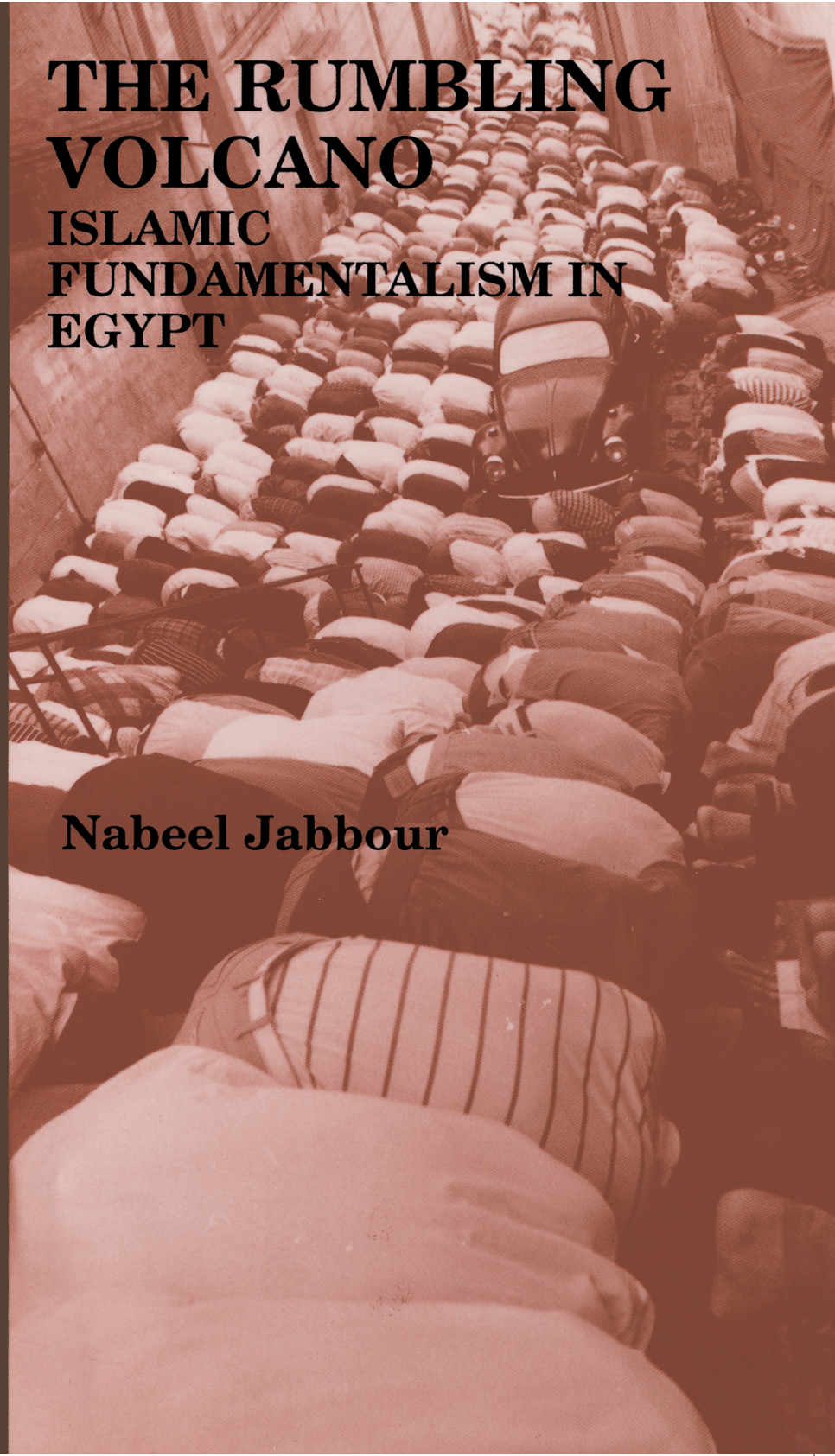


THE RUMBLING VOLCANO

**ISLAMIC
FUNDAMENTALISM IN
EGYPT**

Nabeel Jabbour



**THE RUMBLING
VOLCANO
ISLAMIC
FUNDAMENTALISM IN
EGYPT**

Nabeel Jabbour

MANDATE PRESS
Pasadena, California

Copyright 1993 by Nabeel T. Jabbour
All Rights Reserved

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means—electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording, or any other—except for brief quotations embodied in critical articles or printed reviews, without prior permission of the publisher.

Published by
MANDATE PRESS
P.O. Box 40129
Pasadena, California 91114
(818)798-0837

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Jabbur, Nabil.

The rumbling volcano: Islamic fundamentalism in Egypt/by Nabeel T. Jabbour.
p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references (p. 299).

