

Chapter II: Early Years and the Influence of 'Irfan

Youth and Development

Khomeini was born on 24 September 1902 in the small town of Khomein in the province of Isfahan.¹ His grandfather came to Khomein from India, though his family probably originated in Nishapur, in north-eastern Iran. His father, Sayyid Mustafa, was a cleric and a minor landowner who had spent some years studying in the religious seminary of Najaf, the Shi'i holy city in Iraq, and thus belonged to the Qajar secondary elite. In 1903 when Khomeini was a few months old his father died in a battle with local minor khans who were engaged in banditry. As a result Khomeini was brought up by his mother with the assistance of his father's sister. As a child he went to the local religious school before acquiring individual teachers in special subjects such as logic. By the time he was 16 both his aunt and his mother had died, but he remained in Khomein in the care of his family until he was 19, when he went to Arak, then a major centre for religious studies, to continue his education under, among others, Haj Shaikh 'Abd al-Karim Ha'iri Yazdi, one of the most prominent clerics of his time. In 1922, following an invitation from the 'ulama of Qum, Ayatollah Ha'iri Yazdi moved there and founded the Qum seminary. Khomeini followed soon after and studied under a variety of experts. He undertook the usual studies, particularly first principles (*usul*), jurisprudence (*fiqh*), logic and Islamic taxation (*kharaj*), under Ha'iri himself (although Ha'iri Yazdi died not long after Khomeini's move to Qum). Above all he developed a speciality in Islamic gnosticism, or mystical philosophy (*'irfan*), and in ethics, *akhlaq*. He received his *ijaza* or permission to act as a mujtahid in 1936, at a remarkably early age. In 1308/1929 he married Khadija Thaqafi, the daughter of a well-known cleric.

Khomeini was widely read and interested in politics from his youth, and would probe his teachers concerning their political memories.²

During the rise to power of Reza Shah and the consolidation of the Pahlavi state, he was still a student and a very young man. In political terms there were two major options confronting him, that of following Ha'iri Yazdi's policy of quietism, accommodation and consolidation, or that of supporting Mudarris's activist struggle against the perceived rise of dictatorship.³ His writings give no firm clue, possibly out of respect for Ha'iri Yazdi, his teacher, but his subsequent praise of the policies of Mudarris and implied criticism of others reveal where his sympathies lay. He was not, however, notably activist, though he had some contact with clergy-led demonstrations against Reza Shah, for example that of Haj Aqa Nurullah in Isfahan over a plan by the government to turn opium cultivation into a state monopoly; Haj Nurullah marched to Qum and Tehran at the head of a column of merchants, clergy and peasants. Khomeini was also in touch with an 'ulama-led movement against the introduction of compulsory education in Tabriz, where the bazaar closed in 1928. At the time of the dress-code law in 1935 he helped his students with their examinations to ensure they gained the requisite standard to retain their clerical dress.⁴

Khomeini greatly admired Mudarris for the strength and courage of his stand against Reza Shah.^{5,6} He also felt that lack of support of Mudarris on the part of others had permitted the consolidation of power by the Pahlavi dynasty. He went frequently to listen to Mudarris speak in the assembly, and often went to his classes and his home. He particularly respected the simplicity of Mudarris's lifestyle, and the fact that he was dressed in cloth of Iranian make. This admiration is significant because of both the similarities and the differences between the two. Mudarris was also born in the province of Isfahan, in his case near Ardistan, into a clerical family, and had a similar upbringing and education. His first prominent role in politics was as assembly representative from Isfahan. Supportive of reform and constitutionalism, he nevertheless fought legal change that might weaken Islam and strongly opposed the secularizing inclinations of the radical democrats. Also like Khomeini, Mudarris demonstrated his simplicity of lifestyle and piety in such a way that he secured a following among the poorer classes. However, he had less standing in terms of learning and was more willing throughout his career to make compromises with elite groups. His perception of the role of the clergy in politics was more one of supervision than of outright rule. Mudarris, like Khomeini, had his power base among the bazaar networks, merchants, guilds and lesser

clergy. These groups were not averse to reform, but were traditionally resistant to the encroachments of the arbitrary power of the state, especially in the form of financial exactions. They had, it will be recalled, played a highly significant role at the time of the Reuter concession in 1872, the tobacco concession in 1891 and the Constitutional Revolution of 1906; but in such support for reform but resistance to the centralization of the state lay potential inconsistencies. Their perception of a link between republicanism and the centralization of power in the hands of a secular state led them to resist Reza Khan's move towards republicanism in 1924. When the Qajar dynasty was finally deposed in 1925, Mudarris was one of the few deputies to resist the move, and thereafter criticized the growing power of the army, representing a conservative constitutionalist view. Following his forced retirement in 1927, he was arrested in 1929 and imprisoned in Khurasan, where in 1938 he finally paid with his life. If Mudarris resisted republicanism and Khomeini fought for it, the difference originates from their circumstances. Mudarris, however, was unwavering in his support for constitutionalism, despite the evident problems it presented in the contemporary Iranian context. As will be discussed below, the same was not necessarily true of Khomeini.

'Irfan and its Background

'*Irfan*⁷ is a kind of mystical philosophy which encompasses the possibility of unity with the divine one and universal self. At the heart of it is the perception that all creation derives from the One, the eternal truth. The social and political transformation of the late Qajar period and the Constitutional Revolution coincided with and were related to a revival of '*irfan* along with other schools.⁸ These developments in ideas among the religious intelligentsia, which were at least partly provoked by confrontation with the West and the need to embark upon new ways forward, appear to have had an influence on Khomeini. The revival in '*irfan* took the form of renewed interest in the thought of the great seventeenth-century mystic philosopher Mulla Sadra, as exemplified in his work *Asfar al-arba'a* (*The Four Journeys*). The famous nineteenth-century mystic philosopher, Mulla Hadi Sabzavari (d. 1872) produced a

summary of the teaching of Mulla Sadra in *Sharh-i manzuma* (*Commentary on the Composition*), one of the main texts of Islamic mystic philosophy. Khomeini's teachers in Qum came out of this milieu, and included Mirza Ali Akbar Yazdi, a pupil of Sabzavari.⁹ A second early guide was Mirza Aqa Javad Maliki Tabrizi (d. 1924), who held classes in philosophy and ethics¹⁰ at probably the most radical of the Qum schools, the Madrasa-yi Faiziyya, and taught 'irfan privately at home, a pattern Khomeini was to follow. His principal mentor was Ayatollah Muhammad 'Ali Shahabadi,¹¹ who led Khomeini through *Fusus al-Hikam* (*The Bezels of Wisdom*) of the outstanding twelfth-century mystic philosopher Ibn 'Arabi, and also taught him the thought of Mulla Sadra. Shahabadi was briefly a pupil of Aqa Muhammad Riza Qumsha'i, a leading exponent of the thought of Ibn 'Arabi, as well as other gnostic luminaries in Tehran, such as Mulla Hashim Rashti.¹² Khomeini spent many years studying Mulla Sadra under Shahabadi, and achieved the rare accolade of being known as a scholar learned in Sadra's works, particularly *The Four Journeys*.¹³ He also made annotations on Davud Qaisari's commentary on *The Bezels of Wisdom*, the fundamental text for the study of 'irfan in Iran.¹⁴ His published works between 1925 and 1937 were mainly on the subject of 'irfan. His book *Misbah al-hidaya*, (*The Light of Guidance*), published in 1931, refers to both Ibn 'Arabi and Mulla Sadra,¹⁵ and they are again mentioned in *Kashf al-asrar* (*The Revealing of Secrets*) published 1943–44, as is Plato's *Timaeus*.¹⁶ Khomeini further placed great value on the so-called *Theologia of Aristotle*, a text falsely attributed to Aristotle throughout the Middle Ages, and in fact based on the *Enneads* of Plotinus.¹⁷ In the 1930s his mystical poetry, which he wrote throughout his life, was known in Qum, especially the verse:

