

Religious Landscape Empowered by the Language of Revolution: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Ayatollah Khomeini Speeches

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Abstract

This paper explores the linguistic strategies employed in the revolutionary speeches of Ayatollah Khomeini to integrate religious landscape and disintegrate liberalism in Iran. It is explicated in this study that religious ideologies embedded in the language of revolution, i.e. revolutionary speeches, are not primarily persuasive because they are right or true, instead, how coherently intense the arguments appear to masses evoking their emotions. Revolution is not between two people but between two ideologies represented by two parties, which in the speeches by Ayatollah Khomeini are Islamist and Liberals. For the purpose of this research, we have selected two speeches of Ayatollah Khomeini with special reference of the Iranian revolution. By drawing on the theoretical framework of Norman Fairclough's structure of critical discourse analysis, this study demonstrates the power of language to translate ideologies into revolution. It is analyzed that the language of Khomeini's speeches depicts an Islamic ideology both implicitly and explicitly, therefore creating a Religious Landscape in Iran at the time of revolution. Khomeini inculcated Islamic ideologies among Iranians through his speeches and challenged the status quo by overthrowing Shah's liberalism.

Keywords: Religious Landscape, Ideology, Ayatollah Khomeini, CDA, Language of Revolution.

Introduction:

The aim of this research is to examine the language of revolutionary speeches by identifying varied linguistic strategies that tend to impose moral, ethical and religious values on people for a better state. Language has an undeniable significance in almost every phase of life, but in politics the significance of language is amplified as it lays emphasis on an ideology and the implications of the impact of language are broader in scope. Charteris-Black contends that within all types of political system, from autocratic, through oligarchic to democratic; leaders have relied on the spoken word to convince others of the benefits that arise from their leadership. Therefore, there is a close link between language and ideology¹. The language used by political leaders tend to represent the underlying philosophies on which their political ideologies are based. This study explores how the language of revolution used by Ayatollah Khomeini in his speeches to persuade an audience to the revolutionary cause by inducing a set of ideologies among masses. The speeches of Khomeini, who is regarded as "The Leader of the revolution" by his followers, are selected to deconstruct the linguistic features and ideologies embedded in the language of revolution².

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¹Jonathan Charteris-Black, "Persuasion, Speech Making and Rhetoric," in *Politicians and Rhetoric*. 2nd ed. (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 12.

² Hilary Janks, *Literacy and power* (London: Routledge, 2009).

However, it needs to be clarified at the outset that the focus of this paper is critical discourse analysis of two speeches of Ayatollah Khomeini to understand ideologies commemorated in the discourse of revolution. Therefore, this study does not make any political claims about legitimacy of Khomeini's Islamic ideology or Shah's modernist ideology. This paper analyzes the religious landscape created and propagated by Khomeini through the power of his language.

In this paper, the conventional meaning of religious landscape is not used i.e. mapping out world religions. Rather, we draw on the phenomenological understanding of 'landscape' from a cultural perspective i.e. sketching a way of being in the world through our embodied practices and language. Our understanding of religious landscape is inspired by Dewsbury and Cloke idea of spiritual landscape who argue that 'the idea of spiritual landscapes provides a worthwhile avenue towards new understandings of how faith, belief, religion and phenomenology can (rather than must) illuminate the notion of being in the world'³. However, we have used the term religious instead of spiritual since this study focuses on a religion i.e. Islam and its ideological elaboration through the discourse of revolution. Besides, Dewsbury and Cloke paper explicates the embodied spiritual practices, whereas, this paper analyzes the power of language to bring about a revolution by empowering the religious landscape⁴.

Literature Review:

The word revolution is from the Latin word 'revolutio', meaning "a turnaround" which refers to a fundamental change in the shift of a political power or organizational structures in a shorter or longer period against the existing authorities. Political revolution leads to a complete constitutional change or modification of present constitution⁵. Revolution may or may not be instant. On one hand, political revolution is instant, aggressive and violent that aims not only to launch a new political system but to renovate or create an entire society. On the contrary the second kind is gradual, slow but brings about transformations for the entire society that may take several generations. Revolution is of many types for example political, social, communist, digital, religious, scientific and industrial. It is rightly quoted by the great revolutionary leader Mao cited in Alexander Cook's study of socialism that, 'a revolution is not a dinner party, or writing an essay, or painting a picture, or doing embroidery.... a revolution is an insurrection, an act of violence by which one class overthrows another'⁶. Revolutionaries are people who take up and carry out the cause of bringing about change in an existing system and ideology by taking drastic moves to remove the unjust system.

