AMIR HASSANPOUR

Millions of Iranians left their country after the coming to power of the Islamic Republic in February 1979. Some twenty years later, the urge to leave the country is as strong as it was in the early post-revolutionary years. In a world that is less hospitable to refugees, some Iranians risk their lives in search of a hostland. For many emigrating Iranians, the hostland does not readily turn into a new homeland. In fact, Iran is often present, or rather reproduced, in the memory, language, way of life, and the network of relationships that remain in place despite physical distance.

Homeland and Hostland
Iranian Press in Canada

More than ever, new communication technologies contribute to the collapse of time and space. Round-the-clock television and radio programming in Persian is available to diasporic communities around the world via satellite and the internet. Print journalism is also extensive in major urban centres.

Be hich yār mad-e khāter o be hich diyār
Ke barr-o bahr farākh ast oādami besyar
Do not dedicate yourself to any companion
    and any land,
Because lands and seas are vast and human
    beings numerous.

(Sa'di of Shiraz, Persian poet, 1184-1292 AD)

Quoted out of context, Sa'di's couplet seems to be a call for detaching oneself from community and place of birth. Later in the poem, however, he celebrates the ties that bind people together and asks: 'Who will shy away from the affection of a friend. Which lover will turn away from the intimacy of a beloved?'[1] Sa'di was probably not contradicting himself if we see detachment and attachment not in isolation but as constituents of a dialectical relationship.

The Iranian diaspora of Canada

The number of Iranian immigrants in Canada was approximately 100 in 1961 and increased to 660 by 1970.[2] According to the 1996 census figures, Persian, the official or state language of Iran, was the 'mother tongue' of 60,275 Canadians (out of a population of 28,846,261).[3] It ranked 17th among some 110 non-official languages of the country (English and French being the only official languages).

Canada is a country of the ideal 'civic nation' system in which citizenship is not based on relations of blood, ethnicity, language, religion, or national origin. The overwhelming majority of Iranian-born Canadians acquired Canadian citizenship without rejecting their previous citizenship. Iranian presence can already be felt in the major urban centres. There are Iranian grocery stores, mosques, restaurants, travel agencies, driving schools, bookstores, and Persian language sections in public libraries. Persian signs can be seen in some business quarters.

Where is the homeland?

The following newspapers, mostly weeklies, were published in Toronto in 2000: *Irān Estār* (Iran Star), *Irān-e Javān* (Young Iran), *Iran Tribune*, *Irān Post*, *Javānān* (Youth), *Salām Toronto* (Hello Toronto), *Sarmāye* (Capital), *Sepidār* (White Poplar), and *Shahrvand* (Citizen). All are secular, privately owned, financed primarily through advertising income, and distributed free of charge in places frequented by the targeted readership (grocery stores, restaurants, video and bookstores).

Browsing through these papers, one notes immediately that the coverage of Canadian news is minimal. Although interest in the country of origin is to be expected in the 'ethnic media' of all immigrant communities, most of the cited papers are sharply focused on Iran. The limited space devoted to the Canadian-Iranian community is also centred on issues and activities related to Iran and being Iranian.

The over-representation of Iran in the press is matched by similar preoccupations in face-to-face communication. Many Iranian Canadians refer to the majority (i.e. the white population of European origin) as *khāreji* (i.e. foreigner). The word means 'external, outer, exterior, foreigner, outsider, stranger, alien'[4] and has been used in Iran to refer to non-citizens, especially European travellers or residents. The label is not intended to treat Euro-Canadians as 'foreigners'; its use indicates deep-rooted ties – linguistic and political – to the country of origin, Iran.

In a similar vein, the words *hamvatan* and *hammihan*, both meaning 'compatriots', are used to refer to Iranian Canadians only. The synonyms *vatan* and *mihan* mean 'homeland, country, motherland, fatherland'. The word *ham* means 'also, too, likewise, even, both, homo-, co-, con-, com-, sym-, iso-, equi-, syn-', and as a prefix it means 'fellow' as in *hamkelās* (classmate), or *hamkār* (fellow worker).[5]

The treatment of Iranian Canadians of Christian faith shows a similar trend of attachment to Iran. Like the papers published in Iran, the Persian language press of Canada writes: 'We congratulate the new Christian [*sāl-e milādi*] year to our Christian compatriots' (front page headline in red, *Mehr-e Irān*, Toronto, Vol. 1, No. 3, January 1991).[6] In Canada, however, the addressees of this

message continue to be Christian Iranians rather than the entire Christian population of Canada. The editorial of the quoted paper ends by writing: 'In a couple of months, the new Iranian year [*Nowruz*, March 21], too, will arrive. And why should not we turn every day into a day of housecleaning of our spirit?' – housecleaning being a practice of preparing for the new year.

Equally noteworthy is the treatment of the indigenous population of Canada. Since the 19th century, Iranian perceptions of Canada and the United States have been shaped by colonialist politics and discourses. Thus many Iranian Canadians continue to label aboriginal peoples collectively as *sorkhpust* (i.e. redskin) and refer to the Inuit people of the Arctic region as *eskimo*; these derogatory labels are not used in Canada today.

Even in the civic nation of Canada, extra-legal dynamics of inequality – racial, cultural, economic, social, and political – reinforce the attachment of new citizens to their ethnic, religious, racial, and national roots.[7] Some Iranian Canadians use the word *gharib-e* (stranger) to describe themselves. The author of a series of articles dealing with the census data about Iranian Canadians chose the title 'Stranger in the land of strangers'.[8] In spite of these linguistic and discursive reproductions of the country of origin, characteristic of the first generation, many Iranians integrate into their new homeland.

Struggle for control of the diaspora

If Iranian Canadians continue to be attached to their first homeland, the Islamic state too continues to regard them as Iranian citizens. Initially Tehran's policy was the rejection of emigrants as 'counter-revolutionaries' who had betrayed both Islam and Iran. A more tolerant approach was adopted in the early 1990s in order to encourage their return to Iran and to stem the exodus. Although this policy failed, it has allowed many refugees to travel to Iran and return again to their diasporas. It also contributed to Western governments' adoption of policies to restrict the admission of Iranian refugees.

While Iranian exiles have established stable diasporas in the West, the instability of the Islamic state together with its policies of re-

Editorial

DICK DOUWES | *Editor*

Over the last year, a heated debate about the position of Muslims in the Netherlands has evolved around the idea that Islam hampers the integration of Muslim migrants and their children. It was basically argued that Islamic ideology does not accept the separation of state and religion, and fails to confer equal rights to women, making it unfit for a modern European society and a danger to the ideal of multiculturalism (see Meuleman, p.33). The fierceness of the debate must have taken most Muslims in the Netherlands by surprise. Problems that were until recently explained in terms of relative poverty, or failing parental, educational and other institutional support were now being linked to religion. In addition, debates about the high degree of juvenile crime among Moroccans in the large cities were now pointing to religious background as a possible cause. A Moroccan imam exacerbated the debate by a homophobic remark on Dutch television. His views were used to explain violence against gay people by – again – some Moroccan youth gangs. However, the fact that such youths clearly frequent discos and coffeeshops rather than mosques – thus unfamiliar with the imam's views – was simply ignored.

The imam's remarks caused public outrage and within just days, gay pride had become a national pride – naively implying that public demonstrations of homosexuality are fully accepted in Dutch society. Very few pointed to the fact that the violence against gays was not motivated by the queer-bashers' religious beliefs, nor was it limited to a particular ethnic group.

The discussion was complicated by various misconceptions about Islamic institutions. In particular, the position of the imam and his authority over the Muslim community are generally construed as being greater than they actually are. This stems from religion, albeit in a post-Christian society, still being understood in Christian terms. Most people, including policy makers, associate mosque with church, and imam with priest or minister. A formal, church-like structure is projected upon the Muslim communities, which inevitably fails to reflect reality. Combined with the misapprehension of expressions of religiosity and identity among migrants, the debate was highly erratic at times. For instance, the fact that the great majority of youths of Muslim background are hesitant to embarrass their parents and their community by denouncing (certain) practices and beliefs was contrasted with the autochthonous youths' common behaviour of openly criticizing the beliefs of their parents or grandparents. Declaring oneself a Muslim, a believer, is associated with mosque attendance and conformity with the ideals of the imam as expressed in his preaching. The claims of many Moroccans and Turks that their Islamic identity is important to them, even if outward signs of religiosity seem to be absent, is confusing to many non-Muslims in the Netherlands.

A remarkable aspect of the discussions is that the degree of 'integratedness' was measured by the (post-)migrants' stances on gay and female rights. As was previously the case in the United Kingdom, a paradoxical situation was constructed in which people of Muslim background are asked to publicly accept the right of, for instance, gay people to be different, while at the same time their own right to be different is being questioned. They are pressured to denounce at least certain Islamic codes and to openly criticize traditionalist or Islamist points of view. A number of intellectuals and politicians expressed their regret that the voice of Muslim intellectuals was hardly heard in the debate. Nonetheless, the events forced the Islamic community to openly discuss the issue of homosexuality, and representatives of a Gay Muslim organization (Yusuf Foundation) met with local Muslim leaders. This summer people of Muslim background participated in the public events that have become part of Dutch gay culture over the last decade, like the annual Pink Saturday and the Gay Parade.

The participation in the debates of an organization of practising Muslim gays who argue that the Qur'an and *hadith* do not speak out against homosexuality, illustrates the dynamic nature of religious discourse in the context of post-migration. Of course, this example may not be representative for the religious production among Muslim communities in Western Europe, but it is part of the emergence of local forms and adaptations of Islam in Europe. Over the last decade this complex process has attracted increased scholarly attention. The ISIM has recently launched a project on 'The production of Islamic knowledge in Western Europe', in cooperation with a number of European partners (Van Bruinessen, p. 3). The settings of new scripturalist trends in Europe occupy an important place in this project. In this *ISIM Newsletter* the articles by Bava (p. 7), Jonker (p. 8) and Kehl (p. 9) were produced to inaugurate the project. Of course, these discourses in diasporas are linked to the developments in the home countries and the *umma* as a whole. Both Islamist and liberal intellectual debates in Muslim countries (Salvatore, p. 20; Jahanbakhsh, p. 21; Hamzawy, p. 22) impact the discourses in Europe, although the writings of the latter are less readily available in the West and less known among Muslims in Europe.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ISIM Annual Lecture

Professor Barbara Metcalf will deliver this year's ISIM Annual Lecture on 'Piety and Persuasion in the Modern Islamic World'. The lecture will be held in Amsterdam (Agnietenkapel) on 23 November 2001 at 16:00. For further information, please contact the ISIM secretariat.

ISIM Seminar Key Texts in the Anthropology of Islamic Law

In recent years, anthropologists have shown a renewed interest in Islamic law. New themes, such as the social life of Islamic texts and the relations between law, gender, and property have emerged. This interest in the anthropological study of Islamic law calls for an attempt at a more systematic overview of the field. This seminar aims to present such an overview by discussing basic texts on the anthropological study of Islamic law.

This seminar is intended for advanced M.A. students, Ph.D. students, and faculty in the fields of Islamic studies, anthropology, history, and law. The seminar also constitutes an introduction to the ISIM workshop on 'Current Research in the Anthropology of Islamic Law' to be held in April 2002.

Dates:
   Fridays from 2 November to 7 December 2001
Time: 10:00 to 12:00
Venue: Leiden

Should you wish to attend, please contact the ISIM secretariat. The final programme of the seminar as well as a list of participants will be sent to all registered participants by 5 October 2001.
A provisional programme is available at the following web address:

   http://www.isim.nl/isim/activities/seminar.html

New ISIM Ph.D. Fellows

Two new Ph.D. fellows joined the ISIM on 1 September 2001:
– Mujiburrahman (Indonesia): *Muslim Christian Relations in Indonesia (1967–1998)*.

Mujiburrahman aims to analyse Muslim and Christian responses to the government policy on (1) the Pancasila as the sole basis for all social organizations; (2) the application of Muslim personal law and religious education in public schools; (3) mission; and (4) interreligious dialogue. This study is based, among other things, on documents on government policy, writings of, and interviews with, Muslim and Christian intellectuals and preachers, and newspapers and magazines.
– Joska Samuli Schielke (Finland): *Mawlid Festivals in Egypt: A Study on the Description, Assessment, and Categorization of a Controversial Tradition*.

Throughout the 20th century, *mawlid* festivals have represented an epistemic as well as ideological challenge to Islamic reformist and modernist thought. Samuli Schielke intends to analyse the rhetorical conventions, central assumptions, historical roots, and popular reception of this controversy on *mawlids* in contemporary Egypt. Based on written sources and interviews, this study can provide important insight into the nature, commonplaces, and reception of cultural criticism in modern Islamic societies.

ISIM Publications

The ISIM has launched its ISIM Papers Series with the publication of *Islam, Islamists, and the Electoral Principle in the Middle East,* by James Piscatori, and *Thinking about Secularism and Law in Egypt*, by Talal Asad. The third of this series, John Bowen's *Shariʿa, State and Social Norms in France and Indonesia*, is forthcoming. The ISIM has also published the inaugural lecture for the ISIM Chair at Leiden University by Muhammad Khalid Masud: *Muslim Jurists' Quest for the Normative Basis of Shariʿa*.

These publications are available at the ISIM and can be ordered through the ISIM secretariat.

ISIM Fellowships

The ISIM invites applications and research proposals for various programmes. Applications from candidates in the social sciences, humanities, and religious studies will be considered. Applicants should be competent in academic English. The ISIM fellowships and their respective application deadlines include the following:
– *Ph.D. fellowships*
   (1 March 2002 and 1 September 2002)
– *Post-doctoral fellowships*
   (1 March 2002 and 1 September 2002)
– *Visiting fellowships*
   (1 March 2002 and 1 September 2002)
– *Sabbatical fellowships*
   (1 March 2002 and 1 September 2002)

For more information on the various fellowships, please consult the ISIM website:
http://www.isim.nl/isim/fellowships/

Application forms may be downloaded from the website or obtained upon request from the ISIM secretariat.

ISIM Senior Fellows

From September 2001, Michael Gilsenan (until December 2001) and Rudolph Peters (until February 2002) will join the ISIM as senior fellows with a view to furthering their current research:
– Michael Gilsenan (Department of Middle Eastern Studies, New York) is working on Hadhrami families' links around the Indian Ocean in the colonial and post-colonial periods. This research includes following a particular family from South Yemen to countries such as Indonesia, Malaysia, India and areas of East Africa, so as to establish individual trajectories and networks.
– Rudolph Peters (University of Amsterdam) is writing a volume on Islamic criminal law (ICL) as part of a seven-volume series edited by Wael Hallaq (McGill University) to be published by Cambridge University Press. Apart from a survey of doctrine of the *fiqh*, this project includes an analysis of the enforcement of ICL in the Ottoman Empire and Egypt and the present-day relevance of ICL, particularly its reintroduction in various Muslim countries.

Research Programme
MARTIN VAN BRUINESSEN

The Production of Islamic Knowledge in Western Europe

The ISIM is setting up a research programme on 'The Production of Islamic Knowledge in Western Europe', coordinated by Professor Martin van Bruinessen in cooperation with Dr Nico Landman of Utrecht University. The ISIM has organized a series of lectures (summer 2001 and forthcoming in autumn 2001) on the state of the art in this research area – to be published either in the *ISIM Newsletter* or separately as ISIM Papers. An annotated bibliography prepared through the concerted efforts of the ISIM, CNRS-Strasbourg, the University of Louvain-la-Neuve and other institutions, will soon be made available online.

In order to develop comparative research on the production of Islamic knowledge, co-operation with other research institutes in Europe is actively being sought. The *ISIM Newsletter* and website are made available for communication between researchers in this field. The ISIM especially invites applications for Ph.D. and post-doctoral research grants that fit within the programme. Applications are reviewed by the selection committee in October and March (see the website for further details).

Local versus 'universal' Islam

In all parts of the globe where it has taken root, Islam has developed local forms. This is not uniquely due to the retention of local pre-Islamic practices, which may gradually be purged by reform movements. Different regions may have their distinctive practices, the various Islamic institutions may play different roles, education and adjudication may be organized differently, and the interaction between the *ulama* and the state may proceed according to different patterns. Even within 'scripturalist' Islam, there is an undeniable regional variation, notwithstanding the claims of certain Western scholars as well as Muslim fundamentalists.

The Muslim communities of Western Europe constitute – with the exception of a relatively small number of European converts – diasporic communities, maintaining various types of links with their countries of origin and with similar communities in other countries. The social, economic and political situation of these communities differs significantly from that of co-religionists in their home countries. In daily life they encounter a whole range of new and different problems that demand an Islamic answer. The various 'host' countries provide different constraints and possibilities for the development of Muslim institutions, Islamic thought and Islamic practices. Inevitably European forms of Islam will develop, grounded in locally acquired knowledge of Islam.

Initially the sources for most of this knowledge were located elsewhere, either in the home countries of the Muslim immigrant communities or in other Muslim countries or transnational networks claiming to represent a purer, universal interpretation of Islam. Among the mediators we find imams, teachers and preachers visiting Western Europe, and *ulama*, intellectuals and journalists in the 'home' countries reaching out to the immigrant communities by mail and through print and electronic media. Second- and third-generation immigrants, however, tend to understand the language of the country of residence better than the languages of their parents or grandparents. The gradual shift from Turkish, Arabic, Urdu,

or Malay to English and other European languages as vehicles of Islamic discourse is likely to be reflected in changing patterns of religious authority as well as considerable changes in the discourses themselves.

During the last few decades, Muslims in Europe have produced a considerable amount of material on Islam in the forms of media (from newsletters to the internet). There is a multiplicity of voices, not only due to a variety of origins (different home countries as well as different currents within, for example, Turkish Islam) and variations in the legal and cultural contexts in the countries of residence, but also to complex patterns of social interaction. Although Turkish, Moroccan and Pakistani Muslims interact for the most part with Muslims of the same national origins, there is an increasing number of Muslim spokespersons and thinkers whose authority transcends ethnic and national boundaries. Terms such as 'Turkish Islam' or 'Moroccan Islam' do as little justice to the complexity of the developing discourses as 'Dutch Islam' or 'French Islam'.

The production of local knowledge

There are several interesting aspects to the processes under consideration that call for serious study. One of these concerns the production of local knowledge – a process that inevitably occurred wherever Islam was established outside its original heartlands. Islam emerged in a specific cultural and historical context of Arabia. When it spread to other societies and cultures, it underwent a dual process of *universalization* and *localization*. In order to adapt it to local contexts, the producers (and brokers) of Islamic knowledge had to first decide which elements of Islam as it existed in the original context were specifically Arabian and could be discarded, while retaining those elements that were considered essential and non-negotiable. This could be called the process of *universalization*, the separation of what was considered universal in the Islamic message from what was contingent. The second step, that of *localization*, meant adapting the universalized message to local customs and needs. This process of production of local Islamic knowledge continues as local traditions of Islamic knowledge develop.

The Muslim migrants who came to Western Europe brought Islam with them in many different local forms, including localized popular religious practices and localized references to scriptural authority. They too have to decide which aspects are negotiable and which have to be retained intact. Islamic knowledge in Western Europe is produced on the basis of 'universalized' versions of the local Islamic knowledge of the home countries and other prestigious centres. It is this process of abstraction as well as the process of adaptation of discourse to local conditions that constitute the focus of the present research programme.

Individual research projects within the programme may concentrate on the following aspects:

– *The development of European Muslim discourses:* projects may range from an analysis

of sermons or fatwas specifically issued at the request of Muslims in Europe, to debates in Muslim media or public controversies concerning Islam.

– *The contexts within which Islamic knowledge is being produced:* comparative analysis of the ways in which local contexts condition the production of Islamic knowledge. European countries have different policies concerning Islamic education, the admission of imams and preachers, Muslim media, associations of Muslims, etc., and different conceptions of the degree to which Muslim immigrants are expected to integrate and assimilate themselves.

– *Islamic institutions:* a third important perspective is that of the institutions in and by which Islamic knowledge is being produced or reproduced. These obviously include the mosque and Qur'an courses and institutes of formal or informal Islamic education, but also state schools. Muslim associations, broadcasting corporations and other media, and embassies of Muslim countries are to be considered. Since *istifta*, the requesting of an authoritative opinion, is such a central process in the development of Islamic knowledge everywhere, special attention should be paid to the various institutions that issue fatwas (including the electronic media).

– *The establishment of religious authority:* Who are considered as authorities whose counsel is heeded, and why? How do they establish their authority, and what are the means by which they attempt to consolidate it? Is a shift occurring from dependence on authorities in the countries of origin to reliance on authorities based in Western Europe? Mosque imams appear to be far more influential in the diaspora than in the home countries, at least in part because of the pastoral role and authority attributed to them by local governments and other institutions, and in part because of the different functions the mosque fulfils in the diaspora. What strategies are used to establish or to de-legitimatize the authority of certain imams? How and by whom can their authority be overruled? How authoritative are the Muslim thinkers who publish books and articles in European languages, and how influential are their writings?

– *Transnationalism:* another important perspective is the transnational dimension of the processes concerned. It is useful to distinguish the transnational relations of migrant communities and their homeland from those amongst migrants of the same cultural background living in various European countries, and even from the relations transcending ethnic or national boundaries as well as state boundaries.

States such as Turkey and Morocco are making great efforts to keep their (former) subjects under control, and they are actively promoting their respective official versions of Islam among the European Muslim communities. Oppositional religious movements from these countries use the relative freedom of Western Europe to spread dissenting messages among the migrant communities in various European countries in the hope of using these as a stepping stone for political action at home. A wide variety of *da^wa*

movements, from the puritan and fundamentalist to the *tasawwuf* oriented, are propagating rival versions of allegedly universal Islamic messages to audiences irrespective of ethnicity and nationality.

– *The ethnic dimension:* the major fault lines cutting through the Muslim communities in Western Europe are those of country of origin and ethnicity. (These two factors should not be superimposed, as the examples of Turkish-Kurdish relations and Arab-Berber relations indicate.) One would expect these factors to gradually decline in importance. Associations, networks and authority figures that attract members and followers across ethnic and national boundaries deserve special attention, for this is where European forms of Islam are likely to emerge.

– *The new media:* these and some of the 'older' media as well play a crucial part in the production of Islamic knowledge in Europe. Due attention should therefore be paid to the role of print and electronic media in producing Islamic knowledge. It is also important to discover to what extent the new media usher in new types and modalities of communication, and what this means for the contents of communication. Materials to be studied include fatwas and sermons (in all forms of media), discussion lists, chat boxes and websites on the internet, films or television programmes with religious themes, popular novels, soap operas and documentaries.

– *Production, reception and reproduction of Islamic knowledge in Western Europe:* the production of new Islamic discourses is only relevant insofar as these discourses also find acceptance by the Muslim communities in Europe. The reception of Islamic knowledge is a subject deserving serious research in itself. What does the second generation of Muslim immigrants learn about Islam, and what do the European converts learn? Where and how do they seek knowledge, which questions do they ask, and what answers do they find?

– *Islam as the living praxis of Muslims:* inevitably new practices are developing among Muslims in Western Europe in the fields of marriage and the family, economic enterprise, inter-religious relations, political empowerment, social security, and the relations with the state. Insofar as those concerned believe that these practices are in some sense Islamic or part of a Muslim culture with which they identify, they represent a practical knowledge of Islam, even though some of these practices may be at odds with scripturalist Islam as defined by the *ulama*.

Religion, Media and the Public Sphere

From 6 to 8 December 2001 the ISIM, together with the Research Centre Religion and Society, will hold an international conference on 'Religion, Media and the Public Sphere' at the University of Amsterdam. Since the 1990s, three themes have featured prominently in debates in the social sciences and cultural studies: the crisis of the post-colonial nation-state, the increasing global accessibility and proliferation of electronic media, and the rise of religious movements.

Taking as a point of departure that the nation-state no longer features as the privileged space for the imagination of identity, scholars have paid much attention to the crucial role that electronic media play in the imagination and constitution of new links between people and the emergence of new arenas of public debate.

If the nexus of media and the nation-state stood central in recent debates, the role of religion in the transformation of the public sphere has received much less attention. The decline of religion in the public sphere has been taken for granted as an intrinsic feature of modernity. The limitations of this stance came to the fore, of course, with the global rise of religious movements such as political Islam, Hindu nationalism and Pentecostalism. Driven by their will to make sense of the marked articulation of religious movements in, and their contribution to, the transformation of state-society relationships in post-colonial contexts, anthropologists and other social scientists recently have ventured into an empirical study of these dynamics.

The central issue to be addressed during this conference pertains to transformations in the public sphere, and the ways in which these relate to the proliferation of media and the liberalization of media policies, the upsurge of religion, and the crisis of the post-colonial state. Important in this context is the question of the usefulness and limits of the notion of the public sphere: How can this notion be made productive for a better understanding of the dynamics of the complex relationships between media, religion and the state? Topics to be discussed include the role of media and religion in transforming the public sphere, the changes which religious organizations and individual experiences undergo through processes of mass mediation, and the ways in which different forms of mass mediation impact debates about the public-private relation.

For additional information, please contact the ISIM secretariat or see the ISIM website:
http://isim.nl/isim/activities/seminarsconf.html

Islam, Women's Rights and Islamic Feminism

From 9 to 11 November 2001 the ISIM will hold a workshop on 'Islam, Women's Rights and Islamic Feminism: Making Connections between Different Perspectives'. Some consider 'Islamic' and 'feminist' perspectives as mutually exclusive or deny the need for an Islamic feminism with the argument that Islam as it is has already given women all their rights. An investigation of women's activism in Muslim societies through the prism of 'Islamic feminism' takes a different point of departure.

Rather than contrasting these terms, it points to the possibility of connecting perspectives grounded in feminism and Islam. Yet, simultaneously, it also brings to the fore that such a linkage does not come about automatically. Being involved in politics, Islamist women need to take a position *vis-à-vis* state policy and oppositional movements. Arguing in terms of Islamic concepts, they engage in debates with those claiming

positions of religious authority. Debating gender, Islamist women activists relate to women's daily-lived realities.

For this workshop a number of women scholars and activists have been invited who may describe themselves as Islamic feminists, as Islamic scholars adopting a women's perspective, or as women's rights activists in Muslim societies. Three sets of questions have been proposed as topics for debate. First, how does Islamic feminism relate to women's daily lives? What has been the impact of changes in women's position, such as women's growing access to education and formal employment, for the development of Islamic feminism? How do Islamic feminists deal with the possible tensions between *fiqh*

and family law on the one hand and women's changed lifestyles and realities on the other? Secondly, what is the impact of specific relations between Islam and the state on women's activism? What are the effects of the fact that Iran has had an Islamic revolution in terms of enabling or disabling particular forms of women's activism, and what has been the impact of the shift from revolutionary fervour to reformism for developments in Islamic feminism? Similarly, what are the effects of Islamism being an oppositional movement in most other Muslim countries (and its transformations through time) for Islamic women's activism? In what ways may Islamic feminism be considered a transformative force that impacts political

movements and structures of religious authority? Thirdly, how has globalization, both in the form of movements of people and images, impacted Islamic women's activism? Have international links of Islamic movements also created a particular space for women activists, and if so what have been the effects? How have Islamist women engaged with possibilities for international networking and in which ways have they dealt with the proliferation of means of communication and the development of new media?

For more information, please contact the ISIM secretariat.
http://isim.nl/isim/activities/seminarsconf.html

CONFERENCE REPORT

MAREIKE JULE WINKELMANN

The Construction of Female Identity in Muslim Modernity

On 29 and 30 June 2001 nine young female scholars met at the University of Constance (Germany) to discuss how female identity is constructed in various contemporary Muslim societies, and what constitutes this female Muslim identity. Sponsored by a special university programme aimed at the encouragement of academic research by women (Anreizsystem zur Frauenförderung) and in cooperation with the Forum of Social Research (www.socialresearch.de), Schirin Amir-Moazami (Department of Political and Social Sciences, Florence) and Wiebke Ernst (Department of History and Sociology, Constance) organized the workshop to give a panel of young scholars the opportunity to discuss their respective research projects with a view to this topic.

The papers that were presented and discussed during the two-day workshop addressed the theme of female Muslim identity from various angles. The main focus of the first day was religion and the challenge of modernity. Within this framework Margrit Pernau (Delhi) drew a fascinating comparison between the Muslim community in India and the Catholic milieu in 19th-century Germany. This comparison raised the question of how pious women, and their influence on the respective communities, could be viewed as an answer to the emergence of modernity in either (Indian or German) context. At the same time, by drawing this comparison between Germany and India, emphasis was also laid on the not so radical otherness of the Muslim

community in India, as very similar developments appeared to have taken place in the German Catholic church at that time. Hodah Salah (Mainz) then brought into view the women activists of the Islamist movements in Egypt. She argued that the discourse and daily lives of the women she interviewed reflected their empowerment through Islam, as they negotiate and re-define the traditional role models. Wiebke Ernst (Constance) presented the final paper of the day, shedding light on the very particular situation of the Xinjiang Muslims in China as a Muslim community that many would define as peripheral in terms of their cultural and geographical context.

The morning sessions of the second day were dedicated to education and the challenge of public representation. Linda Herrera (Oxford) presented her findings with a view to Islamic and secular education of Muslim girls in Egypt (see also *ISIM Newsletter*, 6, p. 1), showing how crucial the veil, and even more so 'downveiling' are as indicators of the constant struggle of women to gain greater freedom within the public space in Egypt. Following the author's paper on the emergence of Muslim women's education in late 19th-century India, Daniella Kuzmanovic (Copenhagen) introduced the cultivation of bodily ideals

among female students in Turkey. The issue of body weight and the ways in which young Turkish women regulate their weight initiated a discussion about self and other, as the physical ideal these young women strive for is influenced by the (Western) media and by ideas of the self that are linked with upward social mobility.

The afternoon sessions dealt with the challenges and strategies of incorporation of Muslim immigrants in Germany. Kirsten Wiese (Berlin) tackled this issue from the legal perspective. She showed what the possible outcomes of the debate on the wearing of headscarves by teachers in German schools could lead to. Schirin Amir-Moazami (Florence) presented some of the data gathered during interviews with young Muslim women in Germany, and Berlin in particular. In these interviews she asked when and why young Muslim women begin donning the headscarf, and in how far their form of veiling differs those from that of the earlier generations of their mothers and grandmothers. Finally, Sigrid Nökel (Bielefeld) discussed the construction of female Muslim identity in Germany. The life stories she presented focused on how this particular identity is shaped by the affirmation of the self as well as through public policy in Germany.

One of the recurring topics of discussion was the tension between tradition and modernity, as it became evident that even if a certain group of actors within a particular context makes a claim to tradition, the meaning attached to such (re)interpretations might actually represent a break with tradition. A second recurring topic was the plurality of meanings, interpretations, and identities, some of which the programme and participants in the workshop themselves reflect, but also with regard to the geographical spread of the topics chosen by the participants. The aims of the workshop, namely to sketch a differentiated picture of the complex forms and constructions of female identity in modern Muslim societies, which is a picture that displays antithetical dichotomies, and the attempt to scrutinize common stereotypes, were therefore accomplished.

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Family, State, and Civil Society
in Islamic Communities

The workshop on 'Family, State, and Civil Society in Islamic Communities: Legal and Sociological Perspectives', held in Florence, Italy, from 21 to 25 March 2001, was a follow-up of a previous workshop held in Berlin (see *ISIM Newsletter*, 6, p. 3). Both comprise part of a series of meetings, organized by the ISIM and the AKMI, which is devoted to relations between family, state and civil society in Islamic communities in the Islamic world and Europe. The 'Family, State, and Civil Society' workshop was hosted by the Robert Schuman Centre at the European University Institute in Florence as part of the 2nd Mediterranean Social and Political Research Meeting. The workshop directors were Abdullahi A. An-Na‹im (Emory University, Atlanta, Visiting Professor at ISIM) and Laila al-Zwaini (ISIM). Muhammad Khalid Masud opened the workshop.

Family law constitutes – next to penal law – the most controversial area of law in the modern Islamic world. Considering the salience of this topic, relatively little has been published in this field in Western languages. Comparative literature on family law developments, both in legislative texts and as applied by Islamic and secular courts, is scant. Furthermore, law in general – family law being no exception – is often left to students of law, and is thus not usually subject to social science approaches. With this in mind, the first ISIM/AKMI workshop on Islamic family law, entitled 'Family and Family Law in Asia and the Middle East', was aimed at creating a network of scholars currently based in Europe, who employ social science methodologies in the study of family law, its historical and regional developments and its interpretation by the courts.

The 'Family, State, and Civil Society' workshop proceeded towards a scholarly-practitioner's approach to the subject, with participants both from the West and from various Islamic communities. The workshop also forms the overture to the second phase of the Islamic Family Law (IFL) Project (see also:

www.law.emory.edu.ifl), and as such aims at clarifying the basic concepts, actors and processes of improving respect for human rights in this field, in addition to beginning to develop the contacts and resources needed for the practical implementation of the project. The ISIM/AKMI workshops on Family Law now constitute a forum of scholars from various disciplines together with practitioners, all of whom are involved in the latest developments in the reformulation of family law, the negotiation processes between state and civil society, the implementation of family law cases in courts, and informal practices of solving family matters, with special emphasis on the position and rights of women and children.

The workshop was subdivided into three themes. The first was 'The anatomy and internal dynamics of family, state, and civil society', devoted to outlining a comparative-theoretical framework of the three key concepts (family, state, civil society) with regard to their nature, context, and transformation in a local and global setting. The second theme, 'Tripartite interaction between family, state, and civil society', involved an analysis of the power relations, actors, determination and implementation of social policy, and dynamics of processes between the three 'social fields'. On the basis of a combined scholarly-practitioner's methodology, the last theme, 'Strategies for an internalized human rights approach to family relations', was aimed at drafting a frame of reference and strategy for the implementation of an internalized human rights approach to family relations in Islamic communities today, regarding issues such as equality and autonomy for women, protection of women against domestic violence, and children's rights.

Papers presented:
– An-Na‹im, Abdullahi A. (Emory University, Atlanta) & al-Zwaini, Laila (ISIM), *Rights at Home: An Approach to the Internalization of Human Rights in Family Relations in Islamic Communities*
– Bargach, Jamila (Ecole Nationale d'Architecture, Rabat), *Abandoned Children as a Human Rights Issue*
– Buskens, Léon (Leiden University), *Debates on the Reform of the Moroccan Code of Personal Status*
– Fawzi al-Ghamri, Mohammed Essam (Alternative Development Studies Center, Cairo), *Family Law in Egypt: Current Situation and Prospects of Further Development* (paper presented by Ivesa Luebben, Berlin)
– Hamzawy, Amr (Free University of Berlin), *The Arab Discussion on Civil Society: Between the Search for a New Paradigm of Democratisation and the Controversy on the Political Role of Religion*
– Moors, Annelies (ISIM), *Debating the Family: On Marriage, Materiality and Modernity*
– Murshid, Tazeen M. (Brussels), *Violence Against Women: Sexual Misdemeanours, Village Shalish and Shariah Courts in Post-Colonial South Asia*
– Rutten, Susan W.E. (University of Maastricht), *Islamic Family Law in Europe*
– Schulz, Dorothea (Free University of Berlin), *New Muslim Movements and the Struggle over the Reform of Family Law in Democratic Mali*
– Welchman, Lynn (CIMEL/SOAS, London), *Staking out the Territory: Family Law Debates in Transitional Palestine*
– Wuerth, Anna (Human Rights Watch, Washington), *The State, Activism and Social Class: Family Law Reform in Post-Unification Yemen*

A full report of the workshop has been drawn up by Nahda Y. Sh'hada (International Institute of Social Studies, The Hague) and will be published by ZED Publications, London. Apart from the contents of the papers, the publication will include a detailed account of the discussion, demonstrating the difficulty for an observer to distinguish during the debates whether activism or academicism was being voiced. The enthusiasm and devotion of the participants, the challenging realities they revealed, and the rigorous analyses they advanced, highlighted the fact that activism is a necessary conjunct to academia in this particular field. The participants were aware of the complexity of the subject matter, which prompted them to address new theoretical and methodological issues. With respect to issues such as the negotiation processes between state and civil society, the implementation of family law cases in courts, and informal practices of solving family matters, the discussion moved forward the analytical frames of the papers discussed. At another level, the workshop demonstrated a noticeable advancement in analysing the concepts used. It concerned changes in the broader context and conditions under which the discussion is frequently conducted – in other words, the workshop did not view the family, the state and civil society as predefined given units.

The third meeting of this series will convene in January 2002 in Morocco. Further details on this meeting will be made available on the ISIM website.

KAREN WILLEMSE

Muslim Communities,
Globalization, and Identities in Africa

From 18 to 20 April 2001 a number of scholars from Africa, Europe and the United States convened at the ISIM to present papers for the seminar on 'Muslim Communities, Globalization, and Identities in Africa'. The event ended an ISIM atelier that had commenced in February 2001 with four scholars: José van Santen (Leiden), Karin Willemse (Rotterdam), Cheikh Guèye (Dakar) and Shamil Jeppie (Cape Town).*

During the week-long meeting of the atelier in February, the four-member working group discussed various theoretical and methodological questions that could further enrich their own study of Muslim communities in Africa. This resulted in an exchange of ideas and debates on the uses of self-reflexivity (while also being self-reflexive), the role of memory, transnationalism and the meanings of space, and new ways of presenting academic research. The diverse regional and disciplinary orientations of the individual members enabled discussions that were both revealing and animated.

From this first week together the group arrived at four themes that they considered to serve as a basis for the subsequent seminar with a larger group of scholars. The themes were as follows: spatial and imaginary frontiers, the public sphere, identities, and texts and/in contexts. These were addressed in terms of current processes of globalization, the latter term being problematized as well. Within each theme a number of more detailed issues were enumerated. To address these issues invitations

were sent out to an international panel of speakers for the April seminar.