I have sacrificed myself to for the sake of the Friend,
I have separated myself from my homeland and my kind.¹⁸

According to his son, Shahabadi, like Khomeini, was not just a teacher but a political activist with influence among the ordinary people.¹⁹ He sought to train them, with the cooperation of his students, in groups (*hayatha*) which met at his home. In particular, he spread the message of al-Afghani that Islamic countries had begun to decline as a result of corruption, so the pride of Muslims and their rights under Islam had been undermined.²⁰ As a result they had forsaken propaganda

work and the deployment of the concept of enjoining the good and forsaking the evil (*amr-i bi ma'ruf va nahy az munkar*). Shahabadi also gave classes in ethics to the members of the guilds of Tehran. Disillusioned with the failure of the clergy to act in unity in the face of government weakness over foreign interference, in the late 1920s Shahabadi went first to Rayy and then to Qum, where he helped Ha'iri to build up the new seminary. In the mid-1930s, however, he returned to Tehran where, as Leader of Friday Prayers (Imam Jum'a) he criticized the regime and exhorted the clergy to struggle for Islam even to martyrdom. Like Mudarris and Khomeini, and also Sabzavari,²¹ Shahabadi was much respected for his piety and the simplicity of his lifestyle.

Khomeini began by teaching ethics in the 1930s and then moved to '*irfan*' in the 1940s. '*irfan*' had always been to some extent frowned upon by orthodox Islam, as with its supposition of individual union with God and, in its more extreme form of pantheism, the presence of God in all things, it undermined the orthodox concept of divine transcendence. The tendency in '*irfan*' and particularly its more purely spiritual manifestation, Sufism, to challenge established authority, whether lay or religious, to favour direct individual action, to encourage the notion of a worthy death, and of preparation to meet it, as well as to risk disorder in pursuit of its goals, made it the object of suspicion of both orthodox Islam and the state. Its relative independence of the rigidities of established texts has also made it more open to revolutionary politics not only in Iran for example in the 15th century rise to power of the Safavids, but in the leadership of revolutionary movements in other countries, such as that of Izz al-Din Qasam in Palestine in the 1930s or Said Nursi in Turkey, or further afield, Ahmad Bamba in Senegal.

The teaching of '*irfan*' was thus disapproved of in Qum and its specialists had to be both circumspect and selective in their choice of students, who rarely numbered more than a few at any one time. Khomeini appears to have used it in part to develop an independent critical attitude which contributed to the growth in popularity of his classes. He began by teaching philosophy to selected students.²² He then moved to private classes in '*irfan*' especially scrutinising the section on the carnal soul (*nafs*) in *The Four Journeys* of Mulla Sadra and in Sabzavari's *Sharh-i manzuma*.²³ Amongst his earlier pupils were Murtiza Mutahhari and Husain Ali Muntaziri, who studied under him for a few years from 1946, and both of whom played a significant role in the movement which brought him to power. It was his classes on ethics which attracted the

widest attention, perhaps because of their link to self-empowerment. The ethics he taught were drawn from the tradition of *'irfan* and propounded the benefits in terms of self-discipline which may arise from self-knowledge. In *'irfan* it is believed that the resulting self-purification is the pathway to inner union with the divine. Most of his students had some sort of interest in either *'irfan* or philosophy.²⁴ He ensured that the students were aware of their social responsibilities of which he considered *'irfan* to be the basis; it was also seen as a means of assuming the hardest responsibilities and duties.²⁵

The Role of 'Irfan

'Irfan in terms of Khomeini is here examined from the point of view of two main themes, the first of which has its origins in Plato and the second in the way Plotinus and the Neo-Platonists developed elements in Plato's thought. From Plato's Republic, as well as from the Shi'i figure of the Imam, derived the concept of the wise and virtuous leader who will guide his community to a better life. The influence of Plato's *Republic* was felt primarily in the Islamic tradition in al-Farabi's *Al-Madina al-fazila* (The Virtuous City) which interpreted leadership in the light of Plato's Republic and the *Laws* and Aristotle's *Ethics*. Al-Farabi addressed the question of who should be leader of the Islamic community. According to the general Islamic philosophic tradition, which derived from the Greeks, man can only attain felicity and flourish to the fullest extent in a community in which full cooperation in pursuit of the common good exists. A virtuous individual may have the chance of a virtuous life in a virtuous state. Therefore a state is necessary for the fulfilment of human nature. The most noble state is that which is ruled by the best leader, and that is he who possesses not only the moral virtues but also wisdom. For the Greeks the perfect leader was a philosopher. For Muslims, whose approach is essentially spiritual and religious, the first and best leader was the Prophet, whose example all others should emulate. Whereas, however, for Plato, the philosopher was limited only by truth, for Muslims all leaders are limited by the law, the shari'a. Further, whereas religion does not play an ostensible role in Plato's *Republic*, its influence combined with that of Plotinus may be

discerned in the opening to al-Farabi's City, where he discusses the First Being, his attributes and the way in which through emanation he generates creation.²⁶ Like Plato, al-Farabi set out the conditions for the perfect ruler. Plato emphasized among other qualities knowledge of the eternal truth and unchanging reality, which in effect is wisdom, as well as justice, courage and self-discipline. Al-Farabi's ruler was also devoted to justice and concern for the oppressed.

Ibn 'Arabi, however, focused not on the community but on the central figure of the perfect man who, being free from sin and imbued with wisdom and knowledge of the divine, acquires the rank of vice-regent of God on earth.²⁷ Both al-Farabi and Ibn 'Arabi's visions in turn influenced Mulla Sadra, who perceived the development of the perfect man in terms of a journey in four stages to union with the divine; in the last stage the perfect man will return to the larger community with a combination of knowledge of the transcendent and an understanding of the possibilities for effective thought and action in service of the community.²⁸ Khomeini's vision, as manifested not only in his mystic works but also in *Islamic Government*, which in certain respects recalls Plato's *Republic*,²⁹ falls in part within this tradition of Islamic utopias.

From Plotinus *'irfan* inherited the view of the divine intellect that is the origin of all creation and which provides unity to existence. In the Neo-Platonic tradition the individual perception of the divine was primarily intellectual in emphasis, but in the Islamic tradition, particularly in the works of Ibn 'Arabi, it became profoundly spiritual, though retaining an intellectual dimension. Ibn 'Arabi believed in the unity of all existence, which he termed *wahdat al-wujud*, and considered that perceived diversity is an illusion, as Khomeini points out in *The Light of Guidance*, where he cites Ibn 'Arabi as saying 'The Truth is creation and creation is the Truth'.³⁰ *'Irfan* derives from a knowledge of the divine, *ma'rifat*, which has been defined in English as 'knowledge by presence'.³¹ It means the true inner knowledge acquired by direct experience of the intelligible order which lies behind the visible world, and enlightened inner awareness of the transcendent. The person who acquires such knowledge is termed an *'arif*. The emphasis in *'irfan* is upon individual union with God without intermediaries and through continual striving to destroy the barrier of the senses or the carnal soul (*nafs*) so the mystic may reach a state of union with the divine (*fana*). In so doing he may also acquire divine wisdom and the status of sainthood. *'Irfan* is important for understanding how Khomeini constructed himself as a

leader, the philosophic and cultural traditions he drew upon, the objectives he gave his followers, his relationship with them, and his vision, particularly in terms of authority, of the relationship between the leader and the community.