The causes of revolution as explained by Crane Brinton include firstly economy, secondly restlessness by all social classes by restrictions in society, religion and government. People are hopeful about the future, but they are forced to accept less than they believe they are due. Lastly, scholars and thinkers give up on the way their society operates and transfer their allegiance to a revolutionary group⁷. Whereas the adequate conditions for revolution as put forward by James DeFronzo are mass frustration in

³ John-David Dewsbury and Paul Cloke, "Spiritual landscapes: existence, performance and immanence," *Social & Cultural Geography* 10, no. 6 (2009): 696.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ John Jost, Christopher M. Federico, and Jaime L. Napier, "Political ideology: Its structure, functions, and elective affinities," *Annual review of psychology* 60 no. 3 (2009): 325.

⁶ Alexander Cook, *Mao's Little Red Book: A Global History* (Cambridge University Press, 2014), 68.

⁷ Crane Brinton, *The anatomy of revolution* (New York: Norton & Co., 1938), 231.

society, dissident elite, unifying motivation, severe political crisis⁸. Tilly writes about the revolutionary outcomes which are elites' defect and neutralization of the armed forces⁹. Similar causes are noted to bring about Iranian revolution, since, the modernizing project of Shah's regime was imposed on the masses which led to unrest among the masses.

Revolutions are triggered by ideologies, which cater the need of masses. Ideology is the heart of a revolution. It is basically a way of thinking which leads invoke people to fight out their political and social battle at varied levels such as signs and meanings¹⁰. Iran's political ideology has largely been dominated by Islam but early to mid-twentieth century modernist ideologies of Reza Shah Pahlavi (1878-1944) and his son Mohammad Reza Pahlavi (1919-1980) had been the center of Iran's political discourse. Shah's modernist political ideology has been challenged by Ayatollah Khomeini Islamic political ideology.

Background of the Study:

Imam Ruhullah Al-Musavi Al-Khomeini (1902-1989) was born into a staunch religious family in a small town Khumayn near Tehran, Iran. Imam Khomeini was sent to study religious science in Arak at the age of nineteen and soon with his teacher he moved to Qum, which is the center of Islamic learning and pilgrimage. With the arrival of Khomeini's teacher Hairy, Qum became the first Islamic capital of Iran. In 1962, Imam Khomeini initiated the opposition against Shah's regime. Due to his spiritual eloquence and political acumen soon Imam Khomeini became the revolutionary leader of Iran's masses, who wanted a break away from Shah's totalitarian dictatorship. Khomeini's spirituality never meant a social withdrawal or political repudiation rather he drew energy from socio-political plane for his spiritual ideology¹¹. Khomeini's Islamic ideology earned him a place in world's revolutionary leaders of the time. He lifted the banner of Islamic ideology to release Iran from Shah's modernist agenda. Some issues which were at the heart of revolution were the enfranchisement of women, land reform, rigged elections, loans from US, capitulations exempting American officials from Iranian courts, and in general a modernization program perceived as political and economic subordination to the West¹². Khomeini was charged to incite political unrest in Iran by provoking people against the government. Khomeini was exiled in 1964, however, due to untiring efforts of Khomeini and his followers, the dream of Iranian revolution was actualized in 1979. Khomeini came back to Iran in 1979 and established an Islamic state by national referendum.

Research Methodology:

This research draws insights on the power of discourse as a social practice by using qualitative research method. Descriptive approach is used in this study as it analyses the religious, political and cultural implications of the speeches of Khomeini in Iranian society. For this research paper, we have selected two speeches of Khomeini. Both speeches are integral in terms of their context i.e. the background, which triggered

⁸ James DeFronzo, *Revolutions and revolutionary movements* (United Kingdom: Hachette, 2014) 18-21.

⁹ Charles Tilly, *European Revolutions: 1492-1992* (Wiley: Blackwell, 1996), 5.

¹⁰ Terry Eagleton, *An introduction to Ideology* (UK: US Library Publication, 1991), 55-58

¹¹ Hamid Algar, *Islam and revolution: Writings and Declarations of Imam Khomeini* (Kegan Paul, 2002), 14.

