concept of Divine unity. The words: « الانعبدالاالله » indicate the need to conform individual outlook and behaviour to the concept of Divine unity. The phrase: « ولابتخذبعضنابعضاأربابا... » implies equality of men and the need to reflect this in social interaction, which carries the same practical significance as indicated by the concept of democracy. What is more, it reflects the most original form of democracy.

Some people imagine that an Islamic Republic is indicative of social stratification, such as indicated by the reference to the clergy as a dominant class. This goes to strengthen the philosophy of a materialist and class-conscious society. Yet, had the prefix: «Islamic» not been there before «Republic», it would have probably shown impartiality on part of the clergy, so as to mean that the government could well be in the hands of the people, and not any particular class!

Be that as it may, an Islamic Republic can never signify any class-dominated society. Its nature and content must be always Islamic in the ideological perspective, as indicated above. Neither the prefix: «Islamic» can, by itself, really alter the meaning and significance of the word: «Republic», in any fundamental manner, nor qualifying the term: «Republic» necessarily entails any contradiction. One must examine the qualification in depth and decide whether or not any specific limitation, or class-orientation, constitutes an integral part of its content.

4. How can an Islamic Republic cope with the modern problems, with the laws prescribed fourteen hundred years ago?

Questioner: Socioeconomic and political situations have become complicated during the last fourteen centuries. Further changes are taking place in a dynamic manner. Considering these changes, how can a government of an Islamic Republic cope with them in a manner as prescribed fourteen hundred years ago? Are the original Islamic laws (which might have become obsolete by now), intrinsically capable of solving the current problems?

Mutahhari; The question has two aspects. The first one assumes that all Islamic laws, criteria, principles and regulations have remained static during the last fourteen hundred years. The second aspect of the question is also an assumption to the effect that human situations and dynamics underwent substantial changes during the same period. The assumptive nature of the question makes it difficult to reconcile its fallacies before giving a suitable reply. Nevertheless, an attempt can be made.

There is no denying the fact that times are always in a state of flux. Yet, the significant thing is the predictability of human endeavour irrespective of the changing situations. An individual human being is like a traveller in a caravan, and his society is like the caravan itself, which is reaching one destination after another. Neither the individual nor his society can ever remain static or in the same monotonous

situation.

For, it will be against the law of nature to anticipate that the same situation or condition found at one stage will be repeated in toto at the next.

Yet, we must not ignore the fact that there is a difference between an intended destination itself and the way to reach it. Or, must the goals and/or the ways to reach them be regarded as constantly variable, too, even when a particular course of social evolution has been commonly agreed upon? Conversely, does any route to a destination remain the same when one changes it in favour of another? Can mankind, or human society, be expected to strive towards a different goal, say, every day, or change directions at every stage of progress?

The answers are all in the negative. Any particular line of social evolution that is commonly agreed upon can, in principle, remain unchanged. It is like any existing axis of a planet, which remains unaltered by internal changes in the rotating mass around it, or by the body's orbital revolution, as at a given point in time. Or, is it possible at all to deduce that a revolving and rotating planet's dynamism should make its axis, too, constantly variable? Conversely, while its axis remains constant, should it cause the planet to be really stationary in orbit? Clearly, the answers are in the negative.

The same analogy can be drawn in the case of humanity. In this context, the basic question is as to whether or not the fact of being human, the relevant accomplishments and the human values are realities which can be viewed as changeable or transformable. In other words, must the basic human standards and values necessarily undergo changes according to the dynamics of human living, and with the changing patterns of civilisation?

Or, does anything commanded one day by human beings as laudable and cherishable loose its intrinsic value the next day? Or, can it be replaced by any other thing, with a negative

level of intrinsic value as compared to the first, as a normal human standard?

Alternatively, do you think that to be a future Tshombe or Mu'awiyeh is something one can set for himself as a desirable human standard, in preference to Lumumba or Abu Dharr, as if the latter were against humanity? If not, then, you ought to agree that anyone seeking to become an Abu Dharr does not represent something odd and characteristic of a permanent separation from the general direction of mankind's endeavour. This is so all the more because it is in man's specific nature to seek enhancement and even perfection of human values, standards and criteria, on a continuing basis.

By virtue of the constancy of the direction and also the evolutionary nature of human endeavour, mankind has been able to evolve and consolidate the existing values. These values mark the path of mankind's societal evolution. Their function is the same as that of the real landmarks maintained in a treeless and mountainless desert to pinpoint the way across. The standards that humanity has always cherished are unchangeable and are always valid as mankind's fundamental terms of reference for evolving a society's allround excellence. There is neither any reason to forsake the human values, nor any exigency to change them.

In the chapter: Islam and Modern Living of my book: «*The Rights of Women in Islam*»[1]. I have made it clear as to how an Islamic society can seek to resolve the complications and exigencies of modern times and of differently oriented societies. I have pointed out that the question as to whether or not modern life is concerned with the time-honoured principles of a continually valid nature is essentially based on another important question of philosophy.

The abovementioned philosophical consideration involves the following:

- Whether or not man has discovered any transformations in himself, even in recent history, i.e. since he attained the rudiments of civilisation.
- Does man in every consecutive era assume different characteristics, as compared to man in the preceding era?
- Can the basic human pattern of life be changed into an altogether different one? If this is indeed possible, even by sheer force, must all the laws evolved by human society (excluding, perhaps, those of common applicability to man and animal) be replaced?
- Is human nature like the changing properties of water, which is governed by one set of natural laws when in the liquid form and another when it boils and assumes a gaseous/vaporous nature?
- If the answers to the foregoing are in the negative, does it not mean that throughout history the inherent nature of man has remained the same, without any fundamental change?

To sum up, it will not be incorrect to favour the view (without going into its philosophical pros and cons) that man has remained basically the same through every age, since the very beginning of his appearance on the earth, and it has been a constant factor in his and his societal progress.

Notwithstanding the possibility of any occasional variation, or quirk of nature, in the process of man's recreation, there has been no mutation of human beings as a species. However, under the (Divine) Law of Creation, man's psychological, spiritual and sociological evolution, rather than any «mutation» of his bodily constitution and organism, has been in evidence.

In so far as man's special nature has remained the same, it

specifies for him a basically human way of life and living, characterised inevitably by a set of timehonoured principles governing the modality of his individual progress through life, including his attainments and social interactions through various stages of life. However,in a society where individuals are obliged to set for themselves mutually exclusive goals, the latter, by their specific nature, determine what appear to be distinctive sets of rules of pursuit. Then, people are necessarily constrained to follow ways of life/living, which are different from one another, at the individual and societal 'levels.

In so far as one can discern from the intents and purposes of Islamic laws, fundamental principles governing the direction of human endeavour, rather than any individual goals in life, constitute their basis. At the same time, Islamic laws are so established as to take into consideration the need to prepare individuals for accomplishing mutually harmonious objectives. Further, Islamic way of life is predetermined to be flexible, depending on the nature and content of human needs for constancy and adjustability. The peculiarities of Islamic laws have been concisely discussed in the book: «*The Rights of Women in Islam*». For our present discussion, it will be sufficient to explain the matter by way of an example.

We may begin illustrating the constancy and dynamism of an Islamic society by citing an instance from the Holy Qur'an:

وَأَعِدُّوا لَهُمْ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ مِنْ قُوَّةٍ وَمِنْ رِبَاطِ الْخَيْلِ تُرْهِبُونَ بِهِ عَدُوَّ اللّهِ وَعَدُوَّكُمْ...

«Prepare againstthem what force...(and means)you can... to frighten the enemy of Allah and yours... .»
- Qur'an, 8:60

We may also cite that in Islamic jurisprudence, the tradition of the Prophet (ص) concerning the need for acquiring expertise (as in horsemanship, or archery), through competetive war-like exercises in «teaching a lesson», or

«scaring an enemy», has been acknhowledged as something ordered by the Prophet, who himself used to participate in them.

