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IRAN

and the SURROUNDING WORLD

Interactions in Culture and Cultural Politics

NIKKI R. KEDDIE

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Editors

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13 / Revolutionary Iran and Egypt: Exporting Inspirations and Anxieties

ASEF BAYAT AND BAHMAN BAKTIARI

This chapter discusses the impact of revolutionary Iran on Egypt from the revolution of 1979 through the presidency of Muhammad Khatami. It explores some of the major intellectual, cultural, and political influences Iran has had on another ancient nation. It shows that the events of revolution and after have left imprints of both inspiration and anxiety. The revolution inspired many Egyptians of various social milieus—secular nationalists, Islamists, and ordinary people—in their desire to push for social and political change. Yet it generated a disproportionate anxiety amongst the political elites. We show that Iran's influence has been at its height when the nation embarked on social mobilization, democratic practice, and popular participation. In contrast, its political and intellectual impact was lowest when Iran was dominated by authoritarian rule, war, and repressive policies.

By virtue of their strategic location, size, historical tradition, and leadership qualities, Egypt and Iran have been major actors in the regional politics and culture of the Middle East in the later part of the twentieth century. Both countries were ruled for the most part by monarchies, and both monarchies were overthrown by revolutionary change, Egypt's in 1952 and Iran's in 1979. Being located at the crossroads of three continents, Egypt more than Iran since 1500 has been host to many foreign peoples and cultures, including Turks, Italians, Greeks, and Iranians. During the 1920s and 1930s, Iranian residents in Cairo formed a vibrant community of mostly merchants and intellectuals. The community had established associations, published many periodicals, and was highly active in trade. In the words of one historian, Cairo's major commercial center in the 1930s (today's Khan Khalili bazaar) "belonged entirely to the Iranian merchants."¹

Iran-Egypt relations experienced a brief period of flourishing following

the shah's marriage to Fauziya (Fuzyeh), King Faruq's sister, in 1939. The wedding itself caused an outpouring of panegyric on the warm relations between Egypt and Iran. In poetry especially written for the occasion, both countries were called cradles of civilization that had brought forth Ramses and Cyrus, respectively, and shining examples of an awakening East.² It also prompted al-Azhar University to introduce Persian into its language curriculum.³ In the two decades that followed, relations were cordial, giving rise to the activities of the *Dar al-taqrib* movement. Founded in 1947 by the Iranian cleric Mohammad Taqi Qommi and led by Mahmud Shaltut, the rector of al-Azhar, this ecumenical movement aimed at a rapprochement between Sunnism and Shi'ism. Never evolving into a mass movement, it rather functioned as a forum for discussion and a publishing enterprise. Its achievements were few. It never managed to persuade al-Azhar to institute a chair of Shi'i jurisprudence, for example. Yet the 1959 fatwa of Shaltut, which recognized Twelver Shi'ism as a fifth school of Islam, must be seen as a landmark ruling and at least a symbolic measure of success. After the 1952 coup it initially enjoyed the support of Gamal Abdul Nasser, who saw it as a tool in his ambition to play a leading role throughout the Arab world.⁴

The Free Officers' coup in 1952, however, heralded a new era in Egypt-Iran relations. Under Nasser, the core of the Egyptian regime's ideology and the very basis of its legitimacy became Arab nationalism. This episode coincided with the anticolonial posture of the Iranian nationalist prime minister, Mohammad Mosaddeq, who had nationalized the British holdings in the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company. Inspired by Mosaddeq, Nasser nationalized the Suez Canal. A year later, in 1953, a CIA-backed coup removed Mosaddeq from power. From this time, Iran completely changed course, moving in exactly the opposite direction to that of Nasser's Egypt, courting the Western powers and joining military alliances with Britain and the United States.⁵

This was the beginning of a cold war between Iran and Egypt. The shah of Iran perceived Nasser as an "instrument of Soviet expansionism," and Nasser saw the shah's cooperation with Western powers and their allies, especially Israel, as detrimental to Arab interests.⁶ By early 1960, Cairo's relationship with Tehran had reached a low point, with Egypt finally breaking off diplomatic relations with Iran in the summer of 1960, following Tehran's de facto recognition of the state of Israel.⁷ However, a number of external events during the 1960s brought Iran and Egypt closer together. Egypt's unsuccessful military intervention in the Yemeni civil war of 1962, and Nasser's ambition to establish a foothold in southern Arabia, alienated the conservative sheikhdoms in the Persian Gulf, drawing them closer to Iran. The Iranian

regime embarked on an assertive diplomacy and succeeded in isolating Egypt in the region.⁸ But the devastating defeat in the June 1967 war with Israel convinced Nasser to reassess Egypt's ambitious policy in the Persian Gulf and to seek to reduce tensions with Iran. After Iran welcomed the "new Egyptian realism" in May 1970, Iran and Egypt restored diplomatic relations in August of the same year, a month before President Nasser's death.⁹

From the beginning, the shah and the new Egyptian president, Anwar al-Sadat, had a friendship that was to last until the shah's death in Cairo in 1980. Sadat had decided to steer Egypt away from the Soviet Union, and in the Persian Gulf adopted a less aggressive posture toward Arab causes and a more accommodating stance toward Saudi Arabia and Iran. Sadat visited Tehran in 1971, en route to Moscow. The October War of 1973 further cemented Tehran's relation with Cairo. The shah allowed Soviet planes delivering supplies to Egypt to fly over Iranian territory. The Pahlavi regime also provided loans and grants worth billions of dollars to Egypt for a giant project involving reconstruction of Port Said, widening of the Suez Canal, and a number of joint industrial and agricultural projects.¹⁰ Sadat's decision to make peace with Israel also received strong support from the shah. Thus, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi became the second foreign leader, after U.S. President Jimmy Carter, to express his unequivocal support for the Camp David Accords. Vice-President Hosni Mubarak traveled to Tehran to brief the shah on the accords.¹¹

It is against this historical background that the Iranian Revolution took place, causing a radical shift in diplomacy and influencing the course of political events and intellectual trends in Egypt. In the following sections, we discuss the dynamics of such influence in political and intellectual fields in Egypt. We show that the Iranian Revolution both inspired many Egyptians in their desire for change and caused much anxiety among political elites. We conclude by arguing that Iran's influence has been at its height when the nation undertook social mobilization, engaged in democratic practice, and showed popular participation. In contrast, its political and intellectual impact was at its lowest when Iran was dominated by authoritarian rule, war, and repressive policies.

THE IRANIAN REVOLUTION AND EGYPT

The Iranian Revolution undoubtedly caused shock waves in a region ruled by hereditary monarchs or lifetime presidents, from the Persian Gulf to Iraq, Greater Syria, and North Africa. At the time that Iran's revolutionaries were marching in the streets, Egypt was going through a historic shake-up. President Sadat was in the midst of his unpopular policy change of breaking with

Nasserist legacies. Sadat had suspended the strategic alliance with the Soviet Union and become a close ally of the West, especially the United States. Internally, he had launched his Open Door policy, repressed the Nasserists and the Communists, and encouraged the Islamists. At the time that Iranians were shouting slogans against the U.S. and Israel, Sadat signed the Camp David Accords with Israel. For the average Egyptian, this political contrast was tremendous.