Ma'rifat, knowledge of the essential reality of things, is acquired by profound mystical training. It comes directly from the divine, the one or universal self, with whom the gnostic is united by presence to return afterwards to the world of multiplicity.³² Such ideas were originally most fully formulated in Islam by Ibn 'Arabi in his doctrine of the perfect man, created in the image of God as his vice-regent on earth, a synthesis of God and the universe.³³ Only a gnostic who sees the emanation of the divine names in every manifestation of the universe can be called a completed human being, or perfect man. He is one who reaches such a degree of unity that he sees that all things form part of the divine essence, and he has penetrated the mystery of the one truth and its many manifestations. He can further actualize himself in the oneness of all the attributes, thus establishing a truly comprehensive unity, corresponding to the unity of the absolute.³⁴ In *The Light of Guidance* Khomeini attacks philosophers who deny the link between Creator and creation, and argues that the gnostic understands the true fusion of the one with the other. This unity lies behind the religion of *tauhid* (unity of all things), which is the one set out in the Qur'an.³⁵

The special knowledge of the perfect man confers powers of judgement which enable him to attain the inner light without recourse to the external provisions of the shari'a, and perceive through their very nature the just relationship between different matters.³⁶ He sees all things in their proper place, to the point where he embodies the precepts of the divine law in his very soul.³⁷ Those who attain such knowledge reach the highest of all human levels, sainthood or *wilaya*.³⁸ A saint is the highest knower of God and a perfect man *par excellence*, one who has perfect knowledge of the ultimate truth concerning the absolute, the world and the relationship between the two. Ibn 'Arabi considered that potentially any believer has the power within himself to rise to such knowledge, to the point where the vision of the believer may become part of prophethood, in the sense of attaining affinity with the divine.³⁹

The perfect man's knowledge of God is carefully differentiated from that of a prophet. Ibn 'Arabi established this differentiation on the grounds that there are two types of prophethood, the prophethood of

legislation (*al-nubuwwa al-tashri*) and the general prophethood (*al-nubuwwa al-'amma*).⁴⁰ The prophethood of legislation, of messengership, came to an end with Muhammad, who is termed the Seal of the Prophets. Legislative power is not granted to anyone after him, however saintly. His worldly successors, termed the caliphs, may only act as his vice-regents to enforce the laws that derive from his message. The general prophethood, however, continues in the form of sainthood (*wilaya*), which has the function of general transmission (*inba' 'amma*)

The saints are also the caliphs – successors of the Prophet but in a spiritual rather than worldly sense. God manifests his greatness through them, and each of them has his own station in the divine scheme.⁴¹ Such general prophesy or sainthood is the inner truth and essence of the Prophet's message, and it resides in the saints as well as in the Prophet.⁴² The saints, therefore, receive their divine knowledge directly from God although they are not prophets. What God divulges to them is separate and different to the prophethood of legislation and legal judgement.⁴³ The saints therefore follow the outer law brought by Muhammad but receive the same knowledge as the Prophet in the inner sense.⁴⁴ God thus has on earth vice-regents – *khulafa* – who receive authority directly. There is no contradiction between their judgement and that of Muhammad. They are vice-regents because they contain in themselves the things demanded of them by the people, who are dependent on them. They are also expected to take care of the special needs of all the people. They must be differentiated from the historical caliph, for they are vice-regents of God and he is the vice-regent of the Prophet. Very rarely there may arise one who is outwardly a caliph of the Prophet and inwardly a caliph of God, and thus knows both the inner and the outer law. Saints who receive knowledge by esoteric means are superior to the 'ulama, specifically because they preserve not only the prophetic revelation but also their own secret knowledge.⁴⁵ In *The Light of Guidance* Khomeini stresses the secrecy of this knowledge, which is the reflection of the hidden truth, and thus not within the power of more ordinary mortals to understand.⁴⁶

The question is, who can become a saint? Ibn 'Arabi followed the tradition that the vision of the believer is a part of prophethood, and stated that mystics may attain a part of the same. The mystic may thus be a prophet in respect of his knowledge, although his knowledge will not be equal to that of the prophets. The mystic is one who is pious and ascetic and trusts in God.⁴⁷

In *The Light of Guidance* (1931), a work written to reconcile the originally Neo-Platonic theory of divine manifestation of the *'irfan* tradition and the Shi'i vision of the same subject, the perfect man has a pivotal role in representing both Shi'i prophethood and sainthood, and the means of revelation through the divine names. A further theme is that of the spiritual quest, whereby the pilgrim undertakes four journeys and reaches the position where he may lead other men; that is to say, becomes a saint. The work reflects the influence of Ibn 'Arabi, where the perfect man is seen as saint, prophet and vice-regent of God, and the heart and key of the process of theophany and regeneration.⁴⁸ Khomeini discusses the role of the perfect man as the means of immutable emanation, and as the head of a chain of revelation, particularly under the influence of the divine name, Great (*a'zam*).⁴⁹

Khomeini also considers how the ability derived from knowledge of the divine gives the gnostic the capacity to see on the one hand the One and on the other the many, and set out on the journey to unity with the divine, a course of action open only to the chosen saints, prophets and *'arifs* of high position.⁵⁰ In the course of the four journeys the *'arif* arrives at a state of perfect being. Khomeini is here following Ibn 'Arabi and Mulla Sadra. The concept of the perfect man comes from Ibn 'Arabi, and the division of his experience of transcendence into four journeys derives from Mulla Sadra. In the first stage the mystic travels from creation to the truth, so the veils of obscurity and multiplicity are lifted and he becomes one with the eternal being in a state of annihilation.⁵¹ As a result of the first journey, Khomeini wrote, all creatures may see the appearance of the truth, which by implication means also ordinary people.⁵² Thereafter he becomes by successive stages a perfect man or saint, having reached the level of *wilaya*, and a member of the divine realm, until by the fourth stage he knows not only the Creator but also the creation of things.⁵³ At that point, according to Mulla Sadra, having experienced withdrawal, transcendence, devotion and contemplation, he returns to an active life and also to the guidance of the community with heightened understanding.⁵⁴ To Khomeini, only one who has accomplished the fourth journey, that is to say reached the point where he may reveal the secrets of the immutable emanation and act as a guide to others on their own journeys, may be said to have attained the rank of saint or prophet.⁵⁵

Mulla Sadra believed the one who attains such an awareness to be an *imam*, in the sense of guide or interpreter. Outwardly he is simply the interpreter of the symbols and prescriptions of the prophetic lawgiver.⁵⁶