Now, if we examine the principle behind what is meant by: « واعدوالهم », we will notice it to be something which is always new and valid, irrespective of the times. Whereas the order to practise, say, horsemanship/archery is no longer imperative and expedient, because of the obvious change in the state of military, or martial art. However, acquisition of expertise in the military field is a continuing process to this day. This need has been reflected in the abovementioned Qur'anic principle. With regard to the traditon of the Prophet (ص), we can stillappropriately train ourselves in modern warfare.

Thank God, numerous other examples showing the possibility of flexible compliance with the Islamic laws do exist. The principles reflected in Islamic laws are not merely invariable and sound, but permit flexible adaptation to the dynamic human situations, on a continuing basis, and without compromising their basic nature and content. To explain this further, another example is worthwhile.

There is in the Glorious Qur'an a principle governing the quality and modality of circulation of wealth in an Islamic society. This is manifest in the Qur'anic verse indicated below:

...أَمْوَالَكُمْ بَيْنَكُمْ بِالْبَاطِلِ...

«Do not misappropriate each other's wealth. ... .»
- Qur'an, 2:188

The foregoing implies that any economic transaction between people, which serves no purpose useful to the society, is futile. To elaborate further, it means that transfer of any economic means legitimately acquired by one person to another, must be in the overall perspective of ultimately fulfilling the basic needs of people in one's society.

Accordingly, if one has legitimate means to acquire, say, a bagful of dead ants only to throw them away, this transaction is a futile one. Yet, if some useful (or scientific) purpose can be met by utilising the dead ants, the transaction becomes valid. This inverse relationship between what remains prohibited «today» has been envisaged in the Qur'an (e.g. 2:188). A *Mujtahid* (authority on Islamic jurisprudence) is, therefore, expected to correctly interpret the Islamic laws on the basis of their latest applicability, so as to approve or disapprove of a particular transaction in the context of the *Shariat* laws.

Another instance of the variable nature of a transaction concerns human blood. Dealing in human blood was prohibited in the past. Now that the life-saving utility of human blood transfusions has already been established, the Islamic regulation concerning the same has become a positive one, so far as blood donations are concerned, including transactions involving monetary payments.

The above examples illustrate the point that social benefit, envisaged according to the overall meaning and significance of the Islamic laws, remains the main criterion for evaluating any economic activity, or transaction. This principle is not affected by any change in the regulations made within the framework of the Islamic laws, necesitated by transformations in a field of application, as in the case of utilising human blood.

Consistency between the Divine-inspired Islamic principles and the matters of detail in the process of their sound application is maintainable through *Ijtehad* (a functional application of Islamic jurisprudence). The Fakih (a Mujtahid capable of interpreting and ruling on Islamic jurisprudence) concerned is responsible for evaluating and updating the details of regulations formulated in the past, as necessary, within the Islamic legal framework.

1 Translated/Published by World Organization for Islamic Services (WOFIS), P. O. Box: 2245, Tehran, Iran.

5. Why not try for an ideological synthesis between democracy and socialism on one hand, and Islam on the other?

Questioner: You have outlined ho well the Divine-inspired laws of Islam determine the most appropriate way of life for mankind. Yet, in our times, it has been intensely argued that if two of mankind's great ideological achievements, viz: democracy and socialism, put together and supple-mented by the most meaningful Islamic principles (for the benefit of the Muslims in particular), it will add up to a really straight forward and comprehensively effective way for human betterment, without necessitating any ultimate recourse to the Divine-inspired laws? Do you agree?

Mutahhari: Democracy and socialism are prone to mutual incompatibility, basic or otherwise. Their conceptual differences have yet to be resolved. Democracy is basically oriented to individualism, so as to protect individual rights and freedoms. In contrast, socialism is based on collectivism and precedence of social rights over the individual's. That means socialism necessitates limiting individual freedom and democracy.

In the world today, some countries seek to follow democracy and some others favour socialism. Political

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analysts concede that the polarisation of countries towards democracy and socialism respectively has not yet come to mean real freedom and liberality in the case of the former, and unalloyed socialist practices in the case of the latter.

On the other hand, liberalistic group of countries do not talk of socialism. Even where they claim to be both democratic and socialistic, there is actually no substantiating evidence. The socialistic countries, too, hardly discuss any matter of democratic content. Even those among them who call themselves democratic as well as as socialist, do so evidently in vain.

The question as to whether or not to favour one of the two opposite poles of democracy and socialism, or an amalgam of both, if they can really be amalgamated, involves not only a legal but philosophical approach. At the same time, one must take into account the mixed ideological groups, which show inclination to both democracy and socialism, in the context of their trying to achieve a synthesis.

In the philosophical context, the problem of reconciling democracy and socialism revolves around their focus on individualism and collectivism respectively. For, the attitudes of the protagonists of democracy on one hand, and socialism on the other, as well as those who support an amalgam of both, seek an answer to the same legalistic question. The question is as to whether or not an individual man should be recognised as a genuine legal entity in his own right, and society as an accidental phenomenon of secondary, or nominal, importance.

If the answer is in the affirmative, those who readily accept it will naturaly postulate that democracy should assume precedence over socialism. On the other hand, any acceptance

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of a reply in the negative is indicative of the belief that sociological man comes before psychological man, so that individuality has no legal affirmation. Those who do not recognise man's individuality, tend to ignore his spiritual and other inner yeanings, as well as his own will and volition. They expect people to subject themselves to the collective interests, and to reflect the collective spirit of regimentation in their society, which they treat as the only recognisable human entity in socialistic terms.

Yet, recourse to a third alternative is possible, too. It consists of neither absorption of man's individuality (not merely countability as a body) in his society, nor any denial of the society as a real and significant entity. On the contrary, it represents establishment of mutually reciprocal relationship between man's genuine personality and his society, within an overall philosophical framework.

The above possibility is similar to that indicated in our (Islamic) philosophy, where it says that unity (qualitative) and profusion (quantitative) are mutually inclusive. Perhaps, its detailed explanation is not warranted in our present discussion.

Still, your question calls for some detailed explanation of what we consider to be *Ma'nawiyat* (meaningfulness, or intellectual/spiritual content of something). For, one can discern in your question the need for an ideological framework for any combination of democracy and socialism that some people believe they can achieve.

Accordingly, the basic requirement is to ensure the most appropriate human ethos and behavioural norms. Is creation of this ethos as easy as providing greenery in a city, so as to render the urban atmosphere rather congenial, by investing capital and labour? Or, does it require something more, achievable through inculcation of appropriate faith, beliefs,

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inclinations and outlook?

In the latter case, one may as well ask what kind of human inclinations and outlook are effective in assuring sustained congeniality of the relevant ethos, and how can these be inculcated?

Some among the democracy-socialism synthesisers, who deem it necessary to create an intellectually congenial environment for the purpose, treat *Ma'nawiyat* in a rather secular manner, as if it is different from religion.

According to them, *Manawiyat* exists where human problems are viewed in an unbiased manner, without any discrimination, racial or religious or similar other. They consider religion to be discriminatory in the sense that its legal treatment of its followers is different from that of its non-followers. They believe that discrimination makes a religion deficient in intellectual, spiritual and psychological soundness.

They want to build a world allied to *Ma'nawiyat,* but devoid of religion. Their concern for individuality and aversion to religion are reminiscent of mere humanism and atheistic existentialism, as heralded by Jean-Paul Sartre. Humanism (or humanitarianism), or existentialism can be as popular as their catchwords seem to make them. With all their instant appeal to secular intellect, they remain hardly achievable.

Neither any secular conceptualization of human intellectuality, nor any humanistic perception of the scope for improving man's environment, evidence any basically negative approach. However, in actual practice, they fall short of what their protagonists claim them to be. A case in point is Sartre's own partial sympathy towards Israel.

There are others who try to improvise a sort of new ideological framework, incorporating democracy and socialism, as well as some religion. In making use of a religion, they try to be selective about its ideological content

and universal outlook. Then, they seek to enlist the support of religious scholars, specially those with mystical tendencies.