¹² Michael Fischer, "Imam Khomeini: Four Levels of Understanding," in *The Voices of Resurgent Islam*, ed. John Esposito (USA: Oxford University Press, 1983), 150-174.

Khomeini to deliver these speeches. The speeches were delivered in Iranian language and have been translated in several languages by adherents from varied fields of life. However, we have taken speeches from Hamid Algar's¹³ English translation of Khomeini's speeches in his book *Islam and Revolution: Writings and Declarations of Imam Khomeini* (1981). Several translations of Khomeini's speeches in English are available. Theoretical issues of translations have been debated by several scholars. Therefore, we selected speeches from Algar's book considering his expertise in Iranian history, culture and politics.

Ayatollah Khomeini delivered many speeches on different occasions. The sample of the study consists of two most significant speeches, one before his exile and the other after he came back to Iran from exile. The first speech (Appendix-I) selected for this paper was delivered on June 3, 1963. This speech had a strong impact on Khomeini's political career. In this speech, Khomeini openly attacked Shah and his regime and labelled them as agents of the West. Two days after the public denunciation of Shah in his speech Khomeini was arrested on June 5, 1963. Khomeini opposition of Shah's regime faced strong rebuttals and in 1964 he was exiled. During exile, Khomeini continued his work for Iran by sending messages to his followers through letters. Khomeini's untiring struggle picked up momentum as a result of which Shah left Iran on January 16, 1979. Two weeks after Shah's departure, Khomeini returned to Iran on February 1, 1979 and delivered his first speech (Appendix-II) after return at Mehrabad airport in Tehran. The critical discourse analysis of these speeches is valuable to understand the contextual use of language. Speech no. 1 was delivered when the revolution was at its peak, whereas, Speech no. 2 was delivered when revolutionary process achieved success.

Theoretical Framework

The conceptual foundation to analyze selected two speeches is taken from Fairclough's model of critical discourse analysis, which operates at three levels: description, interpretation and explanation¹⁴. According to Fairclough, the description stage analyzes text as a discourse; interpretation reveals discourse as a discursive practice and explanation examines discourse as a social practice¹⁵. The description stage analyzes the linguistics features at vocabulary (words), grammar and structure of the text. Fairclough describes description as a stage of CDA 'which is concerned with formal properties of a text'¹⁶. The interpretation stage explicates the relationship between the discourse, its production and consumption. The discourse is seen as a discursive practice in the interpretative analysis and emphasis is given on the speech act and intertextuality i.e. linking text to the context. Explanation stages elaborates discourse as a social practice i.e. how social identities and ideologies are constructed and practiced through discourse. According to Fairclough, 'Explanation is concerned with the relationship between interaction and social context with the social determination of the process of production and interpretation, and their social effects'¹⁷. All three stages of CDA are indispensable and provide an insight into the production and dissemination of discourse.

¹³ Hamid Algar is a renowned scholar of Persian and Arabic Literature. He is widely acclaimed for his research on Middle-Eastern Muslim societies like Iran, Turkey, Afghanistan etc.

¹⁴ Norman Fairclough, *Language and power* (London and New York: Longman, 1989).

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Norman Fairclough, *Discourse and Social Change* (Cambridge, MA: Polity Press, 1992), 26.

¹⁷ Norman Fairclough, *Language and Power* (London and New York: Longman Press, 1989), 22.

Results and Discussion:

a. Description (Discourse as a text):