Inwardly he is sustained by his own interpretation of divine reality. The *imam* has an additional task to that of guidance – integrating the transcendent and actual dimensions of man's existence. This includes drawing together the religious symbols that engender the formal allegiance of the community as a whole, and the theological perspective of a spiritually inclined elite.⁵⁷ Such an aim is attained through the *imam*'s awareness of the ultimate relationship of all existence, which alone can bestow the unifying vision necessary to provide appropriate guidance.⁵⁸ At the same time he distinguishes between external forms and the inner meaning of the prophetic symbols of transcendence. The *imam*, who may be a person or an awareness in the believer, has developed a rare insight and ability to foster both the inner and outer aspects of our existence, making him a guide and leader with knowledge of the inner light.⁵⁹

Khomeini's precise position on these ideas was ambiguous. The references in *The Light of Guidance* suggest that he identified a perfect man as one who has the status of the prophets and imams.⁶⁰ He says that the one who understands the fourth journey reaches the level of legislative prophesy, again implying that it is unlikely to be possible for ordinary believers.⁶¹ There is, however, a hint that the status of perfect man may be achieved by ordinary mortals, but only the rarest few:

'Anyone who has the quality of a perfect man, that is the quality of the divine essence, is a caliph in this world as he was in the origins.'⁶²

There is also an assumption that an ordinary believer may become a perfect man in his description of the four journeys, but, as with much else, Khomeini left vague the answer to the question of who could reach the eminence implied in such terms as *insan-i kamil* and *wali* (saint). Probably to Khomeini the concept of saint or perfect man, so elevated and idealistic, functioned more in the real world as a goal than as a title which the ordinary believer can claim. At one point he said that there was a class of people who migrate to God and attain the goal of unity with the divine, adding that there were also 'still another group to which you and I belong which has not even begun to migrate'.⁶³

The title of *'arif* alone, however, would appear to be attainable, for Khomeini refers several times to the mystic philosophers and their commentators as *'arif*, including Qumsha'i and his own teacher, Shaha-badi.⁶⁴ He defines an *'arif* as one who has taken a step forward from

ordinary humanity and who sees the world with two eyes – the one which discerns the relationship between Creator and creation and the other which perceives the non-existence of diversity, so that through the rule of justice he accords to each his right and sets out on the path of unity (*tauhid*).⁶⁵ Khomeini also states that only the elect, the saints and the *'arifs* of high position, can understand the nature of the divine emanation.⁶⁶ However, he saw believers as being at a variety of stages on the way.⁶⁷ He says at one point that prophets and masters of the shari'a have reached different stages on these journeys; even after the attainment of annihilation (*fana*) some residue of egotism may remain to the believer, so:

The people of righteousness must lead him to the path of righteousness and the leader [*rahbar*] must be aware of the qualities of righteousness. The believer must not stray from the path of abstinence so that he belongs to the group of souls who draw people along the way of righteousness.⁶⁸

Of course, Khomeini was sensitive to charges of unorthodoxy, particularly since the concepts of perfect man and saint suggest the immaculate nature normally allowed only to the 12 Imams.

The believer's journey along the path of *ma'rifat* and *'irfan* may provide him with qualities of leadership. In particular, his special knowledge of the inner realities is deemed to confer powers of judgement not accessible to an ordinary *'alim* (learned person, cleric). On the one hand he is learned in the external provisions of the shari'a, and on the other he is aware of their internal significance and its bearing upon the just order of the community. In believing that the study of the law represented only one dimension of Islam, and that there existed concerns of religion on a different plain to the legal, Khomeini followed Mulla Sadra, whose philosophy rested on three basic principles: intellectual intuition or illumination, rational demonstration, and religion and revelation.⁶⁹ Also like Mulla Sadra, he perceives *'irfan* and the shari'a as being two manifestations of the same truth, compatible with each other and emanating from the same sources.⁷⁰

In addition to the knowledge conferred by the holy law, the *'arif* possesses exceptional spiritual qualities derived from his striving towards knowledge by presence which entitles him to respect and obedience.⁷¹ He is thus eminently equipped to be the guide and leader – imam and *rahbar* – of the community. Such titles were not inadvertently

applied to Khomeini at the time of the revolution for the exceptional understanding and therefore charisma they imply. They form part of a conceptual vocabulary that was used to mobilize the ordinary people and create a unique image for Khomeini.

The belief that one imbued with *ma'rifat* sees beyond multiplicity and the contingent to the essential and eternal, combined with the idea that the shari'a and *ma'rifat* are manifestations of the same divine message, was to have profound implications for Khomeini once he became the jurist (*faqih*). Then he appears to have used his theory of knowledge by presence, and its implications for power, to alter the powers of the jurist designated in the constitution of 1979. In 1988 he declared *vilayat-i faqih* to be absolute, and made changes to the law which in effect amounted to altering the shari'a as a result of political exigency. The justification for such a ruling may be interpreted as a manifestation of the hidden influence of the '*irfan*' tradition, in that if the '*arif*' is imbued with the same divine wisdom as the shari'a he may be justified in altering it in particular circumstances as the ruling jurist. In changing the law, Khomeini acted more closely to Plato's ideal of the philosopher ruler uninhibited by legal constraints than to Islamic practice.

There was another aspect of '*irfan*' which Khomeini emphasized to his students and followers, and later in public lectures to the Iranian people, and that was self-knowledge and with it ethics. The '*arif*' seeks knowledge of the divine through himself. In order to find the divine within himself he must first purge his soul of egohood. The study of '*irfan*' has long been considered to develop strength of character and courage in adversity, qualities which Khomeini sought to develop in his students.⁷² In his teaching Khomeini reportedly conveyed a sense of awareness of a feeling of spiritual nobility and of responsibility and commitment.⁷³ Implied in Khomeini's lecture is the view that by self-knowledge a person brings into order his own nature. Becoming thus master of himself, he may proceed to act justly and wisely:

'Have you read the book of your soul and have you perceived in it the great divine goal, a goal whereby God has fixed a ladder to knowing him through knowing yourself.'⁷⁴

He affirmed that a person who had completely conquered the ego had taken a powerful step and had reached the highest level,⁷⁵ and he offered the advice that:

After you have read the book of your soul and gathered the necessary understanding, go a step further, turn to the witnessing of the people of *'irfan* and the house of the master of truth so you may find the truth of prophecy and the awareness that is in the world of the attributes.⁷⁶

In other words, in order to draw the proper conclusions a person must have the help of one who is able to throw light into the soul and help him distinguish between permanent and impermanent. The knowledge of the divine and the in-dwelling reason of the universe may be arrived at by the soul's perception of its own nature and origins enabling it to distinguish between the everlasting and the flux of multiplicity. Ibn 'Arabi also stressed self-knowledge, 'He who knows himself knows his lord' being his favourite adage.⁷⁷ He believed that man is in a position to know within himself the relationship between the shadow that is the world and the reality that is the absolute. Self-knowledge and the concomitant development of self-discipline were to play an important part in the struggle in Khomeini's movement, and his students were equipped to take up the hardest responsibilities, which in turn were the basis of social and political duties.⁷⁸ Beyond the individual lay the wider goal – as described by Khomeini: 'We cannot reform our country unless we reform ourselves. If you want your country to be independent begin with your self.'⁷⁹

Throughout his life Khomeini taught ethics, particularly to try and strengthen the resolve of the 'ulama, but also spreading his net more widely. In the late 1930s he held classes on Thursdays and Fridays at the Faiziyya school which many ordinary people, bazaaris, artisans and workers of the Qum district attended. The fame of the classes became such that people from other areas joined them. Reza Shah's police asked Khomeini to close them and, despite his reluctance, he ultimately reduced the classes to protect the people from police harassment, and also moved their location as a means to limit attendance.⁸⁰ After the removal of Reza Shah he returned to the Faiziyya and the classes continued for some years, until pressure in Qum itself forced their closure.