ISBN 0-87808-241-7 (pbk.)

1. Islamic fundamentalism—Egypt—History—20th century.

I. Title.

BP64.E3J33 1993

322' . l'0962- - dc20

99-15796

CIP

COVER PHOTO. Thousands of Algerians pray in the streets during Friday prayers in Algiers outside the Bab el Oued mosque. Jose Goitia, *Wide World Photos* (used by permission.)

Printed in the United States of America.

17 16 15 14 13 5 4 3 2 1 SFP

I dedicate this book to my two sons, Fareed and Nader, who are refreshingly free from prejudice toward Muslims.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am grateful for the interaction and great help of my two mentors, Prof. Le Roux and Prof. Naude’.

My thanks are due to several people who read my manuscript and gave their expert evaluation and valuable suggestions. Among them are: Ed Hoskins, Waldron Scott, Bob Sparks, Raja Tanas and Abe Weibe.

I am grateful also for Letchmi, my secretary in Egypt, who labored in love as she typed the manuscript. I am also thankful for Ben Hanna’s long hours in revising and preparing the manuscript as a dissertation. His expertise on the computer was immensely valuable. I also thank Joyanne Bell for her willing spirit and help with the English language in the final revision before publication.

My wife Barbara along with our son Fareed have also reviewed the manuscript. Their encouragement, along with the encouragement of our younger son Nader, empowered me to use the very early hours of the morning in Egypt to work on this phenomenon of Islamic Fundamentalism.

Above all, I am grateful to God who helped me lay aside prejudice and study this phenomenon of Islamic Fundamentalism from the adherents’ point of view and to have a deeper understanding of it.

CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	v
FOREWORD	xi
PART ONE - INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW	
1 - INTRODUCTION	3
Methodology	6
Hermeneutics	7
2 - ISLAM IN EGYPT	13
A Brief History	13
Manifestations of Islamic Fundamentalism	25
PART TWO - EARLY HISTORICAL ROOTS	
3 - THE KHARIJITES	31
Their Beginnings	31
The Main Characteristics	33
Divisions and Splinter Groups	38
The Significance and Impact	40
The Kharijites and The Fundamentalists of Today	41
4 - THE SHIITES	45
Historical Beginnings	45
Al-Mukhtâr and Al-Mawâli	48

Distinctives of the Shiites	50
The Revolutionary Shî'ism and Al-Khumeini	54
Shiism and Islamic Fundamentalism in Egypt	63
PART THREE - CONTEMPORARY TRENDS IN FUNDAMENTALISM	
5 - THE MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD (ḤASAN AL-BANNA)	71
The Climate into Which Al-Banna Grew	71
Ḥasan Al-Banna	86
The Man and the Organization	92
The Decline	98
Conclusion	108
6 - THE MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD (SAYYID QUTB)	111
The Brotherhood After Al-Banna	112
Sayyid Qutb and his Impact	124
Sayyid Qutb, A Deviant or The Master	133
7 - ATTEMPTS AT ESTABLISHING A MUSLIM SOCIETY	137
Şâleḥ Sariyya	139
Shukri Muştafa and the Society of Muslims	143
8 - THE FUNDAMENTALISTS' ASSOCIATIONS AND SECTARIANISM (AL-JAMÂ'ÂT AL-ISLÂMIYYA)	159
The Students' Movement	159
The Jamâ'ât and the University	162

The Christian Minority and Sectarianism	166
The Jamâ'ât and Sectarianism	170
Sâdât's Regime and Sectarianism	174
9 - THE HOLY WAR MOVEMENT (AL-JIHÂD)	179
Immediate Motives for the Assassination of Sâdât	179
Other Motives for the Assassination	181
The Assassination and its Aftermath	187
Al-Jihâd Organization and Leadership	194
<i>The Missing Precept</i> and its Criticism	201
PART FOUR - FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF FUNDAMENTALISM	
10 - POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS FACTORS	215
Islamic Resurgence	216
Political Pressure and Maneuvers	218
The Dynamic of Momentum	219
The Failure of the Establishment to Curb the Fundamentalist Momentum	219
The Dream of the Return of the Caliphate	221
The Impact of the Gulf Countries	222
The Impact of Israel and Christian Zionism	223
11 - ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS	227
Economics and Poverty	228
Social Factors	232
Life at the University	235

Psychological Factors	237
PART FIVE - IMPACT OF FUNDAMENTALISM	
12 - CONTEMPORARY IMPACT	247
Attitude towards Popular Religiosity and Jâhiliyya	249
Attitude Towards Non-Muslim Ideas	249
Attitude Regarding Tradition	250
Attitude of Fundamentalists towards the Rulers and “Official” Islam and Vice Versa	252
Attitude toward Power and Sanctity	257
Hermeneutics and Phenomenology	262
Manifestations of the Impact of Fundamentalism	265
13 - PROSPECTS	277
APPENDICIES	
A - TRANSLITERATION	285
B - GLOSSARY OF NAMES	289
C - IMPORTANT WORDS AND TERMS	293
BIBLIOGRAPHY	297