The descriptive analysis of a text is further categorized into experiential, relational and expressive value frameworks. The critical discourse analysis of speeches highlights the significance of linguistic strategies and devices employed by the speaker to invoke masses and disseminating his/her political ideology¹⁸. The analysis depicts that many of the experiential value features has been used by Khomeini in his speeches. In Speech no. 1, Khomeini used rewording by calling Shah's regime as tyrannical regime repeatedly. Some synonyms used for Shah are Israeli, Jew and unbeliever. Khomeini stated that Shah's regime is aimed to oppose the *ulama*, Islam itself and the existence of religious class. He further continues that they do not want this (religious) institution to exist. Khomeini's ideology is presented through rewording of *ulama*, Islam, religious class and institution of religion in a hierarchy. The purpose of using rewording and over-wording is to emphasize an ideology. Hyponym is a small reference to bigger things. For instance, Ashura is a hyponym of Karbala incident, Yazid is a hyponym of evil and Hussain of righteousness. Some antonyms used in the text are Husain and Yazid, Great and Small, Innocent and Savage. The analogy of Karbala is drawn by Khomeini to epitomize Shah's brutal atrocities on Iran's religious class. the experiential value of words used in Speech no. 1 is intense as we identified several hyponyms, synonyms and rewording which were used to support Khomeini's landscaping of Islamic ideology. In comparison to Speech no. 1, tone and context of Speech no. 2 is entirely changed. The language of Khomeini's second speech selected for this paper is largely submerged by a sense of gratitude for the people of Iran for their consistent struggle, resulting in overthrown of Shah's regime. Some synonyms used in the speech are thank/gratitude, triumph/victory, toiled/suffered and destroyed/ruined. The antonym used in Speech no. 2 are demons/God, remove/restore. Rewording used for Shah are chief traitor and monarch.

The experiential value of grammar used in Speech no. 1 is also significant. Out of 24 sentences selected from Speech no. 1 for analysis 10 are positive, 10 interrogative, 3 negative and one negative interrogative. The analysis highlights that grammatically most of the sentences of Speech no. 1 are positive but semantically they are negative, implicit is hatred for Shah and his government. However, in Speech no. 2 out of 16 sentences 15 are positive and only one is negative. The analysis highlights that grammatically most of the sentences of Speech no. 1 are positive but semantically they are negative, implicit is hatred for Shah and his government. It is analyzed that Speech no. 1, which was delivered before Khomeini's 11 years of banishment, contains most of the rhetorical questions in which on one side the question was raised to audience with implicit answer hidden in it and on the other side asserting the ideology of Islamism. Whereas, in Speech no. 2 delivered right after he came back from exile, the frequency of rhetorical questions is less. This shows that unlike manipulative political discourse, the language of revolution is direct and explicit. The language structure of Speech 1 is initiated and accelerated by negative statements semantically, but the conclusion follows interrogative and positive statements both grammatically and semantically. Most of the speech is in first and third person pronoun. Moreover, the language used in speeches is less imperative and highly declarative assembled with rhetorical questions. Speech 2 is an expression of tautology in which surplus repetition of the same concept can be seen in

¹⁸ Jason Jones and Jean Stilwell Peccei, *Language and politics*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004).

different words, proving that Shah and his government are corrupt. Religious discourse is dominant in both speeches. The linguistic analysis shows that revolutions starts with negation and interrogation and sums up in affirmation.

In Fairclough's critical discourse model, the relational value of vocabulary consists of informality, formality and euphemism¹⁹. Speech no.1 and 2 both are forms of informal expression, asking direct questions from the audience and hinting the opposite without showing any formality or applying euphemisms. Revolution is direct, harsh and aggressive process and has no place for euphemisms. Instead, in his speeches Khomeini uses dysphemism which are unforgiving, more offensive or more disagreeable term for Shah and those army officials who are not co-operating with him in the revolution. The relational value of grammar is comprised of three forms of sentences: imperative, declarative, and question. It is analyzed in both speeches that the discourse is less imperative and highly declarative with a fusion of rhetorical questioning. Meyerhoff argues that very powerful inferences are drawn about people from their way of talking²⁰. Khomeini's speech format is rooted in religious discourse and follows the language style of Muslims' holy book i.e. Quran. His speech style is decidedly commanding and declarative. The following table shows the relational value of first, second and third person pronouns.

It is analyzed that the third person pronoun is used most and second person the least. The consistent use of third person pronoun as 'he, they, them,' is to aggravate the effect of seriousness of problem and that it needs to be resorted soon to save religion in the state. Using the first-person pronoun 'I, we, us, our' is to lessen the distance between the audience and the speaker, regardless of their difference in age, social status, gender and profession. It helps to bring the audience into the same arena, minimizing the distancing effect, and thus making the audience feel near to the speaker and ultimately his set of ideologies. Contrary to Brecht's V-effect or the distancing (alienation or estrangement) effect revolutionary speech discourse is creating rapport with audience. Moreover, both the speeches are in active voice. According to Chomsky, the affective function of language is concerned with who can say what to whom, which is 'deeply tied up with power and social status'²¹.