Even if it were possible to arrive at a combination of democracy, socialism and religion, this is not likely in case of Islam. Islam is not amenable to any superficial or incomplete adaptation or practice. Anything done in the name of Islam, without really meaning to implement its teachings in all walks of life, will be manifestly contrary to it. What is more, it will be tantamount to underrating and even attempting to disintegrate Islam, so that it no longer remains the same.

With regard to the question of arriving at any appropriate conceptual synthesis, as mentioned by you, we may take into consideration some relevant views of Iqbal.[1]

He says that the modern world needs three things: (1) a spiritual perspective of the world,(2) individual freedom towards spiritual reorientation, and (3) basic principles of universal significance, capable of providing a spiritual basis of justifying appropriate social evolution of the humanity as a whole.

The first requirement mentioned above is one of truly interpreting the dynamics of the world in the light of an overall spiritual-intellectual perspective. It can mean, in terms of Qur'anic exegesis, a continuing process of identifiying the world as a transient condition, the essence of which lies in deriving substance from God and eventually returning towards Him.

The second requirement concerning individual freedom is similar to that envisaged in democracy. The last need mentioned by Iqbal is one which can be met by an appropriate ideology of a society, capable of regulating the ways and norms of life and guiding peoples towards an identical evolutionary path.

In the context of the above requirements, Iqbal himself referred to the condition he noticed in Europe. According to him, the European situation was characterised by

democracies of an unsalutary kind, in that they continued to seek national self-interests and to exploit the weak in their societies in order to further benefit the strong. This was inevitable in a self-centred social ethos.

Iqbal further noted that, in contrast, Muslims have an ideology, rather ultimate in its meaning and significance, based as it is on human spirituality, and capable as it is of coping with the intricacies of life's dynamics, through their spiritual convictions and unselfishness, as well as readiness to die for a moral cause.

1 Iqbal Lahori: *Ahya-i-Fikre-Deeni dar Islam (Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam)*. Ashraf Publ., Lahore), P. 203.

6. How best can the revolution in Iran be analysed?

Questioner: In your opinion, how best can the Iranian revolution be analysed? They say that the Iranian revolution is different from every other revolution in world history. What are the salient features of the difference? Please explain the Islamic nature and content of the revolution in Iran.

Mutahhari: The dictionary meaning of the Arabic word: «*Inkilab*» (انقلاب) or «revolution» centres around «inversion» or turning upside down/inside out, including any overturn of a government, social system, or an established pattern, among similar others.

The Glorious Qur'an uses the word: «*Inkilab*» and its derivatives in their proper or original sense, and not in any figurative or idiomatic way, such as noticeable in current usage. The derivatives used in the Qur'an include: «*Taklib*» (تقليب) or «transformation/inversion», and «*Munkalib*» (منقلب), which can signify «overturn». Another derivative: «*Yunkalib*» (ينقلب) occurs in the Qur'anic passage mentioned below:

«وَمَا مُحَمَّدُ إِلاَّ رَسُولٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ الرُّسُلُ أَفَائِنْ مَاتَ أَوْ قُتِلَ انْقَلَبْتُمْ عَلَى أَعْقَابِكُمْ وَمَنْ يَنْقَلِبْ عَلَى عَقِبَيْهِ فَلَنْ يَضُرَّاللَّهَ شَيْئاً...»

«Muhammad is no more than an apostle; (other) apostles have passed away prior to him. Therefore, if he dies or is slain, will you turn upon your heels?

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And whoever turns upon his heels... will by no means do harm to God. ... .»

- Qur'an, 3: 144

The above verse materialised during the Battle of Ohad, after a rumour that the Prophet (ص) was slain led to a chaotic withdrawal of a substantial number of the Muslim combatants. The Divine admonition emphasized that Prophet Muhammad (ص) was no more than a messenger of God, like many others prior to him. Accordingly, he, like every other apostle, could not but be a mortal, who is liable even to get killed. What remained immortal was the Divine messages they were assigned to convey.

So, in the event of the Prophet's natural death or getting killed, would his fellow Muslims «revert» to whatever idolatery they had practised before accepting Islam? In the terminology of the above Qur'anic verse, the word: «*Inkilab*» was used in the sense of reverting to the former pagan status of the diffident Muslims, which was evidently implied to be an undesirable return.

In contrast, the same word meaning «return» was used as a desirable act in the following verse:

«فَانْقَلَبُوا بِنِعْمَةٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَفَضْلٍ...»

«They returned ... with the blessings from God and by (His) Grace.»

- Qur'an, 3: 174

In the first example from the Qur'an, the word: «*Inkilab*» was used in the same sense as in the second. However, their respective context was different. In the former context, the «return» was meant in the retrogressive sense (i.e. return to the idolaterous ways of the past). In the latter context, the same word signified return to the former state of absolute faith in God (after the incidence of panic during the Battle of Ohad).

The above examples from the Qur'an make it clear that there is nothing sacrosanct, or impious, about the particular

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uses of the word. Whatever other meanings of idiomatic significance came to be ascribed to the word during the subsequent periods, are reflected only in Islamic Jurisprudence and the relevant philosophical works. Even so, the interpretations continue to differ.

For instance, in one part of Islamic jurisprudence, we come across the same word, i.e. «*Inkilab*» («revolution»). According to one interpretation, the word has been used as a synonym for «*Istehala*» (استحالة), or transformation (as in case a defiled or polluted stick is burnt and the ashes are treated as good enough for a kind of «ablution» prescribed in the absence of water).

In the philosophical context, the word: «*Inkilab*» signifies basic transformation of a thing, which necessarily implies a total change in its nature and composition· There is also the question as to whether or not a revolutionary change is at all possible. Some would say that it is not possible, because of the original or intrinsic or basic nature of things, which, they believe, is unchangeable. Others, who subsribe to the theory that things originally existing in one form can change into another, believe not only in revolutionary, but evolutionary changes, even of basic significance, towards perfection.

In current usage, the word is indicative of a special meaning, in the sociopolitical and historical context. The latest synonym for «*Inkilab*» is «*Thowra*» in Arabic, or «revolution» in some European languages. In the sociological context, it signifies a relative, rather than an absolute, change. It does not mean any transformation of one thing into a totally different other thing. In other words, it points to replacement of one existing reality by another kind of existence.

The above meaning and significance of a revolutionary change, as currently understood, is well brought out, in relation to the Qur'an, in one of the poems of Iqbal:

نـــقش قـــرآن چونکـــه در عـــالم نـــشست
نـــقشــــه‌هـــای پاپ و کـــاهـــن را شکـــست
فـــاش گـــویم آنـــچه در دل مـــضمـــر است
ابـــن کـــتابـــی نـــیست چیزی دیگر است
چونـــکـــه درجـــان رفـــت جـــان دیگـــر شـــود
جـــان کـــه دیگـــر شـــد جـــهان دیگـــر شـــود

The universal impact such as that of Qur'an
Eclipsed the Papal Design and the Jewish Plan
Let me just speak out my heart's impulse
It's not just a book, it's something else
Once it creates in man a deep sense
It transforms his heart and his universe.

The kind of revolutionary change we have referred to earlier is indicated in the last couplet above. Iqbal says that the Qur'an is capable of inducing a spiritual revolution in man, leading to an equally significant change in human perception of the external universe.

The foregoing makes it clear that the word: «*Inkilab*» can have different shades of meanings and connotations. These include a «relative change» in the context of man's sociological evolution in the historical perspective, and a «vital change» in the philosophical context. The major nuances of the word are further elaborated herein, together with the factors and motivations influencing its understanding in different perspectives. Then, we may pass on to the essential characteristics of revolutions.

Sometimes, a revolutionary change occurs in some individuals. This type of revolution is oriented to the individual himself, either in his animal or human nature. Where we notice that an individual is more or less obsessed with a specific purpose or objective, without paying attention to anything else, any «change» that he may have undergone is likely to emphasize his inclination to be ambitious and sensual. It can be a revolutionary change even when oriented

to one's animality.

The traditional story of Amir Khajandi illustrates the obsessional change in man very well. According to this story, Amir Khajandi was asked how come his status changed from a poor ass-rider's to that of an owner of palaces. He replied, the change was due to his own desperate efforts to either amass wealth or die, which were prompted by an idea to the same effect he had come across in a poem. This case represents a sort of revolution in an individual's life.