FOREWORD

In the autumn of 1992 a violent earthquake shook Cairo, Egypt. It was sudden and totally unexpected. The whole world took note. Yet, there is a “volcano” that has been rumbling in the same region for years, giving ample warning of a violent eruption to come. It is the “volcano” of Islamic Fundamentalism. *Al-Ahrâm*, the largest daily newspaper in the Middle East, has pointed out that the biggest challenges facing Ḥusni Mubârak are a population explosion and the expected eruption of Islamic Fundamentalism.

I was born into the Christian minority in the Middle East and grew up there. I graduated from the American University of Beirut in Lebanon. Then, from 1975 to 1990 my family and I lived in Cairo, Egypt where I had the privilege of being exposed to Islam and the Islamic culture. Reading the books of Ṭâha Ḥusein, Nagîb Maḥfûz, Yousef Idrîs and others became my favorite pastime on our holidays. Soon, books of Ḥasan Al-Banna, Sayyid Qutb and other pillars of Islamic Fundamentalism became the object of my serious study. It was one of the most meaningful experiences of my life to try to see Islam without prejudice and to attempt to get into the mind of the Muslim Fundamentalists and perceive Islam from their point of view.

This book is written to help Western diplomats, politicians and international policy makers to better understand the “strange” phenomenon of Islamic Fundamentalism. It is also written for university students and professors who are concerned about the volatile Middle East. Finally, it is written for people who are not satisfied with the limited news reports

about the Middle East and are eager to have a deeper understanding of Islam and Fundamentalism.

Egypt is a strategic country in the Middle East. What happens in Egypt greatly impacts the Middle East and causes ripples in Africa and the Third World. The revolution of Nâser in 1952 was followed by many revolutions in the Arab world and Africa. If Egypt should one day become an Islamic state, similar to that of Iran, then many other countries will follow.

Islam is considered the fastest growing religion in the world, and Fundamentalism is its spearhead. It is essential that we try to understand this phenomenon.

For readers who are familiar with Arabic terminology, key Arabic words and concepts are presented in the text in simple and readable transliteration. There are appendices with a key to transliteration, glossary of names and terms.

I hope that, as you read this book, you will be intellectually stimulated, informed and challenged as you see and hear the volcano rumbling.

Nabeel T. Jabbour

PART ONE

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

1

INTRODUCTION

On the 6th of June 1967, on the way to the American University of Beirut (Lebanon),¹ I heard people in the street shouting that the war with Israel had broken out. For days we had been anticipating it, since Jamâl ‘Abdul Nâşer inspired within us tremendous hope that the Arabs could beat Israel and help the Palestinians gain back their legitimate rights. I dashed to the university hoping to find someone with a radio. The university was almost deserted. As I entered the cafeteria, there were about forty students huddling over a little radio. The batteries were weak and the sound was very low. As I huddled along with everybody else, I sensed that I was a part of a solidarity, a member of a strong nation—Pan-Arabism. Religious differences were nonexistent at that moment. It was of no relevance whether a person was a Christian or a Muslim. What really mattered was that all of us around that radio were Arabs. Somehow I was able to suppress temporarily that lingering theological view that God helped establish the state of Israel in 1948 in fulfillment of prophecy.² But at that moment, nationalism was much closer to the heart than theology.

In the midst of that euphoria of anticipation, excitement and hope a student climbed on a table and frantically started screaming “*Allâhu akbar, Allâhu akbar*” (God is great). The other students joined him in loud voices declaring “*Allâhu akbar, Allâhu akbar.*”

A Christian would never use that terminology to praise God. This was Muslim terminology.

There I stood, silent, stunned, cheated and confused. Am I one of them? Is this my war, my cause, or is this cause the monopoly of the Muslim?

That experience of mixed intense feelings was repeated several times over the years. On the one side, an excitement and a sense of belonging to Arab nationalism and the just cause we have, and on the other side, the feeling of being cheated by the Muslims who consciously or unconsciously excluded me and alienated me.

In 1975 a major turning point took place in my life. Just before the civil war of Lebanon started, my family and I moved to Egypt to work with the church. Here I was an Arab and yet a foreigner, having come with “rich experience” in the Christian ministry, yet finding out that very little of what I knew applied to the new situation. I thought that I knew Islam. Because I had studied it, I had “succeeded” in putting it into compartments under labels, and in my mind I had refuted it. Later I discovered that I had been dogmatic, projecting into Islam what I thought it should be.