Lastly, an expressive value is a mark out of the producer's evaluation of the reality spot it relates to. The expressive value of vocabulary analysis refers to Ideologically Contrastive Classification Schemes (ICCS) and that of grammar analysis consists of logical connectors. The use of logical connectors in Khomeini's speeches is less. Fairclough states, "The expressive value of words has always been the central concern to those who are interested in persuasive language ... these expressive values can be referred to ideologically contrastive classification schemes"²². ICCS is extensively used in both speeches by Khomeini to mark his political ideological difference with Shah. Khomeini presented himself as the torchbearer of Islamic ideology against Shah's modernist agenda. To accentuate the contrastive classification of his ideology with Shah, he used an analogy of Hussain and Yazid to represent good and evil.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Miriam Meyerhoff, "Linguistic change, sociohistorical context, and theory-building in variationist linguistics: new-dialect formation in New Zealand," *English Language & Linguistics* 10, no. 1 (2006): 173-194.

²¹ Noam Chomsky, *Language and politics* (AK Press, 2004).

²² Norman Fairclough, "Media Discourse" (New York: 1995), 99.

b. Interpretation (Discourse as a discursive practice):

The interpretation of the discourse involves approaching it as a discursive practice i.e. to understand the process of production and consumption of the discourse. Who is raising questions and who is making a request? Some essential features of interpretation are speech acts, coherence and intertextuality. Through persuasion devices like parable and intertextuality it is prospective to underline power, ideology, religious landscape and revolution discourse in the language of selected speeches. Accordingly, the analysis highlights the connection that how social practice is influenced by linguistic practice as put forward by these speeches. The setting and context of Speech no. 1 is highly integral in relation to the content of speech. The setting of Speech no. 1 was delivered at *Imam bargah*²³ on the Day of Ashura²⁴. The content of speech concords with the message of Day of Ashura i.e. fighting against evil and sacrificing life to protect the sanctity of Islam. Speech no. 1 starts with a parable, by putting forward a religious analogy in front of audience. Khomeini began with a *rawzeh*²⁵, a rhetorical form, normally occurring at the end rather than the beginning of a sermon or preachment, which elicits weeping and is intended to instill in listeners a stoical determination to rededicate themselves to the principles of Islam no matter what the odds and external pressures. This technique is assembled with Commiseration to evoke pity in audience for one's sufferings. An analogy is drawn between Shah and Yazid; Khomeini's students and martyr of Karbala; tragedy of Karbala and brutal killing of students by Shah's regime.

The context of speech no. 2 is Mehrabad Airport in Tehran, when Khomeini returned after an exile of 11 years. Reza Shah had already left Iran and Khomeini was hailed by a large crowd on his arrival. He delivered speech on the airport and thanked people of all classes to bring about this revolution in Iran. Despite Khomeini's victory, in his speech he said few things which are important to analyze the political discourse of revolution. Firstly, he thanked people of Iran for his support. Secondly, he reminded them of Shah's corruption and atrocities. Thirdly, he warned them of a persistent foreign danger in the form of the US and Israel. Lastly, he hoped to build a better future with his fellows provided a unity a purpose is ensured by the masses. Coherence in Khomeini's Speech no. 2, analyzed for this paper, sums up the entire story of revolution in Iran.

c. Explanation (Discourse as a social practice):

Fairclough argues that explanation i.e. discourse as a social practice operates at three levels. Firstly, it discusses the relations of power at institutional, situational and societal levels which help to design the discourse. Secondly, it analyzes the ideological character of the discourse. Lastly, it explores if the discourse contributes to supporting existing power relations or aims to transform them. It is analyzed from Speech no. 1 & 2 that Islamic ideology is propagated by Khomeini to bring about a societal reform i.e. freeing Iranian society from oppressive modernizing project of Shah. A religious landscape is sketched by comparing incident of Karbala with Iranian revolution to invoke the religious sentiments of masses. Shah's regime is presented as the enemy of Islam and friends of the US and Israel, which symbolize the ultimate threat to Islam in traditional

²³ A place where Shias mourn in memory of Imam Husain a.s

²⁴ 10th Of Muharram, marked as the date of Imam Hussain's a.s martyrdom

²⁵ *Rawzeh* is recital of the lives and afflictions of the Imams, especially those of Imam Hosayn and his family *rawzeh-khani* religious ceremonies centering on the above recitals.