Given the limited time – from the end of February to the middle of April – in which the seminar was to be organized, it still managed to bring together a distinguished selection of both younger and senior scholars. Under the theme of the 'public sphere' speakers addressed, for example, the place of African Islamic scholarship (O'Fahey, Northwestern/-Bergen) or attempted a phenomenological reading of Islam in Senegal (Oumar Sy, Dakar). Hussein Ahmed (Addis Ababa) delivered a paper which looked at the development of the Supreme Council of Islamic Affairs in Ethiopia. The lives of women students at the University of Ngaoundere were presented through the medium of film by Habi (Tromso).

Film was the medium for three presentations during the seminar. In the session under the theme of 'identities' a video on the Baye Fall sect within the Mouride *tariqa* in Senegal was shown by Tshikala Biaya (Addis Ababa). This theme was also more or less directly addressed in the papers of three other speakers. Karim Dahou (ENDA-Dakar) compared reformism and Islam-state relations in Algeria, Senegal and Nigeria, while Nafissatou Tall (Nouakchott-Mauritania) focused on Qur'anic texts favouring the position of women in Islam. Adeline Masquelier (New Orleans) analysed the impact of the arrival of a new

'preacher', Malam Awal, in a small town in Niger.

Under the theme of 'texts and/in contexts' there was an analysis and performance of Somali women's poetry in colonial and post-colonial contexts (Lidwien Kapteijns, Wellesley College) and a compelling film about a Muslim capitalist in Cameroun (produced by Lisbet Holtedahl, Tromso/Ngaoundere).

The papers under the theme of 'spatial and imaginary frontiers' dealt largely with the recent history and impact of the Mouride *tariqa* (Cheikh Babou, Michigan) in its place of origin, Senegal, and beyond in places like Marseille, Tenerife, and New York. Papers dealt with the role of Mouride women traders (Eva Rosander, Uppsala), innovative ways of making financial transfers between countries by members of the *tariqa* (Mansour Tall, Dakar), and the transformation of religious practice in the context of migration (Sophie Bava, EHESS, Marseille). Gendered frontiers were considered in the case of the relations between master and disciple in the Qadiriyya and Tijaniyya *tariqa*s in Mauritania (Abdel Wedoud Ould Cheikh, Metz/Nouakchott). The concluding paper was presented by Ousmane Kane (Yale/St Louis, Senegal), who addressed the question of the relations between *tariqa*s and the state in West Africa. He examined the long history of relations between these formations and showed how important the *tariqa*s have

been for the state, especially in Senegal, while also pointing out that several *tariqa*s with West African origins have found roots in the United States. He ended with a plea for more studies on reformism and African Muslim communities, and asked a more general question about the discourses in which Islam in Africa is conceived. The language of analysis needs to more closely reflect the realities of the actors, Kane argued.

The seminar produced a great deal of insight into modern African Muslim communities. It also exposed the areas that are in need of more research. Both the atelier and the seminar, however, were exploratory and created opportunities for discussion about the state of the field. Future research activities of the ISIM will certainly include a focus on Africa.

Books
GERARD C. VAN DE BRUINHORST

Islamic Literature in Tanzania and Kenya

In January 2000, a trip was made to Tanzania to make an inventory of the locally produced Islamic literature. Through the financial support of ISIM, 500 titles were collected for the ISIM library. In October 2000, a 6-month fieldwork period was embarked upon, which allowed for the gathering of another 700 books, pamphlets, newspapers, magazines and ephemera in Tanzania and Kenya. In both countries some 30 bookshops (excluding the street vendors) were visited in 10 urban centres. The items in the collection are written in Swahili (approximately 50%), Arabic (30%) and English (20%). Apart from Gujarati and Urdu, which are sparsely used in East African Islamic publications, other languages seem to be of no importance at all.

PHOTO: GERARD VAN DE BRUINHORST, 2001

A bookshop in Dar es Salaam.

Swahili

During the fieldwork process a collection was made of both local productions and works translated into Swahili. Polemical and apologetic works were abundantly available in this language. Also the works on sexuality and biographies of prophets are very popular. Books on magic, however, are still published (and apparently sold) in Arabic. The collection contains only two Swahili tracts with practical advice on an Islamic *ruqya* in case of a *jinn* possession. Devotional literature is widely available and is mostly bi-lingual – Arabic and Swahili. At least six books explain how to use the 99 names of Allah most profitably. Because Swahili is the mode of instruction in Tanzanian primary schools and part of the curriculum in the secondary schools, the material used for 'Islamic Knowledge' (Maarifa ya Uislam) is entirely in Swahili. The 10th edition of the authoritative *tafsir* by Shaykh Abdallah Saleh al-Farsy (1912-1982), *Kurani Takatifu*, contains for the first time a transcription of the Arabic text in Latin script.

Arabic

Nowadays the local production of Arabic literature in Tanzania and Kenya is very limited. Remarkable is an evaluation report of the Islamic *daʿwa* in Kenya. This 80-page account of the current state of Islam is apparently written for an educated audience in the Muslim world. There is an Arabic book on Islamic and Christian relations (*siraʿ*, struggle is used) in Eastern Africa, published in 1999. Also in Arabic, but still extremely popular, is *Hidayatul-atfal*, written by Mazrui from Mombasa. This book on *fiqh* and other general Islamic topics has been introduced in the *madrassas* both in Kenya and Tanzania and is extensively quoted by many Muslims. In footnotes the author refers frequently to local, 'incorrect' practices. In order to gain more insight into the inexpensive popular literature, the imported Arabic books which were sold for up to 3000 Tanzanian shillings (2.5 US dollars) were purchased. The bulk of this collection consists of prayer manuals, devotional and *madrassa* literature.

English

The third important language in East African Islamic publishing is English, especially in Kenya. Here the official language of formal education is English, so all the books written for the subject of Islamic Religious Education are obliged to use this medium. Also, the Nairobi branch of the Islamic Foundation publishes books and magazines in English. The situation in Tanzania is quite different. English publications from Tanzanian authors are mainly written for an international audience. Dr Mohammed Said, for example, wrote a book on Abdulwahid Sykes and the role of Muslims in the struggle for independence. Likewise, the university lecturer, Hamza Mustafa Njozi, produced a work on the Mwembechai murders of 1998, when soldiers killed at least four Muslims in Dar es Salaam. Selling or even quoting the book in Tanzania is forbidden. From the non-local English works, a small selection was made, mainly of works printed in India. This category is therefore far from representative.

It is not easy to find bookshops. After closing time, they can hardly be recognized behind their iron gates. Even during opening hours there is no sign indicating the commodities that are sold inside. The mosque turned out to be a good place to start. During prayer times there are usually one or more book vendors opposite the entrance. These merchants were often most willing to indicate the location of bigger shops. Although getting information about petty traders was much more difficult, tracing them down was usually very much worthwhile. Old material, sold out in the ordinary shops, was often available on the streets and in smaller towns outside the capitals.

Staying in a bookshop resulted in valuable information. Not only were other researchers encountered, but also teachers from *madrassas*, individual scholars, and representatives of the main publishing agencies. Businessmen from Mozambique shopping in Dar es Salaam indicate that the spread of Swahili Islamic books is not limited to Uganda, Tanzania or Kenya.

Publications outside the mainstream of Islam have their own distribution system. An excellent place for Shiʿa material is the Bilal Muslim Mission in Dar es Salaam (more than 100 books and two magazines) as well as the Iranian cultural centres in the capitals. At the different branches of the Ahmadiya sects the first Swahili translation of the Qurʾan and many other books can be obtained, although very few written by local scholars. Their newspaper, *Mapenzi ya Mungu*, contains interesting data, especially on religious polemics.

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Production of Knowledge
SOPHIE BAVA

The Mouride Dahira between Marseille and Touba

Mouridism is a contemporary Sufi religious movement originating in Senegal at the end of the 19th century. Its founder, Sheikh Ahmadou Bamba, was exiled several times by the colonizers, who saw the movement as a danger to their enterprise. Initially trained in prayer and in working in the fields in the *daara*[1] and pioneers in the cultivation and sale of groundnuts in Senegal, the Mouride *taalib s* (disciples) became great merchants. The drought of the 1970s led them to organize new economic activities, notably those related to commerce, initially in Dakar and later in the cities to which they migrated.

Today Mouride migrants, found all over the world, lead a transnational commercial network that is linked to the brotherhood network (Mouridiyya) they transport to each city of migration. The latter is executed by the founding of *dahira*.[2] Circulating amongst several territories, these migrants transport knowledge and religious experience. A vital question to be dealt with is how this knowledge actually circulates and how it is recomposed between the local societies of the places of migration and the holy city of Touba.

The birth of an economic Mouride territory

The history of Marseille and the Senegalese migrants is a very old one, dating back to the Senegalese infantrymen and seamen who were generally recruited by maritime companies during World War II. The central quarters of Marseille were where the Mouride Senegalese merchants were to settle in the 1960s and 1970s. Here they joined the retired seaman and infantrymen, and the recently arrived African labourers, a situation that offered the merchants a base for their commerce.

The majority of the Senegalese migrants arriving in Marseille during this period were merchants who alternated between ambulating sales during the tourist season and labouring in the textile factories of Marseille during the low season. These merchants, living between a mobile and sedentary existence, comprised the great majority. During the 1980s some of them became wholesalers or (immobile) merchants, furnishing their more mobile colleagues with merchandise. It is thus that a network was organized amongst cities in Europe, Africa, and later America and Asia. Within these economic networks, in addition to the common affiliation to the brotherhood, a logic can be deciphered in the circulation, the inter-relational and transnational network, and the relationship between territories, juridical systems, and other non-Mouride individuals.

Taalib s awaiting S rigne Mourtada at the train station in Marseille.

The Mouride religious enterprise

The Mouride economic enterprise that was organized in various countries is the point of departure of yet another enterprise – a religious one – which de-localized and recomposed itself according to the fluidity of migrants and their migratory routes. These Mouride merchants in migration stimulated both the constitution of places of worship abroad and the elaboration of decentralized (i.e. with respect to Touba) rituals. Whi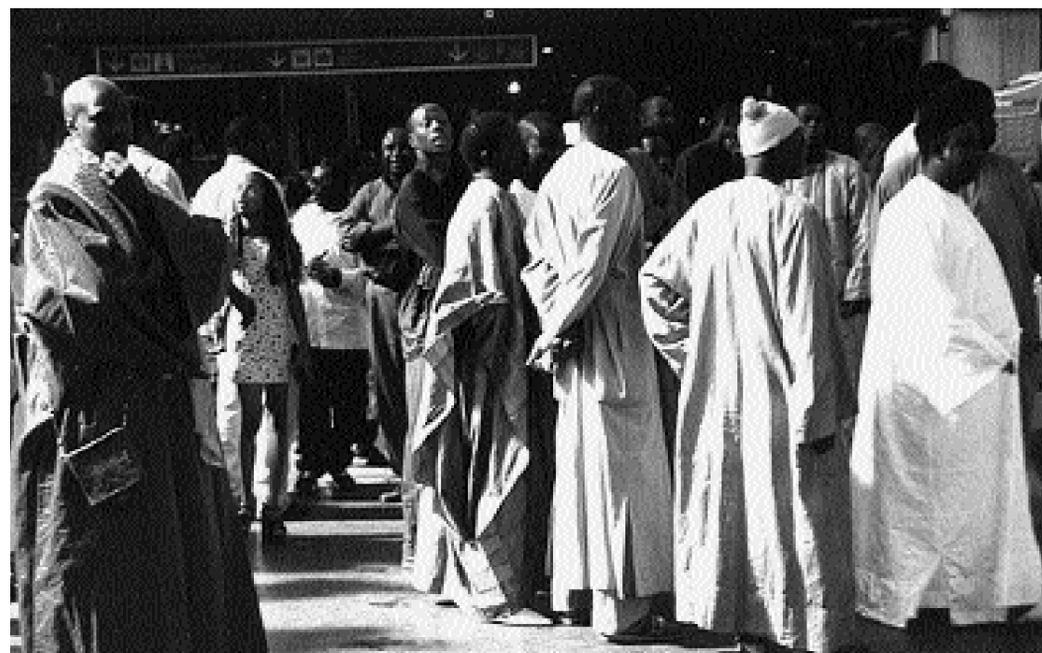le the central authority of the brotherhood is constantly called upon, the initial initiative came from the migrants themselves and from their need to maintain a bond (spiritual and material) with the holy city of Touba. Today the migrants readily transmit the religious and social knowledge proper to Mouride migrants in Marseille to their children and to the new *taalibés*.

Evolution of the Marseille-Touba *dahira*

The Marseille-Touba *dahira*,[3] found at the centre of the small islet of Belsunce, was referred to by the Senegalese in the 1980s as the 'Darou Salam' of Marseille.[4] This *dahira* was the result of one group of Mouride merchants anxious to have one central place for prayer,[5] a place at which they could also gather to organize debates, meetings, and *dhikr* sessions,[6] host passing marabouts, hold the *magal*,[7] and exchange both material and spiritual goods. The *dahira*, a simple room in an apartment, was created in the early 1980s. Every Sunday evening the merchants ritually united for prayer. The young merchants who had initiated the project conferred the management of the *dahira*, after a few generation-conflicts but also because they were too mobile, to the eldest of the Mourides, who considered themselves the most legitimate for the task.

During the last 30 years in France, these structures of hosting *taalibés* (the *dahira*) have changed. Not only have the spaces been transformed, expanded, and modernized, their very functions have also evolved. While their services were originally directed towards perpetuating the Mouride religious practices (recitations of the *khassaïdes*, *zikhr* sessions, organization of Mouride events such as the *magal* festival, receiving sheikhs, etc.), towards social monitoring of the Senegalese in France and towards the possibility of having a place to meet and exchange goods, the *dahira* today – while maintaining their original functions – are increasingly becoming cultural places: places where one can transmit the history of Mouridism and the translated texts of Sheikh Ahmadou Bamba to younger generations born in France, to converts or to non-Mourides. In this framework, the youth (students in France) often take charge in debates on Mouridism and politics, Mouridism and secularism, the commentaries of the *khassaïdes* of Sheikh Ahmadou Bamba, Mouridism on the internet and other social issues, allowing for the transmission and popularization of Mouride religious thought.

In recent years, only the major events have remained a unifying force for the Mouride migrants in Marseille. The influx and number of Senegalese migrants have decreased, and a power struggle between generations and over social and religious status has begun to play a role. According to the initiators of the *dahira*, who are younger but more educated: 'The elders only dealt with the prayers and the readings of the *khassaïdes*,[8] but the rest was not well organized.'

After an incident in the organization of a visit by Sérigne Mourtada Mbacké in September 2000, the members of the *dahira* found themselves mandated by the brotherhood to provide better organization. If this was not obeyed, the sheikh would never come again. Sérigne Mourtada is the son of Sheikh Ahmadou Bamba and brother of the current caliph, and the fact that he circulates between the different cities of migration makes him a sort of guarantor of the continuity and legitimacy of the various spaces invested by members of the brotherhood.

From the *dahira* to the federation

Following these events, those who had created the *dahira* decided to take affairs back into their own hands and to found a federation of all the *dahira* in the south of France. This implied 24 *dahira*, which meant approximately 3000 people, the seat of which would be in Marseille. The setting up of the federation is very interesting to observe as we can witness negotiations between Mouride merchants and students, alone or with their families in France: in short, groups that have neither similar plans for the future nor the same understanding of the brotherhood.

The first are the oldest merchants, who live alone in Marseille and for whom the *dahira* is a place that above all should allow for the development of Sheikh Ahmadou Bamba's work abroad and comprise a link with the holy city of Touba, but should also be a place worthy of hosting Mouride events. For them, leaving a legacy in France is of utmost importance, even if they focus strongly on Touba.

The others are those at the origin of the *dahira* who brought their families over, and who are preoccupied today with settling in Marseille and with the future of their children. For them, the *dahira* must provide a means through which their children can remain informed about Mouridism and through which they can maintain ties with their culture – thus a simultaneously religious and cultural space that will remain should they (the parents) return to Touba. They know many people in the local society and have always maintained links between the Mouride *dahira* and the local authorities when the Mourides organize events. They reproached the 'old' Mourides for not having done so and for always speaking in Wolof. They feel that in the face of this new mission sent from Touba, the words of the future president of the federation best express their views: 'We should not fight against one another, that is what I told them [the 'old' Mourides]. Now we have to unite for an international cause and especially for the children who are their future'.

For the *taalibé* migrants of Marseille, even if they are capable of being here and there at the same time, those who have their families with them are more or less anchored in France, mainly because of their children. The question is one of adapting the Mouride religious system in such a way that the migrants are accepted as much by the Mouride hierarchy as by the mayor of Marseille. The current problem of the migrants is the difficulty in giving sense to their migration, that is, in integrating the global Mouride religious project with the migrant culture and their dynamic, mobile way of living their religion with their local reality.

PHOTO: SOPHIE BAVA

Notes
1. A *daara* is a Maraboutic agricultural community in which one learns the Qu'ran in addition to working in the fields.
2. The *dahira* is an association that groups Mouride disciples either on the basis of Marabout allegiances or on the basis of the location at which they are found.
3. In Marseille there is a central *dahira*, the Marseille-Touba *dahira*, and other *dahira* formed on the basis of Marabout allegiances.
4. Considered the most important Mouride village (outside of Africa) after Touba. The very fact that this name is used indicates a way of expanding Mouride territory by conferring a sacred meaning to it.
5. In general, the Mourides prefer to pray amongst themselves at the *dahira* rather than at the mosque.
6. *Dhikr*: lit. recollection.
7. *Magal*: festival that celebrates an important event in the brotherhood. The most important *magal* commemorates the departure into exile of the brotherhood's founder, Sheikh Ahmadou Bamba, and is accompanied annually by a pilgrimage.
8. *Khassaïdes*: poems authored by Sheikh Ahmadou Bamba.

This article is an extract of a paper given at the ISIM in April 2000.

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Production of Knowledge

GERDIEN JONKER

Germany is becoming a multi-faith society at a rapid pace. The influx of foreign workers and a liberal policy towards fugitives and asylum-seekers made Islam the third religious force of the country. As immigrants become citizens, the Muslim faith is slowly being institutionalized. In public discourse arguments flare up, exposing a deeply felt contrariety between the Christian and Muslim faiths. On the part of the German general public, Muslim claims to particularity (places for prayer in schools, separation for biology instruction) meet with resistance, as Muslim activity is suspected of serving political, not religious aims. Questions are being publicly raised as to whether Muslim communities should be forced to adopt cultural ideals such as gender equality. The educational system offers a stage on which this battle over difference is acted out.

Connecting Muslim Knowledge
to the German School System

PHOTO: HANS JOACHIM MIRSCHEL

Cardinal Czerzinski receives different faith communities for tea, Berlin, February 2000.

For Germany's schools religious privatization, as signalled by American scholars, seems to be the only way to make Muslim particularity socially acceptable. Some thirty years ago, Peter Berger observed in America that the pluralization of religion inevitably led to the privatization of all religions.[1] The mechanism behind this societal re-adjustment seemed to be motored by the wish to live together in peace. When speaking about core religious questions in public, people from different religious faiths have begun to remodel their speech in order not to be offensive. Religious judgements have been transposed to a more abstract level, leaving the explicit religious component out. In public discourse, 'hot' topics like abortion, pre-marital sex, and homosexuality nowadays appear to be less under attack on religious grounds. Rather, their legitimacy is increasingly questioned with arguments that touch upon the supposed needs of society as a whole.[2]

The conditions

In the German Federal Republic the state maintains the lead in educational matters, seeking cooperation with those religious communities that it acknowledges. In this legislative arrangement, religious communities are only responsible for religious content. Everything else remains the responsibility of the state. Bremen and Berlin are exceptions as these two states have taken steps to confer religious communities the full responsibility for religious instruction in state schools including the organization of teacher training and the development of pedagogical methods. The state supplies material and financial support by providing buildings, heating and electricity and pays 80% of the teachers' salaries. After re-unification, most former socialist states decided that religious instruction should be once more the responsibility of the state, with the exception of Brandenburg where religious instruction was banished from public schools altogether.

Muslim communities who wish to play a part in public schooling have to adapt to this legal frame. This is accelerated by the way legislation is put into practice. As state money and responsibility is involved, the organizational model and educational content are heavily scrutinized by the court. Judges pose questions to determine whether an organization is really a religious community, whether it is able to cooperate with institutions of the state, and whether the content is genuinely a product of religious tradition (and not a result of political or ideological indoctrination). Particularly the last question shows a bias, one that has prevented Muslim organizations from entering the educational system to this day.

In fact, the intricacies of German jurisdiction on the freedom of religion present only part of the picture, the ongoing process of secularization comprising the other. Between 1965 and 1999 the percentage of churchgoers among the population of the former Bundesrepublik (West Germany) dropped from 75% to less than 30%. And, as the population of socialist Eastern Germany had been discouraged from religion for two entire generations, the total of non-practising Germans duly increased after re-unification. This development decreases the country's ability to speak about or even recognize religious matters at hand.

In public discourse, teachers unions, media and the majority of scholars as a rule express distrust of religious communities and sometimes declare religiosity a form of ignorance. When Muslim religiosity is at issue, many tend to see it as politics in disguise. Of course, there is a xenophobic component in their distrust of Islam. This is reinforced by representatives of various migrant organizations that promote laicist views. Kemalists, Alevis and others continue to stress that Muslim religious organizations are a threat to democracy. Not surprisingly, most Muslim religious organizations, but especially those that are involved in political issues in the home country – in this case Turkey – are suspected of serving the interest of Turkish political groups and consequently are accused of being dishonest in their motives for teaching religion in school. Part of the media accuses them of undercover extremism and indoctrination.[3] Churches, on the contrary, increasingly seek contact with Muslim organizations, seeing them as natural allies in presenting religious viewpoints in the public sphere.

The Berlin case

Germany counts 3.2 million Muslims, the majority of which are of Turkish descent (75%), predominantly adhering to the Sunnite (Hanifi rite) school. Due to a high concentration of immigrants from southeast Anatolia, in Berlin the picture differs. As a rule Kurds follow the Shafi'i rite and approximately 30% of all Kurds and Turks living in this city adhere to the Alevi rite, which is a different brand of Muslim religiosity alto-

gether. In the light of the German legislation, all Muslim communities have remained underdeveloped in terms of religious organization. The law expects religious communities to develop interior differentiation and to form expert groups, this being the only way in which state institutions are able to cooperate on educational designs.

In November 1998, the Berlin court decided upon nominal inclusion of the local Islamic Federation into the school system. The Islamic Federation is a single-purpose organization with the aim of providing the means for collective religiosity. It lays claim to representing all Berlin Muslims. As in other Muslim organizations, individual membership is rather low but the board of the Federation mirrors a wide spectrum of Muslim religiosity in this city. Out of the 71 mosques, 53 – including the Shi'ite and the Kurdish Shafi'i – gave written testimony to the fact that they feel well represented by the Federation. The Alevis of Berlin, however, deny the Federation's claim, as do all the Turkish citizen organizations whose members as a rule do not participate in mosque community life. However, the Islamic Federation does cooperate with the Milli Görüsh, a Turkish organization that claims to sustain Muslim life in general and for that purpose has set up youth and women's organizations within the Federation mosques. It also offers sustenance in economic networking and organizes summer schools and religious festivals. Kemalists, Alevis and the general German public demonstrate a strong distrust of the Milli Görüsh because of its (former) association with the Islamist parties in Turkey.

As yet, the court decision has not yet been turned into practice. Because of its connections to Milli Görüsh, the Federation has not been able to gain access to any of the Berlin schools. Moreover, it is still in the process of preparing teachers and schedules. Nonetheless, the 1998 court decision was an incentive for Muslims all over the country to develop educational plans and for local administrations to develop tools for communication.

Muslim organizations in Berlin, Hessen, Northrhine-Westphalia, Bavaria and Baden-Würthemberg, all agreeing upon the so-called 'Four plus One' formula (Four Sunni law schools plus one Shi'a) but excluding Alevis and Ahmadiyya, now have produced proposals for educational programmes. Furthermore, administrations of these states organized informal working groups as future instruments for cooperation. In Berlin, proceedings seem to be well under way. Its law on freedom of religion, being different from that of other states, allowed more room for religious partners.

The Berlin Working Group (of which the author is part) was established early in 2000 and consists of members of the Islamic Federation, representatives of Christian and Jewish teacher training programmes, representatives of the State School Authority, politicians and scholars. In its meetings the Islamic Federation explains its educational

plans and discusses particulars with those present. Core issues comprise inter-religious co-existence, flexibility in gender issues, individual rights and abstinence from political goals. As the Federation continues to cooperate with Milli Görüsh, doubts of its ability to solve these issues slow down procedures.

In this way, a proposal for religious instruction – the outcome of internal religious considerations – is being put to test by educational and religious experts, politicians and administrators who do not necessarily belong to the religious community involved. Of course other candidates, Jews, Mormons, Unitarians, and Humanists, now teaching in state schools were also questioned prior to admission. Questions aim to connect the school teachings of a particular religious tradition to the mainstream of Germany – including its secular tradition, emphasis on individual rights, or gender equality – which in itself comprises abstractions of diverse religious and ideological traditions and tendencies. As a consequence the predominantly Christian and secular members are in the position to define the main goals and methods. And where Muslims are concerned, non-Muslims often demonstrate a high degree of subjectivity.

For the representatives of the Islamic Federation, proceedings in the working group bear the consequence that they are obliged to make adjustments in the educational plan and also in places where their following expects clear religious instruction. To solve this problem, the proposal now sometimes resorts to 'humanist' reasoning. Those responsible now distinguish between what is communicated to the community and what is communicated to 'the outside world', including the public schools. Thus, whenever a topic appears to be very sensitive – different treatment of the sexes, or headscarves – it dissociates from strictly religious arguments and points to the responsibility of the individual believer instead. A shift to the privatization of religion can thus be seen taking its course. In the long run, this shift may well connect Islamic knowledge to the German educational system, and through this to the acceptance of Islam.

Notes

1. Berger, Peter (1969), *A Rumour of Angels: Modern Society and the Rediscovery of the Supernatural*, Garden City NY: Doubleday, p. 153.
2. Hammond, Phillip E. (2000), *The Dynamics of Religious Organisations*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 6.
3. The dominant positions are presented in Schreiner, Peter and Wulff, Karen (eds) (2001), *Islamischer Religionsunterricht. Ein Lesebuch*, Münster: Comenius Institut.

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Production of Knowledge
KRISZTINA KEHL-BODROGI

Alevis in Germany
On the Way to Public Recognition?

In the past decade, Alevis in Germany have stressed their distinctness mainly in terms of culture when negotiating with the majority society. Since recently, however, an increased emphasis on religion can be observed, which is not so much due to a regained strength of religiosity. It is rather a response to changed public discourses and an adjustment to the prevailing legal and institutional conditions. In Germany, the issue of immigration has been treated in terms of cultural difference since long ago, the religious identity of the mainly Muslim immigrants having nearly no impact on integration policy. Yet since the end of the 1990s, when attention was drawn to fundamentalist tendencies among the Muslim youth, the religious dimension of immigration has been brought to the fore.

Public debates on the implications of the Islamic presence in Germany gained a new impetus when – for the first time – a high court decision in February 2000 granted an Islamic organization (Islamic Federation Berlin) legal recognition as a religious community. According to the regulations, this organization now retains the right to give religious instruction at public schools. Since then, Islamic instruction has become a central issue of the integration policy.

Alevi response

The Alevis reacted promptly to this high court decision. Already three months later, the largest Alevi association in Berlin had applied for recognition as a religious community and for the establishment of lessons in Alevism at school. Since then, on behalf of associated organizations, the Federation of Alevi Communities in Germany (AABF) made similar applications to the ministries in four other federal states. If Islamic instruction is introduced, Alevis argue, the interests of their children too must be taken into account. Analogous to denominational Christian instruction, there should not be only one type of Islamic instruction. In fact, separate instruction should exist for Sunnism and Alevism.

In this reasoning, Alevism clearly appears as an Islamic denomination. Considering the unsettled debates in the Alevi diaspora over such a classification, as well as the rather secular attitude of the majority of its members, the unanimous Alevi support of the demand for religious instruction may appear surprising.

Indeed, the generating spirit behind the current mobilization appears to be the desire for the recognition of their collective identity, stigmatized under the Ottomans and officially denied in the Turkish Republic. Of equal importance is the will to delimitate themselves from, and to not be placed at a disadvantage with respect to, their Sunni co-immigrants. An observation recently made during a podium discussion organized by an Alevi association in Duisburg may illustrate the prevailing attitude: While the opinion that religion should be kept out of school was met with great approval, all those present stressed that if Sunnis are granted the right to religious instruction, the Alevis should strive for it as well. Furthermore, recognition of the Alevi community in Germany could also have an impact within Turkey. As one of the diaspora cadres put it: 'Our most urgent duty is to fight for legalization. Alevi religious instruction is a first step. If we succeed, Turkey can not continue to deny our distinctness.' Yet the new emphasis on religion is not merely strategic; it refers to inter-community developments as well.

Alevism in the diaspora

Though since the 1960s Alevis are present in large numbers in Germany, until the end of the 1980s they did not appear in the public eye as a distinct community. They were organized on the basis of political affiliation, ranging from social democracy to the radical left. The lack of community-based organizations reflected the decline of Alevism as a result of migration to the urban centres of Turkey – and subsequently to the West. The decline was also accelerated by a state policy unfavourable to the maintenance of heterodox traditions. The outcome has been a nearly complete breakdown of the social-religious structures and a halt to the transmission of the esoteric teachings from one generation to the next. Highly influenced by Marxism, the generation of the 1960s rejected religion, the guardians of which, the Holy Men, thus lost their function and authority.

The rediscovery of Alevi identity began in the mid-1980s as a result of the worldwide decline of the Left and the emergence of Islamism, which aggravated the historical Sunni-Alevi tensions in Turkey as well as abroad. The foundation of the first community-based association in 1989 in Hamburg was the prelude to Alevi organizations all over Turkey and Europe, which have become the backbone of an ethno-political movement striving for public recognition. Today, in Germany alone there are some 150 associations, the majority being combined in the AABF. Only a few of the associations show a clear religious orientation, most having preserved their indifference towards religion. Among the latter, the predominating view is that of Alevism as a 'culture', based on democracy, humanism, and equality of men and women. The term 'culture' is understood here as being in opposition to religion, which is associated with backwardness and fundamentalism, and particularly with orthodox Islam.

In the diaspora, there is a strong tendency to situate Alevism outside of Islam and even to underestimate its character as a *religious* community. In an inquiry on the most important features of Alevism recently made by the AABF, the majority voted for social aspects; the 'fight against injustice', 'high esteem for Man' and 'gender equality' ranking foremost. Religious issues such as the image of the Deity or rituals came far behind. The inferior role of religion corresponds with the lack of religious education in the associations, with the consequence that the youth is highly ignorant of the traditional belief system. Yet the Alevis increasingly recognize that religion – as the smallest common denominator – is the only bracket with which the community can be kept together. Lacking knowledge of the 'path', it is feared, the youth could experience a loss of identity as they find it difficult to maintain distinctness in a secular society in which they define themselves merely in terms of the Enlightenment. Regarding the lack of transmission of knowledge within the community, it is hoped that religious instruction at school will fill the gap left behind by the breakdown of traditional institutions.

How to teach Alevism?

There is no tradition of institutionalized learning in Alevism. In the past, the teachings were handed down orally within different Holy Lineages and passed on to the disciples in special ceremonies held a few times per year. Due to the orality and the often divergent traditions held by the Holy Lineages, it is difficult to speak of a single and coherent system of beliefs in Alevism. Yet this is exactly what is required today. In order to gain recognition as a religious community, the Alevis have to furnish proof of a binding religious authority, and a consensus in dogma and belief. So as to succeed in the current negotiations over religious instruction, a syllabus has to be presented: A first draft, prepared by the Commission for Religious Instruction of the AABF, was declared inadequate by the authorities and was given back for further specifications. Despite setbacks, the production of a basic textbook of Alevism is breaking new ground. Until now there has not been any conscious and organized effort to systematize and unify the diverse traditions of the community. Diasporic Alevism is thus putting itself under pressure to develop a teachable religion in order to meet the legal requirements.

One of the problems to be solved refers to that of authority. The AABF Commission consists of secular-oriented former leftists, all but one belonging to the 'laity'. As it can be concluded from the references given in the above-mentioned syllabus, they tend to depend on works written by Western scholars on Alevism, rather than on personal experiences or the knowledge of the Holy Men. The latter, though nowadays increasingly demanding a greater say in the affairs of the associations, are not likely to regain their former influence. They are often seen as old-fashioned, dealing with issues alien to the youth. In addition, the Holy Men have maintained the divergence in their treat-

ment of religious issues. 'Listening to them, we become only more confused', is a frequent complaint. In this situation, members of the highly secularized 'laity' are taking on the job of creating a new Alevi theology. However, due to ideological and political divergences among the associations, reaching a consensus remains a difficult task. Nonetheless, the joint struggle for recognition has already managed to bring together competing organizations: It lead to the putting aside of internal debates in order to reach an agreement on outward representation of Alevism as a branch of Islam. An agreement has yet to be reached concerning the contents of this future religious instruction.

In the meantime, a textbook on Alevism has been published in Germany, co-produced by an immigrant teacher and a prominent Alevi writer in Turkey.* As it circumvents awkward themes such as the deification of Ali or the widespread Alevi denial of the divine nature of the Qur'an, the book presents a picture of Alevism denuded of its most heterodox features. But even then, the book provoked the protest of the Turkish authorities, claiming that it shows Alevis to be of an 'other belief' (than Islam). This intervention pointed to the political dimension of the possible recognition of Alevism in Germany. Kurdish Alevis, on the other hand, criticized the book's strong Turkish nationalist attitude. These debates may be a foretaste of the future clashes over the syllabus to be presented to the German authorities in order to gain formal recognition.

Due to the legal and institutional conditions of the host society – particularly state recognition of religions – the Alevi politics of identity gained a new impetus in Germany. Yet as the requirements for recognition are basically derived from the Christian tradition of Germany, adjustment to them will undoubtedly cause further transformations in Alevism, the results of which are at the moment unforeseeable. Until now Turkey has been the intellectual centre of negotiations over Alevism. Thus not even half a per cent of the hundreds of books written by Alevis on Alevism in the last 15 years is the product of the diaspora. But because the teaching of Alevism at school in Germany is nearly at hand – in Turkey it is still out of sight – the focus could very well be shifted to the diaspora.
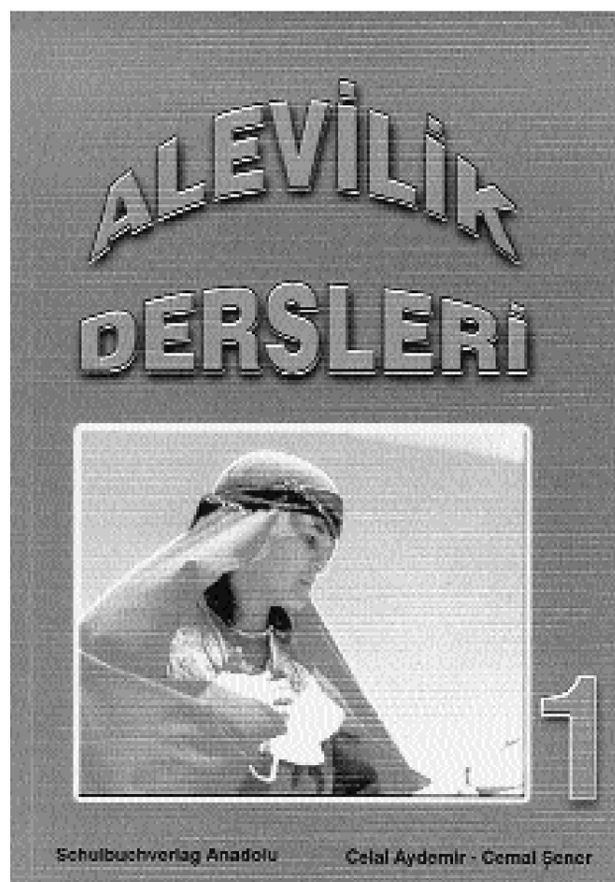
A first Alevi textbook for children.

Note
* Celal Aydemir/Cemal Şener (2000), *Alevilik Dersleri*, Hückelhoven.

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Islamist Discourse
MOHAMED ABUSABIB

Political Islam and the Arts
The Sudanese Experience

The place and definition of art as a human practice have proved to be a thorny problem – in theory and in practice – for Muslim thinkers, old and new, moderates and fanatics alike. The views of both parties are well known, but two features of the problem are of special concern to this essay: the relationship between Islamic teachings and the actual human involvement with the arts as an integral cultural activity; and the practical political move taken by the Islamists to tackle this problem. Here, the Sudanese case is significant in two respects. It is the first time that the Islamist movement has seized power in a dominantly Sunnite, Arab League member state, and it is also an African country that exhibits in its political, social and cultural texture all that has rightly acquired it the description of African microcosm.[1]
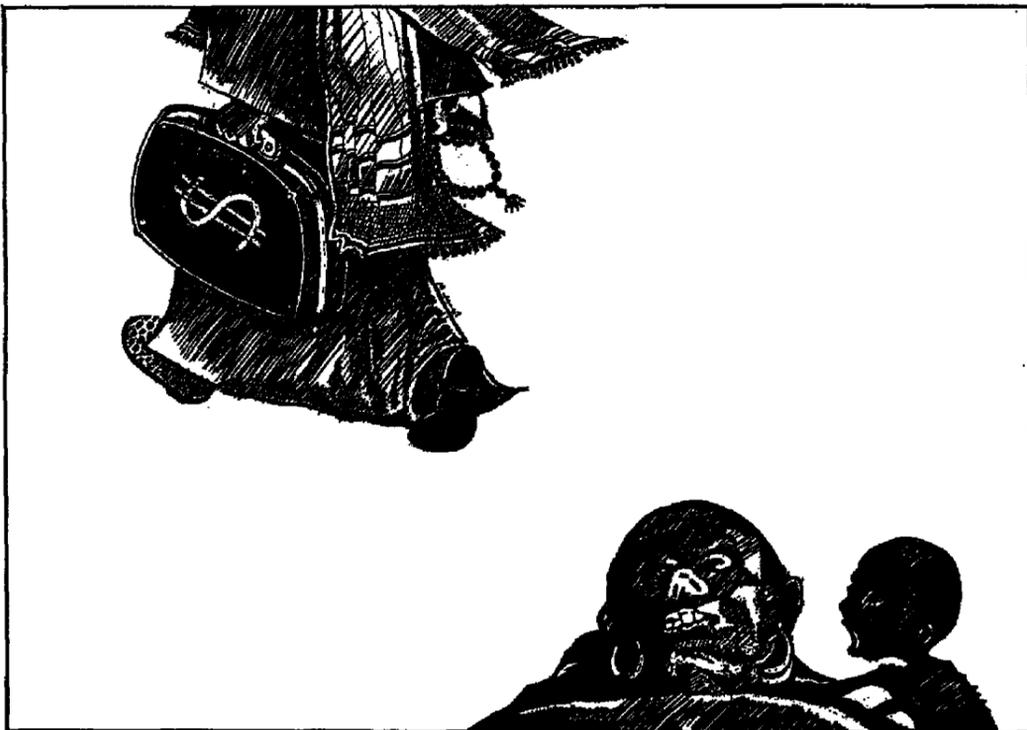
ARTIST: MOHAMED ABUSABIB

The vampire.