When the ruling clergy took over the state power in Iran, the government-controlled press in Egypt ran articles questioning the legitimacy of Iran's Islamic claims. Editorials in *al-Ahram*, Egypt's leading newspaper, criticized Ayatollah Khomeini's concept of Islamic justice by referring to the summary executions of the former shah's officials, advising Khomeini to "return to the teachings of the Quran and implement the principles of true Islam in Iran."¹² By that time the shah had fled Iran to Cairo, and Sadat had received him warmly as a head of state. Thus, in April 1979, Iran broke diplomatic relations with Egypt. Recriminations between Iranian and Egyptian leaders reached a high point in late 1979. In an interview, Sadat stated that he was "sad for the Islamic nation, because Khomeini's fever is beginning to catch onto some Moslem leaders. But I will not hesitate to fight this disease if it tries to creep into some souls here."¹³

Khomeini used similar language. In a meeting with Muhammad Haikal, Ayatollah Khomeini said that "the Egyptian nation is one thing, and Mr. Sadat is something else. How sad I am to see that a person who says he is the leader of an Islamic country sits at the same table as two persons who are both enemies of Islam, the Israeli regime, the United States."¹⁴

When Sadat offered the shah and his family political asylum in March 1980, relations between Cairo and Tehran reached the breaking point.¹⁵ The Iranian regime called for the overthrow of the "lesser Satan," in the words of Ayatollah Sadeq Khalkhali, the "hanging judge," considering it an act of Islamic revolutionary justice. The Egyptian government in turn called the Islamic Republic "a false purveyor of Islam and hatred." Ayatollah Khalkhali called for the execution of Sadat by Egyptian Islamic militants.¹⁶ After a long battle with lymphatic cancer, the shah died in Cairo's Maadi Military hospital. In his last minutes, the shah told his doctor to avoid extraordinary measures, saying "I am fed up with living artificially; I don't want to die like Tito."¹⁷ Even though he wanted a simple funeral, Sadat insisted on full military honors. He is buried in the al-Rifa'i Mosque, where his father Reza Shah was entombed for several years during World War II.

It was not surprising then that, in such circumstances, the Iranian Revolution appeared to many Egyptians, notably the intellectuals, as a genuine

response of a Muslim nation to imperialist aggression in the region. Many members of the intelligentsia looked toward Iran in search of solutions to their own national problems: how to deal with Sadat, and how to tackle the Israeli occupation of Arab lands and American support for it. This sentiment prevailed in all currents within the intellectual class. As an Egyptian author recalled, there was a special enthusiasm in the al-Ahram Center for Strategic Studies, Egypt's most prestigious think-tank, for what had happened in Iran.¹⁸

Left-wingers impressed by the mass mobilization in Iran began to offer analyses, but also sought ways to emulate the model. The Workers Communist Party, for example, offered various observations regarding the events in Iran, in mostly structuralist Marxian language. Iranian mass mobilization became a model couched in ideological language. At the same time, however, the very complex nature of events in Iran confused most Marxists. On the one hand, they could not escape observing the magnitude of a popular revolution that had toppled a repressive regime backed by the West. On the other, it was a religious leadership that brought the revolution to victory. For such secular Egyptian observers, this remained a theoretical dilemma. The question was whether to support or oppose the revolution. Thus, a search for a realistic understanding of the Iranian phenomenon continued.

Given government and al-Azhar censorship of literature on the Iranian Revolution in Egypt, many enthusiasts looked to Beirut, where a liberal publication atmosphere had allowed the appearance of a number of original works by Iranians in Arabic. Such publications as Abol Hasan Bani Sadr's *Oil and Domination* (*Naft va solteh*), Mehdi Bazargan's *The Boundaries Between Religion and Politics* (*Marz miyan-e din va siyaset*), and a number of the Tudeh Party's works (published by the newspapers *al-Safir* and *al-Nahar*) were smuggled to Egypt, where they offered some original insights into the thoughts of some of the revolutionary leaders.¹⁹ In addition, Egyptian observers added their own interpretations of the revolutionary events in Iran. Works such as al-Sayyidd Zahra's *al-Thaura al-iraniya. al-Wajh al-ijtima'iya* (*The Iranian Revolution: The Social Aspects*), Fathi Abd al-Aziz's *Khumaini: al-Badil al-islami* (*Khomeini: The Islamic Alternative*), Muhammad al-Sa'id Abd al-Mu'min's *Mas'ala al-thaura al-islamiya* (*The Question of the Islamic Revolution*), and Muslim Brotherhood member Muhammad Abd al-Rahman Anbar's *Nahwa thaura islamiya* (*Toward an Islamic Revolution*) found their places in Cairo's bookshops.²⁰

The dramatic turn of events in Iran in the early 1980s, including executions ordered by the revolutionary courts, hard-line vigilante violence against leftist and liberal forces, repression of the Kurdish autonomy movement, and

the banishment and arrest of many revolutionaries and respected clerical figures such as Ayatollah Kazem Shari'atmadari, turned the early enthusiasm and jubilation of Egyptian secular intellectuals into confusion and disappointment. The nationalist leftist periodical *Ruz al-Yusuf* commented that Egyptians had supported the Iranian Revolution because one of its objectives was to remove Iran from under American domination. But, the weekly argued, the Islamic rulers had now resorted to a kind of dictatorship that was worse than the shah's.²¹ It seemed the revolutionary repression by the Islamic regime had confirmed the early pessimism of such outstanding intellectual figures as Louis Awad, who had described the events in Iran as "terroristic."²²

THE IRANIAN REVOLUTION AND EGYPTIAN ISLAMISM

While secular intellectuals could find comfort in their preconceived ideas by explaining that a "religious revolution" would eventually turn into a disaster, for Islamists it was an entirely different story. The Islamic Revolution, of course, did not generate Egyptian Islamism. Islamism in Egypt has its own dynamics. However, the Iranian Revolution had a significant effect on its momentum, direction, and expansion.