Khomeini's students also took up the subject of self-knowledge as a means of providing the people with inner strength. Mutaahhari wrote that a person must know his own limitations and weaknesses to know how great God is; ownership of oneself and release from one's desires

constitute the fundamental aim of Islamic teaching. With knowledge of the self human beings feel a kind of dignity and reject humiliation. They may also discern the value of social and ethical practices. Knowledge of self means the human being is not totally earthbound – he has a ray of divine spirit and may take precedence over the angels in wisdom as well as being free and self-sufficient.⁸¹ Human beings can change and construct themselves through self-knowledge, which enables them to shape their future and that of society according to their own will.⁸² In this way self-knowledge not only encourages endurance, it promotes political activism and gives political confidence to ordinary people.

Khomeini also emphasized that it is necessary to engage in struggle, jihad, to be released from egotism. He said the lesser jihad is that waged on the battlefield and the greater jihad is the war waged by man against his carnal self, advice unheard of in Qum.⁸³ All forms of jihad that may be waged in the world depend on this greater jihad. Without the inner jihad the outer jihad is impossible. Later, in 1972, Khomeini developed these ideas in a thesis called *The Greater Jihad* as a way of exhorting the 'ulama to purge their souls and engage in political struggle.⁸⁴ Izz al-Din Qasam preached the same message in his struggle against the British in Palestine, when he also enjoined the greater jihad against the carnal soul.⁸⁵

It may be noted that overall in movements by Islamists against incumbent regimes the vanguard has a significant role to play in mobilization. Firstly they provide an example of good Muslims whom others must strive to emulate. Secondly they embody the corps of a network which extends through other religious institutions such as mosques and schools. This corps may then mobilize a larger section of the population, permeating, in situations where discontent is great enough, the public as a whole.⁸⁶ Thus 'Allama Mawdudi of Pakistan stressed discipline, ideological purity and asceticism. He endeavoured to train a small, informed and dedicated group to assume political and social leadership. Their duty would be to administer and control the Islamic state; they would be pious, committed Muslims, who not only believed in the law but were imbued with its spirit, and would thus form a regulated and cohesive cadre.⁸⁷ Sayyid Qutb in Egypt sought the regeneration of Islam through the emergence of a disciplined vanguard dedicated to the concept of God's oneness, *tauhid*, who could take the lead in transforming society. He perceived himself as living in an era of moral decline and corruption, and saw the answer to society's ills in the creation of a

leadership that would provide a fresh stock of high ideals. Rejuvenation depends on the rediscovery of the true substance of the faith, and restoration of the understanding of the oneness of God would produce a corps of believers in whom the essence of Islam could be actualized.⁸⁸ Thus Khomeini's exhortations to form a vanguard to give the movement moral example and inspiration would seem to be part of what might be called Islamic ideologies of the vanguard. Khomeini was widely read, but it is still not possible to say exactly how far he was aware of this kind of development in Islamic movements elsewhere, especially as prior to him in Iran's past lay the endeavours of Mulla Sadra to inspire a theoretical elite to action in the community through instruction and example.⁸⁹ Khomeini's lectures on character-building in Qum clearly had political implications, as Reza Shah's security services felt it necessary to force their closure.⁹⁰

Ultimately, as Khomeini made clear in *Islamic Government*, his authority rested on his knowledge as a jurist. So why, with his background in *'irfan*, did he not make more use of the potential of knowledge of the transcendent? As already mentioned, Khomeini's earliest interest had been in *'irfan*. From 1936 to 1941 he moved to the related topic of ethics, and from 1941 onwards he gradually developed an expertise in jurisprudence, *fiqh*, publishing many works in this discipline in which he had hitherto had little experience.⁹¹ It appears that he even terminated the classes in *'irfan* that he taught to a select few of his students.⁹²

Mysticism has always had the devotion of the few and knowledge gained through the mystic path has by its nature been considered esoteric – indeed, Khomeini warned in *The Light of Guidance* that it cannot be widely disseminated.⁹³ As long as Khomeini kept to *'irfan* he was confronted by the classic problems of the philosopher who seeks to engage in the actual political context – that is, philosophy, by its elevated nature, cannot provide a link with or power base among the ordinary people. The philosopher is thus dependent upon others to implement his ideas, be they individuals such as kings and priests, or organizations such as those related to religion and the shari'a. Movements in the past based on Sufism, such as that of the Safavids, were also largely tribal in origin. There was in addition the possibility of Khomeini laying himself open to the accusation of heterodoxy. Ibn 'Arabi had always been regarded as suspect by the orthodox 'ulama. Khomeini's mentor, Shaha-badi, was frowned upon in Qum for his interest in *'irfan*. In terms of engagement with society at large, therefore, *'irfan* did not provide a solid

base. The ordinary people came to religion through the Qur'an, the mosque and the shari'a – that is, through jurisprudence, which transforms abstract ideas about people's lives and goals into political directives and social norms which shape the life of the community.⁹⁴ It thus opens up the way to much wider base of support and a door to mobilization of the masses. Ordinary Muslims seeking guidance come to a *mujtahid* to know what the shari'a says. They attach themselves as followers to a particular *mujtahid* for his reputation among other matters in knowledge of the shari'a. So such knowledge was one element necessary in securing popular support. Further, knowledge of the shari'a was important because only through its implementation under the 'ulama could there be true and just Islamic government, that is to say legitimate government. Nevertheless, the creation of the government of the jurist was subtly shaped by 'irfan and its ethics.

* * *

What then was the impact of '*irfan* upon the making of Khomeini's state? As stated, it functioned on three levels: the creation of a leader, the creation of a vanguard and through these two mobilizing the people, though in the latter case along with other perhaps more significant factors.

'*Irfan* provided the ideal of an ordinary believer who could rise to become a perfect man, saint or '*arif*, and whose knowledge of the divine enables him to provide right guidance for his community, so that he functions as God's vice-regent on earth. Such knowledge of eternal truths confers special powers of judgement as well as courage, self-discipline and a sense of justice. He is in effect a more religious version of Plato's philosopher ruler, and the Islamic state in this context is a utopia in the tradition of Plato's *Republic*. As such it is to be a virtuous state which encourages the creation of virtuous individuals. In such a political vision the divine knowledge and wisdom of the leader, in effect another version of the divine message, makes his unfettered judgement higher than the law; not above it, but able to change or suspend it. Such a concept, however, creates problems of both orthodoxy and legitimacy in terms of the shari'a, which ultimately demands knowledge of the holy texts as the rightful source of authority.

In a utopia led by the philosopher ruler there are questions of what the state is and where authority and sovereignty reside. A state may be defined as an organization which shapes or forms a fixed relationship between humankind and their possessions. It presupposes a relationship of command and obedience between rulers and ruled. The rulers, a public office or person, possess sovereignty, the incontestable right and power to resolve differences. In the Platonic tradition the state is epitomized by the just agent who will make the state just. Sovereignty and authority reside in the ruler or guardians, among whom, however, there may be consultation and consensus. The state produced by the Platonic concept of leadership and the *'irfan* tradition is nevertheless one where authority is wielded from above.