Sudanese societies, under the present Islamist rule, have come to experience an extreme form of entanglement of the three major components of culture: politics, religion and the arts. In the early 1980s Dr Hassan al-Turabi, the Islamist ideologue and leader of the National Islamic Front (NIF), laid the theoretical foundation and suggested the practical guidelines for what he construed as true Islamic involvement in the artistic phenomenon.[2] Those guidelines were put into practice by the present government after the military coup of 1989, which brought the NIF to power.

The baseline in Al-Turabi's discourse on art is the doctrine of unicity, *tawhid*, as the main Islamic principle that determines the place and meaning of beauty and art. Citing the Qur'anic verse, 'We have decked the earth with all manner of ornaments to test mankind and to see who would acquit himself best' (18: 7), he describes beauty and art as seductive and distracting from God, and states that we either indulge in them or transcend them. He regards art as a sensuous reaction incompatible with rationality and conscious devoutness to God; like rule, economy and sex it is lustful; it is free, unruly and far from being an objective system or a social function that serves the general welfare.

But art, as he puts it, occupies a wide space in modern society and thus should not be ignored. If it is handled properly, he maintains, it can open a door for religiousness enhanced by the magnetic effect of beauty.

To solve this problem, Al-Turabi adopts a pragmatist approach. He criticizes the legacy of Islamic jurisprudence on art for being indolent, negative, and tending to repel the artist from religion. The alternative to this jurisprudence, as he perceives it, is what he terms the 'method of jurisprudence principles', in the sense that the jurisconsults should not build on absolute legal opinions about special cases. He exemplifies this by the following principles:

– The making of beauty is sanctioned by the Shariᶜa.
– The creation of beauty should be directed to the worship of God.
– Whatever distracts from the worship of God is nullity and if it contradicts worshipping it is forbidden.
– The greatest sins in Islam are polytheism, worship of idols and embodiment of glorification, such as statues of leaders and prominent personalities.
Then Al-Turabi suggests some guidelines for how these principles can be implemented:
– It is possible to unite and blend religious and artistic practices because both of them are symbolic practices aiming at transcending world realities to reach a higher ideal.
– Art can be deployed as an effective ideological vehicle.
– In the first stages of Islamic jihad and revolution all artistic resources must be deployed for the sake of God.
– Inherited jurisprudence on art is to be reconsidered.
– The present traditional and modern artistic practices are to be re-evaluated because they carry pre-Islamic (*jahili*) values as well as ills of Western civilization.
– There should be a creation of the religious artist who would be able to produce 'true Islamic art'.

Practical measures
The Islamist strategy is to have the entire artistic enterprise monopolized, manipulated and transformed into a religious practice. In part one, article 12, under 'Sciences, Art and Culture' and article 18 under 'Religiousness', the constitution of 1998 affirms the commitment of the state to encourage all forms of art and strenuously seek to elevate society to values of religiousness to be directed towards the grace of God in the hereafter.[3]

This constitutional formulation is, in fact, a codification of administrative measures that were already put into effect by the regime in its first years. The appointment of loyalists to leading positions in art institutions, universities and the mass media, the banning of literary and art unions such as The Sudanese Writers Association, and the formation of an alternative organization expected to play a central role in promoting religious art, are some examples of these measures. The outcome includes a sharp decline in the quantity and quality of artistic production in the country, and the voluntary or forced immigration of artists to other countries. According to estimations of the Musicians Union, more than 200 singers and professional musicians left the Sudan in the first years of the regime. The majority of qualified teaching staff in art institutions either were dismissed or forced into early retirement, or chose to resign instead of tolerating unacceptable educational policies of the so-called Islamization of the arts. In general, the culture of parasitism with its sophisticated politics, which is now deeply rooted in Sudanese political life, has already tainted the artistic field, and mediocre artists of every kind are now dominating the artistic scene.

The ideological dimension
The ideological aspect of this Islamist programme is significant in many respects. Firstly, the place of Al-Turabi in the Islamist movement is likely to turn his vision on art into a 'classical' reference for political Islam not only in the Sudan, but in other Muslim societies as well, particularly in Africa given the relations and contacts the Sudanese movement has already established with them. Secondly, it is the first time that a fundamentalist jurisprudential opinion is unequivocally incorporated by the Islamist movement into a comprehensive political agenda. Hence it enables the state to try to use the artistic medium in its strategy to impose a pan-Islamic identity on the multicultural and multi-religious Sudanese society. Thirdly, the Khatmiyya and the Ansar sects, which form part of the Sudanese religious institution and still play a major role in Sudanese politics, never attempted this kind of theorization on art. They are Sufi orders that turned into political sectarianism and adopted conservative visions and rightist policies without having any elaborate political or cultural programme, something that has made it possible for a more intellectual Islamist movement to try to fill in the gap in religious discourse on art. And, the very nature and history of the Sudanese Sufi institution do not allow for such jurisprudential interference in such delicate cultural matters.

Another ideological aspect is that the initial tying of artistic creation to the Islamic principle of unicity is designed to curb its capacity as an effective critical tool. Also, if art is to be based on this principle then any opposition to measures associated with this conception must eventually lead to its antithesis – that is, heresy.

But one serious ideological consequence is the phenomenon of vandalism. Destruction of sculptural works and statues of historical personalities is now quite frequent. Another version of vandalism is that some brainwashed singers declared their 'repentance for singing' and sought to recover and destroy their previous records. Even more serious is the type of official vandalism practised by the Islamist authorities. The director of the cultural section of Sudan television has stated that '[t]he banning of some songs is in accordance with the general policy of the state to establish genuine creative works of art and culture and purge them of all blemish.'[4]

Finally, terrifying rumours were widespread in the mid-1980s that the Islamist establishment, in collaboration with the Minister of Culture and Information in the Cabinet of Sadiq al-Mahdi of the Ansar sect, was considering the elimination of the Sudanese archaeological heritage assembled in the National Museum. He backed down only after local and international bodies started to move.

The aesthetic dimension
The Islamist discourse on art reflects a kind of epistemological arrogance. The vast knowledge accumulated by the humanities and social sciences in this area is simply ignored. The Islamists so easily abstract culture into religion and then accommodate art to it after having it 'purged of non-religious stuff'; hence taking a major risk as they hinge the whole project on a bid to transform art into a religious pursuit. And while as predicted they failed to create the 'religious artist', they did not anticipate the consequences of their policies.

It follows that the role of art as a multi-purpose component of culture deeply rooted in the social realities of the people is irrelevant to the Islamist paradigm. In the African context, the question of art simply transcends a wearisome jurisprudential wrangling over Qur'anic texts and Prophetic Tradition on art. As manifested in the practices of Muslim and non-Muslim Sudanese, art is an integral part of a cosmological outlook. It is instrumental in the preservation, promotion and enrichment of the life of the community, as well as in resolving delicate socio-cultural and psychological situations, thus helping both the group and individuals maintain a healthy and balanced way of life.

Notes
1. Sudan is home to more than 500 ethnic groups, speaking about 132 languages. The country comprises a mixture of Muslims, Christians and followers of African religions.
2. Al-Turabi, Hasan (1983), 'Hiwar al-Din wa al-Fan' (Dialogue of Religion and Art), *Majallat al-Fikr al-Islami*, No. 1, Khartoum: The Islamic Culture Group, pp. 41-64.
3. Draft constitution of the Republic of the Sudan, the authenticated English translation of the Arabic version (1998), p. 2.
4. From an interview with the director of the cultural section, *Al-Fajr Newspaper*, No. 1, 14 May 1997, London.

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Counter-discourses
CHRISTÈLE DEDEBANT

'Mughal Mania' under Zia ul-Haq

As the first nation created as a religious asylum, Pakistan has a short but tormented history of fifty-four years, half of which was controlled by a military regime. Founded in the name of 'Islam in danger' by Muhammed Ali Jinnah (1876-1948), Pakistan officially elected Islam as the religion of the state in 1973, during the tenure of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto (1928-1979), the first popularly elected Prime minister of the country. Bhutto was arrested and hanged by general Zia ul-Haq (1928-1988). While the Islamization rhetoric of Bhutto was characterized by its mixture of socialism, nationalism and populism, the discourse of Zia ul-Haq appeared to be of a much more straightforward military-Islamist type. In opposition to his rule, a counter-discourse developed in which Mughal heritage was revived.

Without going deep into details of the selective brand of Islamization the state promoted, let us say that the regime was above all a dictatorship: eleven years of military rule (1977-1988) that ended only with Zia ul-Haq's death. Zia's Islamization programme was mainly twofold: Firstly, it comprised a deliberate attempt at reforming selective aspects of the penal code inherited from the British through the Hudood Ordinances (1979), the Law of Evidence (1984) and the Blasphemy Law (1986). It was then a kind of juridical *bricolage* that tended to harm above all women and religious minorities. Secondly, it used propaganda through the media (television, radio, and schoolbooks) in favour of religious education, Arabization (Zia ul-Haq himself put on an Arabic accent when he was speaking in Urdu), sanctity of the mosque, canonical Islam, and women's modesty (veiling, restriction of the image of women in commercials and cinema). During the 1980s, Pakistan's national television was notorious for John Wayne movies: a homosocial universe where, except for the saloons, women were virtually absent.

Stitched to Order.
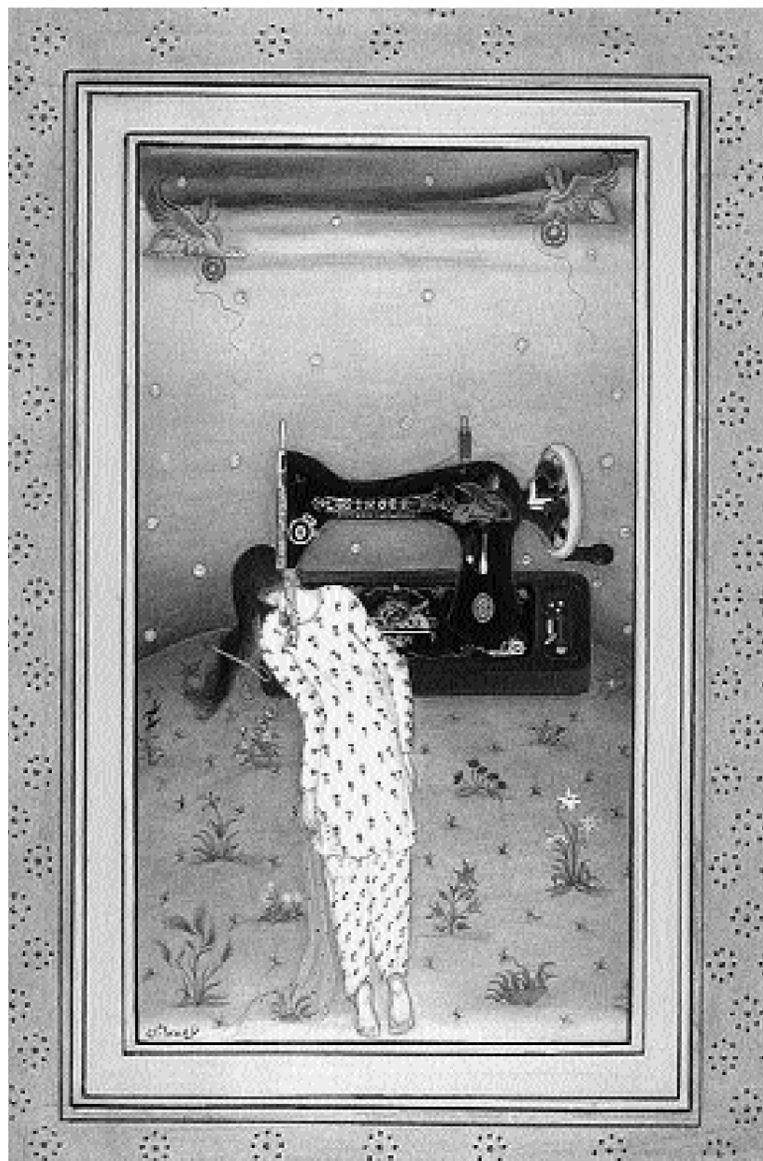
ARTIST: SADIA AMIN

Pakistani society responded to the state Islamization process at different levels. Some – extremely vocal – women's groups, intellectuals and journalists spoke out against the policies, but among them were also animators of the media scene (dancers, painters, music bands, fashion designers, etc.). The latter is a universe which, as a matter of fact, cannot do much without women or the image of women. It was in the 1980s, at the zenith of Zia's dictatorship, that the trope of the Mughal Empire, or rather a specific reflection of the lost Mughal splendour, became a kind of *passage obligé* for a certain section of the media.

It should be noted here that the Timurid dynasty, widely known as the 'Mughal' dynasty, founded by Babur in the mid-16th century, dominated India politically until the 18th century and culturally up to 1857 (which marked the Sepoy Mutiny). But by the second half of the 19th century, effective Mughal power was no more than a memory. What is now considered Pakistan was then at the periphery of Mughal India, the heart of which was Delhi, Fatehpur Sikri and Agra (located in present-day India). The flamboyant exception was Lahore, which for 13 years (1585-1598) was the main seat of the 16th-century Great Moghul Akbar (1542-1605) and one of the major imperial cities during the Mughal period.

The 'Mughal miniature'

The most prestigious art school in Pakistan, the National College of Arts (NCA, a 19th-century institution built by the British), became one of the centres for the revival of the Mughal nostalgia during Zia ul-Haq's era (when non-figurative art and calligraphy became the dominant ideological style). Miniature painting was the epitome of this attempt at revival – not, of course, that the reproduction and merchandising of the so-called 'Mughal miniature' were entirely new. In the 1970s, for instance, under Zulfikar Ali Bhutto the reclamation of traditional Mughal style became a part of the nationalist rhetoric and the miniature was regarded as the perfect gift for visiting dignitaries.[1] But it was definitely under the regime of Zia ul-Haq that 'Mughal mania' really took off at the NCA, where art was promoted as a major study, a department in its own right.

The NCA, which is a semi-governmental institution, always stood as a bastion of liberalism (or objectionable *laissez-faire,* according to one's convictions). It is a co-educational institution where the golden youth of the country mix freely, female students and teachers never donned the veil (even at the peak of Zia ul-Haq's regime); short hair (for girls), tight t-shirts and cigarettes are commonplace. In short, in a milieu where study of nudes is compulsory as a part of the curriculum, the NCA was considered to be at the forefront of 'westernization'. Hence the importance of this concept of 'endangered Islamic tradition of miniature art' vocally promoted by the teachers from the 1980s onwards. However, the students, especially the current generation of graduates, are more than keen to shake the model of reference. While portraits of the 'Great Mughals' (Jehangir, Shah Jahan, etc.) are still produced, exhibited and sold, and the production technique is as close as possible to the original, the graduates from the miniature department have also produced a great deal of avant-garde or *engagé* work. For example, the miniature entitled 'Stitched to Order' (Sadir Amin, 2000) reads as a critique of development programmes for women, which identified the sewing machine as the key to emancipation.

The empire strikes back

During the Zia years, the fashion scene went through a tremendous change as well. If 'truly Islamic' calligraphy was the regime's motto in the art scene, the anti-sari campaign (the sari being seen as Hindu and non-Islamic in origin) as well as anti-Western dress propaganda (Western dress being seen as repugnant to tradition) were very active in the 1980s. In the glamorous fashion scene, the glittering splendours of the lost empire were particularly revived, but not of course without a heavy dose of eclecticism. In a country where the vestiges of Muslim grandeur are more likely to be found next door (in India), Pakistani fashion designers created a fantastic repertoire where the intricate, so-called 'Mughal' embroidery (brocade, gold and silk) coexisted with a kind of pastoral evocation and pseudo-mystical inspiration: colourful cotton peasant dress, ethnic jewellery and even the accessories of religious mendicants (such as amulets 'recycled' as necklaces). In short, at a time when, following (or competing with) the government rhetoric, Arab-style ʿabaya and *hijāb*, Iranian-style *chādar*, and the South Asian tight and covering *duppatā* (veiling) became more and more visible in public spheres, the urban fashion scene was celebrating the flamboyance of the Mughal court, the colours of the countryside and the mystical light of the Sufi saints. Such an outcome would be fruitfully evaluated through the problematic of hybridization, or *métissage* as it recently has been developed in contemporary research.[2]

Cosmetic though it may seem, this selective appropriation of the 'ethnico-mystical-historical' register was very much in accordance with the strategy of certain opponents to Zia's regime. Against the centralized state-sponsored Islamization, many intellectuals opposed to Zia ul-Haq's dictatorship used the Sufi poets of the Sind and Punjab as a political device to show how much these figures of traditional Islam (or traditional religiosity) had been the champions of the people's cause and the adversaries of tyranny. That this interpretation might be somehow anachronistic and historically inaccurate is not of concern here. The purpose is to show how a kind of counter-discourse – advocating the periphery rather than the centre, pluralism rather than a singular dogma, traditional mystical poetry rather than universalist *shariʿa* – an alternative way of presenting 'authenticity' which does not necessarily deny but rather questions the state's propaganda, became an extremely powerful force during Zia's time.

It is ironic that more than 150 years after the collapse of Muslim rule, the empire or (the vestiges of the empire) struck back in certain Pakistani media. Now, this consumption and reconstruction of the past is in accordance with what Hobsbawm has described as the 'invention of tradition'. Admittedly these mediatic spheres were – consciously or unconsciously – bypassing the censorship board (which the Islamists successfully invested in the 1980s) by using a historically defined, profane, mundane, but nonetheless resolutely Islamicate register. The concept of Islamicate, as coined by Hodgson, implies a repertoire 'referring not directly to the religion, Islam itself, but to the social and cultural complex historically associated with Islam and Muslims, both among Muslims themselves and even when found among non-Muslims'. As he rightly puts it, '[…] much of what […] Muslims have done as a part of the "Islamic" civilization can only be characterized as "un-Islamic" in the […] religious sense of the word'.[3] And indeed, against the constant criticisms of westernization and violation of tradition, the strategy displayed by the animators of the media scene paid off (and to a certain extent still does).

Beyond the fear of the censor's scissors, in a young nation like Pakistan (the *raison d'être* of which is still a matter of polemic) this inventive derivation of a prestigious Muslim *grandeur et décadence* allows, in Hobsbawm's words again, 'to establish continuity with a suitable historic past'.[4] The strategy has also become a quest. Through the media and artistic space, Pakistani creators seem to have presented a more pluralistic view of what being a Muslim and a Pakistani could mean.

Notes

1. Whiles, Virginia, 'Miniature Painting in Pakistan Today', lecture at the EHESS, Paris, 10 January 2001.

2. See for example, Amselle, Jean-Loup (1990), *Logiques métisses, Anthropologie de l´identité en Afrique et ailleurs*, Paris: Payot; and Gruzinsky, Serge (1999), *La pensée métisse*, Paris: Fayard.

3. Hodgson, Marshall G. S. (1974), *The Venture of Islam: Conscience and History in a World Civilization*, Vol: I, Chicago, pp. 57-59. See also Mukul Kesavan (1996), 'Urdu, Awadh and the Tawaif: The Islamicate Roots of Hindi Cinema', in Zoya Hassan (ed.), *Forging identities: Community, State and Muslim Women*, Karachi: Oxford University Press, pp. 244-257.

4. Hobsbawn, E. J and Ranger, T. (eds) (1983), *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 1.

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Orientalist Imagery
REINA LEWIS

Cross-cultural Dressing in the Late Ottoman Empire

Cross-cultural dressing is usually seen as a Western activity, but elite Ottomans would have been by the end of the empire perfectly accustomed to wearing Western clothes – something which challenges current theories about cross-cultural dressing. The following considers photographs of cross-cultural dressing in books written by two friends: the Ottoman Zeyneb Hanum, who with her sister, Melek Hanum, collaborated with Pierre Loti on his novel, *Les D senchant es*, and the English feminist and Turkophile, Grace Ellison. Zeyneb Hanum's epistolary account, *A Turkish Woman's European Impressions* (1913), was edited by Ellison, whose own story of visits to Turkey, *An Englishwoman in a Turkish Harem*, appeared two years later in 1915. In both books the authors appear cross-culturally dressed, yet the images register very differently.

▲
'An Englishwoman wearing a yashmak (veil)', in Ellison 1915. By permission of the British Library (shelfmark 10125 bb32).

'Zeyneb in her Paris Drawing-room', in Zeyneb Hanum 1913.
▼

Within Orientalism's fantasy logic about the forbidden harem, women writers could claim an insider's knowledge prohibited to Western men. But, as Ellison knew, associating oneself with a realm so relentlessly sexualized in the minds of the West was also risky: 'To the Western ear, to be staying in a Turkish harem sounds alarming, and not a little – yes, let us confess it – improper' (Ellison 1915, p. 2). Although this closeness to the object of study might prohibit a mode of detached scientific neutrality otherwise desired by European women, Ellison welcomes the proximity permitted by cross-cultural dressing when the privileges of passing gain her access to religious sites:

… now I am wearing a veil who can tell whether I am Muslim or Christian?… [But] how could I, even as a veiled women, take my place amongst the women … I was just a little frightened; my action might be mistaken for irreverence.

(Ellison 1915, pp.162-4)

But she is all laughter at having fooled some Europeans.

Just before we reached our carriage I saw a dear friend… escorting some English visitors round… She recognised my voice, and I was introduced as a Turkish lady to my compatriots.
I felt just a little guilty at their delight in meeting a real *Turkish woman, but it was too dangerous to undeceive them in those fanatical surroundings. "And how well you speak English too!" they said. "English was the first language I spoke," I answered truthfully. I wonder whether Miss A. ever told them who I really was?*

(Ellison 1915, p.169, my emphasis)

Yet though Ellison delights in being mistaken for a Turk, the narrative also marks out her distance from her Oriental objects of study, often by referencing her attempts to 'capture' Oriental women in photographs.

There is a beautiful old woman in the household whom I long to "Kodak". Once I thought I "had" her… but she noticed me, alas! then cursed, screamed, and buried her head in her roomy pantaloons. I shall not try to repeat the experiment.

(Ellison 1915, p.183)

Not only did the new technology of photography develop coterminously with the new investigative social sciences of anthropology and ethnography, it also became an established part of the fieldwork process – classifying, conceptualizing and visualizing 'other' peoples. For Ellison, the Orient's enchanting distinctiveness becomes exasperating when it thwarts her ethnographic and scopophilic desire to gather photographic evidence: she finds members of her hostess's entourage to be 'most fanatical' in their insistence that photography is forbidden by Islam (though photography was, in fact, increasingly available in Istanbul by this period). Defiantly entitling her book *An Englishwoman in a Turkish Harem*, Ellison fronts it with a photograph of herself, 'The author in Turkish costume', in

'native' dress – her hair covered by a *tcharchaff*, her face unveiled. The Ottoman clothes are identified as 'costume', rendering 'native' clothing as timeless and archaic rather than as modern fashion, further endorsing the sitter's racialized identification.

Grace Ellison is identified as 'the author' at the head of the book, yet in another plate, 'An Englishwoman wearing a Yashmak' (see photo), the identity of the woman as well as her face is allegedly veiled. But it is clearly Ellison and her face is still clearly visible, being only partly obscured by the *yashmak*. If the logic of the veil is that one cannot identify the wearer, why does the caption to 'An Englishwoman wearing a Yashmak' identify the nationality or race of the subject but not her name? Passing only makes sense if it can be based on the transgression of clearly fixed boundaries of racial and cultural difference. So Ellison, secure in her position as an 'Englishwoman', can be thrilled when she hoodwinks people into thinking that she is Turkish, just as she plans to hoodwink her readers who open the book expecting one thing (disreputable 'smoking room' tales of polygamy) and get another. By presenting herself though photographs and prose as willingly acculturated to Turkish life, Ellison suggests the positive aspects of haremization and keys into a mode of surveillance based on invisible voyeurism. Whilst the book pictures elite Ottoman women's adoption of Western fashions, Ellison herself only appears *à la turque*. Her presence in English dress would be too anti-exoticizing, would too much trouble the transculturating drive of the book.

European harems
The reverse side of cross-cultural dressing is illustrated by Zeyneb Hanum. Offering a cogent criticism of the limitations of Western 'freedom', she finds the harem in Europe:

What a curious harem!… [This] Ladies' Club [where she is staying in London] is not a big enough reward for having broken away from an Eastern harem… A club… is after all another kind of harem, but it has none of the mystery and charm of the Harem of the East.

(Zeyneb Hanum 1913, pp.182-6)

Zeyneb Hanum exerts a haremizing gaze on the West that makes strange its familiar division of space and organization of sexuality, relocating Orientalism's sexualized projections back to their Western point of origin:

But, my dear [Grace], why have you never told me that the Ladies' Gallery [in the Houses of Parliament] is … the harem of the Government!… You send your women out unprotected all over the world, and here in the workshop where your laws are made, you cover them with a symbol of protection.

(Zeyneb Hanum 1913, p.194)

Clearly Zeyneb Hanum had European clothes and even in Turkey, like many elite women, would have habitually worn Paris fashions – but remarkably in this book about her time in Europe we see the sisters wearing Turkish clothes in all but one of the illustrations. In the face of the potentially acculturating ef-

fects of their sojourn in Europe these photographs work to maintain a sense of the author's Turkishness. It is, after all, the racialized specificity of her gendered gaze on Europe which supports the rationale of the whole book. So when we turn to photographs like 'Zeyneb in her Paris drawing room' (see photo), we have a mixture of the two – a visibly Turkish woman in her Turkified room in the French capital. If the frontispiece to Ellison's book, featuring her in 'Turkish costume', is designed to testify to the actuality of her visits to Turkish harems, the photograph which fronts Zeyneb Hanum's book shows her bringing the harem with her. Being seen wearing a *yashmak* in Paris proves her authenticity as a Turkish woman in the way most easily recognizable to the West. Unlike Ellison, who can leave it to captions to distinguish her racialized identity, Zeyneb Hanum's book cannot start with any hint of unreliability in its narrator.

Zeyneb Hanum's identifications need to be seen as performative, as identifications which, rather than being natural or innate, are constructed and understood through the reiteration of socially and culturally recognizable signs of difference. The completely unnecessary wearing of the *yashmak* in the frontispiece makes sense if we allow that the veil (in all its versions) is the ultimate sign by which the Western consumer can distinguish the 'Oriental' woman from the Occidental. Her knowing deployment of Orientalist imagery suggests a self-conscious manipulation of Western cultural codes, since cross-cultural dressing would have had a very different meaning for her in an Ottoman context. There, Western commodities were seen as part of a continuum of goods, the value of which was concerned as much with rarity as with ideas of cultural difference. So whereas the cross-dressing of the English Ellison in Turkey works to endorse the racialized boundaries she transgresses, the excessive theatricality of Zeyneb Hanum's attempt to dress as a Turk in Europe reveals the non-naturalness of those apparently absolute differentiating terms. Rather than transmit the Orient to Europe it reveals the inventedness of traditions of cultural difference.

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Punjabi Literature
PERVAIZ NAZIR

Modernity, Re-Islamization and Waris Shah's *Heer*

The colonization of the Punjab by the British ushered in economic, social, cultural and legal conditions in which Islamic identity came to assume new forms. In pre-modern times, Waris Shah's epic, *Heer*, was an integral part of everyday life; it was recited at social and literary gatherings. But the text had not yet become the object of intellectual critique. Rather, the critique embedded in the text suffused everyday conflicts and pleasure. In the modern period, however, the text was dis-embedded from the life-world. It became a site for the contestation of pre-modern and modern forms of Islamic identity.

IMAGE: APNA

Waris Shah, from *Heer Waris Shah* by Sharif Sabir.

The re-Islamization that emerged during the colonial period had distinctive modern features. During this period both communal-based (Muslim, Hindu and Sikh) and multicommunal organizations appeared in the Punjab. In the first category these included the Muslim *anjumans*, and the *sabhas* of the Hindus and Sikhs; in the second category were the various academies, circles and societies. Both types developed as a result of British rule, and were the precursors of a separate, developing national consciousness among Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs in the Punjab.

Even today, more copies of Waris Shah's *Heer* are sold in Pakistan than any other book – except the Qur'an. Waris Shah's classic Punjabi text (completed in AH 1180; AD 1766) is considered by many familiar with the work to be the greatest work in Punjabi, and one of the greatest classical literatures of the world.* Ostensibly a story of tragic love between Heer Sial, who is poisoned by her parents for wanting to marry Thidho Ranjha against their wishes, *Heer* is an extremely complex text which narrates the economic, social, political and religious conditions in the Punjab during the decline of Muslim rule. After about a hundred years of rule (1766-1849) by the Sikhs, the British annexed the Punjab in 1849, and this period marks the beginning of modernity, during which this immensely popular work began to be read differently from the pre-British era. The work became 'Islamized' within the context of Islamization of other aspects of life for the Punjabi Muslims. British rule thus witnessed the formation of newer forms of Muslim identity, which were defined in a more systematic and self-conscious manner than before, and in relation to the new institutions established by the British.

The reading of *Heer* during the period of modernity presented an enormous dilemma for Muslims (in ways it did not for the Hindus and Sikhs in the Punjab) because here was an extremely popular text among all classes of Punjabi Muslims, in which the main characters (Heer and Ranjha) were engaged in conduct that transgressed South Asian and especially Muslim norms, but who vindicated their conduct by seeking justification in the same sources – such as the Shariᶜa – as did their antagonists (the Qazis and Heer's family). For example, Heer says to the Qazi after her forced marriage: 'You have performed my *nikah* without my consent. Your act and fatwa are not in accordance with the Qur'an.' Later another Qazi declares this marriage null and void because it was contracted without Heer's consent.

'Re-Islamization' rather than 'Islamization' is emphasized because the period of British rule (1849 onwards) is considered by many scholars to be the time when the Islamization of Muslims in the Punjab took place. These scholars assume that Islamic tradition was either non-existent or poorly developed in the Punjab prior to British rule. What in fact happened was the re-interpretation of the Muslim tradition in the context of new conditions that emerged during British rule.

In this context newer forms of religious identities were developed which were recognized by the colonial state and embodied in legislation, law courts and so on. The reading of *Heer* was far more problematic for the Muslims than for the Hindus and Sikhs, among whom this text was and is popular also, but they read it differently from the Muslims by omitting or de-emphasizing the Muslim aspects. In fact, during the period under discussion the Hindus and Sikhs began to write their own *Heer* with Hindus and Sikhs as the main characters in the text. This was because Waris Shah's *Heer* began to be construed as a 'Muslim' text since it uses Islamic concepts and language – references to Islamic history and traditions, the Qur'an, Shariᶜa, etc. – and the main characters are Muslim. It describes love which is both *haqiqi* (spiritual) and *majazi* (physical); the latter being prohibited to those not married. Similarly, *Heer* contains definite notions of attire and conduct which either conform to, or deviate from, Muslim norms. The text also describes certain practices from which Muslims refrained in the 18ᵗʰ century, as for example the use of all-silk cloth, whilst silk mixed with cotton or wool, called *mashru*, was permitted (this practice is no longer adhered to in contemporary Pakistani Punjab).

'Modern' and 'traditional' responses

Heer and Ranjha's behaviour ostensibly both conforms to and contradicts Muslim tradition in that it permits a person to refuse marriage, but also stipulates that children must obey their parents. So how was this extremely popular text to be reconciled with new forms of Muslim sentiments and identity that emerged during modernity? There were two main responses among Muslim scholars of *Heer* in the Punjab. These may be termed as those belonging to the 'modern' and the 'traditional' literary circles. It should be noted, however, that the 'traditional' scholars were also the product of modernity, and their presence and their intellectual concerns with regard to *Heer* are nowhere to be found prior to the period of modernity. In fact, the latter undertook the task of reconciling this text with re-Islamization; a task far more difficult than that undertaken by the 'modern' literary circles. The term 'traditional' here means those informal literary societies that were not self-consciously modelled on institutions introduced by the British, with written rules and regulations, formal membership and admissions procedures, and so on. To this could be added knowledge of the English language and participation in the institutions introduced by the British such as colleges, schools, and formally organized workplaces.

For the modern literary circles that developed during British rule (the Punjabi Adabi Academy and other *anjumans*), the main preoccupation with *Heer* was the editing out of what were considered indecent passages from the text and the bringing of balance and symmetry to the verses. But most of all they were concerned with the authenticity of the verses: they wanted to purge all verses which they suspected were not Waris Shah's own, i.e. included into the text after his death. Thus the 1863 edition of *Heer* published by the Punjabi Adabi Academy is entitled (in Punjabi) *Heer Waris Shah, Authentic and Purged of all Fake Verses*.

The traditional literary circles published the so-called Kashmiri Bazaar editions, such as those by Mian Hidayatullah, Nawab Sialkoti, Piran Ditta, and Maula Buksh Kushta. In contrast to the modern editions cited above, Sialkoti's edition, also published in the 19ᵗʰ century, is entitled (in Punjabi) *Heer Waris Shah, The Original and Largest Edition with Shariᶜa Sharif*.

For the traditional scholars of *Heer* the main problem was to make the transgressions of the text acceptable to Muslim readers, something which no one felt was necessary prior to the period of modernity. This was for two reasons. Firstly, the absence of a 'modern consciousness' lacking in pre-modern times meant that *Heer* did not have to be defended on 'modern' lines. But now the heightened consciousness of what was 'Islamic' or 'non-Islamic' made such a defence necessary. Secondly, during Sikh rule, Islamic tradition was weakened in public spaces and became more privatized. For example, the *azaan* was banned during this period. British rule created the conditions for the development of civic institutions whereby Muslims could publicly debate, dispute, and propagate what might or might not be considered Islamic. The educational system, newspapers, and reform societies all constituted such public arenas. For example, one of the first 'modern' Islamic societies in the Punjab, the Anjuman Islamiyah, was formed in 1869 to promote the interests of Muslims.

The attempt to make Waris Shah's *Heer* acceptable was made by relating the narrative in the text to Islamic tradition in general and to the Shariᶜa in particular. Thus the Kashmiri bazaar editions contain extensive notes and commentary relating the narrative in *Heer* to Islamic tradition. In fact, Sialkoti's introduction to his edition asks the question: 'Was Ranjha a pious person?' The answer is in the affirmative because Ranjha goes through trials and tribulations which many pious persons in Islamic tradition have had to go through, and analogy is drawn with Yusuf and Zuleikha. There is scarcely any evidence to suggest that Waris Shah's masterpiece was read in any way other than as entertainment, and that concerns about its moral standing in relation to Islamic tradition can only be observed after the onset of modernity – in spite of Waris Shah's comment on his own work: 'Ahe maine Quran kareem dhey nain, jaire shair mian Waris Shah dhey nain' (These verses by Waris Shah are an interpretation of the Qur'an).

The point to be stressed here is that a Muslim Punjabi modernity was not merely a repetition or a derivative of European modernity. Rather, it was a modern formation with its own specificity which fed into a European modernity.

Legal Debate
ANH NGA LONGVA

Apostasy and the Liberal Predicament

In 1994, Husayn Ali Qambar, a Kuwaiti Shiʿi, abandoned Islam and joined the Evangelical Church. The news of his conversion caused quite a sensation in Kuwait, as such an event is practically unheard of in the Arabian Peninsula. Instead of keeping a low profile, as is the custom amongst converts in the Middle East, Qambar self-confidently stood up to the storm of reactions. He agreed to meet with the press and appeared in photos wearing a small silver cross around his neck and holding a Bible in his hand. To the question of why he had decided to become Christian, Qambar candidly answered 'I have found God elsewhere'.

When it became clear that he would not withdraw his decision, Qambar was sued for apostasy. The case was tried in the Shiʿi Court of First Instance, and in May 1996 Qambar was officially declared an apostate. By then, he had already lost his family, his home and his income. Qambar appealed against the ruling, but shortly before the appeal was to be reviewed, he was granted a visa to the USA and was flown out of Kuwait.

Irtidad or conversion from Islam, also known as apostasy, has always been a serious offence in the Middle East.[1] According to tradition, the apostate is to be executed; pending execution, he/she is deprived of the right to remain married to his/her Muslim spouse, to retain guardianship over his/her Muslim-born children and to inherit or hold possessions. Within the personal status laws of several Middle Eastern countries, these civil sanctions are codified and spelled out explicitly. The apostasy law thus strips the apostates of their most basic rights.

The scientific literature on apostasy is limited. Discussions centre almost exclusively on whether the death penalty is required by the Qur'an. While of great scholarly interest, they have no practical relevance since in most Muslim countries today conversion is no longer punishable by death. What remains in force are the civil sanctions, which violate several basic rights and freedoms. Yet there is a perceptible reluctance in Middle Eastern societies, including within liberal circles, to discuss this form of punishment. What are the reasons behind this reluctance?

Liberalism East and West

According to Bryan S. Turner,[2] orientalists, in their attempt to imagine the Muslim world as the radical Other of the West, depict Islam as a 'cluster of absences'. Possibly the deficiency most widely and persistently associated with Islam in the Western imagination is the absence of liberal thinking.