As the Pahlavi regime began to crumble in 1978, most Islamic groups in Egypt criticized officials expressing support for, or at least sympathy with, the shah of Iran. Successive invitations extended to the deposed monarch to reside in Egypt exacerbated differences between the state and the Egyptian Islamic opposition. Defending his decision to invite the shah, Sadat said that Egypt had "acted in this respect in accordance with its values and principles. The shah stood by Egypt before, during and after the October war." The shah had ordered oil tankers bound for Europe to immediately divert to Egypt and unload their cargo.²³

Some Islamic political actors challenged the official argument that the help provided now to the shah was an expression of gratitude for the substantial supply of oil and military and economic assistance he gave to Egypt in 1973 and thereafter. Instead, they referred to the oil the shah had provided for Israel at the time of the 1973 oil embargo, and the close military and intelligence relations he had established with Israel.²⁴ Thus, there is no doubt that the Iranian Revolution gained the sympathy of many political Islamic groups in Egypt. Pictures of Ayatollah Khomeini appeared in Cairo and in some provincial cities, and demonstrations were organized against the arrival of the deposed shah in Egypt.²⁵

For most Islamists, then, the revolution realized a long-awaited dream, following years of defeat and humiliation by the West and Israel. Like secu-

larists, they also thought for the first time in many decades that it was possible to defeat a tyrant as well as the West. And this had happened under the banner of Islam. "Iran fulfilled our dream; Iranians are ruling themselves," an enthusiastic Safinaz Kazim announced to a British TV journalist.²⁶ The message of revolutionary Islam entered universities, nongovernmental mosques, and popular sentiment. For many Egyptians, Iran represented a solution, an alternative model, and a successful one at that. It was an Islamic state with institutions, rulers, ideology, and popular support. One of the main Islamist leaders in Egypt recalls the impact the Iranian events had on him:

As an Islamist, I was so much interested in the Iranian Revolution. Not just me, but most Islamists in the world. In 1980 I was at a conference in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. For the first time, I listened to a representative of Iranian youth. Of course, that was the time when millions of people were demonstrating in the streets in Iran. From this I became very interested in the Iranian Revolution. So I followed the media about the events, the departure of the shah, the return of Ayatollah Khomeini, et cetera. And, of course, the U.S. hostage issue, the war with Iraq, et cetera. All of these showed that Iran was one of the hottest spots in the world. I read a number of books about Iran, like Huwaidi's *Iran min al-dakhil*, or articles by Mr. Haikal and Salim al-Awa, and interviews from abroad. But then, of course, I read a lot about changes [in the 1990s] in Iran too, especially during Mr. Rafsanjani's government. Actually, I think the changes really began with Mr. Rafsanjani.²⁷

Each branch of the heterogeneous Islamist movement in Egypt looked at Iranian Islamism through its own prism. Fahmi Huwaidi, a prominent Islamist journalist, enthusiastically followed the events. He traveled many times to Iran, where he met with Ayatollah Khomeini, and wrote a best-selling book on his findings, *Iran min al-dakhil (Iran From Within)*.²⁸ In his articles and books he offered a sympathetic picture of the revolution. Indeed, once Iran entered into war with an Arab nation, Iraq, he was at pains to defend Iran in its struggle against Saddam Hussein. He went even further, arguing for historic and cultural proximity between the Arabs and Iranians, exemplified in the flow of culture, language, and food—elements that he claimed hostile politicians did not see.²⁹

On the other hand, for Hasan Hanafi, a prominent philosopher at Cairo University, the Iranian Revolution offered a concrete alternative project for Islam—an alternative that he, as a leftist-Islamist of the Ali Shari'ati type, had envisaged. To him, the revolution represented the leftist face of Islam.³⁰ In his attempts to introduce the model to the Egyptian public, he published

Ayatollah Khomeini's classic text, *al-Hukama al-islamiya* (*Islamic Government*). He also, in cooperation with Muhammad Auda and Ibrahim Shita Disuqi, founded the journal *al-Yasar al-Islami* (*The Islamic Left*), in which they discussed the Iranian experience as a new model, a philosophy, a political alternative, and a new interpretation of progressive Islam. Although this publication ceased after only its first issue, nonetheless it reflected the heightened hope and enthusiasm of the Islamic left at the time. Egyptian militant groups were encouraged by the success of popular confrontation against the authorities in Iran. The resoluteness of leaders such as Ayatollah Khomeini surely inspired armed struggle against what the Egyptian Islamists considered the internal *jahili* state (a term originally applied to pre-Islamic Arabia). An early declaration of support came from the Islamic Students' Association of Cairo University. They stated that the spirit behind the revolution was like that in early Islam, when religion and politics were inseparable.³¹

Like others, the Muslim Brothers expressed jubilation concerning the Islamic Revolution, seeing it as a manifestation of Islam's triumph in a political struggle. A member boasted of the global impact of the revolution, claiming that it would "turn political theories and contemporary political forces on their heads."³² For many in the movement, the Iranian Revolution revitalized fond memories of earlier ties between the Muslim Brothers and Iran's Fedayan-e Islam organization. In fact, shortly after Abdul Nasser's accession to power in 1952, pro-Muslim Brotherhood students in Egypt invited Navvab Safavi, the founder of the Fedayan (executed by the shah's regime in the 1950s), to participate in a conference organized by them at Cairo University. They held him on their shoulders and introduced him as an Islamic leader.³³ The initiative of the likes of Navvab Safavi had now paid off in the Islamic Revolution. The duty of Muslims, according to statements issued by the Muslim Brothers, was to support it. Indeed, the United States tried to use the spiritual leader of the Muslim Brothers, Umar al-Tilmisani, to mediate for the release of the American hostages in 1980, although this mediation, like many others, failed to bear fruit.

Nevertheless, as the revolution evolved, the Muslim Brotherhood took an ambivalent position towards Iran. The Iranian Revolution, although Islamic, had posed a challenge for the Brotherhood. First, Iran had entered into war with Iraq, an Arab nation (even if Saddam Hussein had taken the lead in its outbreak). It also had allied itself with Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad and his Ba'ath regime, the great enemy of the Syrian Muslim Brothers. Though successful as a Muslim uprising, Iran's revolution was also clearly inspired by Shi'i Islam. "Shi'ism is a kind of extremism," a Muslim Brother paper commented, echoing a widespread sentiment in the Sunni world.³⁴ Moreover, this

successful revolutionary experiment was at odds with the gradualist strategy of the Muslim Brothers. It represented a radical interpretation of Islam, thus encouraging more radical Islamist groups at the expense of the Muslim Brotherhood. Finally, while until the 1980s it was the Muslim Brotherhood whose pan-Islamist ideology inspired other groups in different Muslim countries, after the revolution Iran began to be a model for those Muslims who waged opposition to their own internal rulers and their Western allies. In short, Iran had become not a great ally, but a formidable rival.

For its part, not only did al-Azhar (the great Islamic university and official religious establishment) share many similar concerns, it went further, criticizing Iranian rulers for instigating Islamist sentiments abroad as part of revolutionary Shi'i activism, a concern entirely shared by the Egyptian regime. Official anxiety over the "danger" of a Shi'i conspiracy in the Egyptian media was expressed in the late 1980s and mid-1990s, when the state claimed to have uncovered groups of Shi'i activists in Egypt (see below).

Despite or perhaps partly because of such reservations on the part of the religious authorities in Egypt, Iran's revolutionary experience contributed tremendously to popular religiosity and Islamic mood, sentiments, and sensibilities in people's daily lives in Egypt. From the very start, Iran considered the emergence of Islamism in Egypt as part of the totality of Islamic revivalism led by Iran. This was clear from Iran's strong condemnation of the Egyptian regime for persecuting Egypt's Islamist activists.