Over the past few years, as a team of men and I started reading the *Qur’ân* with a new perspective, reading books written by Muslims about Islam, and having meaningful dialogues with Muslims, a new love and understanding of Islam started to develop.

As I studied Watts’ book *Muḥammad at Medīna*, I felt a deep respect for Muḥammad and Islam. I envied Muslims for their sense of solidarity as they belonged to the grand *umma* (nation). Through studying Ḥammûda’s book *Sayyid Qutb* I began having respect and understanding for the Muslim Fundamentalists. Although it is still hard for me to identify with these men as I see them wearing white robes and black beards, yet as I look at them with respect and dignity, I want to let this phenomenon teach me, affect me, and make an impact upon me. I want to let these men, their thinking and their texts reach out to me in spite of the cultural barriers and differences.

With this undertaking before me, I feel that I am on the verge of the biggest venture of my life. I hope that this study will help the non-Arab in general and the western Christian in particular to see Muslim Fundamentalism with a new and fresh perspective. This is a very hard task, not only because the contents of this book deal with Muslims, but also because they are Fundamentalists. And both these words are loaded with meaning in the western minds.

Dr. Edward Sa'id, in his book *Orientalism*, describes the stage (the Orient) on which the drama is put together by the dramatist (the western Christian). "In the depths of this oriental stage stands a prodigious cultural repertoire whose individual items evoke a fabulously rich world: the Sphinx, Cleopatra, Eden, Sodom and Gomorrah, Astarte, Isis and Osiris, Sheba, Babylon, the Genii, the Magi, Nineveh, Mahomet, and dozens more; settings, in some cases names only, half imagined, half known; monsters, devils, heroes, terrors, pleasures, desires" (Sa'id 1979: 65).

Muhammad does not escape the judgement of the western analysts and critics either. Danté puts him in the Inferno.

'Maometto' (Muhammad) turns up in canto 28 of the Inferno. He is located in the eighth of the nine circles of hell, in the ninth of the ten Bolgias of Malebolge, a circle of gloomy ditches surrounding Satan's stronghold in hell. Thus, before Danté reaches Muhammad, he passed through circles containing people whose sins are of a lesser order: the lustful, the avaricious, the gluttonous, the heretics, the wrathful, the suicidal, the blasphemous. After Muhammad there are only the falsifiers and the treacherous (who include Judas, Brutus, and Cassius) before one arrives at the very bottom of hell (Sa'id 1979: 68).

To this vivid background of imagination and fantasy, the western Christian has been to one degree or another exposed. Recently the picture has turned more to the Arab and the Muslim as the terrorist. It is relatively easy for the western Christian to place people in boxes and label them with stereo-

types, and as it were, explain them away. We have to face this phenomenon of Muslim Fundamentalism squarely and let it affect us, speak to us and make an impact upon us, otherwise we are only confirming our own prejudice.

Methodology

It is very easy for any person looking at the Islamic Fundamentalism in Egypt to confirm his prejudice, whether for it or against it. What looks attractive and worthy of admiration for some might look repulsive and offensive to others. The challenge in studying Fundamentalism is to choose the methodology which will best help the researcher discover this "strange" phenomenon, understand it, and then describe it. Phenomenology and hermeneutic thinking, along with the historical approach, seem to be the best methods for this venture.

Many books have been written about Islamic Fundamentalism. They are available and to some extent abundant. Some of these books have been written by the Fundamentalists themselves, or by their sympathizers. Others have been written by Al-Azhar representatives, and a few others have been written by western scholars.

As I read these books covering a broad spectrum of sources, the challenge before me was

to re-establish contact with the raw material of life itself. It is the effort to re-discover and re-experience life.... Phenomenology wants to learn again how to see clearly and how to describe accurately. It is the attitude of 'disciplined wonder.' A return 'to the things themselves,' as the phenomenological battle cry runs (Krüger 1982: 17).

Islamic Fundamentalism should be re-discovered and should be re-experienced as a phenomenon. It should be allowed to speak for itself, to affect the reader because of its dynamic vitality as "raw material." We should maintain an

attitude of “disciplined wonder,” where “wonder” and “discipline” will not contradict, but rather compliment one another.

My desire is that we would attempt to understand the world of Fundamentalism from the adherents’ point of view (Krüger 1982: 18).

The challenge for us is to see Islamic Fundamentalism from the perspective of Islamic leaders—al-Banna, Qutb, Faraj or al-Khumeini and their followers. The closer we enter “under the skin” and “in the mind” of these men, the more we will be able to observe clearly, and be learners.