Another example of individualistic revolution can be one involving the emotion of love, specially the obsessive kind. In philosophical works, such as of Bu Ali Sina (Avicenna) and Mulla Sadra, the nature of love has been discussed. There, one can find consensus on the revolutionary impact of love within individuals. Another individual kind of revolutionary turn in a man's life is represented by «*Touba*», or a repentent vow not to repeat or continue something bad and undesirable.

«*Touba*» aptly signifies an individual's revolutionary stand against himself. It is a revolution of psychological, philosophical, sociological and sheer human significance. The stand is one acheved by an oppressed person against a force of oppression. It upholds higher values of which human beings are capable, against those of a debasing kind that individuals are susceptible to. A revolution that an individual brings about in himself is positive when it establishes humanness in place of one's animal-like sensuousness.

In other words, an individual reaches a stage in his personal development where he makes an upright stand against his own baser instincts. He demands his human rights from his own biological self. He «punishes» himself. He vows never to allow his sensuality to predominate his sensibility.

The «*Touba*», as explained above, is an individual

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counterpart of a society's revolution in favour of rectitude. Just as an individual can counter his own baser self, a society — or a relatively innocent majority in it—can effectively overcome the causes, often perpetuated by an influential minority, which lead to degeneration and wrecking of the very integrity of the social fabric. The majority, who counter the minority forces of oppression «avenge» and «punish» the latter, just as an individual committing himself to «*Touba*» counter acts his negative side.

In short, «*Touba*»[1] signifies not only human reaction to any overindulgence of the body, but manifests the repentent individual's own willpower. It is peculiar to mankind, since its parallel does not exist in the animal kind.

The examples mentioned above concern the «revolutions» that individuals bring about within themselves. Revolutions at the societal level of a different kind, too. Among the latter, we may include industrial revolutions, such as that initiated in the United Kingdom three centuries ago. Furthermore, scientific, cultural and educational revolution, too, are part of societal revolutions.

In Iran, the Constitutional Movement and the current Islamic Movement represent the society-oriented revolutions. Similar examples can be found elsewhere, too. Societal movements become revolutions after their accomplishment.

Furthermore, in Arabic diction, the word: «*Inkilab*», in its verb form, is intransitive or without a direct object. It signifies a fait accompli by itself. This is how it is understood in its idiomatic and philosophical contexts, as well as in Islamic Jurisprudence. When used idiomatically in the Persian language, however, the word assumes a transitive significance. For instance, we put it (rather subjectively) in Persian: « انقلاب کرد » («made revolution»), as if it were necessary to add an element of volition into the act:

Secondly, we do not call just any social (or individual)

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change a revolution. In fact, none would call a turn towards the worse a revolution. For, the word is always used in a positive sense of a revolutionary change for the better, in a continuing process of social evolution.

Thirdly, there is even a negative aspect, that of rejection (say, of an existing regime), in the sociological connotation of the word.

All the three points mentioned above are taken into consideration in explaining the social connotation of the word: «*Inkilab*», according to its current usage in the Persian language, specially as a revolution for the good of society and a better social order. Accordingly, it is conceivable that a societal revolution can even mean its getting worse before it gets better.[2]

With regard to societal revolutions, a question of basic importance can be as to whether or not these are alike in substance, if not in form. Briefly, it may be mentioned that, in the opinion of some, any sustained economic disparity in a society can lead to its polarisation into two classes: «the haves» and «the have nots». The socioeconomic disequilibrium is attributed to the nature of utilisation of the means of production and the extent of concentration of the resultant distribution pattern.

The approach based on social stratification resulting from economic disparity involves a hypothetical assumption. It presupposes existence of an overall co-ordinating machinery functioning beyond the economic fields. The functions cover different sociological fields, including philosophical, literary, judicial, moral, religious and similar others. Yet, those who believe in this approach emphasize the basic similarity of efforts in different walks of life, if only because of their common tendency to be self-centred.

In the final analysis, any economically polarised society, as indicated above, is not likely to evolve on a continuing basis of keeping pace with or culturally absorbing economic development, any comprehensive social elan based on a philosophical or religious consensus, and, for that matter, even purely artistic considerations.

A different approach is indicated by those who attribute societal revolutions to factors beyond any economic polarisation as between «the haves» and «the have nots». They do not believe that mere existence of «have nots» can be instrumental in bringing about the revolutions.

According to the above school of thought, root causes of societal revolutions lie neither in the society, nor in the social interactions of its members. Instead, these are directly attributable to the bipolar nature of people's temperament, which their society only reflects.

Moreover, any existence of contradictory effects of people's social interactions are not considered to be mutually repellent in any absolute sense. In other words, their cumulative effects are not likely to be so peremptive as to hinder the general progress of the society.

Accordingly, a society can well achieve sociocultural progress even before reaching the «take off» point in its economic and technological development. The cultural aspects of a societal revolution can be of far-reaching historical, philosophical, moral and religious significance. At the same time, it may reflect the evolutionary status and environmental background of the people, as well as their ethos.

With regard to ethos, it is notable that any economic and technological orientation of a society's general progress may actually involve cultural lag. This is because of the popular concentration on specialization of knowledge and technical skills. Where people's outlook is dominated by an overly concern for material tools and economic means of their selfcentred progress, it can be compared with «*Beenish-Abzari*» (a tools-oriented ethos).

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On the other hand, a comprehensive socioeconomic and cultural growth is advocated in an ethos called «*Beenish Fitri*» (an outlook compatible with the naturalness of things). It is characterised by the following:

- Primary importance is assigned to man's psychological development, rather than his sociological and environmental conditioning.
- Due cognizance is taken of the fact that polarisation of human attitudes can have social consequences.
- It is also recognized that man's freewill and freedom of choice are liable to exaggeration in actual practice.
- Free social interaction is a major characteristic of «*Beenish Fitri*». This means, none can have absolute say, or precedence, over the others. Also, right to forming one's own opinion is upheld. Consequently, what appears to be progressive for some may seem retrogressive to some others.

One reason for the abovementioned variable assessment and interpreatation of societal progress lies in the subjectivity of the assessor (s) or interpreter (s). Often, people remain engrossed in their self-centered pursuits of whatever specific objectives are visualised to be conducive to their material wellbeing. In this process, they necessarily set priorities for realizing what they desire. In doing so, they find it convenient to underrate, or even set aside, the other needs, including some genuinely meaningful ones. [3]

A case in point is the popular concentration on scientific and technological progress. The efforts are aimed at deriving material advantages even from any indiscriminate use of the natural resources. This, too, involves the least concern for any non-materialistic requirements of humanity, while postulating materialistic appeal/glamour. Where materialistic overconcern and over-indulgence become predominant in a society, moral decay sets in, resulting in psychological decline of the affected people. Then, further socioeconomic contradictions between materialistic and non-materialistic attitudes become rampant. Eventually, the materialistically conceived and exploited world faces a total collapse. And, this prognosis is not too far-fetched, or too surprising, for anyone to comprehend!

- The bipolarity of human attitudes is reflected in man's freewill, so that it results in different levels of an eventual realization of humanness among individuals. The cumlative influence of bipolarity of individuals crystallizes into bipolarity of their society. Thus, one societal pole represents the cumulative effects of its members' faith, belief and morality, while the other their creature needs and manifestations. The former signifies people's intellectual and spiritual concern, which provides the impetus for progress towards every realisable human perfection.
- According to *Beenish Fitri*», the terms of reference of man's evolution in human terms include his and his society's freedom, independence, self-reliance and ability to overcome environmental constraints in every possible way.
- Significant changes in the historical course of

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human evolution have been mostly in the direction of righteousness, affirmation of people's faith, belief and aspirations, as well as liberation from domination by external forces, including those of the natural or physical environment and negativating factors of carnal and social or environmental nature.