THE PERIOD OF AMBIVALENCE

However, before long, the early expression of popular jubilation over the Iranian revolution turned into a mood of confusion. The news of repression from Iran, the hostility of Egyptian religious authorities towards the Islamist leaders in Iran, especially after the assassination of President Sadat by the Islamist Jihad group, and Iran's growing emphasis on Shi'ism created an ambivalent mood among average Egyptians. This ambivalence was exacerbated by cultural and religious misunderstandings between average Iranians and Egyptians. In the early days of the revolution, Egyptians had little idea about Iran. They invariably viewed Shi'ism of whatever variety as some kind of extremism (*tatarruf*). Indeed, many Egyptians still consider Shi'is as having deviated from true Islam by placing Imam Ali above the Prophet Muhammad. Some Egyptians even go as far as establishing an etymological link between the terms *Shi'i* and *shiyu'i* (communist). Conversely, Iran's insularity and sense of superiority toward Arabs made the regime's avowed effort to close the gap with Sunnism largely a theoretical option. What contributed to this

gap at this juncture was the escalation of the Iran-Iraq war, in which Egypt supported Iraq, as an Arab and a Muslim nation, in an attempt to return to the old pan-Arab mode that had been virtually lost in the frenzy of the Camp David accords. The sympathy for Iran's revolutionary fervor started to subside.

For over a decade, from the early 1980s until the early 1990s, at the height of Egyptian Islamism, a mood of ambivalence and confusion emerged in Egypt. Iran began to fade from the public discourse. The Islamists, torn between Arab and Islamic solidarity, were unsure how to position themselves vis-à-vis the Iran-Iraq war and the increasingly friendly relations between Tehran and Damascus. Faced with an increasingly nationalist tone coming out of Iran and unable to ignore the revolutionary excesses, they chose to minimize their coverage of Iran, until they themselves were silenced by Sadat's 1981 crackdown on the Islamist press.³⁵ The Egyptian regime and the state-controlled media, in turn, never enamored of Iran's radical transformation, mostly continued to ignore Iran, except occasionally to highlight the oppressive nature of the regime. There was little for Egyptians to note about Iran except for some scattered reports about the Iran-Iraq war, the clash among the Islamic rulers, and accounts of political repression relayed by Iranian opposition groups in Europe. The country almost vanished from the Egyptian popular memory in this decade. Diplomacy ceased, trade ebbed, and cultural and intellectual exchanges almost disappeared.

What remained from Iran were the defunct Iran-Misir Bank, the almost deceased Bank Saderat of Iran, and a few other joint ventures, such as the Misr-Iran Shipping Company and a Suez textile plant. The old glory of a few carpet shops had faded under the dusty "Persian Carpets" signs. Indeed, there hardly remained any really Iranian merchandise. Streets named after Mosaddeq and Iran, and Pahlavi Square, in Cairo's Dokki district, did linger on. But they meant little to passers-by who were caught, perplexed, between the initial inspiration of an Islamic Revolution and subsequent images of "blood-bath," mass execution, and the brutality of the war with "Arab brothers." Only the Maidan Pahlavi was to assume political significance, later, in 2000, as a counterpoint to the Egyptian protest over Khalid Islambuli Street in Tehran, named after the assassin of Anwar Sadat. Even the corpse of the shah, buried in a lonely corner of the al-Rifa'i Mosque in Cairo, only added to the ambivalence in the Egyptian popular consciousness. In sum, this dim picture stood in stark contrast to the decade of the 1930s, when a vigorous Iranian community resided in Cairo, leaving its mark on social, commercial, and intellectual life.

Egypt's state-run media rarely conveyed an in-depth picture of Islamist

Iran. Real news, photos, and footage of Iranian leaders rarely appeared in print media or on TV screens. The transmission of mere words, then, left the actual picturing of events to the imagination of the average Egyptian. Few Iranians traveled to or, for that matter, lived in Egypt in these times.

Persian language and literature remained a major discipline in a dozen Egyptian universities, giving jobs to some tens of Egyptian professors. However, the dull, run-down, and silent hallways of Persian Studies programs spoke of bygone days. Many enthusiasts of Persian language could not find modern Persian texts to read, let alone follow events in Iran.

During the 1980s, there were some 150 mostly half-Iranian families, almost all coming from Western countries, working in international firms or UN agencies. They would gather together, organize gatherings, and reminisce, in the manner of exiled groups, about their fun times in the country that they saw being destroyed by the ravages of the Islamic Revolution and a seemingly endless war with Iraq. They would celebrate Nauruz, worry about their home country, and revive their national pride and identity by criticizing their host nation, Egypt, ranting and raving about its poverty, poor sanitation, and urban chaos. Chances for a meaningful relationship between this community and their Egyptian counterparts, then, remained feeble. Theirs was an expatriate Western life style. The main threads which linked such Iranians to their Egyptian upper-class counterparts were the stories of the failed marriage of the shah and Fuziyeh, and a common nostalgia for each other's old, pre-Islamic civilizations. The knowledge in the Iranian community of Egyptian culture did not go beyond some impressionistic observations. In turn, few Egyptians learned anything about Iran from this tiny community. In the experience of one of the authors, almost no Egyptian would guess, nor often believe, his (Asef Bayat's) Iranian origin. The image of an Iranian man was still one of a bearded, rough, and violent-looking *Pasdar* (Revolutionary Guard).

The more isolated Iran became internationally and the further it sank into the war with Saddam Hussein, the better Egypt's position in the region's political and economic scenes became. The war allowed Egypt to improve its position among the Arab countries in the Persian Gulf, which had suspended ties with Cairo following the Camp David Accords with Israel. In November 1987, the United Arab Emirates (U.A.E.) restored diplomatic relations with Egypt. Improved relations with other Arab countries followed, culminating in Egypt's readmission to the Arab League in May 1989. This was followed by the reestablishment of League headquarters in Cairo, and the leading role Mubarak played in gathering Arab support against Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in July 1990. The general belief that Iran was a major threat to Arab regimes in the Persian Gulf and beyond, and the fact that President Mubarak had dis-

tanced himself from Sadat's denunciations of other Arabs, made a rapprochement with the rest of the Arab world possible. By the time Syria renewed diplomatic relations with Egypt in May 1990, all Arab countries had reestablished diplomatic relations with Egypt.

In the economic domain, the U.A.E. increased trade with Egypt, from zero before Camp David was signed to over \$30 million in 1986. Saudi Arabia's imports from Egypt rose from under \$50 million in 1979 to over \$80 million in 1985. Saudi exports to Egypt increased from about \$40 million in 1979 to close to \$250 million in 1984. Exports from Egypt to Kuwait showed a slight drop in 1978–1980, but by 1981 had already started increasing. There was a significant drop in imports from Kuwait to Egypt from 1978 to 1982, but between 1982 and 1985 they surged from about \$10 million to about \$90 million. In the meantime, Egypt replaced Iran as the main supplier of oil to Israel. From 1984 to 1987, Egypt supplied an average of 25 percent of Israel's oil import needs, reaching 43 percent in 1986.³⁶

THE GRADUAL RETURN OF AN IMPROVED IMAGE

With the death of Ayatollah Khomeini, the end of the war with Iraq, and the beginning of postwar reconstruction under President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani (1989–1997), a new era began to unfold in Iran. In pursuit of reconstruction, the pragmatic president formed a technocratic cabinet, attempted to open up the economy, eased up foreign trade, pursued urban renewal, and went on to repair international relations.