Within the past two centuries, liberalism has acquired a wide range of meanings, all of which do not necessarily correspond to the ideas of the doctrine's founding fathers. Liberalism is increasingly understood as the equivalent of democracy. Indeed, many Westerners would argue that liberalism is found only in the West, and they would disagree with talk of liberalism in the Middle East, let alone the Arabian Peninsula. A discussion of this view would have to be carried out elsewhere. What is important to point out here is that as a philosophical doctrine liberalism contains several basic tenets, not all of which are equally focused upon in practice. Different societies choose to define liberalism by laying stress on one or some particular tenet(s). Among the principles that liberal thought characteristically emphasizes are autonomy of choice, the primacy of the individual over the collective, and reason over faith. The first two tenets have given rise to the centrality of individual rights and liberties; the third one has led to the association of liberalism with secularism, politically expressed through the separation of religion and state.

In the Kuwaiti context liberalism is primarily understood in the latter sense. While rights and liberties are also important, it is not their embracement *per se* that makes a Kuwaiti liberal. Rather, it is the embracement of the third tenet, the separation between *din* and *dawla*. As the term is used here, a liberal is a person who looks upon religion as a personal matter and the public sphere as a religiously neutral space. 'Liberal' is therefore commonly used in opposition to 'Islamist', the latter term referring to people for whom religion pervades and shapes every aspect of social life. Everywhere in the Middle East these days, Islamists and liberals differ in their views on the relationship between religion, public life and politics. Kuwait is no exception. When it comes to apostasy, however, a strong consensus can be found across the liberal/Islamist divide. Most people reacted with anger and dismay at Qambar's conversion; even local human rights activists perceived it as an offence that called for some form of punishment. While there were only few demands for the death penalty, most people accepted unquestioningly the implementation of the civil sanctions.[3]

Protecting the significant community

It may be tempting for Westerners to see in the apostasy law yet another instance of the incompatibility between the illiberal Muslim East and the liberal West, or indeed the ultimate vindication of the orientalist 'absences' thesis. To assess the situation in such terms is to miss the point. What we are dealing with here is not so much the clash between liberal and illiberal cultures as a political and ethical challenge common to all modern societies: How can the political community be protected against real or perceived threats while infringing as little as possible on basic individual rights? From this perspective, the difference between Muslim and Western societies lies in the definition of the community under threat rather than in the measures they evolve to thwart this threat.

All communities – whether ethnically, religiously or nationally defined – depend for their existence on the allegiance of their members; they are therefore keen to watch their boundaries and the movements across such boundaries. Not all large-scale communities achieve the same degree of significance, nor are they all mutually exclusive. To many in the Middle East, the most significant large-scale community is the *umma*. Elsewhere, for example in Europe, it is the nation-state. As a universal spiritual community, the *umma* throws its doors wide open to incoming members but severely restricts the right to exit. By contrast, nation-states generally tend to be lenient on the right to exit while keeping a particularly vigilant eye on the admission of new members. When confronted with acts construed as betrayal of the significant community, reactions everywhere tend to be rather similar. Thus nation-states deal with individuals found guilty of treason by stripping them of their freedom, and/or citizenship rights; in case of high treason, they may even be sentenced to death.

The politics of recognition

A further parallel can be drawn if we approach apostasy within the framework of the politics of recognition. The most remarkable feature of the case under study is not Qambar's conversion in itself, but the self-confidence with which he faced his society's criticism. Qambar publicly defended his decision by invoking the Kuwaiti constitution and the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights. From insights gained through interviews with the convert, the conclusion can be drawn that he sought to assert not only his right to choose his own faith but also his right to be accepted for who he is and belong in the Kuwaiti community on his own terms. In other words, Qambar was seeking not merely toleration but recognition.

Anyone familiar with developments in Western societies within the past two to three decades realizes that this is the same demand that lies at the core of the multiculturalism debate, which is raging these days on both sides of the Atlantic. In this debate, which has split the liberal camp, more than one Western liberal have rejected the cultural minorities' right to difference on the grounds that such recognition would fragment the national community and undermine its value consensus. On the opposite side, liberal defenders of minority groups do not hesitate to assert the primacy of certain collective rights at the expense of important individual rights. For example, Charles Taylor[4] has argued in favour of the Quebec language legislation, which among other things forbids French-speaking Quebecois to send their children to English-language schools. Although this law clearly infringes on the parents' freedom of choice, Taylor finds it justifiable because it guarantees the continued existence of the French-speaking minority of Canada. Taylor and other Western political philosophers question not only the classical liberal tendency to defend individual rights at all costs, but also the liberal Kantian conception of justice that does not presuppose any particular conception of the good life. As Michael Sandel[5] puts it: 'The fundamental question is whether the right is prior to the good.' I believe Sandel articulates here the concern of the majority of Kuwaiti liberals for whom rights may not, or not always, be an end in themselves. The reason that liberal informants could not bring themselves to support Qambar's freedom to convert may be seen as related to their conviction that the virtue of rights lies in the fact that they promote an end presumed to be good. Islam being in their eyes the ultimate religion, they regard the apostasy law, which prevents Muslims from making the mistake of leaving the community's fold, as a good law. The end it promotes is more important than the restrictions it places on freedom of choice, which if exercised may lead Muslims astray.

The implementation of the apostasy law in several Middle Eastern countries is viewed by human rights experts as a major problem. In my opinion, the severity of the law justifies both concern and criticism. It is meanwhile important to bear in mind that neither the rationale behind the law nor the reluctance of Muslim liberals to put an end to its implementation is unique and peculiar to Islam or Muslim societies. Rather, it illustrates a predicament common to all political communities. If we wish to argue against the law, we should start from this commonality of dilemmas and concerns and not from the rhetoric of difference between a liberal (read: morally superior) West and an illiberal Muslim world.

Notes

1. Elsewhere in the Muslim world, e.g. Southeast Asia, apostasy is treated with greater leniency.
2. Turner, Bryan S. (1994), *Orientalism, Postmodernism and Globalism*, London: Routledge.
3. I have given a detailed account of some of the liberals' reactions in my article entitled 'Apostasy, civil death and the liberal predicament' (forthcoming).
4. Taylor, Charles (1994), 'The Politics of Recognition', in *Multiculturalism: A Critical Reader*, Theo Goldberg (ed.), Oxford: Blackwell, pp. 75-106.
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NAJIB GHADBIAN

Al-Jazeera's Coverage of Syrian Politics

Satellite television stations are subtly challenging the state's monopoly over the means of persuasion and information in the Arab world. A Qatari-based television channel, Al-Jazeera's coverage of Syrian politics exemplifies how satellite television is changing the conditions of communication between citizens and states in the Arab world and increasing the space for civil society, creating more moments in television that are not as controlled by states. The significance of the Syrian case lies in the fact that the Syrian regime is highly authoritarian and still maintains near total control of information and communication. The following examines Al-Jazeera's reporting of several issues considered highly sensitive according to the censorship policies of Syria's Ministries of Information and Culture and Guidance: political opposition in Syria, succession, and the impact of the peace process on the regime's survival ability.

Since the 1963 military coup, the Syrian authority closed down all independent newspapers. It passed several restrictive articles under the State of Emergency that gave the state the right to control newspapers, books, broadcasting, advertising, and visual arts, which might be threatening the security of the state.[1] Starting in 1974, the Syrian media became a vehicle to promote the cult of Asad.

Syria's style of communication

The Syrian government has developed a long list of taboo topics. For example, it does not allow criticism of the following topics: the president and his family, the ruling Ba'th Party, the military, the legitimacy of the regime, the sectarian question, the government's human rights record, Islamic opposition, involvement of Syrian troops in Lebanon, graphic descriptions of sex, and materials unfavourable to the Arab cause in the Arab-Israeli conflict.[2]

The government also has not tolerated any independent source of information considered threatening to, or critical of, the regime. A case in point is the crackdown on independent Lebanese newspapers in Lebanon immediately following the Syrian military intervention there. Moreover, human rights organizations documented the arrest, expulsion, and even assassination of prominent journalists by Syrian security forces. Nonetheless, the Syrian government has not succeeded in maintaining total control over the dissemination of information. Syrian citizens turned, before the age of satellite television, to Western radio stations such as the BBC, Monte Carlo, and to a lesser extent the Voice of America.

Occasionally, Syrian media, especially newspapers, have been allowed and sometimes encouraged to criticize corrupt officials in the bureaucracy. While the Syrian government has strived to maintain its strict control over the dissemination of information, it has been less successful in controlling the receiving satellite dishes than in restricting the internet.

More than OneOpinion, Al-Jazeera.

Al-Jazeera's contesting coverage

Al-Jazeera's coverage of Syrian politics has moved toward progressively more assertive coverage of Syrian politics, pushing the limits with each report. The coverage has included three types of issues: indirect reference to Syria under topics such as democracy, human rights and Islamic fundamentalism in the Arab world; direct discussion of the Syrian-Israeli peace process; and reporting on Syrian domestic developments.

Over the last three years, programmes such as *al-Itijah al-Mu'akis* (Opposite Directions) and *Akthar min Ra'i* (More than One Opinion) and *Bila Hudud* (Without Bounds), have debated democracy and human rights with a tone condemning authoritarianism and human rights violations. Another offensive topic for the Syrian regime is the issue of Islamic opposition. Having confronted an armed Islamic movement in the late 1970s and early 1980s, the Syrian government considers this topic taboo. Al-Jazeera featured an interview with the leader of the banned Syrian Muslim Brothers for two hours on the programme *Without Bounds*. Both the Syrian and general Arab audiences had the opportunity to hear a very moderate voice advocating democracy, demanding an end to marshal law rule, and insisting that his party be legalized.[3]

The second category of coverage concerns the Syrian role in the peace process. While the overall coverage is somewhat sympathetic, discussions of the domestic imperatives and implications of the peace process for the Syrian regime and society have not always been appreciated by the Syrian government. On *More than One Opinion*, Najib Ghadbian – the author of this article – being one of the guests, questioned the lack of democracy in Syria and how this affects the peace process. Syrians do not get the chance to debate their government's policies in their press or their rubberstamp parliament.[4]

The third contest over the dissemination of information between Al-Jazeera and the Syrian regime is in the area of reporting and analysing significant domestic political developments. When the Syrian President Asad died, Al-Jazeera played a leading role in the coverage of the domestic and regional implications of the departure of Asad. It was on this station that several Arab commentators expressed their outrage over the speedy amendment of the Constitution in order to in-

stall Asad's son, Bashar. Another recent example is Al-Jazeera's distinguished coverage of Monzer al-Mouseli, an independent member of the People's Assembly, who dared to raise an objection to the formality of the infamous constitutional amendment. Syrian television discontinued broadcasting during his daring remarks, transmitting instead the comments of the Speaker who censured Mouseli and made a statement on his behalf, affirming that 'the respected member's sinful part of his soul led him into error, and he has realized his mistake and repented.' Al-Jazeera had a full report of what had happened and then interviewed Mouseli to get his side of the story, which was totally suppressed by the Speaker's comments. The interview was followed by another discussion with Mustapha Abdul'al, the director of the Centre for Pluralism, who was very sarcastic about the session and the obvious lack of freedom of expression in the Syrian Assembly.[5]

Response and effects

Al-Jazeera soon became a major contending source of news for many Syrians. Some Syrian viewers, however, have complained that Al-Jazeera's programmes are more confusing than illuminating. Some viewers in Damascus say that Syrian audiences are alarmed at hearing vehement contradictory views about such basic issues, being used to hearing only one correct version of the 'truth'.[6]

As for Syrian officials, the rise of Al-Jazeera coincided with the ascendance of Bashar al-Asad to power. Officials have attempted to engage this medium rather than to boycott it. They express approval of Al-Jazeera as long as it does not step on what they consider sensitive topics or violate what they consider 'objective' reporting.

The participation of Syrian officials in Al-Jazeera's programmes has revealed their inability to communicate effectively with audiences outside Syria. One example of Syrian officials' attempts to take advantage of the newly popular channel is the appearance of the Riyadh Na'san Agha, head of the Political Office of the President, on *Without Bounds* just after the death of Asad.[7] Agha immediately clashed with the host and lost the sympathy of most Arab viewers when he tried to assert that the succession of Bashar Asad to power was not a command from above but an overwhelmingly popular choice. He had real difficulties communicating with viewers from other Arab countries who were shocked by his logic – or lack thereof. One viewer from Egypt described Agha's argument as 'an insult to the intelligence of the audience.'

Lately, there has been some evidence that the Syrian government is relaxing its control over media. This retreat could be attributed to two factors. Firstly, many Syrian channels are losing audiences to other channels (e.g. Al-Jazeera) or types of media; and secondly, more recently the new leader seems to want to lead the country into the information age. A number of measures have been taken which indicate real efforts by the Syrian government to modify its media policy in response to the competition. During the 9th Congress of the Ba'th Party, the new minis-

ter of information criticized the performance of the Syrian media, using harsh language to describe his predecessor and claiming that Syria did not have a true 'media policy'.[8]

After his inauguration, Bashar issued two directives pertaining to the development of a 'new media discourse'. The first directive asked chief editors of print and broadcast media to embark on a 'calm, logical, and balanced media address', which would 'respect the intelligence of the audience'.[9] The second instruction was to stop printing and posting new pictures of him, and to stop the use of the phrase *al-Ra'is al-Khaled* (the immortal President). Such immortality, he said with remarkable insight, is only for God. The ministry of information reshuffled the heads of its major departments, newspaper editors, and the heads of the Syrian radio and television agency to reflect the new openness.

The third important indication that change is afoot in Syria came from journalists and intellectuals who demanded more freedom of speech and accountability. Ninety-nine Syrian writers issued a statement demanding freedom of expression, freedom of the press, and an end to one-party rule.[10]

While Al-Jazeera cannot claim full responsibility for all these positive changes, it can be credited with forcing the media in Syria – as elsewhere in the Arab world – to redefine their discourse so as not to lose what is left of their audiences. Despite the success of channels such as Al-Jazeera in expanding the communication and dissemination of information, it is clear that they cannot topple authoritarian regimes. As the Syrian case demonstrates, authoritarian regimes are capable of coping with the new technology and expanded public sphere. Another limitation on Al-Jazeera's ability to continue its contest with authoritarian media has to do with its ability to maintain its independence. Nonetheless, Al-Jazeera has become a phenomenon, and owes this as much to its own approach as to the failure of the official Arab media.

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Notes

1. Middle East Watch (1991), *Syria Unmasked*. New Haven: Yale University Press, p. 109.
2. For a good summary of censorship in Syria, see Chapter 9 of *Syria Unmasked*.
3. *Without Bounds*, Al-Jazeera, aired on 7 July 1999.
4. *More Than One Opinion*, Al-Jazeera, aired on 7 January 2000.
5. *Hasad al-Yawm* (Today's Harvest), Al-Jazeera's nightly news programme, aired on 26 June 2000.
6. A conversation between the author of this article and viewers who watched the interview with the leader of the Syrian Muslim Brothers from Damascus.
7. Aired on 14 June 2000.
8. *Al-Hayat* (London), 18 June 2000, p. 3.
9. Ibid., 16 July 2000, p. 1.
10. The statement was published in the two Lebanese dailies, *Al-Nahar* and *Al-Safir*, 26 September 2000.

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Media Respresentations
T. DENIZ ERKMEN

Construction of Satanism
in Turkish Secularist and Islamist Newspapers

On 22 September 1999 the dead body of an 18-year-old girl was found in a cemetery in Istanbul, Turkey. Massive media coverage was launched when the police discovered that she had been killed by two young men and a young woman, who, claiming to be Satanists, testified that one of them had orders from Satan to perform the sacrifice. When the public prosecutor used the description of Satanism in the formal charges brought against the accused, Satanism entered the legal documents as a new crime for the first time in Turkish legal history. The three perpetrators were judged guilty of murder and were sentenced to a total of 25 years in prison.

Although since the youths were imprisoned media interest in Satanism has died down, all newspapers had covered the issue extensively in the period leading up to and including their trial. There were conferences, talk shows and heated debates on various television channels where important public figures voiced their opinions on the issue. The police declared Satanism an organized terrorist group and began arresting youths who were considered to be connected. Places suspected of being hangouts of Satanists were raided, and bars and clubs accused of being frequented by adherents to the movement were shut down.

This new, marginal issue of Satanism was appropriated by different sectors of Turkish society and placed into existing matrices. However, before commencing with the discussion, the following brief overview of constructionist theories offers useful tools for understanding the Satanic hype.

Social problems are, according to constructionists, socially constructed. Instead of concentrating on the analysis of actual practitioners as was done in early sociological literature, constructionists argued that there was no significant Satanist danger, although it has been defined as a social problem. Concentrating on the portrayal and representation of Satanism, they underlined social mechanisms such as 'scapegoating' and stereotyping in public responses to Satanism. Accordingly, the forming of a stereotype involves the creation of a 'reverse mirror image of one's society' in which the 'evil enemy' is depicted as having all those unflattering qualities that contrast with the virtues of that society. This activity aims at restoring an idealized society and serves the function of 'unifying the conflicting elements within a society, by imposing unity on something that is fragmented' (Jeffrey S. Victor: *Satanic Panic: The Creation of a Contemporary Legend*, Chicago and La Salle: Open Court Press, 1993, p.41). It enables rising collective anxiety to be released, especially in times of increased tension.

If the 'scapegoating' is about constructing an ideal society, is it possible to find shared ideals between Islamic and secular groups in Turkey? Indeed, there is a unifying activity occurring as a result of the shared patriarchal norms of both groups.*

Reading the newspapers

Both liberal/secular and Islamic newspapers depict a Satanist stereotype and tell us that the Satanists can be detected by their physical appearance and behaviour. For instance, *Milliyet* states that Satanists 'mostly come from richer families and live in better neighbourhoods of the cities. They are interested in perverse music types such as heavy metal and black metal. They have long hair and they wear black t-shirts with Satan and skull prints on them. They look unkempt and grungy. [Satanism] is com-

mon among youths between the ages of 14 and 25' (22 September 1999).

This basic stereotype of the Satanist as being young, long haired, clad in black with tattoos and earrings, looking untidy and listening to 'perverse' music is repeated over and over in all the papers – always with some mention of alcohol, drugs, bars, clubs and nightlife. Names of places that they frequent and magazines they read are also mentioned. Along with these descriptions are vivid accounts of what they do, which being generally very much against legal and ethical conventions of Turkish society, help to define the group as a social problem. These accounts are similar in both groups of papers. Accordingly, the Satanists 'worship Satan and conduct rituals in which they sacrifice virgins. They drink animal blood, [...] they conduct activities that go beyond all borders, and they carry out horrifying murders [...]' (*Zaman*, 22 September 1999). 'They sacrifice their own children, have sex with a newly killed corpse, kill their father and mutilate his body without showing any signs of guilty conscience, use young women maliciously to drink their blood and eat their internal organs. [...] They enter into cemeteries at night, choose a girl among themselves, cut her up with a knife, smear her with animal blood and satisfy the Satan by having intercourse with the mutilated girl. They are against all religions and holy books' (*Milliyet*, 22 September 1999).

As the Satanists begin to be characterized as 'sick', 'perverted', 'psychologically unbalanced', and 'lunatic', or as 'alienated', 'detached' and 'lost', interpretations and moral judgements about their existence and solutions for preventing them come to the fore. The accounts of both sides emphasize the moral void of the youth that leads to a search for identity. However, a discrepancy emerges between the secular and Islamist newspapers in their primary line of argumentation. The majority of comments in the Islamist newspapers explain the situation not as a problem with the youth, but with society and social life in general. The youth is only one part of the whole in which the problem is manifested. According to those accounts, Turkish social life is becoming alienated from its traditional cultural roots, moral tradition and national/traditional values (*Yeni Safak*, 26 and 27 September 1999). There is no longer a moral unity, national culture or totality within Turkish society (*Milli Gazete*, 24 September 1999). All this is due to the severance of the nation from religion. Once religion, which is 'the most important factor in shaping a society's moral values', is removed, the ensuing moral void in society leaves the youth prey to all kinds of marginal and perverse beliefs (Ibid.). It is the system that pushes the youth to where they end up, by not teaching them their religion properly, closing down the schools that teach religion, and replacing them with 'materialist' education (Ibid., 25 and 26 Sep-

tember 1999). The youth, with proper Islamic culture, would not 'use drugs, murder, [or] drink blood' (Ibid., 24 September 1999). Some of these arguments have a harsh, even accusing tone towards the secularists for being the cause.

Secularist newspapers, on the other hand, picture the problem more as one related to adolescence, in which the identity-searching youth somehow fall in to the hands of those waiting to impart their dangerous beliefs. Not only 'mystic' groups like that of the Satanists, but 'other materialist totalitarian groups' can also captivate the youth by offering them a sense of belonging and identity (*Milliyet*, 22 September 1999). This crisis of identity is emerging from a system that lacks meaning and is related to the traumas of modernization. Hence, the cause is not located in Turkey in another group, but is rather a global issue of modernity. The solution also comes from the globe, especially the West. It has been indicated that Western societies encourage healthy communities and voluntary organizations against illnesses such as these, thus implying that Turkey should do the same.

Points of convergence

The above findings reveal that even though both liberal/secular and Islamist newspapers present Satanism as a 'belief system', there is never an indication that people can actually choose to believe in it. The Satanists are depicted as sick, atomized, deviant or part of a terrorist group. They are deceived, seized and captivated by dangerous forces or are coerced by the corrupt system into the situation in which they find themselves.

Both secularists and Islamists have made attempts to control the youth – which has become an area of contestation, just as 'women' – since they are the perpetuators of society and symbols of its ideals. Although the Kemalist regime paid special attention to gender roles and gender equality, it did not change the patriarchal order but rather maintained the basic cultural conservatism of gender relations. These patriarchal norms of morality are, however, not only hierarchical in terms of gender but also in terms of age. Both Islamists and secularists share this patriarchal norm regarding the role and position of the youth. They both see young people not as responsible individuals, but as a group to be shaped for the future. They postpone the present – a situation in which young individuals are not supposed to participate or to speak up, but need to be educated, follow rules, obey, and only realize themselves in the future. Both groups also underline values such as obedience, education, loyalty, devoutness, seriousness, decency, and modesty in outlook and lifestyles – and not creativity, individual choice or criticism. While secularists aspire to westernization and modernization, they nevertheless place limits on these. One has

to be modest; if not, one falls into decadency. Thus, both groups agree on setting boundaries on excessive individualization.

Despite Islamists' and secularists' seemingly different reasons for the existence of Satanists, there is a unifying activity: both groups conjoin in not accepting a different mode of living, a different type of youth. They both exclude those who do not fit the patriarchal norms. Furthermore, in both instances, the constructed stereotype is vague and thus potentially targets anyone who is part of a larger hard rock/heavy metal subculture.

Youth subcultures represent symbolic violations of social order and can be seen as provoking the dominant culture. Groups differentiate themselves through constructing unique styles that define an identity and offer particularity. They are collective articulations of a cultural critique that establishes and maintains a new self-concept and symbolically challenges the dominant culture's value system.

In accordance with constructionist explanations of Satanic hype, it can be seen that in the context of growing tension between Islamists and secularists a trigger event – the murder story – leads to an explosion in one of the areas of contestation in Turkish society, revealing dissatisfaction with the moral order. Nonetheless, the two groups are united in their establishing of an enemy that incarnates all the negative virtues to which both aim to put an end. By overreacting and depicting this subculture's members as deviants or terrorists, both sides downplay the possibility that Satanism may be presenting a social critique in the form of symbolic violations of social order. However, in both groups of newspapers as well as in the accounts in this article, what is lacking is the voice of the Satanists, both those who call themselves such and those who are simply perceived as such. Without this, our understanding of the dynamics of this subculture and whether it presents a social critique is limited and undoubtedly deserves greater attention.

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Internet
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IslamiCity
Creating an Islamic Cybersociety

Since the mid-1990s, Islamic webcontent has grown considerably. The distribution of fatwas, one of the most booming components of Islamic webcontent, is becoming a must for any Islamic website. In 1999 at least 10,000 fatwas were to be found online. In the year 2000 the number rose to at least 14,000 fatwas, and this year thousands more are sure to be added to the score. Since the time of the Prophet Muhammad, the provision of fatwas has been an important social barometer. The interactive component of the internet has made online fatwa services not only possible, but easy and accessible as well. Such virtual services, however, impact certain Islamic beliefs and practices.

The distribution of fatwas via internet can be divided into two major groups: the first group comprises the so-called 'fatwa archives', which are simply compilations of fatwas that are already published in books. The second group, 'fatwa services', involves the process of creating fatwas online. There is usually an online form provided, where users can pose their questions. Through these forms, information is also obtained about the users. The fatwas are then determined by muftis and subsequently published on the website.

IslamiCity[1] (based in the USA) is one of the two main Wahhabi players on the internet – the other being Islam – Question & Answer.[2] IslamiCity has already published about 5,000 fatwas on the internet, while the Dar al-Ifta al-misriyya,[3] for example, has published but 300 fatwas online. The massive interest in IslamiCity's fatwa service, however, has led the founders of the site to slow down the services so as to search for funds to finance the site in the future. In the meantime, fatwas from the Saudi daily, *Arab News*, have been added to the IslamiCity database.

IslamiCity is more than just a fatwa service. It provides information on the Qur'an, the Sunna, the Hajj, and other Islamic topics. It offers radio and television channels, chatrooms, Islamic screensavers and electronic greeting cards. It also offers space for advertising. Users are offered the possibility to play an Islamic quiz, donate *zakat* online, or even order flowers. All services are guided by an Islamic etiquette. In this sense, such Islamic web-programming could be considered comparable to the concept of Islamic banking.

Intercultural settings

IslamiCity is based in the USA and the muftis Muhammed Musri, Dr Ahmed H. Sakr, Dr Muzammil Siddiqui and Dr Yahia Abdul Rahman, currently working and living in the USA, and Dr Dani Doueiri and his 'Imam Team' from Beirut handle the fatwa questions. This demonstrates that virtual fatwas are different from 'normal' fatwas. In cyberspace, it makes no difference where the mufti and the *mustafti* are located. Questions from all around the world can be, and indeed are, posted to IslamiCity. The technical management of the website distributes the questions to the muftis, for example in Beirut. So, *ifta* becomes abstract. The mufti no longer sees the *mustafti*, and the *mustafti* no longer hears his voice. In such a context, the mufti cannot determine the background information of a question, and cannot perceive the potential dubious aspects of a question. He is bound by its textual form. This was the case, for example, in a question (No. 1301)[4] about *tapai*, a Malaysian dish with fermented cooked rice, which consists of 5-10% alcohol. A religious teacher had told the questioner that it was halal, since the alcohol does not come from grapes. But according to IslamiCity's mufti it is *haram*, because it is fermented without oxygen and this always produces ethyl alcohol. The thing is, *tapai* might be a common dish in Malaysia, and a mufti based elsewhere can only abstractly solve the problem. He may not know anything about living in Malaysia. To avoid this type of rice might cause serious nutritional problems for Muslims there. Who knows? The following answer to a similar type of question shows more sensibility in terms of local differences (No. 4063):

'In certain countries, Coca Cola does (or used to) include alcohol and in this case, the drink is considered Haram. In many Muslim countries, there are Islamic establishments (like Dar al-Fatwa or the highest religious authority) that monitor such drinks and foods to make sure they don't contain alcohol, in which case the drink becomes permissible. We don't know the situation in Australia and we suggest that you contact Coca Cola itself to find out about the alcohol content in their drinks. The same should apply with Pepsi Cola. Please update us.'

IslamiCity is also faced with problems of intercultural settings within the USA itself. There was a case involving a Japanese neighbour who adamantly tried to give a box of liquor to a Muslim as a Christmas present. The Muslim got the impression his Japanese neighbour's English was so bad that it was impossible to explain to him that alcohol is not allowed in Islam. Finally, the Japanese left the liquor at the doorstep of the Muslim's house. IslamiCity's solution was to empty the bottles of alcohol into the sink (No. 351).

Cyberfatwas

It seems that some users are confused as to whether IslamiCity actually exists in real geographic space. Though the answers to questions do clarify that it is in cyberspace, they nonetheless call the guests 'tourists' and not 'surfers' (No. 3203, 3677). Other users are obviously more than aware of the cyber-location of the site, as one reader even asked (No. 1754):

'Dearest virtual imam of the esteemed cyber-city, I attended *jummah salat* today, and wanted to merely inquire that since we are living in this hectic hussle bussle life, would it be possible to attend your virtual *khutbas* and maybe even on a virtual Friday, and skip the live Friday sermon. This would greatly aid the conservation of time and energy in our lives. Dearest imam, please write back soon as you can see that I'm desperately in need of guidance. And I feel that your virtual hand will virtually correct my ways. Eagerly awaiting your reply is your brother Abdullah (but my friends call me Charlie).'

To answer this question is a delicate task. Considering its formulation, one might even doubt the sincerity of the questioner. Jean Baudrillard's theory of hyper-reality might be the best way to explain it: hyper-reality means that the signs no longer hide reality, but hide the absence of reality.[5] This is expressed by the view of the questioner, who would like to replace reality by virtual reality. According to his question, not only the sermon, but also the Friday itself should be replaced. In this way, a symbiosis between Islam and internet is possible. In the mufti's answer, while the revolutionary component of the internet is acknowledged, he insists on having mosques in physical space. His answer to this question is all the more delicate because the questioner is obviously familiar with new media. The mufti has to prove that he can adequately respond, demonstrating his mastery of the specific vocabulary and its meanings.

Another question raised involves whether

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the internet itself is *haram* (No. 1474). IslamiCity's opinion is that the internet is a tool that can be used for good or for bad purposes (No. 294, 492, 3252, 3468, 3495). This means that the internet in itself is not *haram*. Nonetheless, it is understandable that some question this since, for example, computer images do not fall under the Islamic prohibition of images (No. 829). Thus, developers of computer games are allowed to draw pictures (No. 3606).

The aim of using the internet for good Islamic purposes has resulted in some new topics for fatwas. For example, before reading a digital Qur'an one should perform the ablution, but does not need to (No. 1101, 1880); the recitation in the background of a webpage is not allowed (No. 3343); and *daʿwa* via internet is possible (No. 2078). As IslamiCity offers its own chatrooms, it is important to know how to use them: chatroom discussions are allowed as long as Islamic etiquette is taken into account and useful Islamic topics are being discussed (No. 223). For example, one may take a valid *shahada* in the chatroom (No. 752, 2873, 3699). As there is a physical distance, the chatrooms offer an opportunity for conversation with the opposite sex. If people should happen to fall in love as a result, it is not wrong, but they should not from the beginning have the intention to meet someone in cyberspace with a view to marriage (No. 1983). Muftis warn of disappointments when people, who have only chatted on the internet, meet in reality. Therefore, the intention to marry should be a true and sincere one, especially when the two people concerned communicate privately over the internet (No. 824, 1221, 1724, 2774, 3099). In such a case, it is even allowed to exchange photos (No. 1092). It should be noted, however, that Shaykh Muhammad ibn Saalih al-ʿUthaymeen issued a fatwa via internet in which he forbade the sending of photos to an 'internet fiancée' (Islam – Question & Answer, No. 4027). There are thus two contradictory Wahhabi viewpoints on this question, which means that even in the Wahhabi school consensus does not exist.

A multitude of competing Islamic opinions are distributed via internet. In one of its responses, IslamiCity points out that the dynamic change of websites is a limiting factor to the verification of the authenticity of information, stating that IslamiCity does not act as a watchdog over all material (No. 2055). With the possibilities of the internet, IslamiCity builds not only an Islamic institution but also creates a community of virtually connected Muslims.

Notes
1. IslamiCity: http://islam.org
2. Islam – Question & Answer:
   http://www.islam-qa.com
3. Dar al-Ifta al-misriyya:
   http://www.haneen.com.eg/fatwa/fatwapage.html
4. Numbers refer to those given by IslamiCity.
   The fatwas can also be found in the forthcoming
   CD-ROM: Brückner, Matthias (ed.) (2001),
   Fatwaindex zum Alkoholverbot, neuen Medien u.a.,
   Würzburg, Ergon-Verlag. Further information on
   the topic can be obtained at
   http://www.cyberfatwa.de or in Brückner, Matthias
   (2001), *Fatwas zum Alkohol unter dem Einfluss neuer
   Medien im 20. Jhdt.*, Würzburg: Ergon-Verlag.
5. Gane, Mike (1993), *Baudrillard Live*, London:
   Routledge, p. 143.

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Rendering Traditions
CHARLES HIRSCHKIND

Tradition, Myth, and Historical Fact in Contemporary Islam

Within scholarship on contemporary Islam, one of the issues that has generated considerable discussion (and often perplexity) concerns the accuracy or validity of Muslim historical claims. Many authors have pointed to a discrepancy between what Muslim activists today invoke as belonging to the traditions of Islam and the actual historical record of Islamic societies. It is argued that historical reality is ignored or rejected, while a false, distorted, or selective version of the past is affirmed in its place. In attempting to characterize and explain this use (or misuse) of history, scholars have had recourse to a variety of concepts, some of which merit a re-examination, especially in light of recent work within historiography. A brief review of these concepts suggests a need for new analytical approaches to the styles of historical argumentation prevalent within Islam today.

A common current argument is that the Islam invoked by contemporary activists is an 'invented tradition', in the sense that it is founded by a sort of historical sleight-of-hand, positing ancient roots while actually being of recent origin. In many ways, Hobsbawm and Ranger[1] provided the respectability of a concept for a phenomenon that had long been central to the definition of fundamentalist Islam: namely, the duplicitous (or in sympathetic accounts, naive) misrepresentation of history. Additionally, Benedict Anderson's work,[2] in showing how a similar creative historiography undergirded modern nationalism, encouraged scholars to interpret Islamist historical claims within the framework of nationalist politics. Accordingly, arguments for the traditional Islamic status of the headscarf, democratic political forms, or the idea of an Islamic state are unmasked as strategic moves within a modern politics of cultural authenticity, and thus as not really – historically – authentic. One paradoxical aspect of this argument, it might be noted, is that while cultural authenticity is often criticized as a reactionary form of modern politics, it is assumed that there is an *authentic* relation to the past (not invented, mythological, etc.), and that Islamists are in some sense living falsely not to acknowledge it and adjust to its demands.

Anthropologies of error

Scholars have also frequently drawn on the resources of 19th-century anthropology in their attempts to grasp the mode of historical reasoning employed by contemporary Muslims. Note, for example, Aziz al-Azmeh's use of the notion of the *fetish* in his complaint that 'their [Arab society's] exaggerated attachment to what is past and what they fetishize as "Heritage" means that they are effectively forbidden to perceive reality for what it is or acquire the means to evolve.'[3] As developed within colonial anthropology, fetishism referred to the false attribution of objective value by non-Europeans, the sacralization of objects that European Christians recognized as actually profane. Al-Azmeh's reference to the incapacitating effects of a historical vision clouded by religious passion testifies to the ongoing impact of this scholarly tradition.

Colonial anthropology also bequeathed to students of religion a particular elaboration of the concept of myth, one to which scholars of Islam have frequently had recourse. Take, for instance, the following two well-known authors' suggestions that Muslims have a 'mythical' or 'mystical' relation to knowledge:

'The historian and the sociologist must call attention to the anachronism inherent in [the Islamists'] approach and its nullification of the historicity of meaning as subject to the political, economic, and cultural metamorphoses of society… The Muslim cognitive system is essentially mythical.'[4]

'It is in the myth of the complete and Perfect Man, and not in the corpus or in History, that one can read the universal, that all knowledge adds up and that the return to the golden age – the time of the prophet – is foreshadowed. It is with this mystical conception of knowledge that the new [Islamist] intellectual completes his home-made construction.'[5]

There is often a slide in such arguments from the simple charge that Islamists cheat in representing history to the more complicated claim that they are incapable of grasping reality. The latter claim resembles the long-since discarded anthropological theory, associated primarily with the early Levy-Bruhl, that primitives were possessed of a mythical consciousness. This pejorative sense of myth is particularly surprising in light of the large body of literature exploring the importance of myth within modern societies, its foundational role within our individual psychologies, national politics, social customs and other areas.

The assertion that Muslim historical claims involve a kind of mythical reasoning is frequently coupled with the idea that such claims ignore or deny 'real history'. Gilles Kepel, for example, notes: 'What distinguishes the extremist Islamist movement from the bulk of Muslims as far as reference to the golden age is concerned is that the former blot out history in favor of the reactivation of the founding myth, while the latter accommodate themselves to the history of Muslim societies.'[6] The claim being made is not that Muslim activists offer no accounts of the past; on the contrary, they are generally accused of exaggerating its importance. Rather, it is not history as an account of past events which Islamists erase, but history understood as the sole ground of present reality, as the real (material) conditions of their lives. Kepel implies that by not 'accomodat[ing] themselves' properly to these conditions, Islamists take up a false or distorted relation to their actual historical situation. He assumes, in other words, that there is a single correct relationship to the past: when Muslims do not acknowledge its dictates, it is they, and not the analyst's concept of history, that are at fault.

Sources and selectivity

Let us look more closely at the issue of historical accuracy, since it seems to animate much of the scholarly critique of Islamist arguments. What all of these views have in common is the assertion that Islamist claims are not supported by historical facts. But is this claim valid? Historical facts, in the sense of the documentary or archaeological remnants that constitute the historian's sources, provide evidence but are not equivalent to 'history'. Were this not the case, then the historian's task would be to simply collect and display these remnants. Historical narratives, however, are produced by interrogating the sources, asking particular questions of them so as to reveal patterns and processes more extensive than the sources themselves. It is by embedding source materials within a theoretical construct of history that a particular kind of historical knowledge is produced. Moreover, it is not the sources themselves that determine which construct is to be applied (e.g. economic, social, theological); that decision precedes the analysis, and to some degree conditions which sources will be relevant, capable of providing evidence. As not every historical detail can be presented, this process always involves a certain selectivity: within any narrative, certain objects of discourse are excluded while others are foregrounded. Importantly, this selection and arrangement reflects the use to which that narrative is put, the institutional forms (political, theological, scientific) which that historical practice upholds, legitimates, and extends. Historical writing, in other words, is always shaped by the historian's location at a particular time and place, and by the commitments that he or she holds. It is odd, therefore, that we fault Islamist historical narratives for presenting the past from a limited perspective, as this is a feature of *all* historical works.