The leader encourages self-knowledge in his followers so that they may also aspire to strength through communing with the divine. The purging of the soul creates self-discipline, which in turn generates self-empowerment and the will to struggle against the debilitations of the ego. Although not individualistic in the Western sense, there is nevertheless a strong element of individual endeavour. Among the followers is a vanguard who provide guidance and an example to the ordinary people, so building up a wider basis of support. At the same time individual initiative and direct action emerge liberated from the constraints of constant referral to written authority, but are still based on rightful guidance. The result is an activist movement not dissimilar in many ways to contemporary dedicated and organized secular groups. A further modern influence is indicated in the linking of gnostic ethics to the needs of society and social responsibility. In essence the vanguard is prepared for the administration and control of the Islamic state which will ultimately totally transform society. Such promotion of ethics and self-discipline as a weapon in the political struggle of the weak against the mighty was used by Izz al-Din Qasam in his battle against the British in Palestine, and by Gandhi in the struggle against the empire in India, and it is not impossible that they provided examples for Khomeini.

The jurist as such does not emanate political charisma – the ability to generate widespread devotion in the political arena. That must be drawn from personal qualities and reference to their association. So Khomeini played upon the image of the leader with the divine aura evolved in the Iranian Islamic tradition from the tales of the Imams and the vision of Ibn 'Arabi and Mulla Sadra. He was able to use the gulf that had developed between ordinary Shi'a and a remote secular state that insistently

emphasized the pre-Islamic past – a state that was increasingly perceived as pursuing the interests of its own elite and of a foreign power while operating an oppressive political system and neglecting the poor. In such circumstances adherence to a charismatic leader conferred dignity, and a release from humiliation and rejection; it provided new goals along with the potential for human transformation.

Finally, it is unsurprising that the leader of the revolution should also be one of the principal scholars of Islamic gnosticism, willing to risk the anarchy which orthodox Islam abhors. Nor is it surprising that the mysticism so manifest in Iranian culture and thought should have played an important role in its revolution.

Notes

Notes to Chapter I

- 1 For a more detailed account of the historical background the reader may refer, among other works, to E. Abrahamian, *Iran between Two Revolutions* (Princeton 1992); S. Akhavi, *Religion and Politics in Contemporary Iran* (New York 1980); A. Amanat, *The Pivot of the Universe*, (London 1997); S. Arjomand, *The Turban for the Crown* (Oxford 1988); S. Bakhash, *The Reign of the Ayatollahs* (London 1985); S. Cronin, *The Army and the Creation of the Pahlavi State in Iran 1910-1926* (London 1997); J. P. Digard, B. Hourcade and Y. Richard, *L'Iran au XXe Siecle* (Fayard 1996); M. H. Faghfoory, 'The Impact of Modernization on the 'Ulama in Iran 1925-1941', *Iranian Studies*, Vol. 26, Nos. 3-4, 1993, pp. 277-312, and 'Ulama-State Relations in Iran: 1921-1941', *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 19, No. 4, 1987, pp. 413-32; M. Fischer, *Iran: from Religion Dispute to Revolution* (Cambridge, Mass. 1980); R. Graham, *Iran: the Illusion of Power* (London 1978); F. Halliday, *Iran: Dictatorship and Development* (New York 1979); N. R. Keddie, *Iran and the Muslim World* (Basingstoke 1995); M. Milani, *The Making of Iran's Islamic Revolution* (Westview 1994); A. Rahnama and F. Nomani, *The Secular Miracle* (London 1990); D. Wilbur, *Reza Shah Pahlavi* (New York 1975); M. E. Yapp, *The Making of the Modern Near East* (London 1987), and *The Near East since the First World War* (London 1991).

Notes to Chapter II

- 1 For details of Khomeini's life see M. Pasandideh, *Khatirat-i Ayatullah Pasandideh*, ed. M. J. Muradi Nia (Tehran 1375/1996); S. H. Ruhani, *Barasi va tahlili az nahzat-i Imam Khumaini*, Vol. I (Tehran 1356/1977), Vol. II (Tehran 1376/1997); M. H. Rajabi, *Zindigi-yi siyasi-yi Imam Khumaini* Vol. I (Tehran 1370/1991); H. Ansari, *Le recit de l'eveil* (Tehran 1996); B. Moin, *Khomeini: Life of the Ayatollah* (London 1999).
- 2 Interview with Mr 'Ali Davani, Tehran, July 1998. Khomeini was much in the habit of reading newspapers. I am most grateful to Mr Davani for his time.
- 3 Rajabi, *Zindigi*, Vol. I, p. 127.
- 4 H. Algar, 'Imam Khomeini 1902-1962: the Pre-Revolutionary Years' in E. Burke and I. M. Lapidus (eds), *Islam, Politics and Social Movements* (Berkeley 1988), pp. 273-4.

- 5 Interview with Mr Davani, Tehran, July 1998; *Sahifa-yi Nur*, Vol. III, pp. 34, 158, quoted in Rajabi, *Zindigi*, Vol. I, p. 127.
- 6 For the life and times of Mudarris see for example A. Mudarrisi, *Mudarris* (Tehran 1366/1987); H. Makki, *Mudarris qahriman-i azadi* (Tehran 1358/1979); A. Mahrddad, *Iran auf dem Weg zum Diktatur* (Hanover 1976); Mahdi Quli Hidayat, Mukhbhir al-Saltana, *Khatirat va khatarat* (Tehran 1361/1982); V. A. Martin, 'Mudarris, Republicanism and the Rise to Power of Riza Khan Sardar-i Sipah', *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 21, No. 2, 1994, pp. 200–10.
- 7 The terms Islamic gnosticism and mystical philosophy (in the sense of love of divine wisdom) will be used for 'irfan in the recognition that, although they are not adequate to convey the complexities of the term, they are the translations best suited to this work. This chapter is largely based on my article 'Khumaini, Knowledge and the Political Process', *The Muslim World*, Vol. 87, No. 1, 1997. For further discussion on 'irfan see for example S. H. Nasr, 'The Metaphysics of Sadr al-Din Shirazi and Islamic Philosophy in Qajar Iran' in C. E. Bosworth and C. Hillenbrand (eds), *Qajar Iran* (Edinburgh 1983), pp. 191–2; C. Bonaud, *L'Imam Khomeyni, un gnostique meconnu du XXe siecle* (Beirut 1997), esp. pp. 70ff.; Moin, *Khomeini*, ch. 3.
- 8 Nasr, 'The Metaphysics', pp. 191–2.
- 9 Algar, 'Khomeini', p. 268.
- 10 *Ibid.*, p. 268.
- 11 For Shahabadi's influence on Khomeini see Ruhani, *Nahzat*, Vol. I, p. 27; Pasandideh, *Khatirat*, p. 51; Algar, 'Khumaini', p. 268; M. T. Haj Bushihri, 'Ruhullah Musavi Khumaini', *Chishmandaz*, No. 13, 1373/1994, pp. 32–41.
- 12 Ruhani, *Nahzat*, Vol. I, p. 28; N. Shahabadi 'Shaikh-i Buzurgvar Ayatullah Muhammad Ali Shahabadi', *Tarikh va farhang-i mu'asir*, No. 5, Autumn 1371/1992, pp. 180–92; talk given by Sajjad Rizvi on Muhammad Riza Qumsha'i at conference in Oxford on Religion and Society in Qajar Iran, 3 September 1998.
- 13 Ustad Riza Ustadi 'Kitabha va athar-i ilmi-yi Imam Khumaini', *Huzur*, 1370/1991, p. 57.
- 14 Bonaud, *Khomeyni*, p. 77.
- 15 R. Khomeini, *Misbah al-hidaya* (Tehran 1360/1981 edition), pp. 40, 116, 117, 143. Knysh argues very strongly for the influence of Ibn 'Arabi on the formation of the 'irfan ideas adopted by Khomeini, particularly in theology, terminology and intellectual models; see A. Knysh, 'Irfan Revisited: Khomeini and the Legacy of Islamic Mystical Philosophy', *Middle Eastern Journal*, Vol. 46, No. 4, 1992, esp. pp. 635–6, 653.
- 16 R. Khomeini, *Kashf al-asrar* (n.p., n.d.) p. 33. It may be recalled that the *Timaeus* is concerned with the themes of the one and the many, with being and becoming, and with how knowledge of the real world is the true