Islamic discourse. 'The themes of alienation, Westoxification²⁶ and false understanding of Islam mean to Khomeini that Iran is faced with a deep-seated problem beyond any simple political and economic reconstruction'²⁷. Islam is in danger is the underlying philosophy on which Khomeini based his argument for uprising in Iran. By using religious rhetoric, Khomeini overthrew Shah's monarchy and established a political ideology based on Islamic religious landscape.

Conclusion:

Revolution is not between two people but between two ideologies represented by two parties which in the speeches by Ayatollah Khomeini are Islamist and Liberals. By using religious rhetoric in his speeches, Khomeini created a religious landscape to mobilize the masses against Shah's modernist agenda in Iran. Khomeini puts forward the argument that the problem for Shah and his liberal fellows (backed by the US and Israel) is 'Islam', as they want to shake the very foundation of religion by imposing western ideologies and way of living on the people of Iran. The use of religious rhetoric in political discourse has always been a powerful tool. Huntington's thesis of Clash of Civilizations fueled the conflict between Islam and the West²⁸. The conclusion to be drawn from this study is that it is important to be aware of how revolutionary uses rhetorical strategies in order to persuade an audience in making a religion-based state. It is probably not too controversial to suggest that liberals and conservatives would exhibit differences in thinking and communication styles. Links between language and politics have frequently been approached from the standpoint of pragmatic communication and discourse analysis²⁹. This analysis focuses on both, deconstructing the language codes in the textual structure and the method by which textual function incorporates with Religious Landscape.

This paper concludes that the language employed by Khomeini in the speeches was highly Islamic, which laid the foundation for the revolution in Iran. It is explored that the language of speeches depicts an Islamic ideology both implicitly and explicitly, therefore creating a Religious Landscape. This paper discusses that the speaker uses rhetorical strategies to convey his ideas of an ideal state which is deeply embedded with Religious Landscape at the time of revolution. It is highlighted from the analysis of speeches that a revolution emerges from a language of interrogation and negation, whereas it merges into the language of affirmation and certainty. The gap between language and politics is bridged by Islam to persuade the audience of a religion-based

²⁶ Jalal Al-e-Ahmed (1962) coined the idea of westoxification with special reference to Muslim societies. He explained westoxification as western ideologies having a toxic effect on Islamic ideologies of the Muslim world. Jalal Al-e-Ahmad, *Occidentosis: a plague from the West* (Berkeley, CA: Mizan Press, 1984).

²⁷ Michael Fischer, "Imam Khomeini: Four Levels of Understanding," in *The Voices of Resurgent Islam*, ed. John Esposito (USA: Oxford University Press, 1983), 169.

²⁸ Samuel Huntington, *The clash of civilizations and the remaking of the modern world*, (NY: Simon and Schuster, 1996).

²⁹ John Wilson, *politically speaking: The pragmatic analysis of political language* (Basil: Blackwell, 1990); George Lakoff, *Metaphor in politics: An open letter to the internet from George Lakoff* (1991); Ruth Wodak, *Discursive construction of national identity* (Edinburgh University Press, 2009).

state³⁰. To conclude, it is not about being a secularist and nationalist as Mustafa Kamal Atatürk who on the contrary shifted an Islamic state to a liberal one, or being a communist as Mao and Fidel Castro, or an Islamist as Khomeini what brings a revolution is how aptly and acutely the ideology of a revolutionary depicted through language justifies an ideal livable state for people.

Appendix - I

June 3, 1963

The Afternoon of 'Ashura

This speech, delivered at Fayziya Madrasa in Qum, is particularly notable for its fearless words of reproach addressed to the Shah. Source: Khomeini va Jurbish, pp. 4-7.

IT IS NOW THE AFTERNOON of 'Ashura. Sometimes when I recall the events of 'Ashura, a question occurs to me: If the Umayyads¹⁵ and the regime of Yazid ibn Mu'awiya¹⁶ wished to make war against Husayn, why did they commit such savage and inhuman crimes against the defenseless women and innocent children? What was the offense of the women and children? What had Husayn's six month-old infant done?¹⁷ It seems to me that the Umayyads had a far more basic aim: they were opposed to the very existence of the family of the Prophet. They did not wish the Bani Hashim¹⁸ to exist and their goal was to root out this "goodly tree."¹⁹

A similar question occurs to me now. If the tyrannical regime of Iran simply wished to wage war on the *maraji'*,²⁰ to oppose the *'ulama*, what business did it have tearing the Qur'an to shreds on the day it attacked Fayziya Madrasa? Indeed, what business did it have with the madrasa or with its students, like the eighteen year-old *sayyid* who was killed? What had he done against the Shah, against the government, against the tyrannical regime? We come to the conclusion that this regime also has a more basic aim: they are fundamentally opposed to Islam itself and the existence of the religious class. They do not wish this institution to exist; they do not wish any of us to exist, the great and the small alike.