In short, «*Beenish Fitri*» revolves around the following:

- Man delights in seeking to accomplish meaningful things in a pioneering spirit.
- Human values have always remained the same as in their original philosophical perspective, and these are not only deeply rooted in man's nature, but continue to influence the relevant changes and attainments of historical importance.
- Man, as an individual, is constantly engaged in reconciling conflicts that arise in him from his aforementioned bipolar nature (human vs. animal). Further, human beings tend towards gradually seeking enhancement of their humanness in a natural manner.

In the foregoing explanation, it has been clarified that a major requirement of an appropriate human evolution is man's and his societal independence. A societal independence has been specified to be one from the avoidable constraints of the outside environment, necessitating overcoming of as many natural and man-made obstacles as possible. Personal independence has been indicated to be from one's own domination by the animal instincts.

Man gains independence from his own negative inclinations through self-control. Self-control is necessary, so that one's humanness can emerge out of one's carnality. It comes from one's own conscientious self-development. Individual psychology has the potential to control and guide

one's physiological instincts and gregariousness. Accordingly, psychological man is intrinsically more capable than sociologically conditioned man.

In the above context, it is notable that man is not impressionable in any mechanical way, such as that of an empty tape for recording. At the same time, he is not as exploitable as some inorganic raw material that can be made use of in any required manner. He is as dynamic as a new shoot of a plant, with the potential to become a full-fledged tree. His natural dynamism, rather than any acquired mechanical competence, is instrumental in his achieving freedom and self-reliance, in a gradual manner.

Man's intellectual, or spiritual, and temporal qualities become manifest through self-development, and gradually at that. The process is similar to that of organic growth in the nature. Further, man's historical evolution, at his societal level, depends on the cumulative social impact of the various conditions of individual self-development, on one hand, and the overall social progress in bringing about any sensible harnessing of the physical environment, on the other.

The natural temperament of man and his historical evolution are not necessarily conditioned by his material needs. Some abstract considerations, too, are involved. Neither in the historical, nor in the natural, perspective could man be treated as if he were a mere social animal of economic worth.

For, as mentioned above, man has a «bipolar» nature and, as such, he is capable of gravitating towards either positively wholesome humanness, or negatively unwholesome sensuality. At the same time, this duality of man's nature does not by itself negativate the overall human tendency towards seeking freedom from the negative impact of one's own self, and, thus, endeavouring towards whatever evolutionary perfection one is capable of achieving.

Clearly, the revolutions in history could not have resulted

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just from the cumulative human behavioural inconsistencies as affecting a society. They have their roots in the innate nature of man. The inner conflicts that affect an individual are conducive to his evolving a modus vivendi that reflects his natural concern for freedom and perfection. Thus, some positive human traits may well prevail eventually over the negative ones, as envisaged in a natural behaviour of man.

In view of the possibility that individual pursuits can be consistent with nature, it can be inferred that revolutions are motivated by the inner promptings of men, rather than their reactions to a society's failures.

In other words, revolutions arise from psychological motivations of people. Inner personality conflicts of individuals tend to resolve themselves, so as to eliminate or improve upon some constraints of practical significance in life. Thus, to achieve betterment of situations, at the individual and social levels, is to enhance the cumulative process of realizing such perfection as is naturally within human capability.

At the same time, inter-individual and inter-group differences, conflicts and practical difficulties are also faced by people. These arise from polarisation, occuring at individual and societal levels, as between those who affirm and enhance their spiritual values and intellectual convictions, towards rectitude in themselves and in their social interactions, and the others who concentrate on promoting and carrying out desires arising from their own animal instincts and motivations.

The conflicts indicated above involve people's morality. In fact, these can be interpreted as a continuing antagonism between the inexorable human qualities of righteous and genuine nature, and the unreliable traits of falsehood and self-centred opportunism. In short, these are the conflicts between what is intrinsically right (حق) and what is manifestly wrong (باطل), as emphasized in the Qur'an.

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The foregoing makes it clear that an individual's subjective (inner) and a society's objective (external) conflicts may involve different reasons. These conflicts may not arise from mere social stratification into classes, or similar other economic disparities and materialistic considerations. These may not be entirely based on political considerations. There can always be other equally valid reasons.

The other reasons can be traced to either intellectually positive or materially negative directions of people's endeavour. Positive intellectuality encompasses faith and inspiration. It reflects a well—defined (universal) sense of humanness. It also projects a meaningfully dynamic concern for the well-being of fellow-creatures. At the same time, it is harmonious with the particular needs of creations, and wholesomely responsive to the (built — in) natural requirements.

The negative direction lies in people's undue emphasis on the physical and material things. Their thoughts and actions are motivated by carnal, rather than intellectually human, promptings. Animalism underlies their individual and collective endeavours. They evidence not only sensuality, but interactions based on considerations of quid pro quo, self-interest, mutual gain and exploitation.

To sum up, the direction of materialists' thought, or *Beenish Abzari,* is marked by the following:

- Making the economically poor and socioculturally weak Mustaza'fan (مستضعفان) subserve the interest of the materialistic policy-makers.
- Their ends converge on freedom from material constraints, in terms of material comforts, securing profits and material advantages.
- Their basic aim is to keep evolving competent means of production.
- Their theoretical framework ignores the

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human need to be conscientious, so as to direct one's attention exclusively towards material gain by all possible means.

- Their modus operandi tends to confuse the legal status quo obtaining in a given situation, or the authoritative regulations, in the process of safeguarding material interests.

In contrast, the direction of naturally appropriate thinking, or **Beenish Fitri,** is **not** characterised by the following:

- Considering the *Mustaza'fan* as implementors, rather than policy-makers.
- Treating matter as an end in itself.
- Attributing basic significance to evolving appropriate means of production.
- Predicating methodology of operations on confusion of the relationship between the basic principles (including the need for evolving appropriate means of production) and the traditionally evolved laws and criteria.
- Postulating a theoretical framework irrespective of the a priori need for authentication of the same as a matter of conscience.

On the other hand, those who believe in harmonizing their thinking with the intrinsic nature of things, tend to emphasize the following:

- *Mustaza'fan* (the economic «have nots» and socioreligiously, politically, culturally and educationally deprived or exploited or weak masses) as a major causative factor in the revolutions, including those of ethical, or religious, artistic, cultural and scientific significance.

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- Accent, from time to time, on accomplishment of human values as the ultimate aim of individual and collective endeavours.
- Stress on human pursuits aiming basically at the qualitative enhancement.
- Avoiding, if and when necessary, any deviation from the natural and legal compatibility of one's behaviour, in a manner similar to that of one's sustaining conscientiousness, by ensuring genuine and natural adherence to conscientious behaviour.

The above explanations were meant to invalidate two theories or postulations.

The first postulation was that, irrespective of their outward manifestations, all revolutions could be viewed as essentially the same. This was because of their common origin, which could be traced to economic classes of people in a society. Accordingly, class differences could lead to manipulative changes in the means of production, resulting in polarity of a society, which, in turn, could bring about a societal revolution. The second theory appeared to claim that revolutions were not essentially the same.

Now, let us test and further analyse the above theories, in the context of evaluating the revolution in Iran.

According to the second theory mentioned above, a revolution can take place without involving the economic factors oif production. This is in the sense that the aforesaid factors have neither reached an advanced stage, nor, if advanced, remained effective . Further possibilities, too, could be either non-existent or ineffective. Class-oriented polarity of a society is one negative possibility.

Alternatively, in the words of Hazrat Ali (ح) , the «satiety» of the ruthless and the «hunger» of the oppressed, assumed serious proportions. Even where the polarisation assumed considerable significance, it might not have been due to any crucial role played by the deprived.

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In fact, the deprived were not in any way directly involved in the upheaval that led to the induction of Hazrat Ali(ع) into the office of the Caliphate. He took office by himself, considering that the Islamic society had come to be divided with the ruling class becoming despotic and affluent and the ruled getting oppressed and deprived. This was notwithstanding the fact that the Caliph himself belonged to the deprived class.

The simple and abstemious life that Ali (ع) led had been determined by considerations of neither economics nor class. Again, as the second theory points out, it is conceivable that a societal revolution can take place without the deprived and the weak necessarily acting as the primemovers. Instead, all the societal components or groups or classes, including the merchants, can well be attracted to the cause (s) of a revolution.