knowledge. Khomeini says Plato was known for oneness (*tauhid*) and divine wisdom and influenced Mulla Sadra.

- 17 R. Khomeini, *Misbah*, p. 143; A. K. Zia'i, *Naqsh-i Imam Khomeini dar ihya'-i tafakkur-i falsafi* (Tehran 1372/1993), pp. 34–5, quoting from Khomeini's *Adab al-salat*..
- 18 Ustadi, 'Athar', p. 57.
- 19 Shahabadi, 'Shaikh', pp. 185–8.
- 20 Bonaud dismisses al-Afghani as an influence on Shahabadi (*Khomeyni*, p. 84), but given the enormous impression made by al-Afghani, even indirectly, on Muslim thought in Iran and the Middle East at this time, such denial would seem precipitous. Bonaud, however, also believes that there were more traditional influences on Shahabadi in the form of *futuvvat* or *javanmardi* (bravery, manliness, generosity).
- 21 S. H. Quraishi Sabzavari, *Haj Mulla Hadi Sabzavari* (Sazman-i Tablighat-i Islami 1372/1993), p. 45.
- 22 Ruhani, *Nahzat*, Vol. I, p. 38.
- 23 Algar. 'Khomeini', pp. 269–270
- 24 M. Vijdani, ed., *Sarguzashtha-yi vizha az zindigi-yi hazrat Imam Khumaini*, (Tehran 1371/1992), Vol. V, pp. 152–3.
- 25 *Ibid.*, Vol. V, pp. 153–4
- 26 M.M. Fischer, *Iran*, p. 242. See also G. Rose. 'Velayat-e Faqih and the Recovery of Islamic Identity in the Thought of Ayatollah Khomeini', in N. Keddie, ed., *Religion and Politics in Iran*, (New Haven 1983), pp. 185–6
- 27 M. Takeshita, *Ibn 'Arabi's Theory of the Perfect Man and its Place in the History of Islamic Thought* (Tokyo 1987), pp. 49–50.
- 28 J. W. Morris, *The Wisdom of the Throne* (Princeton 1981), p. 16.
- 29 Khomeini was familiar with Plato's *Republic* (interview with Mr 'Ali Davani), and indeed discusses Plato in *Kashf al-asrar*, p. 33. In an interview with Khomeini's former students Javad Bahonar and Mahdi Ha'iri Yazdi in 1979, the influence of Plato's *Republic* on Khomeini's thought was acknowledged. See *Time*, 16 July 1979.
- 30 *Misbah*, pp. 149, 150. For discussion of the influence of Ibn 'Arabi on Khomeini see Bonaud, *Khomeyni*.. He notes that Khomeini's work is permeated with the teaching of Ibn 'Arabi, particularly on the harmony of the shari'a and the 'irfan tradition, and in the perception of the closeness of the prophets and saints to God. Ibn 'Arabi's terms are precisely discussed and interpreted by Khomeini (p. 262). The doctrines of Mulla Sadra used by Khomeini mostly had their origins in Ibn 'Arabi, even if there is some difference in the philosophical formulation and argumentation (pp. 75–6). Ibn 'Arabi is directly quoted in Khomeini's work, for example *Misbah*, pp. 40, 106, 117, *Sharh-i du'a-yi sahar* (Tehran 1370/1991), pp. 138, 148. Khomeini was of course also subject to other influences – above all, as mentioned, Mulla Sadra. It is beyond the scope of this work to discuss how he interpreted these different views.

- 31 M. Y. Hairi, *A Treatise on Knowledge by Presence* (Toronto 1979).
- 32 *Ibid.*, pp. 187, 201.
- 33 Takeshita, *Ibn 'Arabi*, pp. 49–50.
- 34 W. Chittick, *The Sufi Path of Knowledge* (New York 1989), p. 29.
- 35 Khomeini, *Misbah*, p. 27.
- 36 Chittick, *Sufi*, p. 29.
- 37 *Ibid.*, pp. 29–30.
- 38 Since the words for sainthood and guardianship are in origin the same, the Arabic transliteration (*wilaya*) has been used for sainthood and the Persian (*vilayat*) for guardianship, in an endeavour to assist in avoiding confusion.
- 39 Takeshita, *Ibn 'Arabi*, pp. 160–2.
- 40 *Ibid.*, pp. 120–1.
- 41 Khomeini, *Misbah*, p. 61.
- 42 *Ibid.*, pp. 87–8.
- 43 Takeshita, *Ibn 'Arabi*, p. 122.
- 44 For a discussion of this point see Sharaf al-Din Khurasani, 'Ibn 'Arabi' in *The Great Islamic Encyclopaedia*, Vol. 4 (Tehran 1991), p. 275.
- 45 Takeshita, *Ibn 'Arabi*, pp. 124–5.
- 46 Khomeini, *Misbah*, p. 213.
- 47 *Ibid.*, pp. 161–2.
- 48 Bonaud, *Khomeyni*, p. 80.
- 49 Khomeini, *Misbah*, pp. 61–3.
- 50 *Ibid.*, pp. 27, 32.
- 51 *Ibid.*, p. 205; see also Surat al-Fatiha in H. Algar, *Islam and Revolution* (Berkeley 1981), pp. 382–3.
- 52 Khomeini, *Misbah*, p. 208.
- 53 *Ibid.*, pp. 206–7.
- 54 Morris, *Wisdom*, pp. 16–17.
- 55 Khomeini, *Misbah*, p. 210.
- 56 *Ibid.*, pp 17–18.
- 57 *Ibid.*, p. 20.
- 58 Mulla Sadra was in this much influenced by the sun-line-cave section of Plato's *Republic*. See Morris, *Wisdom*, pp. 84–5.
- 59 *Ibid.*, p. 83.
- 60 See Khomeini, *Misbah*, pp. 60, 61, 69.
- 61 *Ibid.*, p. 205.
- 62 *Ibid.*, p. 192.
- 63 Algar, *Islam*, p. 382. Algar considers the Khomeini's identification of himself with this group should not be taken literally, being an expression of humility and of identification with his audience (p. 439). It may be pointed out that, whatever his private views, he could not publicly claim to 'see all things as coming from God' without endangering his political position.
- 64 Khomeini, *Misbah*, pp. 95, 205.