The impact of such internal changes, on Egypt as much as on other countries, began to surface before long. The Iranian regime toned down its statements on the Egyptian government's crackdown on Islamist groups. In 1989, the Egyptian authorities claimed that they had arrested a group of forty-one persons considered to be the nucleus of a secret Shi'i movement alleged to have been formed when four Sunni militants converted to the Shi'i faith. They were charged with plotting to overthrow the Mubarak regime.³⁷ The fear of a Shi'i conspiracy exploded later, in October 1996, when the state security forces claimed to have discovered an organized Shi'i group displaying their literature and a portrait of Imam Ali. Shaikh Hasan Muhammad Shita, the preacher of a Giza mosque, was detained in this connection. The group of fifty-six Egyptians were allegedly seeking to propagate an Iranian-style revolution in Egypt.³⁸ Iranian authorities did not deny the fact that some members of the Egyptian Shi'i community had traveled to Iran, but commented that "from the viewpoint of the Egyptian rulers the exchange of ideas and meetings between different Muslim groups is against the law and considered

as anti-state activities. The fact is that communications between Muslims is quite usual and natural and no person in his sound state of mind can accuse Muslims of subversive activities just because they pay a visit to another Muslim country or because they meet with Shi'i leaders."³⁹ While the Egyptian government intensified its crackdown on Islamists, Iran continued to make overtures to Egypt. Prior to Iranian foreign minister Ali Akbar Velayati's visit to Cairo in 1994 for the foreign ministers' meeting of the Islamic Conference, Iran communicated a message to Cairo stating that Tehran respected the authority of al-Azhar over Sunni Muslims and would refrain from criticizing Egypt peace policy towards Israel. It also stated that it would discourage Islamic radicals in Lebanon from backing Egyptian radical Islamist groups.⁴⁰ Especially significant was Iran's coordinated position with Egypt during the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), to which Iran sent a high-ranking Ayatollah, Ali Taskhiri, chief of the president's international affairs office and Head of the Islamic Propagation Organization. Taskhiri met a few times with Egyptian officials and visited al-Azhar.

The absence of revolutionary rhetoric from Tehran eventually changed the atmosphere and led to an increase in trade between the two countries. The defunct Iran-Egypt Bank resumed operation. Both countries began exploring avenues for cooperation in the fields of construction materials, industrial machinery, automotives, heavy industries, petrochemicals, and foodstuffs. In December 1994, Egypt and Iran reached an agreement to settle \$149 million of Egyptian debt owed to Iran. The original debt was \$283 million, but Iran agreed to reduce it in order "to create a favorable atmosphere for better economic and commercial relations." Egypt agreed to pay off the debt by constructing a number of sugar factories in Khuzestan province, in southern Iran.⁴¹ Moreover, Iran and Egypt agreed to resume the activities of a joint Iran-Egypt textile company and an Iran-Egypt shipping line. Iran owns 49 percent of the latter company, which is situated in the Suez area and chaired by an influential Egyptian senator, Abd al-Hakim Hujjaj.⁴² By the end of Rafsanjani's presidency, bilateral trade between Iran and Egypt was reported to be around \$80 million.⁴³

The impact of Rafsanjani's pragmatic approach could also be seen in Egyptian foreign policy in the Persian Gulf. Egypt, Syria, and the six members of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) signed a security pact in Damascus in March 1991 calling for the creation of a pan-Arab peacekeeping force, with Egypt and Syria playing the leading roles. According to the pact, known as the Damascus Declaration, a peacekeeping force was envisioned for the Gulf to help protect the area from any possible aggression. The U.A.E. wanted Egypt to lead an Arab military intervention in the territorial dispute between the

U.A.E. and Iran. However, since Iran had promised not to encourage Islamic fundamentalist groups, Egypt reciprocated by not becoming militarily involved in the dispute between the U.A.E. and Iran. Usama al-Baz, top political advisor to President Mubarak, stated that "the situation there [in the Gulf] does not call at all for the adoption of any military steps. There is plenty of opportunity for political contacts and diplomacy."⁴⁴

But domestic opposition to a full normalization of relations with Egypt was still strong in Iran. The daily *Resalat*, a conservative paper, argued that "given the fact that Egypt is still a lackey of Zionism, it is not clear why the future of relations between Tehran and Cairo, the two opposite poles of faith and blasphemy, resistance and compromise, have become a topic of discussion in political circles of the region."⁴⁵ In May 1993, a group of Tehran University students rallied at the university campus in a protest directed at the foreign ministry for normalizing ties with Egypt and Saudi Arabia. Nevertheless, Rafsanjani's government maintained the level of political dialogue and economic cooperation until his successor, Mohammad Khatami, took over in 1997. Since then, Iran has continued to distance itself from overt support for armed Muslim militants in Algeria, Egypt, and elsewhere.

ONCE AGAIN, IRAN AS A MODEL

The outcome of the presidential elections of 1997 in Iran, a resounding victory for a reformist cleric named Mohammad Khatami, was a watershed in Iran's return to the international scene, in particular in the Arab world. A moderate and not-well-known clergyman ousted the hard-line candidate, Ali Akbar Nateq-Nuri, who enjoyed the support of the conservative establishment. This heralded the onset of the "Khatami Era." In the course of three years, Khatami and his team have managed to popularize significant concepts that would shake the conservative power holders, emphasizing civil society, rule of law, tolerance, pluralism, and freedom of expression. Internationally, Khatami opted for rapidly improving relations with other nations based upon mutual respect and the "dialogue of civilizations."

These concepts spread in Iranian society, framing the ideological foundation of the "reform movement," which in turn pushed for policy and institutional changes in the country. To the dismay of conservatives, the reformist executive unleashed an unprecedented free press, civil-society organizations, and some cultural openness. The reformists captured a majority in the 1999 municipal elections and won over two hundred seats in the 290-seat parliament in the February 2000 elections. These electoral victories projected a new, intellectually vibrant, socially active, and democratic image of Iran

abroad, especially in the Middle East. As "isms," such as pan-Arabism, Nasserism, Ba'athism, and fundamentalism have begun to vanish or lose luster, the phrase "Islamic reformation" has now been introduced. Perhaps of greatest importance is that the Iranian democratization is likely to have an impact on surrounding Islamic states, inspiring groups calling for political change in those countries to speak out more forcefully. Indeed, if successful, the Iranian democratization could have an impact on the region similar to that its revolution did some twenty years ago.