The second theory also postulates that the ultimate purpose of human endeavour can be beyond any achievement of material wellbeing. It can be in terms of even intellectual or spiritual reasons and beliefs. In fact, the deprived classes of a society may be averse to any interpretation of their public demonstrations and strikes as tantamount to no more than seeking to obtain material benefits.

The intellectual-spiritual reasons or beliefs, or traditionally established norms, can always be invoked by any able leadership of a society. Alternatively, an enemy may set out to destroy the same. In either case, the people's sense of honour and righteous concern is invoked. It can, thus, give rise to their intermittent clamour, or sustained movement. It can even manifest itself in their revolutionaryfervour,without any purely materialistic demands for any relief. Often, it is interlinked with people's beliefs, meaningful ideals, humane aspirations, or traditional regard for a given set of principles or even outstanding personalities.

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Any analysis of the Iranian revolution on the basis of the aforementioned theories should consider the following:

- Identification of the individuals or groups, who carried out the revolution.
- Tracing the basic causes leading to the revolution and its progress.
- Study of the aims pursued by the revolution.
- Evaluation of the slogans and mottoes of the revolution, which endowed life and dynamism to it.
- Analysis of the role of the leader of the revolution and the leadership.
- Spread and promotion of the revolution with due attention to the fact that it did not depend on any one paricular class, or «crust» of society.

With regard to the basic causes of the revolution, one may race the same over the last fifty years of Iran's history. These nclude:

- Despotism and neo-colonialism.
- Keeping the religion away from politics.
- Attempts to revive the pre-Islamic customs and ethos.
- Tampering with the precious Islamic heritage.
- Ruthless killings.
- Societal disintegration into classes.
- Domination of non-Islamic elements over the Muslims.
- Blatant flouting of Islamic laws.
- Attacking the Persian and Islamic literature, ostensibly for replacing the foreign words.
- Cutting off relations with Muslim countries and establishing friendly relations with anti-Muslim entities like Israel.
- Propagation of Marxism and similar other materialist concepts.

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Some of the abovementioned causes and situations arose from the evils of materialism. Others involved hurt pride of some persons. Mostly, the revolution was prompted by the deeply hurt Islamic sensibilities of the masses. In addition, two other factors were involved in the revolution. One was disillusionment with Western-style liberalism, or permissiveness, and the other was the hopelessness of the Eastern brand of socialism.

In the circumstances indicated above, the Muslim majority in Iran, with their well-informed approach, deemed it imperative to retrieve their own benign Islamic identity and revive the original Islamic ethos. This marked the end of a phase in their history when they harboured a sense of self-defeat and futility. Now, they have entered a new era of reassertion and enhancement of Islamic values. This newly rediscovered Islamic awareness is also capable of rendering the emergent Islamic and non-Islamic «Third World» nations effective vis-a-vis those of the Western and Eastern Blocs.

The all-embracing cause of the revolution in Iran was Islamic in nature and content. It was taken up by a people deeply imbued with a fresh awareness and manifestation of the Islamic spirit and ideological content. In our times, we have seen one kind or the other of spontaneous Islamic awareness among all the Muslim peoples around the world. This rediscovery of their real identity and their Islamic background inevitably followed their disillusionment with «Western» and «Eastern» values and schools of thought.

In the above context, the compound word: «self-defeat» deserves an explanation. Self-defeat is an outcome of:

- An unstable individual personality.
- Bad faith or self-deception.
- Loosing oneself in self-indulgence.
- Loosing self-respect.
- Diffidence and lack of faith with regard to

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one's own culture, traditionally evolved competence and sophistication.

Conversely, no «self-defeating» endeavour is involved in one's regaining one's good faith, self-respect and esteem for one's historical and cultural background.

Analysing the nature and content of the revolution in Iran is not different from analysing the leadership. In either case, the people's own self-discovery is involved. How come Imam Khomeini's leadership has been invariably accepted by one and all? This question must be asked, considering that whatever may be the extent and coverage of opposition to him—in terms of ideologies and policies—none refuses to acknowledge his leadership.

Why, after all, are people genuinely affected by his speeches? And, why do his pronouncements have a farreaching impact and elicit a simultaneous response? That, too, is inspite of his limited means and possibilities and the existence of the opponents' elaborate means of suppressing and/or falsifying the import of his words, as well as their threats of torture, death and destruction.

No doubt, the Imam's self-effacing and indefatigable spirit has been reflected in the popular struggle against oppression and the oppressors. His unflinching support of the oppressed has been as effectively reciprocated, too. Furthermore, his disarming sincerity, abiding faith and truthfulness, innocent explicitness and immense moral courage have all exerted a redeeming and ennobling influence. Every one knew that the Imam abhorred people who acted in bad faith, or in a subversive manner. All these and many other precious qualities of the Imam have been instrumental in the extensive recognition of his supreme leadership. Yet, an all the more profound basis of his leadership lies elsewhere.

The most profound basis of Imam Khomeini's leadership lies in his precise and meaningful articulation of what the masses could only surmise deep in their hearts. What he says

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from the core of his heart effectively touches the «chords» in the people's hearts. For, he recapitulates the inexorable or timeless principles and values, cherished and reflected in our own (Islamic) culture, history and spirituality in depth.

Throughout the last fourteen centuries, our people have deeply cherished the inspired sayings of Prophet Muhammad (ص). They have also valued as deeply the leadership qualities and heroic deeds of Amir Al-Moamineen Ali (ع), Hazrat Fatima, Imam Hussain (ع) and Hazrat Zainab, as well as the bold accomplishments of Salman and Abu Dharr, among hundreds of other devout, articulate and exemplary men and women.

All the meaningful and revolutionary Islamic values and traditions have been profoundly assimilated by successive generations of our people, in as much as these have become a natural part of their individual and collective elan or life's motivating force. No wonder, when they heard a voice reminiscent of the Islamic leaders of the past, they at once discerned it to be part of their own. It was as if they had felt in it the imprints of Hazrat Ali (ع) and Imam Hussain (ع), or visualized the latter's image in him. In other words, they saw in the microcosm of his personality all that they could inherently perceive of the excellence of their Islamic past.

What has Imam Khomeini done to attain his great stature?

He gave our people their true identity and real character. He brought them back to realization of their Islamic values. He freed them from their self-defeating stance and attitudes. In fact, he awakened them from their stupefied reaction to a alien domination and cultural shocks, or from a state of « استسباع » («Istesba»).[4]

Imam Khomeini's greatest service to the people has been in terms of liberating their «captive» spirits. He has been able to assure the return to the people of their lost faith, and enabled them to reaffirm their subdued belief in their own capabilities to be righteous. He has explicitly brought to them the increasing realization that Islam does provide a unique ideological framework for our people's salvation.

He has proposed accomplishment of the salvation through a comprehensive struggle in terms of Islamic Jehad, at the individual and societal levels. In this context, he has emphasized that what is intrinsically good should be explicitly and actively upheld every time and every where. Conversely, what is basically wicked should always be conscientiously and effectively resisted. Furthermore, he has emphasized the need for an appropriate requital of what the exemplary «Shaheeds» (martyrs) struggled for at the cost of their lives, in an enviable manner. For this purpose, further dedicated and effective performance of individual/societal responsibilities has been stressed.

What our people have always cherished through the centuries is the deep regard and envy for those who have succeeded in joining the legion of martyrs headed by the unmatched Imam Hussain (ع). They have constantly and wholeheartedly prayed:

»يا ليتنى كنت معكم فافوز فوزاً عظيما«

«O God; If only I were one of them, so that I could attain the ultimate salvation, too.»

In their deep commitment to what Imam Hussain(ع) stood for, our people have constantly relived the ennobling situations of Kerbala, Hunayn, Badr, Ohad, Tabouk, Khyber, and similar others. Thus, they have been able to achieve self-purification, drawing upon their inner strength originating, in the ultimate analysis, from their love of God, and to invincibly stand up against cruelty and oppression, with the ever-resonant synchronization of the cries of «Allahu Akber» (God is Great).