Israel does not wish the Qur'an to exist in this country. Israel does not wish the *'ulama* to exist in this country. Israel does not wish a single learned man to exist in this country. It was Israel that assaulted Fayziya Madrasa by means of its sinister agents. It is still assaulting us, and assaulting you, the nation; it wishes to seize your economy, to destroy your trade and agriculture, to appropriate your wealth. Israel wishes to remove by means of its agents anything it regards as blocking its path. The Quran is blocking

³⁰ Shahid Gholizadeh and Derek Hook, "The discursive construction of the 1978–1979 Iranian Revolution in the speeches of Ayatollah Khomeini," *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology* 22, no. 2 (2012), 182.

its path; it must be removed. The religious scholars are blocking its path; they must be eliminated. Fayziya Madrasa and other centers of knowledge and learning are blocking its path; they must be destroyed. The *tullah* might later come to block their path; they must be killed, pushed off the roof, have their heads and arms broken. In order for Israel to attain its objectives, the government of Iran has continually affronted us in accordance with goals and plans conceived in Israel.

Respected people of Qum! On the day that mendacious, that scandalous referendum took place—that referendum contrary to all the interests of the Iranian nation and conducted at bayonet-point²¹—you witnessed a gang of hooligans and ruffians prowling around Qum, on foot and riding in cars, going down the streets and thoroughfares of this center of religious learning that stands next to the shrine of Fatima, the Immaculate One²² (peace be upon her)! They were shouting: “Your days of parasitism *are* at an end! Your days of eating *pulao* are over!”

Now, these students of the religious sciences who spend the best and most active part of their lives in these narrow cells, and whose monthly income is somewhere between 40 and 100 tumans—are they parasites? And those to whom one source of income alone brings hundreds of millions of tumans are not parasites? Are the *‘ulama* parasites—people like the late Hajj Shaykh ‘Abd al-Karim,²³ whose sons had nothing to eat on the night that he died; or the late Burujirdi,²⁴ who was 600,000 tumans in debt when he departed from this world? And those who have filled foreign banks with the wealth produced by the toil of our poverty-stricken people, who have erected towering palaces but still will not leave the people in peace, wishing to fill their own pockets and those of Israel with our resources—they are not parasites? Let the world judge, let the nation judge who *is* parasites are!

Let me give you some advice, Mr. Shah! Dear Mr. Shah, I advise you to desist in this policy and acts like this. I don’t want the people to offer up thanks if your masters should decide one day that you must leave. I don’t want you to become like your father. ²⁵

Iranian nation! Those among you who are thirty or forty years of age or more will remember how three foreign countries attacked us during World War II. The Soviet Union, Britain,

and America invaded Iran *and* occupied our country. The property of the people was exposed to danger and their honor was imperilled. But God knows, everyone was happy because the Pahlavi had gone!

Shah, I don't wish the same to happen to you; I don't want you to become like your father. Listen to my advice, listen to the *'ulama* of Islam. They desire the welfare of the nation, the welfare of the country. Don't listen to Israel; Israel can't do anything for you. You miserable wretch, forty-five years of your life have passed; isn't it time for you to think and reflect a little, to ponder about where all this is leading you, to learn a lesson from the experience of your father? If what they say is true, that you are opposed to Islam and the religious scholars, your ideas are quite wrong. If they are dictating these things to you and then giving them to you to read, you should think about it a little. Why do you speak without thinking? Are the religious scholars really some form of impure animal? If they are impure animals, why do the people kiss their hands? Why do they regard the very water they drink as blessed? Are we really impure animals? I hope to God that you did not have in mind the *'ulama* and the religious scholars when you said, "The reactionaries are like an impure animal," because if you did, it will be difficult for us to tolerate you much longer, and you will find yourself in a predicament. You won't be able to go on living; the nation will not allow you to continue this way. The religious scholars and Islam are Black Reaction! And you have carried out your White Revolution in the midst of all this Black Reaction! What do you mean, a White Revolution? Why do you try to deceive the people so? Why do you threaten the people so?²⁶