In the study of Islamic Fundamentalism, it is very easy for a Christian or a Muslim critic to choose the references that agree with his point of view and attack Islamic Fundamentalism. It is also easy for a Fundamentalist to follow what agrees with his convictions to prove his point. Our temptation is to come to the phenomenon with a mind which is already made up, and manipulate the research to prove our assumptions. Contrary to this, we should emphasize the importance of discipline in suspending our judgements. However, that does not mean that I should become a believer or a convert to be able to make a thorough study using the phenomenological approach, but I should “drown” myself in the other person’s culture, without necessarily becoming a believer or a convert (Krüger 1982:18, 52).

Hermeneutics

Hermeneutic Approach

The word “hermeneutics” is derived from a Greek word which means “to interpret.” To many, the word “hermeneutics” is understood to mean the interpretation of literary and religious texts from the past, such as Plato’s *Republic* and the Old or New Testaments from their original languages. According to Krüger, hermeneutics is more inclusive.

The word should not be restricted to texts only; it also applies to the understanding of works of art, music and so on. And it should not be restricted to the understanding of the meaning of something in the past; it also refers to the understanding of contemporary things.... Hermeneutic thinking is rooted in the experience of the 'strangeness' of some cultural products, whether they are far removed from us today in time, or whether they are expressed by people who belong to a different culture from our own (Krüger 1982: 20-21).

In the case of studying the phenomenon of Islamic Fundamentalism in Egypt, its "strangeness" is not only because it is removed from us today in time as we consider past and recent historical roots such as Ḥasan al-Banna and Sayyid Qutb. More important than that is that its "strangeness" lies in its being expressed by people who belong to a different culture. The Christian Arab culture is very different from the Muslim Arab culture, and even more different from Islamic Fundamentalism. The Muslim Fundamentalists' religion, their mind-set, their values, their goals and ambitions, their vocabulary, their customs and their dress code are very different from those of Arab Christians, and even more different from western Christians. It is very easy to judge the Fundamentalists' dedication as extremism, their willingness to lay down their lives for serving God as fanaticism, their holistic view of life as rebellion against the state and their hatred of and desire to punish sin as blood thirstiness, their convictions as dogmatism, their solidarity as exclusiveness and their sense of dignity and honor as empty pride. Several orientalists in the past judged Islam and Muslims very severely. Edward Sa'īd says to this effect,

The Orient 'out there' towards the East, is corrected, even penalized, for lying outside the boundaries of European society. The Orient is thus orientalized, a process that not only marks the Orient as the province of the orientalist, but also forces the uninitiated western reader to accept orientalist codifications as the true

Orient. Truth, in short, becomes a function of learned judgments, not the material itself, which in time seems to owe even its existence to the orientalist (Sa'îd 1979: 67).

"Respect" is a prerequisite for the success of the hermeneutic process. "To do science of religion in this spirit, is to respect the dignity of whatever I am trying to understand, and to allow it to speak for itself. I become an attentive, humble listener to the human spirit reaching out to me across the barriers of time and cultural differences" (Krüger 1982: 21).

Living in Egypt and knowing the Arabic language has given me an open door to enter the world of Islamic Fundamentalism and to interact with it. People like al-Banna, Qutb, Shukri and Faraj who were assassinated or executed are still present, vital and dynamic through their writings and through the abundance of what has been written about them in Arabic.

By studying Islamic Fundamentalism, I wanted to allow myself to be drawn into its world and get involved with its message. This means that I would not be satisfied with being a cool, calculating, objective researcher, but that I would become an involved participant while at the same time maintaining a critical perspective.

There are various aims of this study. One is to discover the thread that runs throughout the history of Islamic Fundamentalism in the twentieth century and find out whether or not this thread existed from the beginning of Islam. Additionally, we want to find out if it was or was not limited to a particular sect or branch. Another aim is to identify the various factors that motivated and are still motivating people to become Islamic Fundamentalists.

Contents

The first part of the study will give an overview of Islam in Egypt. The second will deal with the earliest divisions that took place in the history of Islam, namely the Kharijites and

the Shiites, attempting to identify the causes of these divisions and comparing them with twentieth century Islamic Fundamentalism. It will be helpful to see if this Fundamentalism is “interdenominational,” “international,” and runs across history.

The third part will deal with the contemporary trends in Islamic Fundamentalism. The Muslim Brotherhood is the major group of Fundamentalists in the twentieth century, with Ḥasan al-Banna and Sayyid Qutb as the two major figures associated with it. In the 1970s three main groups came to the surface. Şâleḥ Sariyya’s group, Shukri’s Society of Muslims and *al-Jamâ’ât al-Islâmiyya* at the universities. Early in the 1980s the al-Jihâd organization became the most famous group as a result of the assassination of President Sâdât.