- 65 *Ibid.*, p. 27.
- 66 *Ibid.*, p. 32.
- 67 *Ibid.*, p. 211.
- 68 *Ibid.*, p. 208.
- 69 S. H. Nasr, *Sadr al-Din Shirazi and His Transcendent Philosophy* (Tehran 1978), p. 87.
- 70 Khomeini, *Kashf*, p. 36. According to his student, Sayyid Ahmad Fihri, who edited the *Commentary on the Dawn Prayer*, Khomeini was held to have demonstrated in his commentary the conformity between the logic of 'irfan and that of the shari'a. See Moin, *Khomeini*, p. 44.
- 71 M. Chodkiewicz, 'The Estoric Foundations of Political Legitimacy in Ibn 'Arabi' in S. Hirtenstein and M. Tiernan (eds), *Muhyiddin Ibn 'Arabi* (Element Books 1993) pp. 193–4
- 72 S. Bakhash, *Ayatollahs*, p. 20.
- 73 Algar, 'Khomeini', p. 28.
- 74 Khomeini, *Misbah*, p. 81.
- 75 *Ibid.*, p. 112.
- 76 *Ibid.*, pp. 82–3.
- 77 T. Izutsu, *Sufism and Taoism: a Comparative Study of Key Philosophical Concepts* (Berkeley 1984), p. 259.
- 78 Vijdani, *Sarguzashtha*, Vol. V, pp. 128, 153–5.
- 79 R. Khomeini, *Pithy Aphorisms* (Tehran 1994), pp. 53–4.
- 80 Ruhani, *Nahzat*, Vol. I, pp. 39–40.
- 81 M. Mutahhari, *The Human Being in the Qur'an*, trans. H. V. Dastjerdi (Tehran 1984), p. 34.
- 82 *Ibid.*, pp. 41–3.
- 83 R. Khomeini, *Arba'in hadith* (Tehran 1368/1989), Vol. I, p. 12; Vijdani, *Sarguzashtha*, Vol. VI, p. 20.
- 84 H. Dabashi, *Theology of Discontent* (New York 1993), pp. 459–60.
- 85 E. Burke, *Struggle and Survival in the Middle East* (London 1993), pp. 164–78.
- 86 The operation of such a corps of doctrinally committed elect within a larger movement may be compared to similar organizational methods in other ideologies of the modern period.
- 87 C. J. Adams, 'Mawdudi and the Islamic State' in J. Esposito (ed.), *Voices of Resurgent Islam* (Oxford 1983), p. 121.
- 88 Y. Choueiri, *Islamic Fundamentalism* (London 1990), pp. 125–6.
- 89 Morris, *Wisdom*, p. 20.
- 90 Rajabi, *Zindigi*, Vol. I, p. 130.
- 91 For the chronology of his works see Ustadi, 'Athar', pp. 56–61. He worked mainly on 'irfan from 1925–36, on *akhlaq* from 1936–41 and on *fiqh* from 1941 onwards.
- 92 Fischer, *Iran*, p. 242.

- 93 Khomeini, *Misbah*, pp. 213–14.
- 94 W. Montgomery Watt, *Islamic Philosophy and Theology* (Edinburgh 1964), p. 141.

Notes to Chapter III

- 1 S. M. Razavi, *Hashimi va inqilab* (Tehran 1376/1997), p. 92.
- 2 H. Basirat Manesh, *Ulama va rizhim-i Riza Shah* (Tehran 1376/1997), pp. 523–4.
- 3 Ruhani, *Nahzat*, Vol. I, p. 82.
- 4 Rajabi, *Zindigi*, Vol. I, p. 227.
- 5 For elaboration on this point see V. A. Martin, *Islam and Modernism: the Iranian Revolution of 1906* (London 1989), p. 14.
- 6 A. Davani, *Ayatullah Burujirdi* (Tehran 1372/1993), pp. 93–101.
- 7 H. Ruhani, A. Davani, M. Rajabi and M. H. Rajabi (eds), *Khatirat va mubarizat-i Hujjat al-Islam Falsafi* (Tehran 1376/1997), pp. 171–2.
- 8 Falsafi, *Khatirat*, p. 206.
- 9 Ruhani, *Nahzat*, Vol. I, p. 98.
- 10 Davani, *Burujirdi*, p. 120.
- 11 Falsafi, *Khatirat*, p. 176.
- 12 Davani, *Burujirdi*, p. 121.
- 13 *Ibid.*, p. 125.
- 14 Akhavi, *Religion*, p. 125; H. Algar, 'Borujerdi' in *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, Vol. IV (London/New York 1990), p. 377.
- 15 Davani, *Burujirdi*, p. 130.
- 16 Falsafi, *Khatirat*, p. 203.
- 17 Davani, *Burujirdi*, p. 137.
- 18 *Ibid.*, p. 129.
- 19 *Ibid.*, p. 135.
- 20 Falsafi, *Khatirat*, p. 180; Ruhani, *Nahzat*, Vol. I, p. 99.
- 21 Akhavi, *Religion*, p. 91.
- 22 Falsafi, *Khatirat*, p. 172.
- 23 Razavi, *Hashimi*, pp. 94–5.
- 24 Rajabi, *Zindigi*, Vol. I, pp. 227–8.
- 25 S. Mahallati, *Khatirat-i Shahid Mahallati* (Tehran 1376/1997), p. 27.
- 26 Ruhani, *Nahzat*, Vol. I, p. 96; H. Rafsanjani, *Dauran-i mubariza*, ed. M. Hashimi (Tehran 1376/1997), Vol. I, p. 105.
- 27 Davani, *Burujirdi*, p. 315.
- 28 Rajabi, *Zindigi*, pp. 230–1; see also Abrahamian, *Iran*, pp. 249–50.
- 29 Rajabi, *Zindigi*, Vol. I, pp. 228–9.
- 30 *Ibid.*, pp. 233–4.
- 31 Ruhani, *Nahzat*, Vol. I, 100.
- 32 Davani, *Burujirdi*, pp. 315, 317; Vijdani, *Sarguzashtha*, Vol. II, p. 45.

CREATING AN ISLAMIC STATE

Khomeini and the Making of a New
Iran

VANESSA MARTIN

I.B. TAURIS

LONDON · NEW YORK

New Edition published in 2003 by I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd
6 Salem Road, London W2 4BU
175 Fifth Avenue, New York NY 10010
www.ibtauris.com

In the United States of America distributed by Palgrave Macmillan, a division of
St Martin's Press, 175 Fifth Avenue, New York NY 10010

Copyright © Vanessa Martin, 2000, 2003
First published in 2000

The right of Vanessa Martin to be identified as the author of this book has been
asserted by the author in accordance with the Copyright, Design and Patents Act
1988.

All rights reserved. Except for brief quotations in a review, this book, or any part
thereof, may not be reproduced, stored in or introduced into a retrieval system,
or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photo-
copying, recording or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the
publisher.

ISBN 1 86064 900 9

A full CIP record for this book is available from the British Library.
A full CIP record for this book is available from the Library of Congress.

Library of Congress catalog card: available

Typeset in Ehrhardt MT 10/12pt by Q3 Print Project Management Ltd,
Loughborough, Leicestershire, England
Printed and bound in Malaysia by SRM Production Services Sdn. Bhd.