This does not mean to imply, of course, that we need to interpret Muslim history 'Islamically' (or theologically, for that matter), but that to the extent that Muslims do so, that choice will impact their societies in ways that (secular) historical work must take into account. Thus, the goal should not be to unmask the error of Muslim historical practices from the standpoint of a set of supposedly universal criteria, but to ask what their presuppositions, modes of constructing and arguing from sources, and methods of verification are, and how these practices have been transformed under current conditions in Muslim societies. This entails greater attention to the kinds of historical objects which Muslim historical practices presuppose and the purposes and projects those practices sustain.

To say this is to acknowledge that a tradition is more than a mere record of facts which the researcher (with proper academic training) can scrutinize and re-describe. As J.L. Austin noted long ago, arguments about history always entail a performative aspect: any assessment of their validity must take into consideration the context of goals, practices, and assumptions within which they are embedded.[7] For this reason, we need to recognize that the institutional goals, standards, and competencies (both moral and intellectual) involved in Western academic practice may be distinct in certain aspects from those undergirding Islamic knowledges. The statements made by a professor at a Western university, for example, and those of an ʿalim in Saudi Arabia are embedded in very different kinds of social-historical projects. This difference conditions the *kinds of engagement* each will have with Islamic tradition, the status of their respective claims. Despite the increasing scope and speed of global interaction and movement ('globalization'), such differences in societal and institutional location remain extremely important to contemporary relations of power and knowledge. This point seems to be insufficiently appreciated by those scholars who rush to chastise Muslims for unfaithfully rendering their own traditions.

Notes

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2. Anderson, Benedict (1991), *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*, London: Verso.
3. Al-Azmeh, Aziz (1996), *Islams and Modernities*, New York: Verso, p. 57.
4. Arkoun, Mohammed (1994), *Rethinking Islam: Common Questions, Uncommon Answers*, Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, p. 99.
5. Roy, Olivier (1996), *The Failure of Political Islam*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, p. 148.
6. Kepel, Gilles (1993), *Muslim Extremism in Egypt: The Prophet and the Pharaoh*, Berkeley: University of California Press, p. 228.
7. Austin, John L. (1962), *How to Do Things with Words*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, p. 143-145.

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Articulating Difference

USSAMA MAKDISI

Understanding Sectarianism

The civil war in Lebanon is over. Sectarianism is not. This simple observation should make all scholars who analyse sectarianism (or communalism) pause and reflect on the nature of the problem that they are so often called upon to explain. In Lebanon and elsewhere – in India, Indonesia, the Philippines, and the Balkans – religious violence and sectarian political discourse have not diminished in the modern world, and in fact, in many instances have been exacerbated in it.

The dominant paradigm to explain sectarianism has long insisted that modernity is one thing – invariably defined as secular and Western – and sectarianism another. This secularist paradigm insists that religious feelings, beliefs, culture, and passions are insidiously persistent and immutable. Sectarianism, therefore, is almost always identified as a problem affecting less developed countries, or those peripheral regions of Europe such as the Balkans or Northern Ireland. The destruction by Hindus of a mosque in the late 20th-century India is often comprehended in light of a long history of antagonism between Hindus and Muslims in South Asia. The Maronite conflict with Druzes in Lebanon is similarly understood against the backdrop of an age-old clash of civilizations in the eastern Mediterranean. The power of such a paradigm is rooted in a simple observation: that the discourse accompanying and justifying sectarian violence is itself expressed in a language that leaves little room for historical nuance. More often than not, this language evokes a *longue durée* of antagonisms that mark Muslims, Hindus, Jews, or Christians as irreconcilably different, as inherently violent, and as incorrigibly hostile to a particular group's collective identity. Moreover, such a reassuringly simple paradigm of age-old hostility is constantly reinforced by every act of violence that occurs between religious communities in the modern world, regardless of the specific historical context.

> **Reconstructing downtown Beirut.**

PHOTO: SERGE VELDHUIZEN

Historians' constructions of sectarianism

For many observers, the case of Lebanon has bolstered the notion that sectarianism is an age-old problem. Because the recent civil war (which ostensibly ended in 1990) mimicked many of the aspects of an earlier 19th-century conflict between Druzes and Maronites that devastated the region in 1860, Lebanon has been written about as if its religious antagonisms stemmed from ancient grievances that would forever rob it of an opportunity to 'become' modern. Book after book, speech after speech, and article after article have repeated this so often that few bother to look to closely into the origins of sectarianism in Lebanon. Most Lebanese themselves are convinced that sectarianism is endemic in Lebanese history. Prominent Western historians have claimed that sectarianism represents a Muslim reaction, indeed a rage, against the modernization policies advanced by the Ottoman reform movement which declared the equality of Muslim and non-Muslim and which began a wholesale administrative, cultural and military transformation of the Ottoman Empire. The polemical implication of this argument assumes that the Muslim majority could not be really modern – that is to say, Muslims could never accept Jews or Christians as equals, but had to be cajoled into a Western and presumably alien modernity by authoritarian regimes. Invariably the only evidence presented to support this interpretation is the testimony of contemporary European sources or the fact of the violence itself as if the outbreak of religious hostilities in 1860 in and of itself was sufficient to prove a the-

sis of age-old sectarianism. Other historians have stressed social and economic pressures and dislocations caused by the impact of European industrialization on, and the consequent decline of, the Syrian textile industry. And still other historians have claimed that European rivalries played a decisive role in fomenting sectarian divisions. Historians, in short, have sought to explain the secular context of sectarianism; few have ever seriously grappled with sectarianism itself except to treat it as an easily grasped phenomenon, a cultural essence, a tribal will, a primordial religiosity that is antithetical to a liberal, egalitarian and secular modernity.

Interpretation of Ottoman reform

To the extent that sectarianism in modern Lebanon is religious in articulation it is indeed antithetical to a Western-style secularism which ostensibly separates religion from politics. But to the extent that sectarianism emerged out of a 19th-century intersection of Ottoman reformation and Western intervention, it should not be classified as antithetical to modernity. Before the 1860 massacres, social status, not religious affiliation, defined politics in Mount Lebanon. While in the Ottoman Empire as a whole, and in urban areas in particular, Muslims enjoyed political and cultural primacy over non-Muslims, the operative social and political distinction in rural Mount Lebanon was between knowledgeable elites and ignorant commoners regardless of religious affiliation. Both Christian and Druze religious authorities legitimized the traditional secular political and social order. It was the Europeans, who insisted on saving the 'subjugated' Christians of the Orient, that singled out religion in Mount Lebanon as the basis for, and sign of, modern reform. In the mid-19th century, European powers intervened in the region on an explicitly sectarian basis. The French championed the Maronites and the British protected the Druzes. In an effort to resist European encroachment and to construct a notion of a secularized Ottoman subject-citizen, the Ottomans in Mount Lebanon guaranteed Muslim (and Druze) and non-Muslim (Maronite) communities equal political representation and taxation. At one level, the problem facing European powers, Ottoman authorities, and local elites was how to transform religious

communities into political communities, while also preserving a hierarchical social order. On another level, communal politics inadvertently democratized politics as non-elites forced themselves to the forefront of sectarian mobilizations which, in turn, often violated traditional hierarchies. For example, Maronite commoners interpreted Ottoman reform to mean social as well as religious equality, whereas the Maronite church interpreted Ottoman reform to mean a 'restoration' of an imagined Maronite Christian emirate in Mount Lebanon (which had never existed as such). Both interpretations of reform constituted visions of liberation. Both either entirely excluded or subordinated the Druze inhabitants of Mount Lebanon. The religiously mixed nature of the region and the growing intervention of European powers who insisted on partitioning Mount Lebanon into pure Christian and Druze districts only exacerbated communal tensions.

Ultimately, it was conflicting interpretations over the meaning of Ottoman reform – not age-old religious antagonisms – that led directly to the sectarian violence in Mount Lebanon in the 1840s and culminated in the massacres of 1860. And it was an attempted solution to this 'age-old' problem that led Ottomans and Europeans to construct a system of local administration and politics explicitly defined on a narrow communal basis. Indeed the emergence of an explicitly sectarian political practice in Mount Lebanon can be dated precisely to the early 1840s. It was reinforced after 1860 when the Ottoman government created the religiously balanced Administrative Council to aid the non-native Christian Ottoman governor appointed by the Sublime Porte in consultation with the European powers. And it reached its most complex and theoretically sophisticated form in the modern Lebanese state which divides power on a supposedly proportional (hence theoretically equitable) basis exclusively amongst the major religious communities of Lebanon.

To be clear, this is not to say that sectarianism is 'good' because it is 'modern'. It is not being suggested that sectarianism is the only kind of modernity, as sectarian ideologues would have it. Nor is it suggested that sectarianism is an ideal system. Clearly it is not: it is chronically unstable because constant struggles between and within religious communities to define political con-

trol of, and the limits to, these communities consistently overwhelm every attempt to build a national platform. The articulation of a broad, national, and secular Lebanese citizenship will always be sacrificed on the altar of narrower communal interests because it was upon these communal interests that the state was founded and it is these interests that continue to dominate the state. Rather, while it is important to reject sectarian history, which can interpret the past only in light of supposedly unchanging Muslim, Christian or Jewish communal identities, it is also important to realize that the simplistic equation of sectarianism with atavism indicates the poverty of secularist imagination. It is also not adequate to understand sectarianism simply as a colonial construction. In the case of Mount Lebanon, sectarianism represented the transition from a pre-colonial and pre-reform Ottoman history to a post-reform history dominated by the West.

In the final analysis, what makes sectarianism so tenacious in Lebanon today is that it is a profoundly problematic component of the modern nation: it represents conflicting interpretations of a discourse of equality which, because of a 19th-century history that brought together European 'humanitarian' intervention, Ottoman reform and local aspirations, made the religious synonymous with the communal, and the communal parallel to the individual. In the social context of Mount Lebanon, sectarianism allowed non-elites to involve themselves in politics to an unprecedented degree precisely because politics was defined along communal rather than exclusively elite lines. In the context of the Ottoman Empire as a whole, and against the backdrop of several hundred years of Muslim rule over Christian minorities, sectarianism represented no less a profound change: the state no longer had a majority and several minorities defined in exclusionary religious terms, but a series of interdependent religious communities whose members were granted equal social and political status before the law. That this sectarian revolution was radically distorted by French colonialism during the post-Ottoman era to favour the Maronites (which ultimately led to two civil wars to redress this imbalance) should not obscure its crucial break with an Ottoman history that privileged Muslim over non-Muslim and elite over commoner. Without recognizing the historical, social and political complexity of sectarianism, the secular criticism of it will continue to be little more than indignant sound and fury – as impotent as it is misdirected. It will continue to miss the point, the intensity and the persistence of sectarian allegiances and antipathies. Sectarianism is not a disease but a modern reality that must be understood before it can be dismantled.

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Religious Reform
ARMANDO SALVATORE

'Public Islam' and the Nation-State in Egypt

A growing body of scholarly work is devoting attention to how Muslim traditions articulate notions that might fit the standards of a modern polity.[1] This research focus calls into question the extent to which such notions become ingrained in the norms of modern public spheres, which represent the communicative and legitimizing basis of potentially democratic political systems. The reconfiguration of the normative discourses and the institutional footing of Islamic 'reform' movements in the framework of public spheres can be termed 'public Islam'.

Even in times of burgeoning forms of social association and mobilization carried under Islamic banners, which are based on local (sub-national) and (global) transnational levels, it should be acknowledged that the nation-state framework has been historically the major platform for the rise of such norms of public Islam. Egyptian society and its history present an interesting case for relocating the notion of the public sphere within nation-state building. The specific interest in analysing public Islam relates to how the self-reforming impetus of religious traditions impacts notions of social justice, welfare and governance as well as 'social health', and on the political process at large.

The public sphere and 'public Islam'

That Muslim reformers were the hub of the public sphere at the stage of its emergence in the second half of the 19th century and for several decades thereafter, might seem to clash with Habermasian presuppositions that see a modern public sphere as free from the allegedly ritualistic and 'representational' features of traditional notions of publicness. Several other scholars have, however, stressed that also in Western societies the role of puritan and pietistic socio-religious movements and reformers has not been the exception, but the rule. The public sphere is the site where contests take place over the definition not only of the 'common good', but also of the catalogue of virtues, obligations, and rights required of the members of society (in due time citizens of the nation-state). The emergent sense of public goes hand in hand with the diffusion of norms whereby a member of the community is defined as an autonomous moral-social agent, and is simultaneously expected to be com-

Cover of *al-islam fi khandaq*, by Mustapha Mahmud.

mitted to the collective goals of the community. Therefore, it should not be surprising that reformed religious traditions play a role in the process. It would be impossible to understand the political and legal philosophy of Locke outside of the framework of Calvinist reform theology.

In a comparable vein, from the 1870s onwards, Muslim reformers in Egypt, acting not only as writers but also as editors, publishers and sponsors of new and largely autonomous press organs, expanded the area of Islamic normative discourse into issues of collective concern like state law, distribution of wealth, and work ethics, which are of vital significance for any modernizing society. As shown by Michael Gasper, the Islamic reform movement (*islah*) established the conceptual frame defining the external boundaries of the 'society' on the basis of which the nation-state was defined, including the lines of exclusion and inclusion. Theorizing about 'social ills', they saw in properly intended Islamic traditions the cure at hand. A contemporary of Muhammad ᶜAbduh, ᶜAbdallah al-Nadim (1845-1896), defined virtue not just in terms of the canonical injunction *al-amr bi-l-maᶜruf wa al-nahi ᶜan al-munkar* (enjoining good and forbidding evil), but as tied to economic development and 'industriousness'.[2]

However, we cannot assume that the public intellectuals of the Islamic reform were just playing into the hands of the nation-state. They influenced state educational and legal policies, and initiated autonomous projects within the associational life of the main urban centres, whilst backing up both activities with a public discourse that brought to bear a distinctive view of the Muslim moral being. From that historical moment on, a whole spectrum of differentiated attitudes of personalities, groups and movements of public Islam has developed as to how to manage the state and its ambition to normalize and incorporate public Islam into the normative standards of the nation-state framework (first and foremost 'citizenship', and a culturalization of Islam into a major factor of national identity also acceptable to non-Muslim minorities).

The reformers' intervention in Muslim traditions in the context of the formation of a modern public sphere did not collapse traditional notions of personhood, community and authority into the modern model of personal responsibility and loyalty to the nation-state. On the other hand, state policies could only gain coherence in an epistemological terrain that the emergent 'public Islam' foregrounded no less than colonial policies did. The bottom line is that it would be very difficult to prove that the emergence of public Islam was either purely functional or merely reactive to the process of nation-state formation.

If the normative framework associated with public Islam does not perfectly fit nation-state building, this is because the virtues propagated by the reformers, whilst indeed favouring social mobilization and disciplining in the framework of the nation-state, were not conceived in terms of formulas of

citizenship within a civil law setting, but were seen as rooted in *shariᶜa*. This notion, more than 'Islamic law', signifies something like 'Islamic normativity' or 'Islamic normative reason' (at least as used and implemented in the discourse of modern Muslim reformers).

Mustafa Mahmud

This pattern of disjunction and partial convergence between nation-state building and public Islam that we meet in the reform discourse of ᶜAbdallah al-Nadim is still found a century later – under modified circumstances of the state-society relationship – in the work of Mustafa Mahmud, probably the main personality of public Islam in Egypt. In the period of his ascent to public moral authority in the 1970s and 1980s, the cleavage between state-loyal vs. oppositional, or 'integrationist' vs. 'isolationist' Islam, not unproblematic if applied to the period between the 1920s and 1960s, becomes ever less capable of capturing the reconfiguration of public Islam *vis-à-vis* the nation-state.

The principal generator of public moral authority in Islamic terms that Mustafa Mahmud was able to play upon was the idea of a continuity between personal excellence and rectitude on the one hand, and commitment to the welfare of the community on the other. Mustafa Mahmud impersonated this script of public virtue as the founder of the most famous new Islamic *jamᶜiyya* (welfare association) in Cairo, and as the author and moderator of a very popular television documentary series on *al-ᶜilm wa-l-iman* (science and faith), where he has proven capable of swaying Islamic discourse back and forth across the thin border between the edifying and the entertaining. Through this television programme that he set up from scratch in the early 1970s, Mustafa Mahmud belongs to the pioneers of Egyptian television, a medium that rapidly spread into middle class households. In the post-Nasser political context – where the repressive capacities of the state with respect to its citizens are technically intact or even refined, although they no longer enjoy a solid legitimacy – the public styling of self-correctness and its rooting in religious credibility and authority have been crucial conditions for the efficacy of discourse, as the success story of Mustafa Mahmud shows. This credibility is also supported by the social work of the *jamᶜiyya* Mustafa Mahmud founded in 1975: growing in size and range of (mainly medical) services up to the present (see photo).

As also shown by the path of Mustafa Mahmud, the acquisition of credentials of public Islamic authority is subject to increasing differentiation: *vis-à-vis* the state, public Islam might be in a relation of collaboration, complicity, indifference, suspicion, hostility and outward opposition to terrorism (at the level where Islam eclipses from public visibility). Moreover, the success of one or the other new Islamic spokesmen is certainly dependent on an increasing degree of capacity to match the needs and orientations of a composite public. This makes the state's task of controlling public Islam ever more difficult. More generally, and in a line of con-

tinuity from the early stages of public Islam in the late 19th-century Egypt till today, the state is not the source of authorization of even state-friendly forms of public Islam.

A balanced notion of public Islam

The Habermasian claim that the public sphere creates social cohesion through mechanisms alternative to state coercion and market interest is still basically valid, and also applies to public Islam. More than that, this force of cohesion is exactly what religious-civilizing traditions, as major sources of collective identities, have been capable of doing since times long prior to the rise of modern nation-states. Therefore, in the rise and transformation of public Islam one can find instances of how religious traditions justify claims of membership within the community that articulate the tense relationship between individual salvation and social order.

If the Habermas framework is too narrow to capture the way public Islam is rooted in Islamic traditions and their ongoing reform, diluting public Islam into a 'post-modern' kind of politics of subjectivity, visibility and imagery does not do justice to how reformed Islamic traditions authorize views of social justice and practices of social welfare. By linking collective identity to forms of subjectivity that might prove difficult to ascertain, or to a plainly staged visibility as a 'politics of display' of signs, post-modern accounts of public Islam fail to duly link Muslim identity to welfare and justice, and also fail to focus on the mechanisms of recognition that authorize identity and legitimize visibility. The possible usefulness of a transculturally feasible, post-Habermasian notion of the public sphere that can be applied to the transformation of religious traditions and the emergence of a vast array of socio-religious movements, is in helping to frame the platform where nation-state projects on identity, justice and welfare intersect and overlap with – and sometimes are challenged by – movements and projects grounded on (often consciously reformed) religious traditions.

Notes

1. Cf. Eickelman, Dale and Piscatori, James (1996), *Muslim Politics*, New Jersey: Princeton University Press; Krämer, Gudrun (1999), *Gottes Staat als Republik*, Baden-Baden: Nomos.

2. Gasper, Michael (2001), 'Abdallah Nadim, Islamic Reform, and "Ignorant" Peasants: State-Building in Egypt?', in Salvatore, Armando (ed), *Muslim Traditions and Modern Techniques of Power*, *Yearbook of the Sociology of Islam*, 3, Hamburg: Lit Verlag, and New Brunswick and London: Transaction Publishers.

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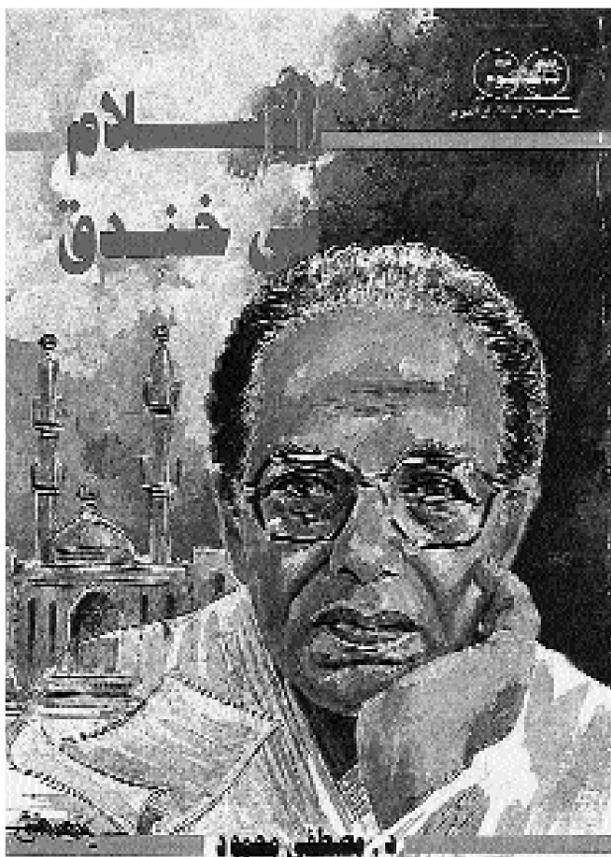
Religious Reform
FOROUGH JAHANBAKHSH

Abdolkarim Soroush
New 'Revival of Religious Sciences'

Abdolkarim Soroush (b.1945) is an Iranian philosopher-thinker whose innovative ideas on religious reform are sure to win him a place among the most prominent Muslim reformers of this century. A graduate of Tehran University in pharmacology, Soroush undertook postgraduate studies in history and the philosophy of science at the University of London in the early 1970s. His searching mind, already familiar with Islamic and Western classical philosophical traditions, was captivated by modern philosophy.

PHOTO: WIM VREEBURG

Abolkarim Soroush at the ISIM Muslim Intellectuals Conference, April 2000.

Prior to postgraduate work, Soroush was long preoccupied with textual interpretation – a product of his extensive, systematic study of Qur'anic exegesis, and classical theological, mystical and philosophical works such as Rumi and Al-Ghazali. These joined with new insights to draw him into a vortex of intellectual activity aimed at re-evaluating traditional metaphysics in order to find a convincing solution to the relationship between science and metaphysics/reason and revelation. Context has also contributed to Soroush's intellectual fruition as a Muslim reformer. In the 1960s, as a religiously committed and socio-politically concerned student, he pondered revivalist literature from Al-Afghani to Ali Shari'ati. Since returning to Iran shortly after the 1979 revolution, he has experienced the rule of an Islamic government, the supremacy of an ideologized Islam, and the implementation of a jurisprudential understanding of Islam.

Contraction and expansion

His turbulent yet rewarding intellectual journey culminated in the development of his epistemological/hermeneutical 'Theory of Contraction and Expansion of Religious Knowledge'. This theory, constituting the foundation stone of Soroush's reform plan, distinguishes him from other revivalists. Notwithstanding his deep appreciation of their endeavours, Soroush believes that his theory provides a hitherto absent but vital contribution, that is, an epistemological structure. To reconcile the immutable (religion) with change (dynamic world) it is necessary to distinguish between religion and religious knowledge. Religion is divine, eternal, immutable and sacred, while human understanding of it is in constant exchange with every field of human knowledge. As such, religious knowledge is in flux, relative, and time-bound. This recognition means that issues of reform can be addressed without compromising the sacredness of religion. Revivalists' neglect of this foundation has diverted their attention from fundamental questions. Consequently, solutions, though valuable, have been provisional. Nevertheless, Soroush claims neither perfection nor finality for his approach.

Soroush's goal goes beyond unsystematic reforms in certain selected, mostly legal, matters and his plan is multidimensional. Of its two major aspects, one is to prune elements and understandings that are considered superfluous and stagnant and have often obscured the essence of religion. The other is to equip religion with extra-religious means and values, chiefly in reconciling reason and revelation.

Reason and revelation

His pathology of contemporary Islam surfaces numerous ills. Although post-revolutionary conditions in Iran are central to his diagnosis, Soroush has no difficulty identifying these problems all over the Muslim world. First, he sees the ideologizing of Islam, the prevalent mode of Islamic resurgence since the 1960s, as detrimental to the essence of religion. Among other things, it makes religion an instrument for attaining goals. It promotes a dogmatic understanding of religion concerned with exoteric, accidental aspects, ignoring deeper meanings and resulting in intellectual rigidity and exclusivism. It fixes one understanding of religion as final, absolute, official, and beyond criticism. Demanding its official interpreters, it entrusts the clergy with a priori privileges and gives access to religious totalitarianism at societal and political levels. Soroush calls this the 'Islam of identity'. At best, it is an ideological means that may help Muslims overcome their modernity-inspired 'crisis of identity'; whereas the 'Islam of truth', understood as the essential truths to which prophets have invited humankind, is only remotely related to this 'expediental' Islam.

A second problem is the undue emphasis given to legal aspects of Islam (shari'ah and fiqh) at the cost of ethics and theology. Soroush's critique of this imbalance targets traditionalists and some modernists alike, the former for reducing Islam to fiqh. The latter, trapped in this short-sightedness, have lost their ability to recognize ills at a deeper level and have thus reduced reform to partial and unsystematic legal solutions. Soroush does not underestimate the significance of fiqh and shari'ah. What he argues against is ascribing to it primacy, comprehensiveness and finality. Inspired by his 'mentor' Al-Ghazali, he believes that fiqh is neither the core of Islam nor its totality and should thus be confined to its own sphere. Moreover, a fiqh-based understanding of Islam puts a premium on 'amal (outward practices) rather than iman (inner faith). It envisions a society wherein the enforcement of the shari'ah, ritualism and uniformity in religious experience prevail. This absence of plurality leads to hypocrisy and monopoly on truth.

These two ills have not only caused a stagnation in religious thought, they have promoted a 'maximalist' view of religion. They have prevented a dialogue among Islamic religious sciences and between Islam and the human sciences, necessary components to a revitalization of Islamic thought. Only through such recognition and willingness to enter into a give-and-take process will Islamic thought break the shackles of rigidity and absolutism. This is a summons to the invigorating role of reason, a call deeply aligned with

Mu'tazilite rationalism and resonating with the pleas of Muhammad Abduh and Muhammad Iqbal.

A 'maximalist' view of religion affirms that what Muslims need to solve their problems or administer their public and personal lives is all provided in Islam as if religion were a repository of pre-packaged solutions for all problems at all times. This deprives Muslims of the intellectual challenge and benefit of other means and values. In practice, it recedes to fiqh, which, in its most lively manifestation, ijtihad, is ironically the most in need of extra-religious knowledge. A 'maximalist' view of religion is perhaps best exemplified in the prevailing discourse on Islam and politics. It teaches that shari'ah is an all-comprehensive system of law that provides for political needs. This juridical approach to politics not only disregards the very nature of the matter, it ends in some un-resolvable contradictions.

Islam and democracy

Soroush argues that discussion about Islam and politics should be approached from outside of religion. Reconciling religion and democracy is of the same nature as reconciling reason and revelation; both involve extra-religious values and means. In essence, the nature of the state and values and methods of governance are not matters of religious jurisprudence but belong to political philosophy. With regard to religion, they should be addressed in kalam (theology). Human beings qua human beings are entitled to a priori rights, including political ones. Pivotal values of democracy – justice and freedom – are extra-religious, though upheld by religious systems. Methods of governance are also non-religious. Administering public life is a rational matter that should benefit from modern social sciences, economics and administration. Fiqh is neither a science of administration nor a government platform. Anything found in religion in this respect is 'minimal' and 'accidental'; it is not 'essential' to religion. Arguing for the possibility of a religious democratic state, Soroush believes that if democracy is irreconcilable with the normative legal reading of Islam, it can be compatible with another understanding that accords primacy to human values such as rationality, justice, freedom and human rights. Therefore, democracy can work in a religious society only if the respective theoretical foundations are harmonized.

Islam and modernity

Acutely aware of an epistemological break between the old and modern worlds, Soroush believes that any serious attempt at Islamic modernism should begin by equipping itself with modern concepts, perceptual outlooks and intellectual means. Of the several issues addressed by Soroush, two are modern: critical reason vs. traditional hermeneutical reason, and rights vs. duties.

Modern Muslim thought needs to adopt critical reasoning, a tool that not only involves a critical historical approach to traditional religious paradigms but can also suggest alternatives. One of the most decisive paradigmatic changes of the modern world is that most of its concepts and institutions are right-based, reflecting the shift in human self-per-

ception from duty-bearing to right-bearing. Equally critical of the shortcomings of the past duty-oriented mentality and the current right-oriented mentality, Soroush proposes a third paradigm in which elements of rationality and rights are tempered by a form of religiosity that prevents human beings from assuming God-like characteristics and obliges them to God. However, the nature and definition of this religiosity and obligation differ radically from conventional notions that are primarily geared to external behaviour.

Far from inviting secularism, Soroush advances a learned and examined kind of religiosity. This dimension of his project deals, one might say, with reviving a higher mystical type of religiosity. It is an 'experiential religiosity' based on the love of God, the prototype of which is the 'prophetic experience' of Muhammad. What the demystified modern world is in need of is an 'experiential' not 'expediental' religiosity where God is experienced as a gracious Beloved, not as a stern Law-giver. His commands are observed not out of obligation to legal duties but out of compulsion of love.

Soroush's reform plan targets the shortcomings of both tradition and modernity. While advocating adoption of certain modern elements to strengthen the tradition, it searches the deep layers of tradition to offer a remedy for the spiritual impoverishment of the modern age. In order to become functional in the modern world, religion needs to interact meaningfully with modern concepts, outlooks and institutions. To this end, Soroush moves reform from the plane of fiqh to deeper levels of theology and philosophy where essential concepts of God, humankind and religiosity are to be redefined. This is predicated on the recognition of the need for a dialogical pluralism between inside and outside of religious intellectual fields. The complementarity of Soroush's project lies in the fact that it invigorates the intellectual rational tradition of Islam and at the same time accentuates its spiritual richness. The effect is to restrain the arrogance and self-centredness of modern humankind.

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Those technical terms in quotation (e.g. 'maximalist', 'experiential religiosity', etc.) are taken from Soroush's own works hitherto in Persian. For the sake of space limitation no individual reference is given here.

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Re-Islamization
AMR HAMZAWY

al-Manar al-Jadid
Changes in the Contemporary Islamist Discourse

The periodical *al-Manar al-Jadid* was first published in January 1998 in Cairo. In the words of its editor-in-chief, Gamal Sultan, its aim is: 'To establish a civilized and authentic intellectual forum, to combat the waves of westernization, arbitrariness and opportunism in the Islamic world.'[1] The initiators of the publication include such prominent Islamists as Muhammad ᶜImara, Tariq al-Bishri, Yusuf Qaradawi, and Rashid al-Ghanushi, as well as activists of the younger generation, like kamal habib, a leading member of the Jihad Group in the 1980s. The new periodical is obviously linked to the famous *al-Manar* issued in 1898 under the patronage of Rashid Rida.

By constructing a historical continuum from the situation of the *umma* at the end of the 19th century to the state of the Islamic world at the threshold of the 21st century, *al-Manar al-Jadid* emphasizes its lineal ties with Rida and his initial goals. 'Rida already understood that the *umma* required a step forward into the future […]. A new future, at which horizon it would free itself from the heavy burden of stagnation, technological and scientific backwardness, and civilizatory sloth […]. Today, at the end of the 20th century, these hopes and fears are still on the agenda of most Arabic and Islamic societies.'[2] In light of this analogy, the leading article written by Rida in 1898 and republished in the first issue of *al-Manar al-Jadid*, entitled 'Risalat al-Manar' (The Message of al-Manar), stands as a policy statement for the new periodical. In addition to the revival of *umma* thought, it also intends to provide new impulses to the tradition of *islah* (reform) and *tajdid* (renewal) and to bring the century-old aims of *al-Manar* to the centre of contemporary attention.

Revival of a religious tradition

With his motto, *tajdid al-tajdid*[3] (renewal of the renewal), Muhammad ᶜImara is representative of the way in which historical analogies are constructed and arguments relevant to the present times are articulated in *al-Manar al-Jadid*. Apart from Rida, ᶜImara refers to the writings of Jamal al-Din al-Afghani and Muhammad ᶜAbduh. He sees the efforts of these reformers as an attempt to develop the fundamentals of a civilizatory societal project that is in harmony with Islam and contemporaneity and that calls into question both the blind copying of the West and the uncritical following of the first generation of Muslims. He argues that the main goals of the early reform were: opposing the 'harmful' Western influence; formulating an authentic understanding of progress on the basis of the totality of Islam as religion, society and state; liberating Islam from the *bidᶜa* (innovations); promoting contemporary interpretations of the *shariᶜa*; and mobilizing the forces of renewal in the *umma*. Finally, he emphasizes the gradual nature of reform in the Islamic tradition, contrasting it to the secular idea of the necessity of a radical break with the past. ᶜImara sees a continuity of history and content from the old reform tradition to the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, which he regards as the first modern embodiment of the Islamist tendency. In fact, its founder, Hasan al-Banna, took over the publication of *al-Manar* after the death of Rida in 1939. In ᶜImara's opinion, the initial goals of *al-Manar* remain of importance, given the unbroken dominance of the West, the continued stagnation of the Arabic-Islamic societies, and the marginalization of authentic Islamic thought.

The analysis of ᶜImara provides an essentialist discourse. His argument that the *umma* has remained in a state of stagnation reveals a one-sided understanding of developments in the 20th century, depicted as a history of decadence. As is frequently encountered in the modern Islamist historiography, he explains this history as a departure from the fundamentals of a Golden Age, the original state of grace of the community at the time of the Prophet. The same understanding of history informs his evaluation of transitions in contemporary Islamic thought, which he explains as an internal fall from a correctly guided tradition (*islah*) – a situation that is to be redressed with the help of *al-Manar al-Jadid*.

The notions of continuity and change in the discussions found in *al-Manar al-Jadid* have two central themes: the persistence of decadence as a general tendency of human societies and the desirable return to an idealized moment in history. The notion of change is only relevant as an embodiment of the transition from the current decadence to the restoration of the Golden Age and of the rediscovery of a religiously appropriate approach to the needs of the *umma*. This highly retrogressive aspect of the continuity-change dichotomy means that some of the writings in *al-Manar al-Jadid* lose their future-oriented substance. However, the revival of the ideal of reform works against the backward-looking limitations in the contemporary Islamist discourse and extends the limits of what is changeable in Islamist thought.

The contributions of the 'new reformers' in *al-Manar al-Jadid* reveal two approaches. Firstly, the strategies and approaches of Islamist efforts since the 1970s are subjected to critical scrutiny. Secondly, on the basis of the so-called 'teachings of the past' there is a debate on the prospects of theoretical and programmatic change in the Islamist spectrum. Within this framework, the process of rethinking is legitimized by emphasizing the overall societal changes and the diversity of experiences in the Islamic world. In other words, the primacy of continuity, which is central to the revival of the reform tradition, is substituted by a dynamic perception of the realities of modern Arabic-Islamic societies. Subsequently, the phenomenon of Islamism becomes a matter of pragmatic approach. This marks a shift of focus in the discussion of future-oriented reforms. While the link to the past remains the main legitimizing paradigm of the Islamist thought, it is qualified by a link to contemporary matters.

On the fallibility of contemporary Islamism

The Tunisian scholar Rashid al-Ghanushi sees Islamism as a mass movement, as the '[…] sum of the individual and collective efforts of numerous faithful men and women in order to lead Muslims back to their merciful God'.[4] Islam being the only true source of orientation, the Islamists have the duty to start a process of re-Islamization in all spheres of life by means of legal and educational reforms. Thus they make it possible to realize a model of society and politics based on the authentic principles of *shura* (consultation) and *siyasa sharᶜiyya* (rule of Islamic law). The relevance of contemporary Islamism is felt by Al-Ghanushi to lie in the vitality and uniqueness of its role. In his argumentation the transformations of the 20th century constituted a break within Islamic history. The rise of modern nation-states put an end to the old separation of power between rulers and religious scholars, which was based on a functional distinction between the spheres of politics and society. In his view, the traditional role of the ᶜulama' was to sanction political power and to protect people against despotic rule. However, this lost its significance within the context of the nation-state. New authoritarian elites rejected the participation of any forces other than their own in the formation of the new national society. They degraded religious institutions to state instruments serving to preserve their own power and even adopted religious contents and symbols for their own secular goals. According to Al-Ghanushi, the ᶜulama' had the option to either obey the rulers and thus ensure a minimum amount of freedom (in the educational sphere in particular) or to inspire opposition in order to free religion and society from secular nationalist rule. The Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood was a typical result of the latter option, and with the works of Al-Banna and Sayyid Qutb it paved the way for numerous other movements aimed at re-Islamizing the state and society.

Although Al-Ghanushi continues to see this goal as essential, he emphasizes that the 'painful experiences' of the past three decades make it necessary to reassess the strategies used and to examine their conformity to Islamic values as well as their political efficacy. The radical and violent approach characteristic of many attempts to bring about change in the 1980s and 1990s, he argues, is in stark contrast to the authentic concept of gradual change in Islamic thought. These attempts damaged the credibility of the Islamists, the majority of whom have come to see in recent years that neither violence nor a complete rejection of modern social structures offers prospects for the future. He therefore pleads for turning away from the militant paradigm of Qutb and for a 'return' to the reform tradition of Al-Afghani, ᶜAbduh, and Rida, and above all to the pacifist, ethical-moral principles of Al-Banna. By emphasizing gradual change and relevance to the present as the main criteria for evaluating social activity, Al-Ghanushi opens the way for a critique of the central principles of contemporary Islamist practice.