1 Hazrat Ali (ع) once explained the implications of «Touba» to a

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follower, who had casually uttered the traditional invocation for repentence: « استغفرالله ربى واتوب اليه », thinking that he had by merely saving so, restored himself to an unimpeachable state. Amir Al-Moamineen admonished him and asked whether or not he realized the implications of «Isteghfar» (asking for forgiveness), or he mistook it for forgiveness itself. For, anyone must be very highly motivated himself, in order to be able to derive God's grace as anticipated in «*Touba*». And the act of «*Touba*» itself is governed by several conditions, including the following:

- One should be fully and sincerely repentent about one's past misdeeds, so as to become completely averse to any repetetion not to commit the act one repented for.
- One must be really determined not to commit the act one repented for.
- One must compensate the others who might have suffered on account of one's past misdeed, in terms of restoring their rights, repaying their dues and carrying out any other responsibility one might have for others.
- Make good what rightfully belongs to God, by way of atonement for forgetting Him.
- The condition oft-forgotten by repenters is as follows: «See to it that you actually feel that you have punished yourself for the misdeed (s) for which you repent, so that the 'tat' you have unduly accumulated by trampling on your better self and on the other's rights wears off, as in fasting and in being severe with one's own self.»
- «You might have begun to even relish wrong-doing and commitment of offenses, as a matter of habit. To reverse any tendency to obtaining negative satisfaction, you should try to make yourself feel and actually experience heartfelt remorse and sympathy and reflect the same in your accentuated services and compensations to others. Only then, you will be able to repent effectively and atone meaningfully for your negative actions in the past.»

In the Qur'an, the word: «*Taib*» («تائب»), meaning «return», as in one's regaining good sense is usually accompanied by another word: «*Aflah*» (salutary action). The first word covers an individual's decision to reverse a negative trend. The second indicates a positive and salutary endeavour, de novo, atoning for the past misdeeds in the process. Any avowed repentance only marks the beginning of a process of reformation, which should always follow one's inner revolution, on a continuing basis. «*Touba*» is indeed a

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reconstructive process undertaken in good faith.

1 Once the concept of revolution is clearly understood, it will not be difficult to relate it to Islam. Islam signifies an inner aspect of revolution, i.e. a revolution taking place in an individual or society from within. The societal revolution, on the other hand, is indicative of the outward manifestations of the Islamic change. We all know that Islam is a monothestic religion, in that Muslims worship but one God. The Divine Unity is reflected by an Islamic *Ummat* (Society), when individuals in it identify themselves with their brother Muslims, while the society as a whole identifies itself with the individual. Without going into details concerning the theoretical and practical implications of «*Towheed*» (the Divine Unity), it will be sufficient to point out that the very basis of the concept leaves no room for any dualistic adoration, or polytheistic belief. Inf act, «*Towheed*» always demands rejection of any parallel construing of anything else as god-like in belief and devotion. Above all, it means a revolution, overcoming deviation into false beliefs and devotion to false dieties, so as to reaffirm the Divine Unity, as envisaged in the Qur'anic verse mentioned below:

لا إكراه فى الدين قد تبين الرشد من الغى فمن يكفر بالطاغوت ويؤمن بالله...

«No compulsion be in religion; indeed, Truth has been made manifest ... distinct from Error. Therefore, he who disbelieves the rebels (false dieties) and believes in God has indeed laid hold on the strongest handle ... no break (is possible) for it.»

- Qur'an, 2:256

Accordingly, absolute submission to God necessarily means total rejection and complete disapproval of any parallel faith or adoration of a false diety. The sense of rejection must be as absolute as the word: «لا» (*La*). The rejection of «كفر» (Kufr), meaning blasphemy or unbelief, refers to anything or any entity (or concept) that purports to negation of God's Oneness. For, one cannot be really Islamic when harbouring any negation of «*Towheed*».

1 For a detailed explanation, see Mutahhari's footnote (PP. 43-44, vol. I) in Allama S.M.H. Tabatabai's book: « اصول فلسفه وروش رئالیسم » (Principles of Philosophy and Methodology of Realism), Sadra Publications, Tehran.

1 The Arabic word: « استسباع » is idiomatically used in Islamic philosophy. Its literal translation into Persian revolves around «a dazed condition». It is said that young ones of some animals coming face to face

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with ferocious adults of other species (e.g. a young rabbit facing a lion) get non-plussed, in that they find themselves unable to make any attempt to escape. They loose their intrinsic ability to act and, as such, become self-defeateda and captive.

The phrase: having faith in oneself conveys a meaning opposite to that of «self-defeated». During the lifetime of the Prophet (ص), one of his companions was in dire need of help, which he was obliged to seek from the former. Before he could make his request, he heard the prophet telling a gathering that it was alright to ask fellow human beings for help. However, those who repose their trust in God and evidence suitable attempts to obtain what they need will invariably achieve success by His Grace.

On hearing the Prophet's discourse, the poor man departed without saying one word about his helpless condition. Pangs of hunger obliged the man to return to where the Prophet was on the following day only to find the latter elaborating on the same point of discourse as on the preceding day. Then he thought: Why not act on the Prophet's advice? This made him all the more determined to find some gainful work by His Grace. He returned home and borrowed an axe and a rope from his neighbour. Thus equipped, he proceeded to cut wood in the near by forest. After a few days of gainful self-employment, he regained his self-confidence and stabilised his economic condition.

In the above case, the Prophet (ص) emphasized the person's own intrinsic ability, will power, dynamism and opportunity to alleviate his poor condition on his own. The same is true also with regard to a society. Often people inhabiting some countries are taken unaware by other people from different countries. The former then become rather non-plussed and may even assume a self-defeating stance, as in pandering to evil, or selfish designs of those who overtook them.

Our own country was in a situation identical with that described above, during the regime of the former Shah.

Countries which develop a servile attitude forget their own inner capabilities of achieving even miracles. Their condition may aggravate to the extent of becoming subservient to the will and purpose of others. In an undesirable situation like that, the «captive» people may find even perverse satisfaction in appeasing those who dominate them. Alternatively, it is possible, as historical examples of successful resistance go to show, some affected peoples colud retain or even revive their faith in themselves. In this context, the heroic sacrifices and dynamic struggle of our own people is a very good example. Our people, guided by the sustained courage and visionary insight of Imam Khomeini, have been able to reaffirm faith in themselves as part of their Islamic heritage. Their liberated selfconfidence brought about their victorious revolution.

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7. How best can the Islamic revolution in Iran be consolidated and enhanced?

Questioner: The last question is: How can this revolution be sustained and the means that became available in its wake be consolidated and enhanced on a lasting basis, so that there can be neither any possibility of return to the status quo ante, nor any development of an undesirable situation?

Mutahhari: Obviously, it will be rather naive to hail what has already been accomplished—as an end in itself. This is primarily because of the persistence of the negative impact of the former regime. The negativity is discernible in the existing socioeconomic institutions and their lack of efficacy. It is reflected in the self-deceptive nature of the prevailing effects of the imperialistic culture. It is equally manifest in the basically illconceived and corrupt governing systems and organizations. All these handicaps still continue to exert a more or less negative impact.

In short, our people have yet to unlearn all those negative things assimilated from the imperialistic days of the «*Shahinshahi*»or«*Aryamehri*» dictators and policy-makers. Accordingly, it is imperative to first attack the existing problems inherited from the past. It is necessary to carry out Sweeping changes to eliminate the/negative cultural impact, colonialistic outlook and similar other traces of the past regime.

In the above context, it is notable that some illmotivated

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groups remain poised to seize the very first opportunity to return the country to the status quo ante. Other groups of leftist inclination also exist, with a view to deflect the course of the revolution towards socialism or communism. Still others are waiting to start a movement of the erstwhile constitutional agitation type, or on the patterns of the subsequent «Iranian National» movement and that of Iraqi independence.