In this section, following the thread of Fundamentalism from 1930 to 1990 will help us discover the evolution, escalation and development in vision and tactics. What are the causes of this development and is this development limited only to Fundamentalism? Or, is it affecting the whole of Islam in Egypt as well?

The fourth part will deal with the contributing factors to the development of Fundamentalism. These factors could be political, religious, economic, social and psychological. All these factors combined, or the combinations of two or three of these factors, might be the contributing causes that push youth in the direction of Fundamentalism. In this section we want to see in detail these factors in their particular setting, namely the Egyptian society with all its complexities.

The last section of the study will deal with the impact of Fundamentalism. An attempt will be made to give an in-depth application and interpretation of the materials offered in the previous chapters.

In the final chapter, an attempt will be made to look at the future prospects and contemplate what might happen in Egypt in the coming years or decades as a result of Fundamentalism.

In October 1992, an unexpected earthquake shook Egypt, where hundreds were killed, and thousands were wounded. The earthquake was not expected, but the rumbling volcano is on the minds of most people. The rumbling volcano—or Islamic fundamentalism—is the story of this book.

Notes

- 1 In those days I was a seminary student, taking two courses in Islamic studies at the American University of Beirut.
- 2 Over the years my convictions regarding that issue have changed dramatically.

2

ISLAM IN EGYPT

A Brief History

In 570 A.D. Muḥammad was born in Mecca in what is today Saudi Arabia. He believed that God had chosen him to be the Apostle of God to proclaim a message of monotheism to the idolators of Mecca. In 622 A.D. the *hijra* (emigration) to Medīna took place. In Medīna the Arab tribes Aus and Khazraj were in constant struggle. The Jewish tribes on the other hand were expecting a Messiah who would deliver them from oppression. As an outsider to Medīna, Muḥammad was accepted as an arbiter to the Arab tribes. He attempted to win the Jews to his side, but later on when they failed to respond, he turned against them.

From Medīna he waged several battles over the years until Mecca came to a full surrender. Within a relatively short time, Islam had spread and the Islamic *umma* (nation) was established in Medīna. The reason for Muḥammad's success was the attractiveness of Islam and its relevance as a religion and social system to the religious and social needs of the Arabs. The contrast was seen "between the feeling of harmony, satisfaction and zest in the Islamic community and the malaise elsewhere; this must have been obvious to many and have attracted them to Muḥammad" (Watt 1981: 70).

In this *umma* (nation) the Christians and Jews were not equal to Muslims, nor were they considered idolators. Instead, they were called *ahl al-kitâb* (the people of the book) and they were required to pay the tribute tax.

In 632 A.D. Muḥammad died and Abu Bakr, his first convert, became the leader of the *umma*. At this time the Persians were in control of Iraq, Iran, and Afganistan. The Byzantines on the other hand were in control of Syria, Palestine, Egypt, a narrow strip of North Africa, Turkey and parts of east and south Europe. The two great empires, the Persians and the Byzantines, were defeated by the Muslims. In one single century an extraordinary marvel came into being—the vast Arab Empire that stretched from Spain to India.

Beginnings of Islam in Egypt

At the time of Caliph ‘Umar, one of the war generals called ‘Amr Ibnīl-‘Âṣ entered Alexandria, the capital of the Byzantines in Egypt, and conquered it. As a reward for his victory, he was appointed as the first Muslim ruler of Egypt. With this conquest, major changes started to take place in Egypt. The conversion of many Copts to Islam was one of the changes. A main reason for these conversions was the persecution that the Copts experienced at the hands of the Byzantine rulers because of theological differences on the person of Christ, whether He had one nature or two (Suleiman 1988: 76-77).

Another change that started to take place was the appointment of Muslim rulers to Egypt by the caliph. Arabic started spreading and by the eighth century it became the official language of the state, gradually replacing the Greek language in the areas of science and knowledge. By the eleventh century Arabic became the language of the people as a whole.

An interesting phenomenon was the inability of the Roman and Hellenic cultures to penetrate the Egyptian culture and change the language of the Copts, although these two cultures occupied Egypt for ten centuries. In contrast to this, within four centuries after the arrival of Islam, Arabic became the language of Egypt (Haykal 1985: 315).

With time, Muslims became the majority and the Christian Copts were considered as *ahl dhimma* (the protected people), as long as they were faithful in paying a tribute tax and adhered to certain commitments. These commitments were laid down in "*Al-Wathîqa al-'Umarîyya*" ("The Pact of 'Umar"). This pact described and regulated the relationship between Muslims and Christians. It consisted of two parts: one was the required rules, and the other was the favorable or desired rules.

There have been several versions of "The Pact of 'Umar." An interesting phenomenon lies in the varying viewpoints which these versions reflect. Two samples follow, with the first provided by Qâsem, a Muslim author, and the other provided by Youssef, a Christian leader. As one compares these choices, it is easy to see how two people from different backgrounds will choose various versions of the same document in order to fit their religious and cultural affiliations.