The plea for an appropriate return to the gradual reform tradition and the ethical beginnings of modern Islamism indeed marks a break with the dominant radical understanding of politics and society over the past three decades. While since the 1970s such negative evaluations have been a prime feature of the secular criticism of Islamism, the fact that they are adopted in current Islamist discourses indicates a fundamental change. The inclusion of historical and contemporary processes of change in determining the societal goals and strategies of Islamism means a reversal of the radical assumption that social structures must be (re-)formed according to a(n) – essentialized – religious world-view and by political means. This gives relevance to the question of the social plausibility of certain religious contents and the form in which they are mediated in the public sphere. The primacy of adapting to 'changeable' social conditions becomes a central element of the discourse. The persistence of the notions of 'return' and 'beginnings' justifies the adaptation to the present by emphasizing a conceptual and symbolic affinity to the old reform tradition and, moreover, to the dominant, backward-looking paradigm of Islamist thought during the last decades. The call to rediscover the ethical-moral dimensions of Islamism represents a response to the immanent tension between continuity and change in religious discourses. By restoring the separation between timeless (ethical-moral) and changing (society-related) elements in Islam and by taking the former out of the sphere of politics, the religious ideals are resacralized and freed from the secular constraints of social reality.

The review in *al-Manar al-Jadid* of the Islamist experience over the past three decades has led to a renewal of the religiously influenced understanding of politics and society. The backward-looking notion of change should not obscure the significance of the reform proposals originating from the discussions in the periodical. Reverting to authentic experiences (early-Islamic period) and traditions (reform tradition of the early *al-Manar*) is re-valued and reduced to the functionality of stabilizing the sacral reference system and the legitimization of renewal. Thus a new scope is provided for discourse in which, by taking account of religious ideals and historical transformations, answers can be formulated to the tensions generated by the demands of continuity and the need for change.

Notes

1. *al-Manar al-Jadid*, 1 (1998), p. 4. This article is based on an analysis of the first seven issues.
2. Ibid., p. 5.
3. Ibid., p. 14-20.
4. Ibid., 2 (1998), p. 64.

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South Asia

PETER GOTTSCHALK

The Problem of Defining Islam in Arampur

An annual religious procession makes its way along darkened brick-paved and packed-earth streets through the various neighbourhoods of Arampur, a village in Bihar, India. Young men chant formulaic slogans while ritually clashing in shows of weapon-handling. Women, men, and children stand in the night or sit on string beds outside their homes watching the lively action come and go on their otherwise non-eventful street. Occasionally they shout their support for the prancing adolescents. In this village with nearly equal numbers of Hindus and Muslims, is this procession Hindu or Islamic?

Scholars have become increasingly aware of how political interests have depicted 'Hindu' and 'Muslim' identities as artificially singular to suit their own agendas, whether of the colonial state, Pakistan movement, or Hindutva cause. Despite their disapproval of militant attempts to both equate 'Indian' with 'Hindu' and denigrate Muslims, scholars demonstrate far less cognizance of their own acceptance of a monolithic understanding that suffuses post-colonial Western scholarship regarding South Asian cultures. This is to say, Western scholars may recognize the socio-political ramifications of essentialized religious identities but do not often enough practise scholarship in ways that challenge problematic categories.

The example of the procession described above demonstrates a crisis in identification for religious studies, the import of identity politics on the national level, and the dynamics of identity practices on the local level.

The description could accurately portray two different annual processions in Arampur: one which occurs on Muharram and another on Durga Puja. Attempts to categorize these events as Muslim or Hindu demonstrate both the multiple meanings each term allows and the uncertainty which commonly accompanies their use. With equal vitality and energy for the proclamation of their heroes, the boys and young men of each procession brandish long, hardened bamboo staves and differ only by the heroes they memorialize: Muslims commemorate Husain and Hindus celebrate Durga. However, the participation of both Muslims
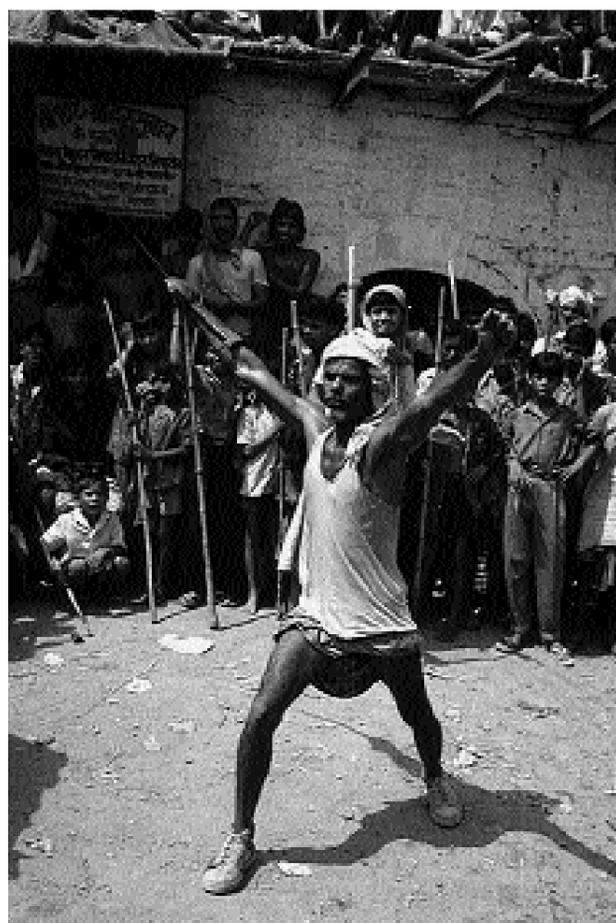
Muharram swordplay.

and Hindus among the watching, if not cheering, crowd problematizes efforts at exact labelling.

Problems of definition

Efforts to label such rituals as 'Islamic' or 'Hindu' often rely on unclear definitions and thus overlook the often shared identities and participation in each other's lives. Three options for determining the religious character of each ritual come to mind: historical origin of the ritual, essence of the ritual, and identity of the participants. We might label the Muharram procession as Islamic and not Hindu (or Sikh or Christian) because it originated as a commemoration of the martyrdom of Husain. Yet, if the historical origin alone determined the assessment of a memorial day's character, would All Souls Day then be defined as pagan instead of Catholic based on the primacy of its beginnings? Secondly, Muharram might be defined as Islamic simply because it is accepted, assumedly, as essentially Islamic by Muslims in Arampur. In fact, however, some Muslims in the Arampur area, not to mention elsewhere in the world, disparage such rituals as counter to Islamic principles as they understand them. Finally, the Durga Puja procession might be labelled Hindu because those processing identify themselves as Hindu. Yet can the event be so narrowly described as to define participation solely based on the procession? The audience, which includes Hindus and Muslims for both events, does indeed participate in each procession, if only by attendance. To label it as 'Hindu' disregards the presence, support, and involvement of many Muslims. Overall, then, no single criteria exists for the application of the descriptors 'Islamic' and 'Hindu'. Rather, the use of either term can refer to any of the three criteria given above (if not others) and thus the meaning remains unclear.

In contrast with the elusive definitions of 'Islamic' and 'Hindu', the term 'communal' conveys a very specific meaning in South Asian studies. The Anglophonic use of 'communal' has come to commonly assume nothing less than acrimonious relations between antagonistic religious groups. The pervasive dominance of this expectation regarding community in South Asia demonstrates the degree to which scholarship has been shaped by a focus on religious communities imagined to be monolithic in composition, exclusionary in principle, and hostile in practice. When the term 'communalism' is used in an Indian context, the burden of anticipated religious exclusivity prohibits the imagining of any shared community among Muslims and Hindus.

Hindu, Muslim or modern

Caught between secular expectations and communalist rhetoric, scholarship often struggles against three contingent, essentializing assumptions: firstly, that Islam and Hinduism in India (if not elsewhere) are not 'just' religions, but lifestyles. That is, the first assumes that most Muslims and Hindus eschew the possibility of a shared secular public sphere because they allow their respective religious traditions to pervade completely their lives.[1] Too often the additional assumption follows that, this being the case and because Hindus and Muslims embrace practices and beliefs entirely apart from the other community, they are either Hindus or Muslims and seldom, if ever, share an identi-

ty. The third assumption is that not only do the personal identities and cultural spheres of Hindus and Muslims not overlap, they stand in binary opposition to one another (e.g. cow veneration versus beef consumption, iconic representation versus strident iconoclasm). Despite the professed secularism of India's democracy, scholars expect most social and cultural phenomena to be uniformly Hindu, Muslim, or – when neither term fits – modern. The current spate of Hindu nationalist language that has been the focus of ample Indian and Western scholarship has only intensified the expectations among many that Hindus and Muslims live in irreconcilably different cultures. Trapped by secular presumptions that religion can and should be safely isolated from the public sphere for the preservation of social order, scholars often deride the political use of communalist language while accepting its underlying assumptions regarding the social divergence of Hindus and Muslims.[2]

In fact, the terms 'Islamic' and 'Hindu' are inherently multivalent. This is because religions in India (and in much of the West) are not purely self-contained systems which reside neatly behind definite boundaries. Rather, religious symbols, terminology, and behaviour permeate the public cultures within which they thrive and a wide variety of phenomena can be 'Islamic' or 'Hindu' in myriad ways. Further, what these terms define – what practices, beliefs, dispositions, emotions, and physical manifestations they include – vary so greatly even among the residents of a single village that, were Hinduism and Islam to exist within tangible and mutually exclusive limits, their internal variation would challenge any notion of consistency.

These problems may impel some, like Wilfred Cantwell Smith, to declare that religion is too ill-defined to be an adequate concept. But increasingly people perceive these religions as objective systems within which they involve themselves and so their academic rejection would be naïve.[3] Smith also called for a study of believers in context; that we must look through their eyes at the universe and see what they see.[4] Issues of the limits of this ideal aside, Smith is right insofar as this universe also includes the broad socio-cultural world of believers. The religious lives of Hindus and Muslims are informed by the relationships of diffusion and antagonism with other religious and non-religious cultural traditions. When scholars imagine that they see the world through the eyes of believers, they too frequently suffer a far-sightedness that overlooks neighbours, classmates, and teammates who may share in any dimension of life except religion.

We must be sure to recognize that few Muslims and Hindus understand themselves solely as such. They not only see differences among the members of their own religious communities broadly construed, but they also understand themselves as members of communities without an explicit religious character. Each resident of Arampur recognizes not a single identity but multiple identities with which they navigate through the multiple social interactions and associations as they live their lives. As they consider publicly and privately their own meaning of 'Islam' or 'Hinduism', they do so within a web of conversations and interactions which shape their thinking and identity

practices. Because identity is more than how one thinks – it is perhaps even more how one communes bodily – we must more extensively explore the fuller range of interrelations among Muslims and those living in the broader cultural realm along with them.

So perhaps, for example, one of the audience members who watches the Muharram procession pass by her house and identifies herself as a Hindu will think about Aurangzeb's infamous deprivations against Hindus and wonder whether any of the cheering young men would be a future iconoclast. Can Muslims ever truly be loyal Indians like she and her family are? But while such thoughts may prompt her to ponder Hindu-Muslim differences, they may not come to mind as she prays at any of the local *dargah*s for the intervention of a Sufi in her life. Or a boy, who identifies himself as Muslim, takes part in the procession and feels encouraged by hearing the narrative of Husain's sacrifice. He is following a very deliberate path through the village – a path along which he and many others – Hindus and Muslims alike – use their bodies to affirm that they all belong to the village, not unlike his local cricket team. In these two imagined but not impossible moments, identities of Hindu and Muslim mingle with those of nation and village, family and team.

Part of the answer to this crisis in religious studies lies in expanding the contextualization of religious traditions, not only in the multi-religious cultures in which most Indians live, but also in the socio-economic environments in which they thrive as individuals with multiple identities, shared and not shared, in varying combinations among them.

Notes

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South Asia

FRANCIS ROBINSON

The ʿUlama of Farangi Mahall and Islamic Culture

The Farangi Mahall family of learned and holy men is remarkable in the history of India. Indeed, it would be in any society. Claiming descent from Ayyub Ansari, the host of the Prophet at Medina, through the 11th-century saint ʿAbd Allah Ansari of Herat, their ancestors migrated to India in the early years of the Delhi sultanate. One branch settled around Pani-pat, close to Delhi, and in recent times produced: Altaf Husayn Hali, the great poet of the Aligarh movement; Khwaja Ahmad Abbas, the progressive writer; and Dr M.A. Ansari, the pan-Islamic leader and president both of the Indian National Congress and of the all-India Muslim League.

The ʿUlama of Farangi Mahall and Islamic Culture in South Asia

Francis Robinson
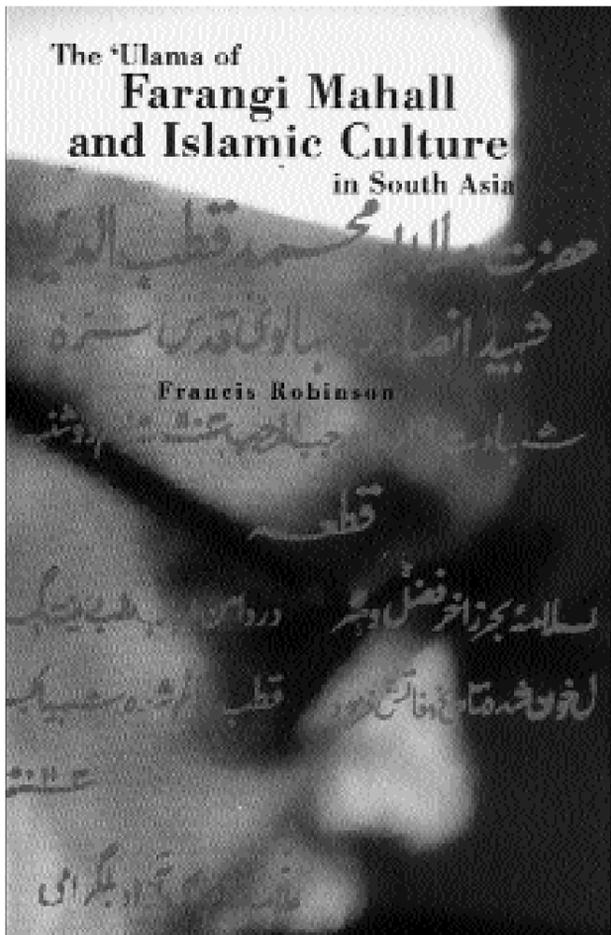
A second branch established itself in Awadh. Documentary evidence of its existence begins with the first known farman of the Emperor Akbar which made a revenue-free grant to one Mulla Hafiz in 1559. The family can be traced through such documents down to the time in 1692 when the Mulla's great-great-grandson, Qutb al-Din, was murdered in a squabble over land. In consequence the Emperor Awrangzeb granted his family the sequestered property of a European merchant in Lucknow which,

in 1695, the family occupied. Over the years they came to occupy a considerable *muhal-la*, which was named Farangi Mahall.

We know something of the lives of almost every male descendant of Qutb al-Din from the early 18th century to the mid-20th century. They are important in four main ways. They were scholars and teachers, the great consolidators on Indian soil of the rational-ist traditions of Islamic scholarship derived from Iran. These they encapsulated in their *dars-i nizamiyya* curriculum, which became the dominant system of education for Indi-an Muslims until it was overcome by the twin forces of Islamic reform and Western education in the 20th century.

Such men of learning were also religious leaders. They offered guidance to society through their commentaries on the great books in the *madrasa* curriculum, through the *fatawa* they issued and through the counsel they gave, both public and private. Those with spiritual vocations, moreover, were models of right behaviour, their deeds and sayings being passed on by word of mouth and on occasion in written form, as guidance for their own time and for future generations. Two great Sufi lines ran through the family: the Chishti-Sabiri from Shah Muhibb Allah of Allahabad (d. 1648), spiritual confidant of Dara Shikoh and de-fender of Ibn ʿArabi, and the Qadiri line from Sayyid Shah ʿAbd al-Razzaq of Bansa (d.1724), spiritual guide of Mulla Nizam al-Din of Farangi Mahall and reviver of the Qadiri *silsila* in northern India.

Such religious leaders were, of course, de-fenders in the public sphere of their under-standing of Islam. Up to the mid-19th centu-ry this largely involved, apart from the odd exchange with a Christian missionary, con-testing the claims of Shiʿa ʿulama or of re-formist Sunnis. From the mid-19th century their prime concerns were the threats to Islam presented by British power in India and elsewhere. In the 20th century these came to a head in a wave of protests and or-ganizational developments reaching from the first decade through to the mid-1920s. Farangi Mahallis were at the heart of the

foundation of the Jamiyat al-ʿUlama-i Hind and the All-India Khilafat Committee, as well as a host of smaller activist organizations.

Finally, the Farangi Mahallis are of impor-tance simply as a family. We can see how they responded to the challenges of Mughal, Nawabi and British rule, and subse-quently to partition and independence. In the 18th and 19th centuries we can trace their movements as they sought service in the courts of Lucknow, Rampur Farrukhabad, Buhar (in Bengal), Arcot and Hyderabad. In the 19th and 20th centuries the princely states remained a haven, in particular Hy-derabad, but many also found employment in British India as ʿulama, hakims, publish-ers, newspaper editors, and administrators in government and commercial concerns. Throughout the family, education – whether traditionally Islamic or Western – has remained highly valued. Now they are spread throughout the world: from Aus-tralia, through South Asia, the Middle East, Europe and North America. A good number, now joined by their womenfolk, maintain the family traditions of scholarship, but more often than not in universities.

Research concerns

I first encountered the Farangi Mahallis in the mid-1960s as I began the research which was published as *Separatism Among Indian Muslims: the Politics of the United Provinces' Muslims 1860-1923* (Cambridge, 1974). I was much puzzled that they figured prominently in the imperial record but not in the historiography then current. *Sepa-ratism* established their central role in the Khilafat movement. The book itself led the head of the family, Mawlana Jamal Miyan, to come to London from Karachi in 1976. He told me that the records available for the study of his family were much richer than what I had been able to consult in Lucknow. There followed several years of research in Karachi and Lucknow, but also in Hyderabad and Madras. Throughout, family members were teachers and guides of great kindness and generosity. This research led to a deep-ening of my understanding of Islamic civi-

lization, and not least of the role of ʿulama and Sufis as guardians, interpreters and transmitters of the central messages of Is-lamic culture. This understanding profound-ly influenced my approach to subsequent work, for instance, my *Atlas of Islam since 1500* (Oxford, 1982) and the *Cambridge Illus-trated History of the Islamic World* (Cam-bridge, 1996).

All but one of the essays in the *ʿUlama of Farangi Mahall and Islamic Culture in South Asia* have been published over the past twenty years in different places, most of which are not particularly accessible. The aim of publishing them together is to en-able an understanding of the achievement and importance of the family to be per-ceived more readily. Three of the essays – 'Perso-Islamic Culture in India from the Sev-enteenth to the Early Twentieth Century', 'Scholarship and Mysticism in Early Eigh-teenth-Century Awadh' and 'Ottomans-Safawids-Mughals: Shared Knowledge and Connective Systems' – illustrate the role of the Farangi Mahallis as the consolidators and the defenders both of rationalist tradi-tions of scholarship and of Ibn al-ʿArabi's Sufi understandings in northern India. The last of the above-mentioned places their achievement in the context of the wider Is-lamic world and the movement of ideas from the 17th century onwards. Two essays – 'The ʿUlama of Farangi Mahall and their Adab' and 'ʿAbd al-Bari and the Events of January 1926' – set out to evoke what it was to be a learned and holy man in the Farangi Mahalli tradition. Of particular value here is the way in which the *malfuzat* literature and private correspondence enables Farangi Mahallis to speak for themselves. Four es-says – 'Problems in the History of the Faran-gi Mahall Family of Learned and Holy Men', 'Al-Nizamiyya: A Group of Lucknow Intellec-tuals in the Early Twentieth Century', 'ʿUla-ma, Sufis and Colonial Rule in North India and Indonesia', and again 'ʿAbd al-Bari and the Events of January 1926' – all deal with the family's responses to British rule. We see them responding as jurists, as educators, as spiritual leaders and as young intellectuals, and in doing so for the most part we sense the moderate and balanced judgement which was the hallmark of their rationalist tradition. In the ʿAbd al-Bari essay we wit-ness the life and ideas of a man who epito-mized the Farangi Mahalli tradition in his time, but whose death in January 1926 brought with it the end of the tradition's greatness.

It is to be hoped that the publication of these essays as a book will establish the sig-nificance of the Farangi Mahall family of Lucknow alongside that of the Wali Allah family of Delhi in the Islamic history of India. They are but a starting point; there is more research on this family to be done.

Degree in Eastern European and Mediterranean Civilizations

The opening of the EU to Eastern Europe and Mediterranean countries facilitates the widening of international relations and at the same time exacerbates the need for people who have profound knowledge of these areas, which constitute the 'Europe of the future'. With contemporary society becoming increasingly multicultural, ex-perts who can solve the problems deriving from the coexistence of citizens from dif-ferent social and cultural backgrounds will be indispensable.

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South Asia
REHANA GHADIALLY

Women Pilgrims
Boons and Bonds in an Ismaili Sect

The religious life of the Daudi Bohras – an Ismaili sect of South Asian Shi'i Muslims – comprises a rich pattern of beliefs and rituals. Its members adhere to seven pillars of Islam. Besides the well-known five, the other two include *walaya*, or devotion to the Prophet and his relations, and obedience to the twenty-first hidden imam. Visits to tomb shrines constitute a significant expression of devotional observances. Distinct from the Hajj, this type of pilgrimage is known as *ziyaret* in Bohra usage. The following concentrates on domestic pilgrimages or visits to tombs of *dais** (leaders of the missionary effort) and other functionaries in India.

The Daudi Bohras are an endogamous Gujarati-speaking group, numbering a million and scattered across fifty countries, the largest concentration being in South Asia. They are urban-based, the majority living in their ethnic enclaves, and are small shopkeepers, with professionals among their youth. As a sect, the Daudi Bohras are relatively prosperous. The religious life is overseen by a hierarchically organized, exclusively male class of clerics headquartered in Mumbai city. The spiritual leader is variously known as *dai*, *syedna* or *maula*. The *syedna* is the custodian of all shrines and under him the religious establishment works like a corporate structure, offering spiritual services in exchange for cash or kind. Although women may be more visible at shrines than men, they play no role in their management.

The missionary effort of the sect was transferred from Yemen to India in the 16th century and thereafter *dais* of Indian origin graced the leadership. The tombs of the twenty-seven *dais* (numbers 25 to 51) and their deputies constitute the sacred space in India. This space stretches across four states in northwestern India, including fifty sacred spots, the highest density of which is found in the state of Gujarat, home to the largest concentration of the Bohras. While Bohras previously travelled annually on saint's day for *ziyaret*, the post-independence spurt in year round travel may be attributed to the *syedna's* agenda to modernize the facilities as well as the prosperity of the community from migration and expansion of road and rail connections.
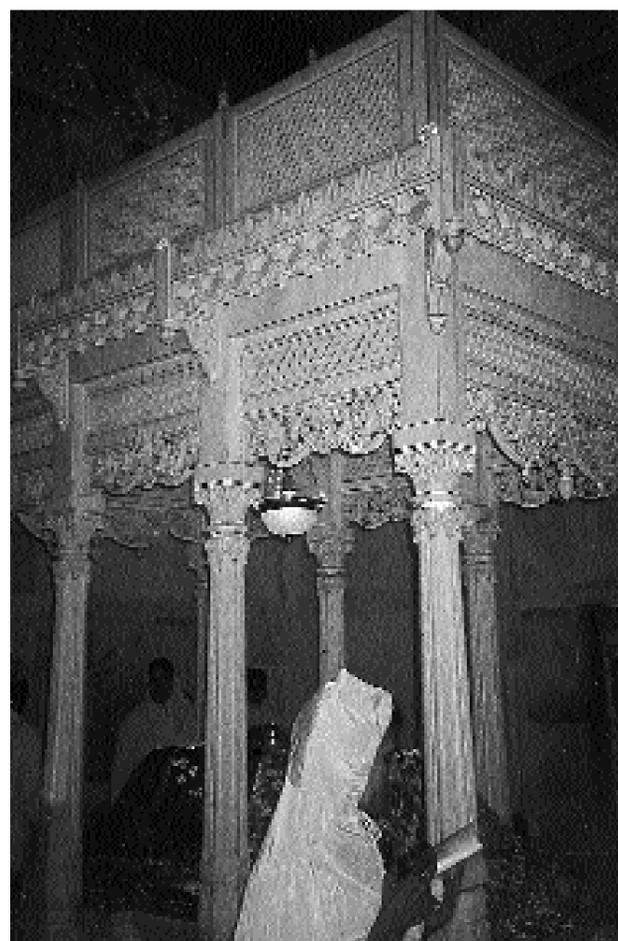
A shrine in Galiakot.

PHOTO: REHANA GHADIALLY, 2000

Pilgrims, sacred journeys, and other trips

Love for the prophet and his relations is incumbent on all believers and in the spirit of this obligation, the faithful – irrespective of class, gender, age, educational background and geographic location – undertake the sacred journeys to tomb shrines (*ziyaret*). However, women more than men (middle-aged and older women more than younger women) and the orthodox take this journey. On the occasion of the saint's day a substantial presence of men can be witnessed. The older men come to sponsor meals and the younger to serve the influx of pilgrims. Pilgrimages are never solitary journeys. Women travel with their families or with their husbands, but more importantly in all women's groups. They travel by train, hired vehicles, and state-run or private buses and taxis. A common method is to travel by train to a major shrine centre and hire a vehicle to complete a selected circuit. By far the most popular circuit is the density of shrines in the state of Gujarat, popularly referred to as *Kathiawar ni ziyaret*, which takes eight to ten days.

In addition to the common practice of travelling for *ziyaret*, women also travel for domestic, social, leisure, and business purposes making practised Islam indistinguishable from other aspects of their lives. In short, shrines provide vital links to what is central to a woman's world. Given the expansion of women's motives to travel, shrines have evolved from being exclusive centres of devotion to being refuges from domestic and urban life, serving as picnic spots or even holiday resorts that provide inexpensive lodging facilities.

Devotion and earthly boons

The devotional expression of the Daudi Bohras is simple and requires no presence of a cleric. Unlike the mosque and the community hall, space is not gendered inside the shrine. Women do need to be ritually clean and the covering dress (*rida*) is mandatory. Men may be in traditional attire or Western clothes. The pilgrims enter the mausoleum (*roza*) barefooted and with their heads covered. They bend from the waist, moving the right hand rapidly between the floor and the forehead, signifying greeting. As a mark of respect they half prostrate before the tomb. They then press their forehead and kiss the sides of the tomb. Additional devotional expression may include an offering of flowers or cash, and prayer. These are usually accompanied by a small request.

The Bohra worldview gives insight into women's motivation for undertaking the pilgrimage. One such motivation is the belief that every earthly possession is a gift from God and that piety thus enhances the possibility of material provisioning. Furthermore, one can accumulate religious merit (*sevab*) from devotional acts, which can offset the weight of minor sins. Although the primary intention of the women is to express devotion and reaffirm their faith in their spiritual leaders, it is quite clear that no woman leaves the shrine without making a request. The most powerful method is to pray, express one's wishes, and express hopes for an earthly boon.

Whereas visits to shrines of *dais* are motivated by respect and the hope to have a request fulfilled, pilgrimages to shrines of holy men known for their service and sacrifice are motivated by the taking of vows. The frequency and nature of vows vary with gender and age. Women take more vows than men, older and middle-aged women doing so more than younger women. Unlike Hindu women's fasting vows, which focus on the well-being of sons and husbands, Bohra women take vows for their own concerns, followed by vows taken for the benefit of their children and the family as a unit. The content of women's requests and vows reflects traditional life cycle concerns. Vows related to children centre on their health and safety. A popular vow is one taken with a view to the economic sustenance (*rozi*) of the family. Men's vows are generally related to (un)employment and success in business.

Vows may be fulfilled by a variety of acts or gifts. Acts may include undertaking a pilgrimage for a stipulated number of days or a pilgrimage on saint's day; or sponsoring a sweet dish, a meal tray for eight, or a religious gathering followed by a meal for all. Occasionally a ritual sacrifice of a goat may constitute the fulfilment of a vow. All meal-related offerings involve cash payment to the clerics. Gifts may include a bed of flowers (*chaddar*) or richly embroidered silk and velvet tomb covers (*ghalef*). More commonly, dates or other fruits and sweets are blessed at the tomb and distributed among those present. Vow-related offerings must be construed as the giving of thanks for the saint's blessing and intercession, thus not as an exchange for boons delivered, for even in the absence of boons these must be honoured. Lastly, women undertake pilgrimages as an act of piety with the intent to accumulate merit.

Status quo or emancipation?

The pilgrimage ritual may be conceptualized as serving a political and social purpose. Women's hegemony over popular Islam can be seen as their having strategically hijacked a ritual to suit their own needs and concerns. Secondly, through a tripartite division of labour, women counteract the economic control of the men and the ideological hold of the religious establishment maintaining a power balance within the family and the sect. The spheres are unequal in status and prestige, but each is vital and all are strongly interdependent. Women cherish the gender roles prescribed within Islam. At the same time, within the bounds of a traditional setting, they increasingly negotiate the distribution of power and resources within the household and the community.

It is important to contextualize what constitutes emancipation. At the micro-level, education, control over personal property, assistance in family business and power within kinship networks have given women space to enhance their status. At the macro-level, the economy must allow for jobs that provide enough pay and status to make them worthwhile. With limited opportunities for well-paid employment, coupled with perceived discrimination of Muslims in the job market, women are predisposed to structure their status within the conventional framework. Piety is a source of protection to women providing opportunities for agency and action. A woman's ability to communicate with the *dais* and to evoke their favour is the same as that of a man. Given the primacy of traditional gender roles it is not surprising that women seek control over sexuality and reproduction. Through the popular vow taken with a view to economic sustenance, women's centrality in (the success of) their family businesses is symbolically assured, and by implication their role in the sustenance of the sect is acknowledged.

By portraying saints as androgynous – having male qualities but more importantly female qualities such as service and sacrifice – the pilgrimage ritual is an occasion to celebrate femininity. Through devotional engagements women have assured control over personal time and surplus family income. As one male noted: 'When women ask to go to *ziyaret*, men immediately open their pockets.' Sacred journeys widen women's horizons and offer valuable lessons in negotiating with the world on their own.

Besides being a pious exercise, the pilgrimage is a significant part of women's social life. On the road in a mini-bus, women pray in unison, roll the *tasbi* (strung beads), talk, joke, munch on snacks and stop by the wayside to eat and drink. The marble platform (*sen*) around the tomb and the benches outside the rooms provide space for interacting, sharing common concerns and exchanging news about the happenings in the community. Bonds are fostered as women mix with (female) strangers in the (segregated) activities of prayer at the shrine mosque, religious gatherings and communal meals. Despite the vibrant character of the women's sub-culture, it is not aimed at revolutionizing the power structure maintained in the (male-dominated) economic and religious spheres. It is rather aimed at extracting greater freedom and improvement of the status of Bohra women. Since these devotional practices do not challenge the primary duties of women as homemakers and the wider culture remains indifferent to their aspirations, a genuine transformation of their status remains problematic.

Note
* The plural for *dai* is *dai duat*. I have used *dais* for smoother reading.

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North Africa

ABDEL WEDOUD OULD CHEIKH

Brotherhoods and Gender Relations in Mauritania

The expansion of Islam in northwest Africa has been very much associated with the spread of brotherhood movements (*turuq*). Religious and educational practices as well as collective rules of conduct carry the imprints of these movements, the political and economic influence of which has been – and remains – decisive in vast regions from Mauritania to Nigeria, from the Sudan to Senegal. Recent developments, however, indicate an increase in power of a neo-fundamentalist inspirational Islam originating in the Middle East, which presents itself as a rival to the ideas and practices developed by the local versions of *tasawwuf* (Muslim mysticism) organized as brotherhoods.

The following proposes to underline more particularly the 'gender' dimension of local Muslim practices as it manifests itself both in 'tradition' and in certain recent challenges to it. The focus is limited to the Moorish society of Mauritania, although it is most likely that the transformations experienced by this society have affected its neighbouring societies in an analogous way.

Although it is not necessary to offer a general presentation of Muslim brotherhoods or the *tasawwuf* as such,[1] it should be noted that the brotherhoods are religious organizations centred on the person of the *shaykh*: a master and educator *par excellence* (*murabbī*) whose authority is part of a chain (*silsila*) of authorities leading back to the Prophet of Islam. He is perceived by his disciples (*talāmīdh*, *murīdūn*) as a guide, an intercessor who must be served and obeyed without reserve until he leads them, his disciples, through the chosen trials to the point of mastering 'the way' (*tarīqa*). They can then, after a rite of enthronement, leave the 'guide' as they now hold their own title of 'master' (*shaykh*) or 'licensed' (*muqaddam*) and are authorized to guide others. In practice, the transmission of material and symbolic capital (*baraka*) associated with the direction of the *tarīqa* is generally carried out by the descendants of the founding *shaykh*, but not without competition and dissent amongst the various candidates of the inheritance.

In the Moorish territory, which has often constituted a place of transit and transmission of Maghrebi or Middle Eastern brotherhood organizations heading for Sub-Saharan Africa, the principal *turuq* comprise the following: the *shādhiliyya* in its *nāsiriyya* variant, inaugurated by the Moroccan Muhammad b. Nāsiral-Dirʿī at the end of the 17th century; the *qādiriyya*, associated principally with the legacy of Al-Shaykh Sīd al-Mukhtār al-Kuntī (d. 1811), the movement's great Saharan renewer of the 18th century; and finally the *tijāniyya*, the dissemination of

which in the Moorish territory and its confines is accredited especially to Al-Shaykh Muhamd al-Hāfiz al-ʿAlawī (d.1830/ 31). An entangled network of ramifications emerged from these main brotherhoods, associating individual initiatives, inheritance quarrels, tribal ʿasabiyya (group solidarity), and even political allegiances. The search for autonomy manifests itself most notably in the creation of centres that often become places of instruction, agricultural production, and commercial exchange.

Formally, the *turuq* appear as miniature reproductions or 'clones' of their mother religion: they reduplicate the initial messenger (the Prophet Muhammad) with a second messenger who 'descends' from him – either doctrinally, by the *silsila*, or 'biologically', by the sharifi *nasab*, to whom a number of brotherhood founders/transmitters are linked – and often 'repeats' the key traits of his biography. This is essentially a male affair: the founders and their 'chains', the *muqaddamīn*, and the successors counting no women amongst them.

Nonetheless, women are not absent from the brotherhood movements. Islam extracted from the common basis of the two pre-existing monotheisms the theme of the female temptress and it tends to regulate with a certain rigour the contacts and relations between men and women. In addition, Islam is profoundly suspicious of celibacy. Albeit in vain, the mystical propaedeutic exalts the refusal of all pleasures of the flesh; rarely has it arrived at a definitive separation of men and women. Inversely, certain brotherhood movements in the Saharan region arouse rumours and concern over the promiscuity these movements supposedly authorize, meaning the male-female contacts.

Extreme variations on the gender issue

Two communities, belonging increasingly to the same tribe (Idaybusāt) and cohabiting in the same space (within the confines of Tagant and Assaba), serve to illustrate contrasting positions. On the one hand is the branch known as the *ghuzfiyya* of the *shādhiliyya*, founded by Al-Shaykh Muhammad al-Aghzaf al-Dāwūdī (d. 1801), to which diverse accounts, notably colonial,[2] attribute orgiastic practices leading at times to births out of wedlock, these children being baptized *awlād al-nūr* (sons of the light). On the other hand is a scion branch of the *qādiriyya* initiated at the end of the 1930s by Al-Shaykh Muhammad ʿAbd Allāh wuld Adda (d. 1963), who went as far as to initiate celibacy amongst his adherents, thus engendering a small community of monk farmers at a place called Būmdayd, in central Mauritania.

Another group, this one originating from the Ibrahimian *tijāniyya* of Kaolack (Senegal) made itself known in the 1950s by a co-gendered existence considered suspect by the *vox populi* of the region in which it emerged: its adherents were conferred the sobriquet *ahl al-gazra*, i.e 'the unsubdued', 'marginals'. The group recently recalled the originality proclaimed by certain brotherhood movements in treating the question of gen-

der relations in Moorish space. The context of the polemic that this incited should be briefly reiterated here: a polemic that illustrates in particular the opposition evoked earlier in this article between the local Islam of the brotherhoods and the new global Islam of neo-fundamentalist influence.

In order to correctly perceive the stakes of the controversy incited by the position taken by the movement's *shaykh*, Wuld Sidīna, it is appropriate to underline the fact that in Moorish society, all physical contact, and notably the salutatory handshake, is traditionally prohibited between people of the opposite sex unless they belong to the class of those who may have physical contact between sexes (*mahārim*) – a class defined by blood or milk kinship, and within which marriage is prohibited. Wuld Sidīna was to publicly rise up against this tradition that organized the separation of men from women by designating amongst them who could touch one another and who could not.

He takes the pretext of an interview for the unofficial journal *al-Shaʿb* on 21 November 1989 of two Sudanese academicians visiting Mauritania, under the title: 'The Sudanese woman is at parity with man as much in rights as in duties. A Sudanese scholar offers his opinions on the issues of speaking to a woman or shaking her hand.' In substance, one amongst them declared that there is no harm in a man and a woman shaking hands *ajānib*, that is to say non-*mahārim*, as a salutation. Basing himself on this declaration, Wuld Sidīna pronounced a *jawāb*, disseminated in the form of a tract, in which he declared that it is licit for a man and a woman, no matter who they are, to shake hands. He thus publicly opposed traditional rules of male-female contact in Moorish society, founded on kinship relations.

This position taken by the *tijānī shaykh*, whose community already had a reputation of non-conformism with respect to male-female relations, incited a unanimous condemnation by the Mauritanian religious establishment. This position has also recently fed the stigmatizing discourse of certain former members of Wuld Sidīna 's community criticizing it adamantly for, amongst other things, the promiscuity (in their eyes scandalous) instituted among men and women.