What the aforementioned deviationists had anticipated and kept waiting for was relegation to the background and discrediting of the Islamic authority wielded by the clerical leaders soonafter the overthrow of the former regime.

In my book: « نهضت‌های اسلامی صدساله اخیر » (Islamic Movements during the last Hundred Years)[1], I have discussed the problems confronted by the revolutions. The relevant explanations are of direct interest in the context of your question as to how best to protect the intents and purposes of our revolution.

Of the problems discussed in the abovementioned book, there are some which can be indicated here. These are persistence of the adverse effects of the alien cultural penetration, extraneous seduction of people's determination to carry through the Islamicisation process, breach of the work processes by liesure—seekers, opportunists in key posts and those who tend to relapse into extravagance, as well as ambiguous future planning, among similar others.

Notwithstanding the complicated nature of the above problems, our people can always rely on their very best and the most effective defensive weapon: Their deeprooted faith. It could well enable them to be self - reliant, while continuing to rediscover and enhance their original Islamic ethos and values.

If the East wakes up and rediscovers its own Islamic strength in the process, it can well mean that even atom bombs will be of no avail in confronting their massive strength and unconquerable awareness. Once the Eastern peoples have arisen to reassert themselves and their own competence, there will be no stopping their achievements.

The way to a sustained and dynamic awakening of our Eastern masses is through their reacquaintance with their own original (post - Islamic and pre - colonialistic) history and cultural standing, as well as ideological perspectives and criteria.

In one of the recent public addresses, I was asked by a student as to why Islam could not set our people free and restore their Islamic civilisation earlier, if it had been really capable of doing so, over the last fourteen hundred years. In reply, I pointed out that it was due to nothing but our own lack of awareness of Islam even in a historical perspective. Many of us have allowed themselves to remain still unaware of the historical fact that Islam had been able to evolve, during its first five hundred years, the attributes of the most exalted and viable civilisation in the history of mankind.

The lack of self-awareness concerning the Islamic past has been a major contributing factor in rendering our present cultural standing more or less static and nonproductive. Had we been able to fully realize and safeguard our own Islamic cultural identity (inspite of the ongoing colonialistic efforts to the contrary), it would have been impossible for any imperialistic/colonialistic superpower (s) of the day to have exploited and dominated us.

The very first requirement that the imperialistic powers and colonialistic expansionists superimposed on our peoples was one aimed at eclipsing their own objective cultural heritage. This evil design was sought to be implemented through a subjectively divisive process of reorienting them (e.g. in terms of nation - states/nationalities), so as to bring about their mutual separateness and estrangement from their widespread common Islamic cultural background.

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One glaring example of the mercenary - like workings of the alienated minds is that of the former Shah, who sought to celeberate what he called the 2, 500 years of monarchical rule in Iran. The former regime constantly sought to undermine our Islamic identity, as can be seen also from another example in my own personal experience.

The Husseiniye Ershad (a famous Islamic cultural centre of Tehran) has had to cope with the former regime's opposition to its Islamic activities. Even its routine programme announcements, not to speak of any lectures allowed to be delivered there, were not approved for publication in newspapers. An exception to the ban was indicated when a two-week programme was arranged in which it was oficially expected of me to speak on the subject of book-burning incidents in Egypt and Iran - so as to «debunk» their authenticity!

However, on the eve of my scheduled lecture, interested people looked forward in vain to see its announcement in the local newspapers, as anticipated. On our enquiries, we were given to understand that the announcement was not approved, after all. Earlier, we had been unable to mention the book-burning episodes in a book under publication entitled: «خدمات متقابل ایران واسلام» (Mutual Contributions of Iran and Islam). For, permission to publish it was given on the condition that we expunge book-burning episodes from the same.

No wonder, the former regime had for years tried to feed us anti-Islamic propaganda to the effect that Islam not only failed to evolve any significant civilisation, but caused the ancient civilisations to be destroyed!!

Yet, the historical fact remains that the Muslim peoples excelled in the world of Islam's first five centuries, in terms of intellectual, scientific and cultural achievements. Their supremacy has been acknowledged to this day, in as much as knowledgeable Europeans trace their cultural and

civilisational roots to even Islam!

I, for one, am convinced, on the basis of my intensive research, the sociological philosophy of Islam remains more progressive in its evolutionary content than the philosophy of life and living that has come to prevail in the West.

So, my reply to the question posed by the student—brother concluded on the note that had it been true that Islam failed to produce any civilisation worth the name since its ascendancy fourteen centuries ago, any intrinsic weakness in the religion his question might have implied or assumed would have been correct.

In the context of Islamic renaissance, we may recall Iqbal Lahori's philosophy of «Self» (and its enhancement), which is meant to enable the Muslim peoples to re-orient themselves towards their own Islamic potential. The ultimate success of our Islamic movement, too, depends on our people's rediscovering themselves and re-inculcating in themselves the original Islamic values. Towards realizing the efficacy of Islamic values, we ought to reassess our purposes and shortcomings strictly within the Islamic conceptual and regulatory framework. On the basis of the reassessment, we ought to reorientate ourselves to the timeless principles of Islam.

The reorientation to Islam is a time-consuming process, requiring patience and perserverence,such as envisaged in Islam. It can be accomplished with the Islamic spirit of **Jehad** (Muslims' self-defensive and constructive struggle conducive to righteous accomplishments in the path of God). It calls for determination to always uphold truth and rectitude. At the same time, it demands relentless struggle against falsehood and wickedness. Only with this Islamic modus operandi, our success will be conclusive.

Accordingly, Muslims everywhere in the world should fully recognise the need for self-reliance, based on their intrinsic strength and constructive and positive faith in the

ultimate recourse to the Divine Grace and protection. For. without self-reliance and unflinching faith, they cannot really free themselves from the constraints and shackles of their neo-colonialistic exploiters.

A case in point is that of the «Stateless» Palestinians. One retarding factor in the Palestinian Arab/Muslim movement is its expedient involvement with, and reliance on, the support of the Communists. Their precious sacrifices and continued suffering have yet to become sufficient for assuring the success of their movement. Their approach has been evidently different from that underlying the movement towards an Islamic revolution in Iran.

The «*Shahadat*» (martyrdom) of Iranian Muslim youth has not been in vain. On the contrary, their *Shahadat* has enabled the surviving Muslims to further enhance their struggle towards achieving final success. Consequently, the struggle of Iranian Muslims has already reached ascendancy. Had it been in a non-Islamic perspective, its astounding effectiveness and progress would have been unlikely. It would have been as if Muslims were fighting as mercenary non-Muslims, with the latter's inevitable self-centred concern with, at worst, their own lives, and, at best, the welfare of their families.

The *Shaheeds* (martyrs) of Iran were known to be basically aware of the Islamic content of their prospective «*Shahadat*» (martyrdom), which they all positively embraced. They were conscious, too, of its secular or non-Islamic interpretation or misinterpretation by some groups. The fact that they opted for *Shahadat* underlined their fervent desire and deep concern that the regime should not be allowed to fall into the hands of the groups remaining disoriented in their comprehension of Islam. That Muslims in Iran were always deeply committed to Islam, and averse to its enemies, had been a fact exploited by the former regime, when it decided to brand the Muslim revolutionaries as «Islamic Marxists»;

Actually, Communism and Imperialism are like the respective blade of a pair of scissors, which seem to act in opposition, but actually come together to cut a root or fabric. Contemporary history amply evidences the scissorslike twin action of Imperialism and Communism.

In conclusion, I think that the time has now come for us to voice our clarion call to Muslims, so that they do intensify their search for rediscovering their original Islamic cultural identity. No doubt, its echoe will be heard by the other brotherly Muslim peoples, too. Then, the time will not be far off for the sound of breaking of the chains of bondage to reach us from all directions, and for us to witness the Muslim peoples' reassertion of their potency and competence in the process of the current Islamic reawakening.

Interviewer: Ustad! Thank you for participating in this television interview.
Ustad Mutahhari: Thank you for the opportunity.

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1. Murtaḍa Mutahhari: «Islamic Movements in Twentieth Centurey», Bonyad Be'thet, Tehran, 1981.