I was informed today that a number of preachers and speakers in Tehran were taken to the offices of SAVAK and were threatened with punishment if they speak on three subjects. They were not to say anything bad about the Shah, not to attack Israel, and not to say that Islam is endangered. Otherwise, they can say what they like! But all of our problems and all our differences with the government comprise exactly these three! If we overlook these three subjects, we have no dispute with the government. Even if we do not say that Islam is endangered, will that mean that Islam is not endangered? Or if we do not say, "The Shah is such-and-such," will that mean that he is not in fact such-and-such? And

what is this tie, this link, between the Shah and Israel that makes SAVAK consider the Shah an Israeli? Does SAVAK consider the Shah a Jew? Mr. Shah! Maybe those people want to present you as a Jew so that I will denounce you as an unbeliever and they can expel you from Iran and put an end to you! Don't you know that if one day, some uproar occurs and the tables are turned, none of those people around you will be your friends? They are friends of the dollar; they have no religion, no loyalty. They are hanging responsibility for everything around your miserable neck!

You know that vile individual—I'll mention his name at the appropriate time—who came to Fayziya Madrasa and whistled to signal for the commandos to gather, then ordered them to attack, to assault, to plunder all the rooms in the madrasa and destroy everything. When he is asked, "Why did you commit these crimes?" he replies, 'The Shah told us to do it. It was his royal command that we destroy Fayziya Madrasa and slaughter these people.'

There is much to be said, far more than you can even imagine. Certain things are happening that endanger our country and our Islam. The things that are happening to this nation and those that are about to happen fill me with anxiety and sorrow. I feel anxiety and sorrow at the state of Iran, at the state of our ruined country, at the state of this cabinet, at the state of those running our government. I pray to God Almighty that He remedy our affairs.

Appendix - II

February 1, 1979

Declaration Upon Arrival at Tehran

*Imam Khomeini gave this speech at Mehrabad Airport in Tehran, shortly after setting foot on Iranian soil for the first time in more than fourteen years. Source: Sayyid 'Abd ar-Rasul Hijazi, ed., *Majmu'a-yi Kamil az Payamha-yi Imam Khomeini* (Tehran, 1358 Sh. 1979), pp.2-3.*

I THANK THE VARIOUS CLASSES of the nation for the feelings they have expressed toward me. The debt of gratitude I owe to the Iranian people weighs heavily upon my shoulders, and I can in no way repay it.

I offer my thanks to all classes of the nation: to the religious scholars, who have toiled with such devotion during these recent events; to the students, who have suffered so heavily; to the merchants and traders, who have undergone hardship; to the youths in the bazaars, universities, and madrasas of the country, who have shed their blood in the course of these events; to the professors, judges, and civil servants; to the workers and peasants. You have triumphed because of your extraordinary efforts and unity of purpose.

You have accomplished the first step toward a complete victory by removing Muhammad Riza, the chief traitor, from the scene. It is said that he is plotting certain intrigues abroad and that although his masters are keeping him at arm's length and refuse to admit him to their country, he is seeking the aid of treacherous rulers like himself. But his hopes are in vain after the fifty years of treason his family has committed and the more than thirty years of crime in which this traitor has himself engaged. He has exploited our country and made it more backward than it was before, destroyed our agriculture and ruined our land, and made our army subordinate to foreign advisers. Our triumph will come when all forms of foreign control have been brought to an end and all roots of the monarchy have been plucked out of the soil of our land.

The agents of the foreigners during the recent events have been trying desperately to restore the Shah to power, preserve the monarchy, or institute some equivalent form of government.

But they must know it is too late. Addressing them, I say that their efforts are in vain, and unless they submit to the will of the people, the people will soon put them in their places.

We must thank all classes of the nation. Victory has been attained by the unity of purpose not only of the Muslims, but also of the religious minorities,⁷⁸ and by the unity of the religious leaders and the politicians. Unity of purpose is the secret of victory. Let us not lose this secret by permitting demons in human form to create dissension in our ranks.

I offer again my thanks to all of you, and beseech God Almighty to foreshorten the arms of the foreigners and their agents.