Wuld Sidīna and his disciples did not remain without reaction in the face of these attacks. They themselves engaged a vigorous polemic, specifically against their former companions that had renounced them and that they accused of being in the pay of Wahhabism.[3]

What can be concluded from the above-mentioned observations in terms of the evolution of gender relations amidst the brotherhood movements and in a larger sense within Moorish society in its entirety? Even if the communities mentioned are demographically small, it is appropriate to underline the diversity and the non-conformity to a certain representation of Sunni 'orthodoxy' that they bring into the gender relations in Moorish society. The recent upheavals experienced by this society (massive sedentarization of former nomads, un-

precedented swelling of the urban population, substantial progress of elementary religious education, etc.) tend to modify the very foundations of the rules of life in collectivity on which it is based. In the context of the nomads, the residential unities (encampments), generally small in size, were constituted, above all, based on tribal kinship. The tent was not very conducive to keeping women inside. In fact their presence in the public sphere, although it has a certain sense in this type of context, did not pose a particular problem. The statutory parity and the genealogy offered the safeguard necessary to govern the contacts between individuals and between the two sexes. With the exception of the marginal cases previously mentioned, the brotherhood movements' management of community affairs was part and parcel of a tradition marked by monogamy and by a certain women's 'liberty' that belonged to the practices and collective representations of Moorish society. The social upheavals mentioned here planted the seeds of new recompositions. The rural communitarism that served as the substance for the forming of brotherhoods gave way to anomy, or at least the threat of anomy, in the new cities. The *baraka* of the *shaykh* was progressively effaced before the individual adhesion to a 'reinvented' Islam – that of neo-fundamentalism. And the grand villas of the new pious bourgeoisie offer from then on the possibility to separate the female space from public space and from masculine space. It is to be feared that in this precise context, the formula of Max Weber, according to which 'the city liberates', is not to be verified.

Notes

1. For a historical overview, see. Jenkins, R. G. (1979), 'The evolution of Religious Brotherhoods in North and Northwest Africa 1523-1900', in Willis, J. R. (ed.), *The Cultivators of Islam*, London: Frank Cass. For the Mauritano-Senegalese territory, see Robinson, D. (2000), *Paths of Accommodation*, Athens: Ohio University Press; Robinson, D. and Triaud, J.-L. (eds.) (2000), *La tijāniyya*, Paris: Karthala; Ould Cheikh, A. W. (2001), 'La généalogie et les capitaux flottants. Al-Shaykh Sid al-Mukhtār (m. 1811) et les Kunta', in Bonte, P. et al. (eds.), *Emirs et Présidents*, Paris: CNRS.

2. See especially Beyriès, J. (1935), 'Note sur les Ghoudf', in *Rev. Et. Isl.*, I, and Du Puigaudeau, O. (1993), *Tagant*, Paris: Phébus.

3. An entire file has been made with tracts signed by members of the community where this position is expressed openly and without nuance.

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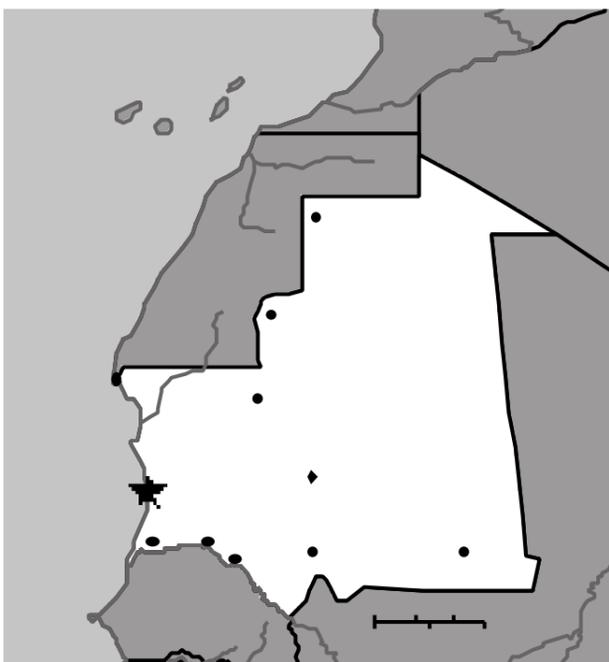
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North Africa

MOHAMMED HAMDOUNI ALAMI

The Fiction of Architectural Identity
in Contemporary Morocco

On 14 January 1986, H.M. Hassan II, the late King of Morocco, delivered a speech on architecture. The speech was addressed to a small gathering of architects selected by the Ministry of the Interior as representatives of their profession. The King of Morocco, unlike Prince Charles, was a true ruler and his speech was not meant as an art critique. Rather, it was intended to clarify a new incipient politics of urban design. This new politics, which intended to promote a return to 'traditional' architectural culture, was in open contradiction to the former official discourse of modernization. How can one understand this return to traditional forms? Was this an index of failure in the process of modernization initiated by the state after Independence, or rather an issue of strong societal resistance towards modernization, calling for a new politics of urban design?

PHOTO: CHRISTIAN LIGNON, 1989 © AGA KHAN TRUST FOR CULTURE

Ait Ourir Children's S.O.S. Village, Morocco.

The question of the political use of architecture and urban design as a means to create and promote cultural identities through which social control and coercion are implemented is of great political and academic interest. It has generated a wealth of literature and heated debates. Yet it has mainly been addressed within Western and colonial contexts, and largely ignored with reference to the post-colonial period. In the context of a developing country such as Morocco, marked by the perception of architecture and urban design as a formative dimension of cultural identity, the intervention of international organizations in development and housing programmes is often perceived as biased and neglectful of basic cultural phenomena. For instance, relying on a fundamentalist discourse on authentic traditional Moroccan family life style, government officials oppose the economic standards of international organizations and their disregard for the Moroccan cultural requirement for specific forms of space and ownership. No matter whether the claim is contradicted by the informal and formal practices of urban production, the official discourse stands as political defence of national cultural identity.

The forms of urbanization and the spread of shanty towns and informal housing in the new urban landscape, along with a succession of spectacular urban riots (1981, 1984, 1990) have been reflected upon in different ways by national and international scholars. But the problem with existing approaches is that they are dominated by concerns of population, urban geography, and academic compartmentalization. To address this lacuna, at one level, it is crucial to remember that the urban context is not simply a reflection of the demographic and economic evolution of society. Indeed, the well-documented and frequently researched notion that urbanism

uses space to 'regulate' the economy and grant financial opportunities and subsidies to targeted groups obscures a much deeper political process in the construction of urban space: the maintenance of social control and coercion not only through a Haussmannian conception of space (Walter Benjamin) but also more subtly through the construction of a politics of cultural identity embodied in urban design.

While colonial architecture and urbanism have received substantial scholarly attention in the last two decades, post-colonial urban design has yet to be seriously studied. Students of the colonial period have generally shared the assumption that a politics of urban design shaped colonial architecture and city planning. They all suggest that colonial architecture and urban design were a medium for the production of images of cultural identity and otherness.

The question of traditional architecture and its relevance for contemporary practices in Islamic countries was addressed by the programme of the Aga Khan Award of Architecture through many seminars and publications.

The Moroccan case

The galloping urbanization of the last decades and the ensuing social and housing problems have attracted the attention of many academics and international organizations. Unfortunately the literature concerning these issues is extremely limited. But the politics of urban design did not receive much attention from scholars in the field. Despite the consistent and conspicuous involvement of the state in defining a new architectural culture, and its claim of initiating a revival of authentic national identity, scholarly works continued to view urbanism as limited to its role in the regulation of economy and regional planning.

It is vital to study the implementation of that politics and to show how and why, despite its alleged rejection, the colonial architectural legacy has been a main source of inspiration to the foundation of a nationalist discourse on architecture.* This nationalism is

clearly both a discursive entity created by narrativity (Homi Bhabha 1990) and marked by a distinction between the political realm of nationalism, which is influenced by metropolitan precedents, and the cultural realm, where different 'nationalist' patterns are perpetuated (Partha Chatterjee 1986 and 1993). Moreover, the implementation of that politics does not rely only on narrativity, it also calls in different institutional and legal strategies and tactics, rituals and economic practices. In a word, it is a complex power strategy in perpetual adaptation (Foucault 1979). This strategy aims to maintain social control through the fiction of an architectural identity.

By deconstructing the ideological fiction of architectural identity in contemporary Morocco, a space can be created for architectural and urban criticism: lifting the taboos imposed on architectural style and urban debates. It is therefore necessary to discern the many components of this architectural reformulation, pointing out their intricacies:

– The construction and ritualization of an official discourse on architecture: Le Discours sur l'Architecture. To commemorate the significance of the King's 1986 speech, 'Le Jour de l'Architecture' (Architecture Day) was officially declared by the Minister of the Interior in 1992. It is celebrated each year by the Ministry of Urbanism in collaboration with the Ordre National des Architectes (National Order of Architects). The commemoration has been constructed as a ritual. The ceremony starts with a Qur'anic recitation and a showing of His Majesty's 1986 Speech on Architecture. Nothing could be more telling since any religious ceremony begins with a Qur'anic recitation.

– Institutional strategies, and reformation of laws: The second important effect of the royal speech comprises the reform of the law on urbanism and the creation of new institutions of city planning. After the 1981 urban riots in Casablanca, urbanism strongly attracted the strategic attention of the state. The political reaction to these riots was to reform the administrative organisms of that city and to create a state agency specialized in urbanism. Following the royal speech, with its diverse guidelines for architecture and urbanism, it was considered time to reform the law on urbanism, which was inherited from the French.

The reformation of law and the institutional changes functioned as complementary devices of denial of the failure of the national policy and of coercion in the management of urban development.

– The share of the professionals: One of the strategies of the new politics was related to the need to mobilize all the actors involved in architectural production. The professional associations, and in particular that of the architects, were called to play a major role in the policy of the style. However, most of the reactions remained unspoken. Why is it that, in a country where democratization is supposed to be progressing, and where architectural production is far from being uniform, such an important debate has to be avoided?

It can be hypothesized that because of the weaknesses of their professional status, the controversies about their knowledge, and the competition with other professionals, most architects became part of the game by sup-

porting it, or by not publicly taking any critical position. Building on Foucault's view (1997) that power is productive of knowledge, it can be argued that the architect's political involvement was the opportunity to promote the profession of architect and to re-create a professional knowledge.

– Architectural conservation and the negation of history: Conservation of historic buildings and urban sites was first introduced to Morocco by Maréchal Lyautey, the Résident Général of the French Protectorate. In the 1970s, after a long period of neglect, the Moroccan government with the help of UNESCO turned back to that politics.But this politics has had little effect in the field. Interestingly the few works of conservation which took place do not respect the international norms: the buildings are reconstructed anew with the pretext that 'Moroccan architectural tradition has never died.'

The claim of continuity of that tradition used as a metaphor of cultural perennial is in fact a pure denial of history.

– The fiction of architectural identity: The actual development of Moroccan architecture suggests that the new politics of urban design is mainly a fiction. Indeed, the first official urban project of independent Morocco is strikingly modernist: the city of Agadir, which was rebuilt after its destruction in the earthquake of 1960. On the other hand, there is a great architectural diversity.

Here the hypothesis is that the fiction of architectural identity functions as a Freudian negation, adenial of the actual hybridization of contemporary Moroccan architecture.

– Refashioning the urban landscape: A delirious reshaping of the urban landscape took place after the royal speech on architecture of 1986. Soon this refashioning resulted in a disastrous uniformity of the urban landscape.

Through the analysis of the architectural refashioning projects it is possible to point out that despite the promotion of narratives about Moroccan architectural identity, the implementation of that politics was practically mimicking the French colonial politics of urban design. It is also possible to realize that the creation of a fiction of architectural identity functions as a Freudian denial of the objective stakes of urban development (housing problems, spatial control, and hidden distribution of subsidies). This could function only because many patterns of cultural nationalism were available in the political nationalist realm.

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Note

* Theme of the author's current research.

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Central Asia

TAIR FARADOV

Religiosity in Post-Soviet Azerbaijan
A Sociological Survey

The religious situation in Post-Soviet Azerbaijan has been dramatically changing in recent years. Unlike in the Soviet times of total state control over religion, 'scientific atheism', suppression, and intolerance of believers, religion is currently enjoying conditions of relative freedom. Indeed, the constitution guarantees the freedom of religion as a right. Religious views and information have been very rapidly spreading among the population. Public interest in Islam, which has very deep historical and cultural roots and a rich spiritual tradition in Azerbaijan, has considerably increased in recent years, particularly among intellectuals and the youth. In fact, religion is becoming one of the most important factors of public life.

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Participants of the public lectures on Islam for Russian-speaking intelligentsia.

A number of vital theoretical and practical questions arise from the current circumstances of religion in Azerbaijan: What are the factors preconditioning the growing popularity of religious views among citizens? What is the degree and level of adherence to Islam and other religions? What is the concept of 'religion' in mass consciousness? How do people view the place and role of religion in public and private life? Finding answers to these questions led to the organizing and conducting of a large-scale sociological survey.*

The first stage of the survey was conducted from September 1999 to February 2000 in five regions of Azerbaijan, the number of respondents interviewed totalling 1,000 persons. The main purpose of the survey was to obtain comprehensive data concerning the peculiarities, dynamics and basic trends of religiosity in Post-Soviet Azerbaijani society, as well as to explore the basic sociological characteristics and parameters of public religious awareness and behaviour.

The respondents were distributed over the following religious affiliations: Islam, 94.0%; Orthodox Christianity, 3.7%; Judaism, 1.2%; and representatives of other religious confessions (Lutherans, Baptists, Catholics, etc.), 1.1%.

Judging from the data obtained, such typological groups of religiosity as 'believers' and 'hesitant' are dominant. The survey identified the following break-down of respondents depending upon their attitude towards religion (on the basis of their confessional self-identification). 'Believers' constituted 63.4% of all respondents, while 6.7% consider themselves even 'firm believers'; the groups of those hesitating between belief and non-belief comprised 10.4%; non-believers made up 7.1%; and 8.6% indicated being indifferent to this issue. Lastly, a small 3.8% of respondents consider themselves 'firm atheists'.

Dynamics of religiosity
It was important to follow up on the dynamics of the changing attitudes of the population towards religion over the last years. The data provide a rather complicated picture of the dynamics of religiosity in Azerbaijan, but in general it can be said that religiosity is on the increase. Some two-thirds of the respondents (62.0%) indicated having maintained their previous level of religiosity. Half of the respondents (52.3%) said that they were and still are believers, while 9.7% pointed out that they 'have never believed before and do not believe now either'. However, a third of the respondents (35.1%) confirmed having changed their views in the direction of greater religiosity and 9.3% said that they had never believed before, but have now become believers. One out of four (25.8%) respondents stated that he/she believed before, but has become more religious now. Finally, a very small portion of the respondents claimed to have estranged themselves from religion (1.9%) or to have changed their religion (1.0%).

A tenth of the respondents (10.4%) said that a 'tremendous importance' was attached to religion in their lives; while 26.1% of the respondents feel it occupies 'an important enough place' in their lives. Religion was conferred a 'moderate' role in the lives of 41.8% of respondents and an 'insignificant' role for 12.5%. Those for whom religion 'does not play any role at all' amounted to 9.2%.

The motives and reasons for religiosity amongst respondents are directly linked to a wide variety of factors. The first cluster is comprised of social and socio-psychological factors. Firstly, it seems that the family and immediate surroundings are relevant to one's religious experience: 15.7% of respondents indicated that their having adopted religion is explained by their 'family traditions, because this has been accepted in the family', while 16.1% of respondents affirmed that they were nurtured in a religious spirit since childhood and received a religious upbringing at home. For others, religion was more predetermined by their ethnic and cultural identity and thus acts as an element of national consciousness. In this vein, approximately one out of seven (14.2%) respondents adopted religion because it corresponds to their national customs and traditions. Adherence to Islam was explained by one out of five (19.7%) respondents by the fact that 'we are a Muslim nation and our entire nation is Muslim'. Among the individual and personal stimuli or reasons for adopting and practising religion, the most frequently encountered were the following: 'this helps moral self-perfection', 18.3%; 'it is easier for me to live this way, it has created an interest and meaning in life', 7.8%; 'this has become my inner need', 5.7%; and 'it has been caused by my personal life circumstances, personal hardship and difficulties', 1.9%. Among reasons for pubic interest in religion, there were also responses such as 'tribute to fashion' (0.6%) and 'ordinary human curiosity'. Clearly homogeneity does not exist in this complex of factors and circumstances, but future research into this matter could clarify the answers further.

Knowledge of the *shariah* and religious observance
Adherence to the Islamic faith envisions familiarization with the *shariah*. The respondents were asked about the extent of their knowledge of *shariah* rules and laws. A substantial 58.7% confirmed having 'a certain idea' and 16.8% feel they are 'quite well' familiar, 18.4% being 'absolutely unfamiliar with the *shariah*'. A mere 6.1% stated that they know the *shariah* principles 'very well'. In the survey context, the respondents were also asked about their understanding of some key dogmas, principles and understandings of Islamic belief (e.g. *Islam*, *iman* and *ibadat*). It turned out that very few have a clear understanding of the meaning and essence of these terms.

The observance of religious commandments varies: 6.3% of the respondents asserted that they fulfil all commandments in all life situations; 16.2% try to fulfil commandments to the greatest possible extent; 19.9% fulfil some of the commandments partially; and 57.6% do not fulfil them at all. The daily prayer is generally seen as one of the most important obligations for Muslims. The survey shows that 17.7% of 'believer' respondents pray the *namaz*. Correspondingly, 82.3% of the respondents do not abide by this core ritual. Another important obligation for believers is to observe the fast. The survey illustrated that 28.6% of believers fast during the Ramadan. Respondents also appear to respect the religious prohibitions of gambling (76.3%), eating pork (59.8%), and drinking alcoholic beverages (52.6%). The frequency of visits to mosques is one of the most obvious indicators of the level of religiosity. Respondents who visit mosques 'from time to time' totalled 35.1%; those who 'do not go to mosques at all' amounted to 32.8%; those who only visit mosques 'on holidays and special occasions' comprised 23.1%; while those 'permanently' at mosques totalled 6.4% and those that attend mosque 'every Friday' just 2.6%.

Role of religion in public life
The respondents were invited to express their opinions concerning the role religion currently plays in society and how its social impact has changed over the last several years. More than half of the respondents (54.4%) think the role of religion has been 'on the increase' recently, that it has 'started playing a more noticeable role in society'; while a mere 3.8% indicated that this role may be growing, 'but only for the time being'. A large share of the respondents (41.3%) believes that the role of religion in society and its social impact 'remain unchanged' (i.e. 'just like before, in the socialist time'). Only 4.3% of respondents feel the role and influence of religion at the present time 'is weakening'.

Respondents were asked to mention spheres of the social life which, in their opinion, are to function according to religious regulations and norms. Religious influence is supposed to be distributed, in the respondents' views, over such spheres as 'public morality' (83.9%), 'culture' (70.6%) and 'family' (71.2%). Most consider religion not to be a factor in economic or political life in Azerbaijan, and a large majority suggested that neither economics (74.1%) nor politics (90.7%) should be influenced by religion on any account. This confirms the assumption that the concept of 'religion' at the level of public consciousness is predominantly considered in moral terms, having an ethical content. Religion is primarily regarded as a main and effective regulator of the everyday life and behaviour of Azerbaijanis, and not more.

Public perceptions of Islam
When asked about their opinions concerning the role of Islam in the historical, cultural and spiritual development of the Azerbaijan nation, the majority (62.7%), including some adherents to religions other than Islam, indicated seeing this role as an exclusively 'positive' one. In their comments, the respondents most frequently used the following arguments and comments: 'Islam gave the impetus to the development of national culture, science, philosophy, and art'; 'Islam has taught us to tolerate others'; 'we owe Islam all our merits'. A smaller part of the respondents (28.5%) implied that this role has been dual: in some sense as 'positive' and in another sense 'negative'. Only 6.9% see this role as 'not quite considerable' or as 'negative' (1.9%).

Overall, the empirical data illustrate the process of a growing level of religiosity of the Azerbaijani population. Over the last years, the process has assumed quite an intense and dynamic nature, which is reflected in the increased number of (practising) believers. Public opinion is giving a high assessment of the role and place of religion in public and private life. Moral and ethical interpretations and understandings of religion prevail in public consciousness. An important role is also played by traditional and ethnocultural components of religious perception. Another peculiarity of the present religiosity is intensification of the ritual and cult aspects of religion. At the same time, however, religious adherence is not always accompanied by the observance of rituals.

These research findings provide a basis for elaborating our understanding of the religious situation in such a transitional society as Azerbaijan. They may also serve as the point of departure for comparative analyses of religious situations in other post-communist countries.

PHOTO: TAIR FARADOV, 2001

Turkey
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Religion and Public Policy in Turkey

Despite the centrality of the rising tensions between secularist and pro-Islamist groups with respect to the future of Turkish politics, little empirical analysis exists on the cleavages between the two groups. The Political Islam in Turkey (PIT) project* provides extensive opportunities for such an analysis as well as analyses of many other aspects of Islam in modern Turkey. The following focuses on the levels of support for the controversial policies in recent years aimed at regulating the role of religion in Turkish social life.

Several memorable incidents occurred during the establishment of the secular Republican regime and its immediate aftermath in which the reactionary peripheral forces gathered around a loud reactionary demand for *şeriat* and the protection of the sultanate and caliphate. Tension between the secularists and pro-Islamist forces resurfaced with the success of the pro-Islamist Welfare Party (Refah Partisi), first in the local elections of 1994 and then in the general elections of 1995. Ever since, questions concerning the popular bases of *şeriat* rule have been used in public opinion surveys. The wording of the questions usually refers to an unspecified group of people that supposedly think that Turkey should be governed according to *şeriat* rules. The respondents are asked whether they would agree with this idea. These simplistic evaluations cannot be taken as a reflection of a demand for *şeriat* rule. Perhaps more seriously, the respondents are not even given a description of what is meant by *şeriat*, nor are they asked about specific implications of *şeriat* rules.

Table 1 shows the findings in three consecutive opinion polls conducted in 1995, 1996 and 1998. What is striking in these figures is that over the years concerned at least one out of five voters expressed their approval of *şeriat* rule in Turkey. A year before the peak of tensions between the military and the pro-Islamists during the so-called '28th of February process', the approval rate peaked with slightly more than 25% of the voters supporting the idea. Nearly a year after the start of the 'process' the approval rate dropped to its 1995 level.

The straightforward wording of the question used in the PIT stressed the necessity of the establishment of *şeriat* rule: 'Would you or would you not favour the establishment of a *şeriat*-based religious state in Turkey?' Answers to this question in February 1999 indicate that approximately 21% of the voters approve.

Table 1. Approval of *şeriat* rule

	June 1995	March 1996	May 1998
Approves	19.9	26.7	19.8
Does not approve	61.8	58.1	59.9
Don't Know/No Opinion	18.4	15.2	20.2
Source: TÜSES (1999, 68–69)			

Would you favour the establishment of a *şeriat*-based religious state in Turkey?

	Would favour	Would not favour	DK/NA*	
Total	21.0	67.9	11.1	100
Source: Çarkoğlu and Toprak (2000, p. 16)			*Don't know/No answer	

Several additional questions (Table 2) in the PIT concerning the Civic Code could be used to provide some content to the above findings. When posing these questions on the present-day Civic Code regulations on marriage, divorce and inheritance, the wording specifically allowed for a clear comparison with arrangements in accordance to the Islamic law.

The overwhelming support for the secular Republican Civic Code is evidence of the problematic nature of the word *şeriat* for the Turkish electorate. A significant number of the

Table 2. Evaluations of the Civil Code

According to Islamic law a man is allowed to be married to up to four women. However, at present polygamy is outlawed. Would you approve of changing the system of marriage in accordance with Islamic law, so as to allow the marriage of men with up to four women?

	Approves of marriage according to Islamic law	Does not approve of marriage according to Islamic law	DK/NA*	
Total	10.7	85.0	4.3	100

According to Islamic law women receive a smaller share of their parent's inheritance. However, according to the present Civil Code both men and women get an equal share from inheritance. Would you accept changing the Civil Code so as to give men the right to obtain a larger share of the inheritance than women?

	Would accept changing the present Civil Code	Would not accept changing the present Civil Code	DK/NA*	
Total	13.9	81.4	4.7	100

According to Islamic law a man can divorce his wife without going before a judge. However, according to the present Civil Code, divorce requires a court case and a judge's decision. Would you accept changing the present Civil Code so as to allow divorces to be regulated according to Islamic law?

	Would accept changing the present Civil Code	Would not accept changing the present Civil Code	DK/NA*	
Total	14.0	78.5	7.5	100

In Turkey only the civil wedding is legally accepted but those who wish may go through a religious ceremony (imam wedding). Would you approve of having a religious wedding as legally valid or should the present regulations continue?

	Present application should continue	Religious wedding should also be legal	DK/NA*	
Total	50.5	45.3	4.2	100

*Don't know/No answer

electorate seems unable to refute *şeriat* rule. However, as Table 2 shows, once given a clear choice between the secular and Islamic legal arrangements, preferences clearly shift toward the secular arrangements.

An integral part of the Republican civic law was the abolishment of religious ceremonies or clerical marriages (*imam nikahı*). Under the Republican arrangement the only lawful marriage is civil marriage. However, it is well known that a sizeable proportion of the couples that marry in a civil ceremony also undergo a religious ceremony in which an imam concludes the marriage contract. When asked whether the religious wedding with an imam and the civil marriage ceremony should both be counted as official, nearly 45% of the respondents answered favourably to having both become legally binding.

Table 3 presents answers in support of some assertions concerning the role of religion in Turkish society and general evaluations of the social and political life of the country. It seems that nearly three quarters of the respondents support assertions about women having the right to cover their heads if they want to in the universities as well as in government jobs. Other statements about religious expression in social life were strongly supported. However, despite overwhelming agreement with statements backing a religious point of view, nearly 67% agree with the statement that having religion as a guide in state affairs is detrimental. Could these agreements be taken as a disguised support for secular principles? The fact that those who agree with this statement seem very unlikely to support *şeriat* rule seems to support this view. Similarly, nearly 77% of the respondents agree with the statement that Republican reforms have helped Turkey to progress.

Recently the role of the Directorate of Religious Affairs (Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı) in regulating the role of religion in Turkish society has come under attack. Despite its large budget, the Directorate's services concentrate

ship (practice) requirements of Islam. Those who indicated that people in Turkey are not free to fulfil these requirements totalled nearly 31%. People were also asked whether religious people are oppressed in Turkey. Compared to the question concerning the freedom to fulfil requirements, those who believed that oppression exists with respect to religious people is higher – at approximately 42%.

Those who indicated that oppression of religious people exists in Turkey were also asked in an open-ended question to provide examples of this oppression. Of the 1,254 respondents who indicated that oppression exists towards the religious people, 812 – or nearly 64% – gave an example related to banning of headscarves or the turban. Interestingly, the closure of Imam Hatip schools and Qur'anic courses constitute the second largest group of examples, which were given by about 13% of the respondents. In short, examples of policies that are directly related to oppression in the perceptions of the people are primarily related to education policies. These examples were evoked by 77% of respondents who claim that religious people are being oppressed in Turkey. The very low number of examples for oppression of religious people that included oppression of worship practices such as daily prayers (*namaz*), fasting and the like is

Table 3. Approval of various assertions

	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	DK/NA*
All Muslim women should cover their heads.	58.9	6.4	32.6	2.1
I don't approve of teenage boys and girls being educated together in the same classroom.	38.5	6.8	51.9	2.7
I don't approve of girls and young women wearing short skirts.	57.1	8.8	31.6	2.5
Women state employees should be allowed to cover their heads if they want to.	74.2	5.8	17.4	2.5
Girls should be allowed to cover their heads in the universities if they want to.	76.1	5.6	16.0	2.3
I don't approve of men and women sitting next to one another in inter-city bus travel.	60.2	7.1	30.7	1.9
Selling of alcohol during the month of Ramadan should be banned.	70.5	5.4	22.3	1.8
Religious guidance in state affairs and politics is detrimental.	67.2	9.5	16.4	6.9
Work hours should be arranged according to Friday prayer.	66.4	7.5	22.2	3.9
Earning interest from money invested in banks is a sin.	62.6	6.1	28.1	3.2
Republican reforms have advanced this country.	77.3	9.0	8.3	5.4
Source: Çarkoğlu and Toprak (2000, p. 59)				*Don't know/No answer

primarily on Sunni rather than Alevi communities. Nonetheless, the harsh reactions to the Directorate do not seem to find much support among the population at large; only about 8% seem to support the idea of abolition of the Directorate. But when it comes to the functions it fulfils the reformists dominate the answers: nearly 70% of the respondents agree with the statement that the Directorate should provide services to the Alevi as well as the Sunni communities.

Another facet of state-society relations in Turkey concerning religiosity, religious services and worship practices is an implicit concern, or explicit claim, that religious people are being oppressed. Although some state policies are not fully supported by the people, it is not clear whether these policies are perceived to be oppressive.

The PIT includes a question as to whether people in Turkey are free to fulfil the wor-

also worth noting. Similarly, very few answers note oppression targeted at the Alevi community. Despite Turkish media's intense coverage of the closure and prosecution of Islamic brotherhoods (*tarikats*), answers indicating this comprised only about 1% of all examples given. Surprisingly, the military appears only in a total of 33 answers as an example. Clearly, within the context of an open-ended question about oppression of religious people, the military does not receive much blame.

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Middle East
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Informing Terminally ill Patients
in Yemen

Biomedicine's ability to postpone death and prolong life generates ethical dilemmas that are best answered in their cultural context. Medical anthropological fieldwork conducted in Yemen[1] has allowed for an exploration of doctors' and religious scholars' responses to the interesting cross-cultural issue of whether to inform patients of their terminal conditions. This research is part of a larger study on Yemeni patients and family members who leave their country for reliable, high-tech medical care only available abroad.

For Yemen, international medical travel is not limited to the wealthy and well connected. Nonetheless, economic disparity does exist in terms of the ease with which certain patients and companions can travel, the medical conditions for which they seek treatment, and their therapeutic destinations. While families with abundant resources are said to bypass local facilities for even basic check-ups and minor complaints, those with few resources often make large sacrifices to provide a lifesaving cure for a seriously ailing loved one. Bombay and sanctioned Iraq offer the least expensive care. Jordan and Egypt are more expensive but also more popular. Germany provides excellent care but at a high price. Britain and particularly the United States are desired destinations, but are accessible only to high-level government officials or wealthy businessmen.

Disclosure

Doctors in four governmental hospitals in Yemen's capital said they generally do not inform their patients directly about their condition, imparting the information to family members instead. More specifically, 165 out of the 205 doctors (or 80%) said they would not tell a patient if he/she were almost certain to die within a short time. Eighty-four per cent said that in the same situation they would indeed inform the family. If the patient has a 50% chance of dying shortly, almost 90% of the doctors said they would not inform him/her, while 77% said they would inform the family. The approximately 10% greater unlikelihood of informing either the patient or the family in the case of a 50% chance of dying is probably due to the possibility of a wrong prognosis, which would unnecessarily upset the family and hurt the doctor's reputation.

In a follow-up question concerning what occurs if the patient specifically asks about his/her condition, the number of 'yes' and 'it depends' responses increased in both the 'almost certain' and '50% chance of dying' cases. Doctors said they would be more likely to tell an inquiring patient if he/she demonstrated the ability to understand the disease and prognosis, or had complete faith in fate and destiny. One doctor, however, said that in Yemen patients do not usually ask, making the added survey questions somewhat hypothetical.

Doctors listed several common reasons for not informing patients of their condition. First, learning about their fatal condition would harm patients psychologically, which would contribute to their further physical demise. Second, doctors explained, life and death are in God's hands and much depends on *al-qada' wa al-qadr* – fate and destiny – so there is always room for miracles. Indeed, when reviewing an initial draft of the survey, one doctor recommended to change the original 'a patient is almost certain to die within six months' to 'a patient is almost certain to die within a short time' since only God can specify a time. Moreover, most patients come to the hospital at the final stage of their illnesses, generally imply-

ing a prognosis for life expectancy much shorter than six months. And finally, doctors said that if terminally ill patients learned of their condition, they would discontinue treatment, leaving the doctors even more ineffective than they would be otherwise.

Readers familiar with Middle Eastern societies will recognize a general preference for not telling someone bad news outright, especially when the recipient lacks the necessary social support to help him/her cope with the distressing information. For example, a Yemeni, Iraqi or Afghan living in the United States whose father has just died back in their home country might be first told he is sick, then worsening, then close to death, and then recently deceased. Informing the person is a gradual process, whereas the death may actually have occurred well over a year prior. In this way, the person far from home is protected from shock, or *fija'*, believed to lead to ill health[2] and from the desire to join the grieving family when circumstances are not conducive to this. If people are reluctant to tell even healthy individuals disturbing news for fear of its deleterious effect on their psychological and physical well being, why would they tell the patient, who is just barely holding on to life as it is?

Doctors said that they generally tell the patient: 'Everything is fine. You are getting better. *Inshallah*, you will recover soon.' They then tell the family: 'The patient's condition is very bad. You had better prepare yourself for the worst.' The family needs to know, doctors said, so that the death does not surprise them and so that they do not blame the doctor instead of the disease. Most family members, doctors said, are also inclined not to inform the patient, although they thought that a very few might prefer to offer the patient a chance to repent for his sins, return any entrusted items, and write a will. Along with physicians, the family tries to raise the patient's morale by hiding the truth and speaking only words of encouragement. Doctors' opinions differed widely on whether patients suspect the true nature of their disease. Some said patients sense the proximity of their death, particularly from overheard conversations, looks of worry and grief on their family members' faces, and a lack of physical improvement. Other doctors believed that patients never know when they are about to die.

Treatment abroad

One clear indication that a patient's condition is serious is the need to go abroad. Anyone with a progressive life-threatening illness, such as cancer, heart conditions, or kidney failure, cannot be treated in the country and must pursue advanced medical care elsewhere. Hearing they must go abroad alerts patients to their condition. Doctors were divided on the consequences of patients learning their diagnosis and prognosis in a foreign country where disclosure practices might be different. Some maintained

that the news would be as devastating as in Yemen. Others said patients would accept reality when hearing it from a foreign doctor whom they may tend to trust more than a Yemeni one. Still others said patients could cope with the news in an environment with suitable medical capabilities, especially when seeing their family's efforts to care for them by taking them abroad.

Two patients of the 71 Yemeni medical travellers interviewed in Jordan and Bombay stand out as not knowing the full extent of their medical conditions. One whose cancer had spread throughout his body, producing further complications as well, praised the Jordanian doctor for all he had done for him and for his vast improvement. His young son inquired later, outside of his father's hearing range, if there were perhaps other countries where a cure could be found for his father, in Germany or anywhere else. The other patient was a woman in Bombay who cried about having to sell their house to seek treatment. This interview was abbreviated as her son had previously requested that no questions be asked about the particularities of her condition. That is the difficulty inherent in research on patients' perspectives on disclosure of terminal illnesses. One cannot very well ask: 'So, what is it like to have cancer and not know about it?'

Other Yemeni patients, particularly those in one governmental hospital's radiation department in Jordan, said unhesitatingly that they had cancer. Progressing through a course of radiotherapy surrounded by their compatriots also undergoing such treatment no doubt sustained their hopes of recovery.

The most detailed religious opinion collected on informing terminal patients, particularly in light of treatment abroad, came from the deputy mufti, or *na'ib al-mufti*. In his written answers, *al-ʿallama* Hamud ʿAbbas al-Muʿaid responded: 'The doctor should not frighten the patient. It is better to tell him "*Inshallah* we hope for your recovery and health", so he comforts him and does not frighten him.' Shaikh al-Muʿaid then elaborated, drawing on religious texts and practical experience:

'It is from *al-sunna* [the ways of the Prophet] that a person gives the patient good news so as not to frighten him. How many very sick patients have received their cure from Allah, and how many healthy people has death taken suddenly? And how many dead persons have come back to us from London, or Germany, or India, or Amman, where the patient had travelled for a cure but only his corpse returned. This […] matter is mentioned by our Almighty God: "If Allah touch thee with affliction, none can remove it but He" [*wa an yamsuska allahu bi durin fa la kashifa la hu illa huwwa]*. Also, "And when I am ill, it is He who cures me" [*wa idha muradtu fa huwwa shafini]*.'

As the doctors also indicated, it is God who ultimately decides who lives and dies. Informing patients of a terminal illness

could cause a shock that proves more detrimental than the disease itself. Doctors and family members should reaffirm the possibility of a cure rather than speak perhaps unnecessary words of doom.

Answers to bio-ethical questions will seldom be universal, given varying cultural ideas of what constitutes a good life and death. Approaches contradictory to one's own can appear inhumane, often rendering cross-cultural debates unyielding. Most Yemeni doctors spoken to were appalled to hear that in the United States, doctors almost always tell patients their diagnosis and prognosis. Also unsettling to them was the fact that patients, usually visiting doctors on their own, are then the ones to tell their family about their grave illnesses. For someone already struggling with a serious disease, they said, this is unnecessary and cruel. Examining practices in their sociocultural context can help us in understanding the 'humaneness' in others' actions.

Notes

1. In 1998, the author surveyed 205 doctors in four governmental hospitals in San'a, the capital of Yemen, on whether they inform terminally ill patients of their condition. All but 19 doctors were from Yemen. Ten were from Iraq, five from Cuba, and four from Egypt. Additionally, opinions were solicited from nine religious scholars concerning treatment abroad and advanced medical care in general. These scholars ranged from the mufti to heads of *shariʿa* courts to *shariʿa* law college professors. In addition to fieldwork in Yemen, Yemeni medical travellers in Bombay and Jordan were interviewed.

2. Cf. Swagman, Charles F. (1989), 'Fija': Fright and Illness in Highland Yemen', in *Social Science and Medicine* 28 (4), pp. 381-388. See also Good, Byron J. and Delvecchio Good, Mary-Jo (1982), 'Toward a Meaning Centred Analysis of Popular Illness Categories: Fright Illness and Heart Distress in Iran', in *Cultural Conceptions of Mental Health and Therapy*, Marsella, Anthony J. and White, Geoffrey M. (eds.), Dordrecht: Reidel, pp. 141-166.