In regional diplomacy, Khatami's presidency coincided with the eighth meeting of the Organization of Islamic Countries (OIC) in Tehran in December 1997, the largest gathering of Islamic leaders in Tehran since the 1979 revolution. The timing was very providential for Iran. With a new, popularly elected president, Iran was uniquely situated to capitalize on the deep frustration felt by Arabs and Muslims at the intransigent policies of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, as well as Washington's failure to pursue a balanced strategy in Middle East peacemaking. The pro-American regimes of Egypt and Saudi Arabia, long hostile to revolutionary Iran, shunned invitations to attend a U.S.-backed regional economic conference that Israel attended in Qatar. Instead, both decided to go to Tehran along with other ostensible Arab allies of the United States.

Prior to the conference, Khatami's government embarked on an assertive campaign of diplomacy to prepare the groundwork for a successful conference. Iran Air resumed its flights between Iran and Saudi Arabia, while Iran attended a large trade fair in Jiddah, Saudi Arabia. Iraq subsequently opened its border to Iranian pilgrims, and, within days of Khatami's election, Cairo radio quoted Egyptian foreign minister Amr Musa as saying that Egypt was "looking to improve relations" with the Islamic Republic in light of the actions of Khatami, who had made a similar statement.⁴⁶ In short, the OIC changed the political language between the two countries. Accusations of treason and betrayal traded by Iranian officials and their Egyptian counterparts over the prior twenty years were now replaced with words of praise and an expression by both sides of a serious desire to mend ties. Egyptian dailies praised Iran's great efforts to ensure good preparations for the Islamic summit, stressing that Iran's success with this summit "helped it emerge from twenty years of isolation." They also hailed Iran for its new moderate course, which they saw contributing to the stability of the region.⁴⁷ For its part, the Iranian press also began to open a public debate on Egypt. For the first time since 1979, a daily asked, if the Islamic Republic could improve its relations with Saudi Arabia, what was keeping it from doing the same with Egypt?⁴⁸

These events were followed by the first media delegations from Egypt and

Iran to visit Tehran and Cairo, respectively, in October and November 1999. In December 1999, Egyptian Minister of Information Muhammad Safwat al-Sharif traveled to Tehran to attend the Fifth Islamic Conference of Information Ministers (ICIM-5). In the meeting, President Khatami emphasized that the exchange of visits by Iranian and Egyptian officials, irrespective of differences of opinion and political stances, was beneficial to the region and the world of Islam.⁴⁹ As a further gesture of goodwill to the Egyptians, on January 4, 2000, a group of Iranian reformists formed an NGO to lobby for better relations with Egypt. The Iran-Egypt Friendship Society is headed by a prominent journalist, Ali Hekmat, and is supported by President Khatami. Although the Society was bitterly denounced by some hard-liners,⁵⁰ resulting in an attack on the headquarters of the Society, moves to normalize Iran-Egypt relations continued nonetheless.

These developments began to create a new image of Iran in the popular consciousness of Egyptians. Once again, a positive picture of Iran returned in the popular media. The era of confusion has given way to a time when Iranians are seen as "people who have found their way in this turbulent region." Iranian youth are praised as conscious agents, combatant and cultured.⁵¹ Nothing better reflects this expression of admiration for Iranians than the ecstasy with which Egyptians cheered for Iran's team in its competition against the U.S. in the World Cup in 1998.⁵²

The Iranian parliamentary elections of February 2000, resulting in a landslide victory for the reform candidates, were a turning point in Iran's new image. Iran became a new "model of democracy" in the Muslim Middle East. "After two decades as a source for inspiration for Islamic militants," the *Washington Post* reported, "Iran has become an example of political reform in the Middle East, prompting democratic activists and commentators in the generally less pluralistic Arab world to look east and wonder: What about us?"⁵³ This is true in a region where elections, if they take place at all, are usually little more than a pretext and rarely oust those in power. In contrast to Iran, the Arab world's political landscape has been at a standstill for decades, featuring monarchies with absolute rulers or republics with authoritarian presidents and pseudodemocracies. The Iranian experience is worrisome to these rulers because it provides an example of a society where change comes from the ballot box instead of through military coups.⁵⁴

Governments in the region officially expressed satisfaction about the direction Iran was taking, in part because they see a decline in its extremism. Yet in reality they are worried that the consequences of the democratic change in Iran might undermine their own legitimacy. "Instead of Islamic revolution," the Egyptian newspaper *al-Wafd* warned, "this time Iran exports the

idea of free elections."⁵⁵ An Egyptian writer, Wahid Abd al-Maguid, underscored the impact of the Khatami experiment by saying that "we in the Arab world have such a hunger for democracy that we are like a man starving to death who goes to the market. He eats anything in the belief it is good food, though it may not be."⁵⁶

The timing of Iran's parliamentary elections was unfortunate for Egypt, where the compliant Majlis al-Sha'b (People's Assembly) had just extended the Emergency Law, then in effect for the last twenty years, for another three years. The law effectively restricts free expression and assembly, and renders detention without trial a routine procedure. The Assembly passed the law after one hour of debate. President Mubarak's congratulatory telegram to Khatami notwithstanding, he seemed to avoid this embarrassing situation by flying to Beirut to express support for the Lebanese people, including the Shi'i Hizbullah, in their struggle against the Israeli occupation of south Lebanon.

This happened against a background of unprecedented coverage of Iran, with extensive commentaries, photos, and footage in most Egyptian papers and on national television. For weeks, Iran's parliamentary elections were the talk of the town among politicians, journalists, intellectuals, and many students in the college corridors. Liberals, nationalists, and Islamists alike applauded the outcome. Although there were some who dismissed the event as "not really democratic," since no one from "outside the system" was allowed to participate,⁵⁷ nonetheless many acknowledged that Iran was a "regional power" that "we cannot afford to ignore." Whatever happens in Iran will affect Egypt, an *al-Ahram* commentator noted.⁵⁸ Significantly, Iran once again became a reference point, a "model," and a "lesson." Reflecting on the Iranian reform movement's major concern, "political development" (as opposed to the usual "economic development"), Salama Ahmad Salama argued that Egypt should follow similar policies as Iran. "It is no longer possible to argue," he said, "that economic reform must take precedence over democratization, to claim that there are no political parties capable of competing at the polls, or to exaggerate domestic problems or terrorist threats as a pretext for avoiding political change. Iran today seems far more advanced than many Arab and Islamic countries," he concluded.⁵⁹

"Iran's model," another observer advocated, "can be and should be emulated by all Arab and Islamic nations."⁶⁰ To many, this experience pointed not only to the fact that ordinary people can cause significant political change, but also that Islam can embrace democracy. *Al-Azhar* was particularly emphatic on this latter point, despite its suspicions about Iran's Shi'i influence and support for militant Islamism. This "fusion of religious values and democratic principles" represents what Khatami describes as "Iran's inno-

vation." A commentary in *Saut al-Azhar*, reflecting on the significance of this innovation, compared it with Britain's experience of "combining democracy with Christianity," although no one, the commentator argued, calls that system a religious state or theocracy. The reverberations of Iran's experience, the paper further suggested, would go beyond Iran to influence other Muslim countries, from Turkey to Egypt to Indonesia.⁶¹