The Required Rules, which were compulsory, include (Qâsem 1979: 26-27):

1. Not to criticize or slander Islam.
2. Not to criticize or slander the *Qur'ân*.
3. Not to mention the name of the prophet in contempt or falsification.
4. Not to commit adultery with a Muslim woman.
5. Neither to proselytize a Muslim to another religion, nor entice the Muslim to consider changing his religion.
6. Not to attempt to kill a Muslim or take his money.
7. Not to take the side of the house of war against the house of Islam.

The Favorable or Desired Rules:

1. A specific dress code for Christians to identify them as non-Muslims.
2. Not to beat the bells of churches loudly, nor raise their voices in chanting Christian songs or scriptures.

3. Not to build the houses of Christians higher than those of the Muslims.

4. Not to display idolatry, crosses, nor display freedom in drinking wine or eating pork.

5. Not to display Christian funerals or mourning for the dead.

6. Not to ride horses.

(Muslim rulers who were moderate put into practice the required rules and ignored the favorable rules.)

In a contrasting version of "The Pact of 'Umar," Youssef quotes the rules and conditions that the Christians in Syria allegedly imposed upon themselves (Youssef 1985: 21):

1. We will pay tribute out of hand and be humiliated.

2. We will not hinder any Muslims from stopping in our churches by night or day.

3. We will beat the *naqûs* (bells) only gently in our churches and not raise our voices in our chanting.

4. We will not shelter in any of our homes a spy or an enemy of the Muslims.

5. We will not build a church, convent, or hermitage, nor repair those that are dilapidated.

6. We will not assemble in any church which is in a Muslim quarter, nor in any of the roads or markets of the Muslims.

7. We will not display idolatry, nor show a cross on our churches, nor in any of the roads or markets of the Muslims.

8. We will not prevent any of our relatives from converting to Islam if they wish.

9. We will not make our houses higher than those of the Muslims.

10. We will not keep weapons or swords, nor wear them in a town or on a journey to Muslim lands.

11. We will not sell wine or display it.

12. We will not strike a Muslim or keep a slave who has been the property of Muslims.

Islam in Egypt through the Centuries

History tends to be prejudiced. I chose to look at the history of Islam in Egypt as Egyptians learn it in their school textbooks. The following is a brief presentation.

During the caliphate of 'Umar, 'Amr Ibnil-'âş was the ruler of Egypt, and according to the Muslim scholars he was a ruler who was concerned for the Egyptians. He established peace and security, improved agriculture, reduced taxes and allowed freedom of worship. Furthermore, he made Egypt into a strong military base from which he invaded North Africa. Following 'Amr Ibnil-'âş, 'Abdallah Ibn Abi Şarh ruled Egypt at the time of 'Uthman. He built up an Arab fleet in order to fight the Byzantines in the Mediterranean.

During the Roman and Byzantine reign, Egypt was the richest state in the Empire and the same was true during the time of Islam. To be appointed as the ruler of Egypt was a privilege that meant acquiring great financial gain. In light of this, it is no wonder that during the Omayyad period 31 rulers ruled Egypt, averaging three years per ruler, and during the Abbasid period there were 74 rulers averaging one and a half years per ruler (Haykal 1985: 316).

Following the Omayyad period came the Abbasid period. At this time, Turkish leaders began ruling Egypt. This rule would last for centuries to come. This came into existence because in Baghdad, the capital of the Abbasids, the Turkish soldiers had great power and wealth, to the degree that the caliph's ability to rule was greatly hampered. In order to please these generals, the caliph appointed them as rulers of the various states of the Abbasid Empire. Aḥmad Ibn Ṭolon (not even a general) was appointed as the ruler of Egypt in 868 A.D. Ṭolon built up a strong army of Mamluks (the Mamluks were white slaves who were liberated to become professional soldiers), and declared the independence of Egypt from the rest of the empire. Furthermore, his conquests of neighboring countries included Syria, parts of Iraq and

parts of North Africa, making Egypt a strong state. His descendants were weak, however, and this resulted in a decline that led to the conquest of Egypt by the army in 905 A.D. Once more Egypt became a part of the empire.

In 935 A.D. Akhshîd, a Turkish general, was appointed by the caliph as the ruler of the state of Egypt, and later the Arabian Peninsula and Syria as well. His sons tried to maintain an uneasy balance between the independence of Egypt as a state and Egypt as a part of the empire. Kafûr, an Ethiopian liberated slave who became a professional soldier in the Akhshîd army, was later appointed by the caliph as the ruler of Egypt.

