Pakistan Television Corporation: You have a dream -- the renaissance of Islam. All your activities really converge on that particular point. But what makes you believe it will become a reality?

Aga Khan: Simply because I believe in the eternity of the faith and I believe it is the faith for man. And in that sense, Muslims will find within their faith all the dimensions they need to live satisfactorily in the future. The question is not one of the faith; it is a question of what man does. The faith gives him the environment in which to function today and tomorrow. It is what we do as individuals in our lives.

Pakistan Television Corporation: How do you resolve this then that people who do not have the faith of Islam, they have their own faiths, may be followers of holy books or otherwise, they have made great progress. How is it, if correct faith and true faith, was the foundation.

Aga Khan: I would question what you interpret as, or the elements you put in the word, “progress”. There are many aspects of the industrialised world, as it is called today, which I do not wish for the future of the Islamic world, nor for my own children. I think there are imbalances there, which of course exist in other societies but the imbalance is there, which I don’t think are healthy, which I would wish changed, which I would hope Islamic society in the future will address and find different forms, perhaps better forms, of solutions. So, I don’t think one can equate “progress” exclusively with what is happening in the industrialised world now, very far from it.

Pakistan Television Corporation: And what would be your ideal world view of the future of Islam? And what kind of world, Islam as a faith and followers of Islam would envisage where really we can say that yes this is an Islamic country with the best of ideals and practices?

Aga Khan: I would like [the] essence of the faith to be more predominant in everyone’s life. Go back to the origins of Islam. It was a faith practised in a land with no physical frontiers. The concept of the modern state is not really an Islamic concept. Islam was a brotherhood, is
a brotherhood. That is the first thing -- the free movement of people, the generosity of people's attitudes towards their brothers around the world, that is itself I think is important. Secondly, living in the context of the moral discipline of Islam, I think, is important because living in a society where freedom eventually becomes equated with license, is not what I would want.

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His Highness the Aga Khan's 1985 Pakistan Television Corporation Interview (Karachi, Pakistan)

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