The reform movement in Iran has generated a more active and diverse exchange between Iran and Egypt. The number of Iranians visiting Egypt has increased considerably and the number of those living in the country rose to some five hundred families. Once again, programs in Iranian Studies and Persian Language and Literature have been revitalized, with currently some one hundred professors specialized in these fields. Many Egyptian businessmen, intellectuals, and officials have visited Iran, attended workshops and conferences, and returned with positive impressions, often expressing a sense of surprise. Interest in Iran, its democratic readings of Islam, new politics, and culture, has been reinvigorated. Egyptian Muslim women have expressed their eagerness to learn from the experience of Iran's "Islamic feminism."⁶² Professional workshops and conferences have been held to discuss the changes in Iran. A number of books on and by President Muhammad Khatami and other personalities are in Cairo's bookshops.⁶³ Currently, the Egyptian Iran-Egypt Friendship Society is waiting for an official permit. According to an Iranian foreign ministry official in charge of policy for Arab countries, "Iran's relations with Egypt are improving rapidly."⁶⁴

CONCLUSION

When the revolutionaries swept to power in Iran in 1979, Arab rulers in neighboring states feared the success of Tehran's brand of radical Islam as a dangerous example for the region. Twenty-one years later, a new democratic wind is blowing out of Iran, and many of Iran's neighbors are just as fearful. In this article, we have discussed the impact of revolutionary Iran on Egypt since the revolution of 1979 by exploring some of the major intellectual, cultural, and political influences Islamist Iran has had on this ancient nation. Our analysis supports the conclusions drawn by Rudi Matthee and Shahrugh Akhavi that the Iranian revolution did not generate Egypt's Islamism.⁶⁵ The Islamist movement in Egypt had its own internal causes and followed its own dynamics. However, the revolutionary developments in Iran contributed to an increasing mood of religiosity in Egypt and legitimized the activism of the Islamists, in particular their anti-Western perspectives.

The doctrinal shift currently underway among Islamist movements in general, to which the new changes in Iran have contributed, is likely to influence Egyptian Islamism. Some evidence already points to disarray in the Egyptian Islamist movement. The crisis has in part to do with state repression, and is in part a matter of internal strategy. Some factions are undertaking new ways of thinking about the notion of Islamic politics and its strategic objectives. The Hizb al-Wasat may represent the organizational form of such a revisionist trend in Egyptian Islamism.

On the other hand, the experience of relatively free elections in Iran, where an opposition actually took power, has made the Egyptian opposition bolder in demanding "clean elections." It was these calls and concerns that led opposition groups to form a committee in April 2000 to work together with the government to ensure clean, free, and fair elections for the Majlis al-Sha'b in November 2000. Yet what promised at first to be the fairest election since 1952 turned sour in the final stage.⁶⁶ It has also forced the Egyptian regime to pay more lip service to democracy and the rule of law. A review of Iran's presence in Egyptian popular imagery makes one thing very clear. In the past twenty turbulent years of Iranian-Egyptian political and intellectual relations, Iran's influence has been at its height when it experienced an increase in popular mobilization, democracy, the rule of law, and popular participation (that is, at the time of the revolution in 1979 and, currently, during a period of increased democracy and an active reform movement). Iran's impact reached its nadir when the country went through authoritarian rule, war, and repressive policies.

NOTES

We thank Rudi Matthee for his assistance with the paper and especially for the German sources he suggested.

1. The periodicals included *Sorayya*, *Parvaresh*, *Hekmat*, and, most importantly, *Chehrenema*. On the Iranian community in Cairo see Mohammad Yadegari, "The Iranian Settlement in Egypt as Seen Through the Pages of the Community Paper *Chihrinima* (1904-1966)," *Middle Eastern Studies* 16 (1980): 98-114.

2. See "Sahwat al-Sharq" and "Kusra wa Ramsis," in *Misr wa Iran. Al-Kalamat wa al-qasa'id alati ulqiyat fi haflat al-adabiya al-kubra alati aqamaha al-ittihad . . . Ibtihajan bi al-musahara al-malakiya al-sa'ida*, ed. Ittihad udaba al-Iskandariya (Alexandria: Matba'a al-faruqiya, 1939), 23-29. Also see Adel Sabit and Majed Farag, *The Imperial Wedding: Royal Albums of Egypt* (Cairo: Max Group, 1993).

3. Rainer Brunner, *Annäherung und Distanz Schia, Azhar und die islamische Ökumene im 20. Jahrhundert* (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz, 1996), 87.

4. *Ibid.*, 225-32. Even Shaltut's fatwa was not free from political overtones, com-

ing as it did after the coup in Iraq and a call for support from the beleaguered Shi'i ulama in that country. See *ibid.*, 236.

5. R. K. Ramazani, *The Foreign Policy of Iran: A Developing Nation in World Affairs, 1500-1941* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1975), 102; Shahram Chubin and S. Zabih, *The Foreign Relations of Iran: A Developing State in a Zone of Great-Power Conflict* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), 156.

6. Chubin and Zabih, *The Foreign Relations of Iran*, 157.

7. As Brunner, *Annäherung und Distanz*, 238, notes, Iran had had unofficial relations with Israel since the early 1950s.

8. *Tehran Journal*, 9 March 1965.

9. For a good analysis of Egypt under Nasser, see Raymond William Baker, *Egypt's Uncertain Revolution Under Nasser and Sadat* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1978).

10. R. K. Ramazani, *Revolutionary Iran: Challenge and Response in the Middle East* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), 163.

11. *Al Ahram*, 24 Oct. 1978.

12. *Ibid.*, 11 May 1979.

13. Associated Press (AP), 25 Dec. 1979.

14. Tehran Radio, 19 Dec. 1979, translated and rebroadcast by the *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, 21 Dec. 1979.

15. AP, 24 March 1980.

16. *The New York Times*, 25 March 1980. The fact that Sadat offered the United States use of Egyptian military facilities, if it wanted to make another attempt to rescue the American hostages in Tehran, provoked more harsh statements from Iran.

17. *Newsweek*, 11 Aug. 1980.

18. Interview with Nabil Abd al-Fattah, a prominent Egyptian writer to whom we are indebted for offering his insights on the Egyptian intellectual scene during the Iranian Revolution of 1979. Interview with Asef Bayat, Cairo, 24 April 2000.

19. Abol Hasan Bani Sadr, *Naft va solteh* (Beirut: Dar al-kalima li al-nashr, 1980); and Mehdi Bazargan, *Marz miyan-e din va siyasat* (Tehran: n.p., n.d.).

20. al-Sayyid Zahra, *al-Thaura al-iraniya. al-Wajh al-ijtima'iya* (Cairo: al-Ahram Strategic Studies Center, 1980); Fathi Abd al-Aziz, *Khumaini: al-Badil al-islami* (Cairo: Dar al-i'tisam, 1979); Muhammad al-Sa'id Abd al-Mu'min, *Mas'ala al-thaura al-islamiya* (Cairo: n.p., 1981); Muhammad Abd al-Rahman Anbar, *Nahwa thaura islamiya* (Cairo: Matba'a abirin, 1979).