After Kafûr's death, the Fatimids, who were in North Africa, attacked Egypt and made it the headquarters of the Fatimid Empire in 969 A.D. The Fatimids grew in strength and their empire included all of North Africa, the Arabian Peninsula and Syria, with Cairo being the capital of that huge empire. During the Fatimid reign, Al-Azhar mosque and university were built. Education, wealth and folk Islam were the marks of this period.

Decline followed as the Saljouk Turks conquered Damascus and the Crusaders conquered the shores of the East Mediterranean. The rulers of North Africa and the Arabian Peninsula declared their independence. Only Egypt remained from the whole Fatimid Empire. During this period a struggle for the leadership of Egypt took place. Shâwer, one of the two competitors for the leadership, called for the help of the Saljouks, and Durghâm, the other competitor, called for the help of the Crusaders.

In 1171 the Fatimid Empire was terminated and the reign of Şalâḥ Dîn al-Ayyûbi and his family started. During Şalâḥ Dîn's time Egypt became a strong nation and won the approval of the Abbasid caliph. Şalâḥ Dîn conquered Libya, parts of Tunisia, the Arabian Peninsula, Syria and parts of Iraq. With this strong nation Şalâḥ Dîn surrounded the Crusaders that were in Palestine and along the shores of the

Mediterranean, and in 1187 he conquered Jerusalem and the rest of the Crusaders' strongholds. This stirred the emotions of the Christians in Europe, so waves of armies came "to deliver Jerusalem from the Muslims." In 1192, a treaty was signed by Ṣalâḥ Dîn and Richard the Lion-Hearted which placed Jerusalem under the Arabs. Later, more wars were fought and more treaties were signed until in 1244, King Louis the Nineteenth of France led an army of Crusaders to "crush Egypt." The Crusaders were beaten and the French king was arrested and was released only after a huge ransom had been paid.

At this time the Egyptian army was made up mostly of Mamluks. The Mamluks' strength grew with time, and in 1250 they assassinated the descendent of Ṣalâḥ Dîn and declared Egypt as a Mamluk state. The Mamluks had long wars with the Crusaders that were still on the shores of the East Mediterranean. Another danger was coming not from Europe, but from the East. Under Genghis Khan, the Mongols moved west, starting in parts of China and reaching and taking over Islamic states such as Turkistan and Iran. Finally, under Hulako in 1258, Baghdad, the capital of the Abbasid Empire, was defeated by the Mongols and the caliph was killed. That year the caliphate shifted from Baghdad in Iraq to Constantinople in Turkey, and the Ottoman Empire was established. The Mamluks fought and stopped the Mongol conquest.

A new struggle began. The Ottomans started competing with the Mamluks for the occupation of Syria, and the Ottomans won. The Mamluks experienced their first defeat. By the year 1453 the Ottomans had become the greatest power in the Islamic world. Egypt, under the dictatorship of the Ottomans, suffered for centuries under their oppressive rule.

At this same time, there were two great powers in Europe, the British and the French, which were competing for the spread of their colonies in the various parts of the world. The British had colonized parts of North America, in addition to India and the Cape of Good Hope. Napoleon believed that if

France could possess Egypt, then India would be cut off from the British influence. So, in 1798 Napoleon conquered Egypt. Although Napoleon tried to communicate understanding and respect for Islam, the Egyptians perceived his escapade as “a foreign Christian” occupation.

The British sent their fleet to the Egyptian shores to fight the French, and the French fleet was destroyed near the shores of Alexandria. When the Ottomans wanted to attack the French and take back Egypt, Napoleon moved north to Palestine to fight them. Later, Napoleon, for various reasons, had to go back to France, mainly for the purpose of consolidating the strength of France in Europe. His army was left behind in Egypt to fight the Ottomans and to crush Egyptian resistance. In 1801 the British and the Ottomans cooperated and pushed the French out of Egypt.

During the French occupation a rough plan for digging the Suez Canal was drawn up. From a military point of view, the French conquest demonstrated to the British the strategic importance of Egypt.

After the departure of the French from Egypt there were four powers left: the Mamluks and the British on one side, and the Turks along with the Egyptian resistance, on the other side.

In 1805, Muḥammad ‘Ali, a Turk of Albanian origin, was accepted by the Egyptian resistance as the ruler of Egypt. He enforced taxes, pleasing his soldiers and the Ottoman caliph with the money, and thus was able to wipe out the Mamluks and push away their British supporters. Finally, he dealt a heavy blow to the Egyptian resistance that had accepted him and became the sole ruler and dictator of Egypt. In time his ambitions expanded and he added most of the Arabian Peninsula, Sudan, Palestine and Syria to his reign, which aggravated the Ottomans and the British. The Ottomans were annoyed because their empire was challenged, and the British were threatened because their routes to India came under the control of Egypt.