21. Cited in Shahrugh Akhavi, "The Impact of the Iranian Revolution on Egypt," in *The Iranian Revolution: Its Global Impact*, ed. John Esposito (Miami: Florida International University Press, 1990), 149.

22. Interview with Nabil Abd al-Fattah of the al-Ahram Center for Strategic Studies, Cairo, 24 April 2000.

23. Cairo Home Service, 27 Feb. 1979, *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts: The Middle East and Africa*, 1 March 1979.

24. Maridi Nahhas, "State Systems and Revolutionary Challenges: Nasir, Khomeini, and the Middle East," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 17 (1985): 521.

25. See Salih al-Wirdani, *al-Haraka al-islamiya fi Misr; ru'ya waqi'iya li al-hiqbat al-saba'inat* (Cairo: al-Bidaya Publishing House, 1986), 197-202; and Henry Munson, Jr., *Islam and Revolution in the Middle East* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), 135.

26. Cited in the British documentary, "The Sword of Islam," Channel 4, 1996.
27. Asef Bayat's interview with Abu al-Ala' a Madi, the leader of Hizb al-Wasat, Cairo, March 2000.
28. For an analysis of Huwaidi's views on Iran, see Wilfried Buchta, *Die iranische Schia und die islamische Einheit 1979–1996* (Hamburg: Deutsches Orient-Institut, 1997), 234–42. See also Rudi Matthee, review of *Iran min al-dakhil*, *Iranian Studies* 22 (1989): 12–14.
29. Fahmi Huwaidi, *al-Arab wa Iran. Wahm al-sira wa hamm al-wifaq* (Cairo: Dar al-shuruq, 1991).
30. Hasan Hanafi, "The Relevance of the Islamic Alternative in Egypt," *Arab Studies Quarterly* 4 (1982): 54–74.
31. Cited in Akhavi, "Impact of the Iranian Revolution," 141.
32. Muhammad Abd al-Rahman Anbar, quoted in *ibid.*, 145.
33. Tariq al-Bishri, *al-Haraka al-siyasiya fi Misr 1945–1952*, 2nd ed. (Cairo: Dar al-shuruq, 1991); Abd Allah Imam, *Abd al-Nasir wa al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun* (Cairo: al-Mawaqif al-arabi, 1983), 60, 174.
34. In *al-Liwa al-Islami*, 27 Aug. 1987, cited in Johannes Jansen, "Echoes of the Iranian Revolution in the Writings of Egyptian Muslims," in *The Iranian Revolution and the Muslim World*, ed. David Menashri (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1990), 214.
35. For this, see Rudi Matthee, "The Egyptian Opposition on the Iranian Revolution," in *Shi'ism and Social Protest*, ed. Juan R. I. Cole and Nikki R. Keddie (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986), 264–65.
36. Paul Sullivan, "Contrary Views of Economic Diplomacy in the Arab World: Egypt," *Arab Studies Quarterly* 21 (1991): 14, 29, 65.
37. Akhavi, "Impact of the Iranian Revolution," 143.
38. *Al-Ahram Weekly*, 24–30 Oct. 1996.
39. Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran external service, Tehran, *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, 23 Oct. 1996.
40. *The Independent*, 23 July 1990.
41. *Iran News*, 5 Dec. 1994.
42. "Iran, Egypt, two cradles of human civilization approach each other," *Iran Commerce* 5, no. 2 (Summer 1998): 32–37.
43. *Ibid.* By this time, Iran had overtaken Saudi Arabia as the biggest user of Egypt's Suez-Mediterranean (Sumed) pipeline to significantly boost its oil sales to the European market. Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA), 8 May 1996.
44. AP, 22 Sept. 1992.
45. *Resalat*, 22 July 1992.
46. IRNA, 29 May 1997.
47. Middle East News Agency, Cairo, *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, 10 Dec. 1997.
48. *Neshat*, 6 June 1999.
49. IRNA, 1 Dec. 1999.
50. See the editorial in *Jomhuri-ye Eslami*, 5 Jan. 2000.
51. These phrases are from a Cairo taxi driver during Asef Bayat's discussion with him in May 2000.
52. For the first time in twenty-one years, Egypt's national soccer team traveled to Tehran in early June 2000, and won a match against Iran. Later, an official of the Egyptian team said that "we hope this friendly match can strengthen the relations

between the two Muslim countries and act like the Ping-Pong diplomacy that finally ended the hostility between China and the U.S.," *Gulf News*, 11 June 2000.

53. Howard Schneider, "Democracy in Iran Prompts Arab Introspection," *The Washington Post*, 11 March 2000.

54. Farid al-Khazin, a political scientist at the American University of Beirut, Lebanon, predicts that Arab leaders who may have been toying with the idea of holding free elections will decide not to, in view of the outcome of Iran's elections. Quoted by Associated Press, 8 April 2000.

55. *Al-Wafd*, 4 March 2000.

56. Salama Ahmad Salama, *al-Ahram Weekly*, 2–8 March 2000.

57. See the commentary by Abduh Mubashir in *al-Ahram*, 5 March 2000.

58. Salah al-Din Hafiz, "Nahnu wa Iran. Hal tataghayyara qawa'id al-la'ba?" *al-Ahram*, 8 March 2000.

59. Salama Ahmad Salama in *al-Ahram Weekly*, 2–8 March 2000.

60. Muhammad Ali Shita, "Dars min Iran," *al-Wafd*, 5 April 2000.

61. *Saut al-Azhar*, 25 Feb. 2000.

62. The Egyptian Muslim feminist Heba Ra'uf, for instance, on a number of occasions expressed a strong interest in learning about Iran's Muslim feminist movement.

63. Muhammad Khatami, *al-Din wa al-turath wa al-hadara wa al-tanmiya wa al-hurriya* (Cairo: Dar nahdat Misr, 1999).

64. IRNA, 13 May 2000.

65. Matthee, "The Egyptian Opposition"; Akhavi, "The Impact of the Iranian Revolution."

66. Many polling stations in several governorates were sealed off by police forces to prevent the supporters of NDP rivals from voting. At the industrial suburb of Shubra al-Khaima, in the north of Greater Cairo, one person was killed and thirty people were wounded in clashes with police who prevented them from voting. At Ma'adi-Bassatin, south of Cairo, security forces prevented voters from casting ballots for the Brotherhood's candidate, Abd al-Fattah Rizq, who ran against Muhammad al-Murshidi, an NDP sympathizer. Many of Rizq's supporters were arrested. Nevertheless, in spite of numerous violations, 17 (out of 442) pro-Brotherhood candidates managed to get elected, making them the largest opposition bloc in the Assembly. See *al-Ahram Weekly*, 16–22 Nov. 2000; 13–20 Dec. 2000.