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Middle East
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The Intifadas and the Palestinian Youth

The latest Intifada has once again brought to the fore all the national themes of resistance inherited from the first Intifada. The same songs, the same poems and the same symbols are used. The Palestinian television constantly mingles images of the first Intifada with those of the present uprising. Unlike the first Intifada, however, there is no massive commitment on behalf of the youth to the cause of the Intifada Al Aqsa. The following is concerned with how the attitude of the young Palestinians towards the national struggle has evolved, which could explain the difference in their level of commitment to the two uprisings.

The young stone-throwers are but a minority, most of them coming from the more disadvantaged sections of the refugee camps. As for the groups fighting Israeli strongpoints, the majority come from youth movements linked with Palestinian parties, and mobilize a different kind of population: namely people who were often more specifically affected by the first Intifada. Still, in that case as well, we cannot say that there is a massive commitment.

The main difference now is that most youngsters do not believe that the fight will succeed in the short term, although they think that it is a necessity. They adhere to the nationalist themes which are leading the present fight, because they think that the construction of an independent state is the only way to obtain their rights and enable the expression of Palestinian identity. Most of them no longer believe in the possibility of making this state come true through short-term confrontation, which is precisely the contrary of what the youth of the first Intifada thought. Palestinians are thus trapped by the contradiction between their support for the principle of a fight for independence and their scepticism as regards how effective such an uprising is.

▶ **Crossroad 'City Inn' at El Bireh (suburb of Ramallah)**

PHOTO: BERTRAND DALIMIER, 2001

From national hope to individualism

The evolution in the their way of thinking stems from the extreme disappointment which has grown among the youth from 1995 onwards, on account of the gap between what they fought for and the reality of the current Palestinian Authority. At the same time, opposition parties were not believed to have any constructive suggestions for an alternative. Islamist parties alone were able to take advantage of the situation. For all the (relative) scepticism which prevailed regarding their strategy of confrontation, they alone were thought to be taking up the gauntlet and defending Palestine's 'lost honour', when they decided to continue the national struggle after the failure of the Intifada. Israel's withdrawal from Lebanon, being interpreted as Hizbullah's own victory, gave credibility to that feeling.

That analysis of the political situation led a large part of the youth to bitterness and despair since they could not see any way out of an extremely difficult situation, unstable and dangerous, with an economy in ruins. They have tried to reconstruct their lives by drastically lowering their hopes and concentrating on projects which they could control and which would never be jeopardized by an unstable and economically degraded situation. This self-restructuring corresponds to a will to find a field in which it is possible to act without systematically being alienated by an oppressive situation. So, projects like beginning a family, studying abroad if possible, or finding a job, have become solutions. To a certain extent, these are attempts to forget a political situation that is increasingly restricting their horizons with each day that goes by. This refocusing is therefore made most of the time with a certain degree of bitterness and appears more as a last resort than as a real alternative, because it is built on failure and not on a real sense of fulfilment. In short, the attempt to reconstruct a small but independent life for oneself is in contradiction with the Intifada Al Aqsa.

This self-restructuring is challenged by the present mobilization of nationalist themes as the unique meaning of the Intifada Al Aqsa. In fact, bringing again to the fore the nationalist themes, coupled with the acceptance by some of the youth to sacrifice their very lives for these principles strongly discredits all attempts to initiate projects which are not linked with the national struggle. Anyhow, the serious degradation of the political and economic situation has reduced their scope for these projects. For the most disadvantaged Palestinians, such projects as finding employment or marriage are impossible, simply out of reach.

Sacrificing oneself to the cause of the present Intifada is mostly the choice of youngsters from the latter category. This logic of self-sacrifice makes it possible to solve the contradiction between adhesion to the goal of creating a State and scepticism about the possibility of achieving that goal in the short term.

The use of martyrdom

The *shahid* (martyr) actually produces two about-turns. On the one hand, the *shahid* removes the national struggle from a short-term temporal frame and places it in a thousand-year-old frame. This change in temporality enables a change in status, from that of victim to that of fighter of a victorious struggle, the Jihad, for which Israel is just a passing event. The second about-turn is at the personal level. A youth who accepts the perspective of personal sacrifice is then able to remove from his shoulders the burden of conflict between adhesion to nationalism and self-fulfilment since he transcends his own story by associating it to the victorious figure of the *shahid*: my self-fulfilment will come from the national struggle which for sure has little chance of succeeding now, but it does not matter since I am ready to sacrifice myself for a goal which is above and beyond me.

Such a commitment that enables them to be involved in the logic of victory and no longer in the logic of failure requires sacrificing their history as an individual. This choice made by a small minority of Palestinian youths invalidates any attempts at self-fulfilment through personal projects which would mean abandoning the fight for the superior objective of the national struggle. This is why the decision to resume the fight and accept the sacrifice made by a very small minority of the youths is going to reduce the identity resources available. The Palestinian field of identity resources is to become more and more univocal. Nationalism tends to become both the sole way of interpreting reality and the framework within which actions must take place in order to be socially legitimate.

This resumption of the fight will not change the way the majority of the youths view the possibilities of change. We can witness a cleavage between, on the one hand, talk of unconditional backing for the struggle, and on the other hand, a real commitment. They do in fact think that the fight must continue because the situation is unacceptable. They have waited long enough and heard enough promises, which were never kept. They also have the feeling that if they stop now, they will lose everything. But if they support the objectives of the fight, they do not believe that throwing stones or even shooting is effective. A growing feeling is that martyrs have died for nothing. At the most, only the attacks would seem to them to be able to establish a real power relationship. So the Palestinian youths who are not getting involved in a logic of sacrifice are caught between a nationalist ideology which they stand for and which is becoming the only source of legitimacy, and their refusal to get involved in a fight which is extremely costly in terms of lives and which makes already hard living conditions even harder. That is why they are searching for alternative ways of keeping up the fight such as boycotting Israeli products or making international opinion aware through means of the internet.

Still, that does not seem enough to them, and this despair leads to the idea that either they do not have competent leaders to guide them to more efficient ways of resisting, or that they are in a total deadlock because of Israeli intransigence. That general feeling of an impasse makes a large number of these youths think about going abroad, especially those who can afford it. It seems to them one of the last few possibilities that remain, in order to lead a normal life and to find more acceptable living conditions – in short, become the actors of their own story.

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Eastern Europe
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The Muslim Gypsies in Romania

The Islamic community of Romania is concentrated in the Dobrudja, a southeastern province of Romania lying between the Danube River and the Black Sea. The community comprises an ethnic mosaic of Turks, Tartars, Albanians and Gypsies.[1] Muslim Gypsies identify themselves as 'Horahane Rroma' – Horahane meaning Turkish in the Rromani language. The Muslim community accepts the Horahane Rroma as belonging to the Islamic religion, but otherwise does not affiliate with them. The great majority of the Romanian population rejects Horahane Rroma because of their adherence to a religion different from the 'national' Orthodox Christianity. For the other Gypsies, they are simply known as 'Turks'.

▶

The women and children of the *bulibasha*'s family in Babadag

The official number of the Rroma, or Gypsy, population of Romania is still based upon the 1992 census: 409,723 persons, or 1.8% of the entire population. However, unofficial estimates by Rromani associations amount to approximately 2.5 million people. A very small part of this Gypsy population (10,000-15,000) is estimated to be Muslim, and is distributed over a dozen towns and villages.[2]

Because very few written records have survived little is known of the history of the Muslim Gypsies in Dobrudja. It is thought that they arrived in the area in the early 16th century as a *sanjak* (division) of a specific category of Gypsies serving in the Ottoman army. This hypothesis is sustained by the Special Law for the Gypsies of Rumelia, promulgated by Sultan Suleiman the Great in 1530, and by the Law for the supervision of the *sanjak* of Gypsies of 1541. Others may be descendants of Gypsies that came from the other territories to the Ottoman dominions that embraced Islam. Muslim Gypsies in Dobrudja have no written culture, but they have a rich oral tradition, which includes fairytales, legends, riddles, charms, and songs. Unfortunately this tradition has been recorded only sporadically thus far and it has not been analysed at all. The study of these cultural expressions would certainly lead to a greater understanding of their history.

Ancestral beliefs and Islam

The Muslim Gypsies in Romania are Sunnites of the Hanafitic rite. Identifying Islam with the Ottoman civilization, some of them proclaim: 'We are Muslims, so we believe in the God of the Turks.' The other Muslim inhabitants of Dobrudja often stress that the Gypsies do not have much knowledge of religion. They name them *Allahsiz insanlar*, Godless people, because they do not live a manifest religious life. They go to the mosque only on the occasions of great Islamic festivals, such as the Id al-Fitr and the Id al-Adha. Pejorative allusions are sometimes made by other

PHOTO, ANA OPRISAN

Muslims of Dobrudja to the old dualist religion (*Devla*-God/*Benga*-Satan) of the Gypsies.

Generally Gypsies are capable of adapting, at least superficially, to all sorts of circumstances while maintaining their identity. This phenomenon may also be noticed at the level of religion. In spite of their declared affiliation to Islam, many of their ancestral religious representations, beliefs and practices are still present, such as belief in demons, totemism and divination. Of interest is that the two Islamic categories *halal* (allowed) and *haram* (prohibited) have been superposed on two categories of the ancestral culture of Gypsies, namely *ujo* (pure) and *melalo* (impure). This taboo system is regulated by rituals, such as the use of charms, and not by resorting to Islamic teachings.

Another illustrative example of the syncretism that characterizes their worldview is the annual Hirdelezi festival, an occasion on which the dead are commemorated. This festival takes place on the 6th of May and is celebrated by all the Muslims in Dobrudja. Fire plays a central role for the Gypsies on this special day. Fires are lit in front of their houses and the members of the family jump over them in order to purify themselves from sins and liberate themselves from bad spirits. This ritual is similar to the Newroz festival celebrated by Kurds, Iranians and others. The Hirdelezi festival is sometimes called 'Turkish Easter', because the Gypsies also light candles in their houses.

Linguistic aspects

Name-giving among the Muslim Gypsies reflects the pragmatic and eclectic approach of this small community living in a – sometimes – hostile environment. Often their names are a combination of a Turkish (Islamic) name and a Romanian (sometimes even Christian) name. For example, the name of the *bulibasha* (community head) in the town of Babadag is Recep Lupu, Lupu being a name from the Romanian bestiary, meaning wolf. The women in the community have at least two names. For example, one of the outstanding women in the community of Babadag is called Maria Rubie. Depending on circumstances, some of them declare themselves Romanians and Christians, making use of the Romanian name only, while at the other occasions they proclaim themselves Turks and Muslims, making use of the Turkish name.

Muslim Gypsies in Dobrudja present a typical case of languages in contact. A number of languages – Horahane (a Rromani dialect), Turkish, and Romanian, as well as varieties of these are widely used in everyday interactions. The choice of using a particular language is governed by social factors. For instance, the Horahane dialect is spoken inside the community, especially by women and children. The type of Turkish used is linked to a whole spectrum of varieties ranging from the Ottoman Turkish, used for the invocation of God, to the

everyday Turkish variety spoken in the area. A kind of pidgin Turkish is also used. Classical Arabic is used for the Islamic prayer ritual, the *namaz*, and some religious expressions derived from Arabic – but with a very specific pronunciation – are part of their spoken language. Romanian, the official language, is normally spoken by the majority of Gypsies.

A direct result of this situation is the appearance of the phenomenon of code-switching, which is defined as the alternate use of two or more languages in the same sentence or in the same discourse.

Changing lifestyles

Muslim Gypsies, once nomads, used to travel as artisans and seasonal labourers by tilt wagons from village to village offering their services, such as tinning kitchen dishes, in exchange for agricultural products or for money. However, modern industries led to a crisis of the traditional craft practised by the Muslim Gypsies. Taking also into consideration the forced sedentarization policies of the communist authorities, their entire way of life was changed. Without the traditional skills they once had, nowadays the Muslim Gypsies are seeking employment opportunities outside of their community. Attracted by the economic activities of the large cities, a considerable number of them migrated, usually settling in the city outskirts as petty traders, domestic servants and day labourers. Their cities of preference are Constantza and Bucharest in Romania and Istanbul in Turkey. Those remaining in villages are also involved in petty trade and domestic service. One can often find them travelling with their merchandise from one village to the other in the area, by car or sometimes still by traditional tilt wagon.

The Muslim Gypsies can be said to still have close-knit communities. The tradition of 'Hanamic' is a way to construct strong relationships between families: More powerful than blood kinship, the parents vow, before their children are born, that their offspring will intermarry when they have reached the proper age. As of yet, mixed marriages are very rare. This may nonetheless change: It seems that the Muslim Gypsies could lose their distinct identity through assimilation. However, through the strengthening of relations with the Muslim Gypsies in other parts of southeastern Europe, especially in Bulgaria and Turkey, a revival of their ethnic identity indeed belongs to the future possibilities.

Western Europe
JOHAN MEULEMAN

Headscarves, Homosexuals, and Imams

in the Netherlands

The wearing of headscarves by three Moroccan girls in a French public school in the autumn of 1989 was considered an *affaire d'état*, debated up to the highest official level. For most Dutchmen this turmoil was quite amazing. In the Netherlands, earlier that same year, echoes of the Rushdie case did lead to a heated debate, which reached cabinet level. However, public polemics on Islam soon settled down and henceforth the few controversies over the wearing of headscarves in public schools and other similar incidents were usually settled quickly at the level of school or, in the worst cases, municipal administrations. Since a year and a half ago, however, a series of incidents seems to indicate that something has changed in the Netherlands.

The incidents began with the publication of an essay by Paul Scheffer in the 29 January 2000 issue of the prestigious *NRC Handelsblad* daily. In his text entitled 'The Multicultural Drama', this Dutch publicist warned that the integration of immigrants into Dutch society was threatened with failure and that the development of a class of socially marginalized persons, mainly of immigrant origin, was imminent. In the ensuing debate, from the observation that most people concerned are Muslims to the conclusion that the problem is somehow related to Islam was but a small step. Next, not directly connected to Islam or even to Muslims, but pertinent to the development of Dutch public debate, came a discussion on the attitude of registry officials who had conscientious objections to the authorization of marriages between persons of the same sex. In November, an alderman of the capital city publicly announced that he would fire any civil servant refusing to apply the new legislation. One month later, a discussion broke out when the principal of an Amsterdam public school refused Muslim pupils the use of an empty classroom, during breaks, to perform the ritual prayer. A little afterwards, Dutch media devoted much attention to the cancellation of an opera entitled *Aisha and the Women of Medina*, after Assia Djebar's novel *Loin de Médine*, scheduled as one of the 'intercultural' performances that would offer a special flavour to Rotterdam as this year's cultural capital of Europe. The Moroccan artists had withdrawn under the pressure of certain Muslim circles that considered this play, staged around one of Prophet Muhammad's wives, unacceptable. One of the local Muslim leaders who, in a subsequent public debate, opposed the performance was Khalil El Moumni, the Moroccan imam of the Al Nasr mosque in Rotterdam. The declaration of the editor-in-chief of the Dutch feminist monthly *Opzij*, that she would in no case ac-

Imam el Moumni and representatives of Muslim organizations at a meeting with the Minister of Integration Policy.

cept a woman with a headscarf as an editor of her magazine, aroused yet another public debate. The refusal of an applicant of Turkish origin for the position of assistant clerk at the court of the city of Zwolle gave rise to a larger debate, concentrating on the question of whether, as a symbol, the headscarf impaired the neutrality of the court.

The El Moumni case

The most recent incident originated with the May 3rd broadcast of *Nova*, a popular television programme offering almost daily background information on current news issues. The attention of the *Nova* editors had been drawn to the increasing harassment of homosexuals by youths of Moroccan origin. They asked Imam El Moumni for a comment. His opposition to the violence of Moroccan youngsters against homosexuals was not transmitted. In a short statement that was broadcast, El Moumni declared that homosexuality was a dangerous illness that, if not halted, might contaminate Dutch society as a whole and thus lead to its extinction. These words aroused a wave of indignation in wide circles of homosexuals and defenders of their rights. For well over a month, they were discussed in newspaper comments and letters to the editors. Several persons and organizations lodged complaints against El Moumni and other imams who had voiced similar ideas in later newspaper interviews, accusing them of defamation. The Public Prosecutor began an investigation to determine whether any penal offence had been committed. Members of parliament commented on the issue and some demanded El Moumni's extradition.

Apart from the proportions it took, this most recent debate was interesting because of the transformations the subject underwent in a relatively short period. From the original question, the harassment of homosexuals by Moroccan youths, the topic shifted to the opinion of imams, considered persons of

moral influence among the Muslim population. Some even held the imams responsible for the behaviour of Muslims. This became clearer at the next stage of the issue, when Imam El Moumni had fallen short of expectations and some considered his declaration offensive to a component of the Dutch population and indirectly inciting to violence. More generally, the discussion turned to the incapacity of the imams available so far in the Netherlands – almost all of whom have been trained abroad and practically ignore Dutch society, its institutions, or even its language – to play the prominent role many Dutch politicians wish for them to play in the integration process of the Muslim minorities in Dutch society. Then the discussion turned to the place of Islam and Muslims in general in Dutch society. Finally, the discussion took an unexpected turn when prominent members of both liberal parties, VVD and D'66, suggested that the attitude of Muslims towards homosexuality and the attitude of Christian political parties with respect to this question and such questions as euthanasia were similar. This short metamorphosis of the debate was a rehearsal for next year's general election campaign and reveals the broader framework of the issue.

One might begin the analysis of this framework by a comparison with the 1989 Rushdie case. Mainly because of its origins from various countries, characterized by sharp political, social, and ethnic divisions, the Muslim community of the Netherlands is extremely diversified and divided, and no particular organizations, institutions, or persons can be considered as its representatives. As in 1989, this circumstance has led to much confusion, repeated misjudgement, and unwarranted expectations among Dutch cabinet ministers, journalists, and other participants in public policy and debates. The excessive concentration on ethnicity in their analyses has only diminished slightly, their ignorance of Islam hardly at all. The refusal to admit any role of religion in public life has even spread wider. This has to do with one of the main causes for the fact that controversies relating to Islam and Muslims have recently taken unprecedented proportions: the tendency of the Dutch state and society to relinquish its traditional model of *verzuiling* and move towards the French model of *laïcité*.

Religion and the public sphere

Verzuiling, usually translated as 'pillarization', is the unique mechanism through which, during the 19th and 20th centuries, various Dutch communities, such as the Protestants, the Roman Catholics, and the labour class of social-democratic conviction, each through the development of their particular cultural, labour, and political organizations as well as their own educational institutions, could achieve a respected place within the Dutch society and state. Avoiding a detailed historical, political, and philosophical discussion of complicated concepts, the French notion of *laïcité* may be explained as the total

absence of religion in the public space, even in the form of comparative studies respectful of all denominations and non-religious worldviews in public schools. According to a number of authors, from a situation in which various communities were sharing the public space on the basis of respect for certain common rules and principles and diversity in other matters, the Netherlands is moving towards a society in which expressions of cultural and particularly religious specificity are banned from the public sphere. In a very extreme form, the latter situation was defended in a letter by a professor of women and law studies on the Zwolle court case to the editor of the daily newspaper *Trouw*, stating that people should 'live and indulge in their own cultural identity during their own time off.'

A related tendency in contemporary Dutch society is the development of a dominant culture and set of opinions, the adherents of which, by imposing their version of tolerance, leave no room for difference. It is they who determine the standards of 'political correctness' and the zeal of some of them reminds one of ultra-French Jacobinism. James Kennedy, historian, has described this trend as the development of a liberal, secular, and white majority culture, and Bas van der Vlies, a Christian member of parliament, has spoken of a 'new state religion'. In the El Moumni case, some of those who took offence at his statement called for the repressive means of prosecution and extradition. Recourse was also had to curious arguments to defend fundamental liberties against the ideas of the imam: reference was made to the fact that El Moumni had been banned from preaching in Hassan II's Morocco and not only the French, but even the Turkish state were mentioned as examples worthy of being followed for their attitude towards religion. It was even mentioned that the historical freedom of religion guaranteed by the Dutch constitution had only been intended for diverse Christian denominations. Various others who do not share El Moumni's opinions, Muslims and non-Muslims, rejected excessive reactions.

The growth of the Muslim population in the Netherlands is reason for concern among various categories of inhabitants. Among them are those groups within the political and social elite who were just rejoicing over the gradual advance of *laïcité*. Their attitude is a fundamental factor in the recent debates about Islam in the Netherlands, of which a conflict between the constitutional rights of freedom of religion and speech and a particular understanding of tolerance is a recurrent ingredient.

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PHOTO: ANP / ROBERT VOS

South America
SCOTT DARREL MORRISON

Muslim Life in Sao Paulo

The following description of contemporary Muslim worship in Sao Paulo, Brazil, is part of a larger inquiry into the Syrian-Lebanese diaspora community of the city. The research was conducted in June and August 2000.

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The Mosque of Elisa Whitaker Street (the only Shiᶜi mosque).

Of the eight mosques in Sao Paulo, all are Sunni except for one Shiᶜi mosque. The Shiᶜi mosque, founded in 1983, located on Elisa Whitaker Street in Bras, a commercial district famous for its inexpensive clothing stores. On the Muslim sabbath, a visit was paid to the latter. The mosque is walled, and the gated main entrance of the building is covered with marble. Featuring two bronze-coloured minarets and an exposed orange brick tower, the mosque is apparently under construction. The Sunni mosques found in the area of this Shiᶜi edifice stand in sharp contrast due to their angular, unadorned concrete.

The mosque houses a library with a collection of Arabic works on philosophy, economics, religion, a collection of works translated into Portuguese (e.g. *What is Islam?* and *The History of Islam*), and pamphlets from Tawheed (a publishing house in Teheran, Iran) concerning religious holidays, duties and doctrines, some of which have Qur'anic verses in Arabic transcribed into Roman characters. The Shiᶜi mosque also distributes a bimonthly magazine, *ᶜUruba*, the latest cover of which features a photograph of a line of men with hands crossed at their bellies and bowed heads, praying inside another mosque – the Mosque of Brazil (the actual sanctuary of which was closed during the author's visit, due to a flood at the beginning of the year). Eight or ten pages at the end of the magazine are written in Arabic, but the remaining, larger portion is in Portuguese. *ᶜUruba* provides coverage of recent events, such as the visit of the Pope to Jerusalem, Israeli attacks on Lebanon, and a story presenting 'Our position on the settlement', which discusses the status of negotiations with Israel. Doctrinal treatises on Islam and politics appear with

relevance to the Muslim world and to Muslim participants in the Brazilian polity. It deals with 'human justice' in Islam, with an explanation of the concept of 'consultation' – presumably the article, written in Portuguese, is referring to *shura* – and its importance in the protection of political liberty, with quotations from Muhammad Abdu and Rashid Ridda.

In the context of religious holidays and devotional duties, the unity of the larger whole of Muslims was exemplified by a report on the Hajj with photographs overlooking the Kaaba in Mecca. On the back cover of the issue, Muslims gathered for prayer, wearing white clothing and skull caps, inside of an unnamed mosque with the headline in Arabic: 'The Hajj is a world Islamic congress'. Back in Sao Paulo, for the celebration of the Feast of the Sacrifice, for which a sheep was sacrificially slaughtered at the Sultan Club, meals were served at various mosques in the community.

Sunni and Shiᶜi

Informants at the Shiᶜi mosque reported cordial relations with the Sunni mosques. One informant, the president of the congregation, said that he did not like to use such categories at all, not only sectarian categories within Islam, but also the distinctions between religions in general: Christianity and Islam, for example. This was justified by his view that such categories were divisive and even harmful. The mosque offers Arabic lessons for children, while *madrasas,* separate from this mosque elsewhere in the city, also offer Arabic instruction. Both the Sunni mosques and the Shiᶜi mosque include large assembly halls for functions other than prayer: *ᶜid al-fitr*, the Ramadan, the Prophet's birthday, marriages, parties and – in the case of the Shiᶜi mosque – the birth-

days of the twelve imams, and *ᶜashura*. Women do not attend *jumᶜa* at the Shiᶜi mosque, and only a few could be seen in the back of the Sunni mosque at the time of the author's visit.

Inside the sanctuary itself, the floor is covered with eight grey patterned rugs, upon which was printed in English and Arabic: 'To Sao Paulo mosque from the Islamic Republic of Iran'. At the cultural centre annexed to the Mosque of Brazil, where prayer was temporarily held, there is a surprising recurring image, that of a kneeling camel. Around the freshly painted white walls of the Shiᶜi mosque are the names and birth dates of the twelve imams (the people of the house – *ahl al-bait*), and the *shahada*, all printed in Farsi Arabic script. At the centre of the sanctuary is a *mihrab*, with a rectangular tile depicting the 'visit of Hussein' (*ziyarat* al-Husein) next to it. There is also a podium with pictures of the al-Aqsa Mosque and the Great Mosque in Mecca. The windows at the top of the rectangular dome and along the walls are frosted white and green, diffusing white light throughout the space, while a breeze wafts in traffic noise from the open front door. A bookshelf containing Qur'ans donated by Saudi Arabia can be found along with disassembled Qur'an stands. Above, on a balcony railing, there is a large painting depicting Karbala.

Ninety per cent of those who frequent the Shiᶜi mosque are Lebanese, with other congregants in small numbers from around the Arab world, including Syria, Libya, Iran, Jordan, and Egypt. The Mosque of Brazil is equally dominated by Lebanese adherents, purportedly with few Syrians and Palestinians. The number of Brazilian converts at the Shiᶜi mosque was approximately 30, the Sunni mosque counting approximately 500 members. The main outreach programme of

the Shiᶜi mosque was the three-month-old 'Imam Hussein Project' for distributing food, clothing and toys, or other items donated to the mosque, around the city.

Imam and shaykh

Newly arrived from Iran, an imam swept in, dressed in a white cloth turban, a long, brown outer cloak, and a grey vest. He wore a beard and brown tinted glasses. The son of the permanent imam, who was out of town at the time, reported that the purpose of the imam, in addition to his recitation and sermon for *jumᶜa*, was to help the members solve problems and to interpret Islamic law: for example, to determine whether particular goods purchased in Brazil, a non-Muslim country, were permissible. Sometimes there would be no imam for a week or two. The imam from Iran circulated with a charismatic air, shaking hands and greeting the 25 men assembled by this time. He then read from a prepared text.

The shaykh at the Mosque of Brazil was from al-Azhar in Cairo and reported that all of the shaykhs in the Sunni mosques of Sao Paulo were Egyptians from al-Azhar. He attributed this presence of al-Azhar shaykhs to an outreach programme implemented by Nasser. The shaykh recited the Qur'an with the aid of a simple microphone for one hour. A one-page summary of the text was translated into Portuguese and distributed prior to the service. The majority of the congregants apparently could not follow the sermon (although many did speak Arabic), as they were unaccustomed to the Arabic of the Qur'an.

At the Shiᶜi mosque, after the imam spoke, the worshippers prayed between four white lines in the front of the room, before the *mihrab*, while latecomers arrived unnoticed. Most of the men, wearing socks or nothing on their feet, after leaving their shoes in the *hammam* just behind the sanctuary, removed their belts and picked up a plastic, beige-coloured disk (*masbah*) from a wooden box. After prayer, reverting to Portuguese, the men talked and made plans. The imam, now more casual and curious, asked how long I had studied Arabic, and where. He asked about religious studies in the USA, whether it was called 'theology', and whether there were religious universities. When I left, he was sitting in a pool of sunlight, leaning against a column in the sanctuary.

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pression continue to create new waves of emigrants, including highly skilled groups, professionals, investors and the youth.

Twenty years after the revolution, diasporas have gained in importance and they impact in diverse ways the political environment in Iran. Some members of the exilic community engage in political activisms aimed variously at the reform or overthrow of the Islamic regime. Moreover, members of the diaspora influence the foreign policy of the countries where they have become new citizens. Not surprisingly, a struggle has ensued over the control of the diaspora.

Iran's policy of controlling the diaspora is complex, diverse, and implemented through the chain of embassies, consulates and all the power that diplomacy and statehood bring into play. Moreover, Tehran uses satellite broadcasting; allows artists, film makers, films, singers, and sport teams to travel abroad; builds mosques and religious centres; offers material rewards for those using these services; and gathers information on exilic communities.

The opposition in exile was quick to note the shift in policy. Debates have been going on about the extension of state repression to the diaspora and how to confront it. According to one political trend, the Islamic regime should not be allowed any space in the diaspora. This involves a boycott of its export products, sports and art groups, and other in-

tellectual inroads into the exilic community. It also dismisses return to the homeland, or engaging in intellectual and publishing activities there.[9] However, a large number of Iranians who do not support the Islamic state demonstrated strong attachment to their first homeland when a soccer team visited Australia, Canada and the U.S. in the late 1990s. The visit of the pop singer Googoosh to Canada and the U.S. in 2000 also rallied tens of thousands of nostalgic audiences to her performances. She had been denied the freedom to perform in Iran since 1979.

The de-territorialization of a sizeable population of Iranian dissidents has a far-reaching impact on the political destinies of Iran. Today, the struggle between the diaspora and the Islamic state goes on everywhere – at conferences and demonstrations, in print and broadcast media, and on the internet. However, convergence of political interest between the two sides has developed in the wake of the rise of 'the reformist movement' in and outside the government. Browsing through the diaspora press, it is often difficult to distinguish between the reformist trend in Iran and in exile.

This article is based on research in progress and a paper presented at the 34th annual meeting of the Middle Eastern Studies Association of North America, November 2000.

Notes

1. These are quotations from the first part of a well-known panegyric *qaisda* by Sa'di.

2. Cited in Navid Azadi, 'Gharib-e dar sarzamin-e gharib-e-hã' (Strangers in the land of strangers), *Shahrvand*, Vol. 9, No. 452, 28 January 2000, p. 20.

3. *Canadian Almanac and Directory 2000*, Toronto: Micromedia, 1999, p. 1-48.

4. Aryanpur-Kashani, A. and M. (1983), *The Concise Persian-English Dictionary*, Tehran: Amir Kabir Publications.

5. Ibid.

6. The exact words, *sãl-e now-e milãdi rã be ᶜomum-e hamvatanãn-e masih-i tabrik migu'im*, can be found in other papers (e.g. *Sãyebãn*, Vol. 1, No. 1, January 1998, p. 2).

7. See, for instance, Himani Banerjee (2000), *The Dark Side of the Nation: Essays on Multiculturalism, Nationalism and Gender*, Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press.

8. Navid Azadi, ibid. footnote 3 above.

9. For a survey of the politics of return see, for instance, Azadeh Sepehr, 'Honar-e bãzgasht va bãzgasht-e honari' (The art of return and the artistic return), published first in *Qãsedak* (Europe), reprinted in *Kãrikãtor*, Toronto, Vol. 1, No. 4, 1997.

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IISMM Research Programme

AGNÈS DEVICTOR

Contemporary Artistic Creation in Societies of Islam

The vocation of the IISMM (Institut d'Etudes de l'Islam et des Sociétés du Monde Musulman) is to make the contemporary world of Islam known and to stimulate the curiosity of a large audience while developing various high-level research programmes, the duration of which ranges from two to four years. 'La création artistique contemporaine en pays d'Islam' (The contemporary artistic creation in Islamic regions), a programme run by Jocelyne Dakhlia, director of studies at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales (EHESS) in Paris, adheres to this perspective.

Several years ago, the West began to discover Algerian rai music, the films directed by Kiarostami, and the novels authored by Mahfouz. However, other artistic sectors, clearly less widespread, still remain little appreciated. Research in the domains of social science, sociology or the history of art are making but minor advancements in the field of contemporary art and in the phenomena of creative production and dissemination of works in the highly diversified political and cultural contexts of the Muslim world. Organized by the IISMM, special one-day seminars devoted to music, literature, cinema, theatre, architecture, painting, the plastic arts, and dance aim to explore the dynamics at work and to reveal the rapport between aesthetic modernity and tradition that is inherited or re-appropriated in the various Muslim societies.

The influence of Islam varies according to national contexts and geographic zones, but also according to the different aesthetic supports. It is through the joint perspective of specialists in the social sciences, those in charge of institutions, and artists, that questions arise concerning the dynamism of artistic creation, aesthetic and technical modernity, and also the role of the state and private actors (sponsorship, censure) in contemporary artistic creation in Muslim societies. The objective of the programme on 'The contemporary artistic creation in Islamic regions' is to present an overview of contemporary works in the various Islamic regions, so as to offer new insight into this phenomenon.

During a first meeting on 24 November 2000, the coordinators of the various one-day seminars formulated the most salient issues within contemporary artistic creation in Muslim countries, thus inaugurating the programme with ambitious research perspectives. Already, the relations that artistic creation maintains with the West, with tradition, and with Islam presented themselves as determining factors in the different systems of creative production.

Hadj Miliani, professor of literature at the University of Mostaganem, Algeria, in charge of the one-day seminars devoted to music and to theatre, encourages reflection centred more on the modes of production than on an aesthetic evaluation of the works at hand, which leads to favouring the collective rather than the individual. With the Maghreb as point of departure, he proposes four axes of reflection: the definitions of actors within a culture, the various competing registers and languages, the relations with the outside (whether that be an Arab foreigner or a Westerner), and the rapport with heritage, with cultural patrimony.

Sylviane Leprun, professor of plastic arts at the University of Bordeaux demonstrates that the nature of the relations between African artists and the West is such that it is as if the formers' creative production could not exist without reference to, or explicit markers of, the latter.

Contemporary African plastic arts appeared in the West with the Festival Mondial des Arts Africains (World Festival of African Arts) of 1966, indicating that Africa was perceived as a monolithic bloc in terms of creative production. Nonetheless, the question of an identity-based art was already present and still underlies artistic creation today. Professor Leprun, specializing in African arts, emphasizes the specificity of 'installation' art in Africa – a very dynamic branch since the 1970s – characterized by recuperation and re-use. The influence of Islam is difficult to situate in African cultures, since Western ethnography contributed for almost a century to erasing the traces. The remarkable use of calligraphy in these installations is certainly the most identifiable marker of Islamic influence on African art that exists today.

Silvia Naef, professor of Islamology at the University of Geneva, in charge of the seminars devoted to contemporary painting and to the work of gallery owners, also affirms the influence of the Western variable on the elaboration of a contemporary pictorial art in Islamic regions. Modern art is, for the Arab world in its entirety, a borrowed phenomenon and corresponds to the theme, developed in the 19th century, of *rattrapage civilisationnel* (civilizational catch-up). In 1951, with the Manifesto of the Bagdad group, a decisive movement towards a modern and authentic art was launched in Iraq – a country that was to remain a leader in terms of contemporary pictorial creation. Silvia Naef analyses the strategies developed by these artists, whose approach consisted in improving their knowledge of foreign countries and their local identity so as to enter the international market. Pre-Islamic and popular art was thus reinvested so as to create an aesthetic that broke away from tradition. The affirmation of a lay culture, indispensable to modernity, is recognizable by the absence of an Islamic referent. In the 1960s, abstract painting asserted itself, still following the Western influence. But already the pan-Arab character can be detected by its recourse to calligraphy that tended towards abstraction. The 1980s gave sanction to the Arab identity of these works, albeit without constituting a return to Islamic art, while the last decade has been witness to a vanishing of this identity-based characteristic. The *rattrapage civilisationnel* has occurred; the necessity of explicitly defining an Arab identity has faded. Aesthetic forms increasingly tend towards a hybridization of influences.

The cinema

Agnès Devictor, researcher at the Institut Politique in Aix-en-Provence, specialized in Iranian cinema, is currently attempting to inventorize the points of convergence amongst the cinematographies of Islamic countries and to open new venues of reflection with respect to the relationship between cinema, Islam and modernity.

One of the questions posed by cinema touches upon its very existence: there are regions that do not (or no longer) have national cinema productions, whether this be for economic or technical reasons – or for religious ones (as is the case in Taliban Afghanistan, where cinema is forbidden based on theological arguments). If there is an inequality of the status of cinema and a great variety in the dynamics of national production, in those societies where cinema does exist, it presents a certain number of characteristics such as the way the body is dealt with on screen and most notably male-female relations.

Also interesting is the relationship between cinema and the representation of a Muslim culture on screen. The Islamic Republic of Iran is, until present, the only regime that has attempted to reform its national production so as to transform it into an Islamic cinema. Since the 1979 Revolution, the cultural leaders have been striving to establish a cinema competitive with that of Hollywood, totally detached from any Western references. The state implemented a censorship that contributed to the creation of a new cinematographic language and a new narrative style – the question of whether a genuinely new aesthetic had been born still remaining.

Aesthetic modernity, as found in the works of the Egyptian film director Salah Abu Saïf, or in the works of Abbas Kiarostami in Iran, distinguishes itself by its recourse to new types of narratives, by a more ambiguous rapport with reality and by a greater freedom conferred to the audience in the construction of the work.

As for technical modernity, reflection is necessary both to analyse the reception of new techniques in the production of images and to isolate the registers of the intellectual debates they evoke in the Muslim context. The broadcasting of images on new supports could comply with the lack of movie theatres, or resolve the question of prohibition of image consumption in groups (as in Saudi Arabia).

Gilles Ladkany, lecturer at the Ecole Normale Supérieure in Fontenay-aux-Roses, surrounded by Arab writers, gives perspective to the links between the birth of modern Arabic literature and its relations with the West. He investigates the correlation between the emergence of new themes with an elaboration of new forms and genres of literature.

Free verse, which appeared at the end of the 1940s, followed by the poem in prose in the 1960s, both carriers of literary modernity, provoked the most profound break known to the Arabic language in fourteen centuries by eliminating rhyme and metres. This literary revolution was accompanied by a political rupture in which the metaphor – symbolic detour – occupies the field of ideas and engagement.

The novel

The novel, new literary genre, from the beginning of the 1960s confronts the most severe taboos such as intimacy, sex, the relationship with God, and the rapport with the West. Fiction offered a view of daily life and unveiled the troubles of society, poverty and neuroses. Similar to Hadj Milani, Gilles Ladkany made apparent the renovation language had undergone by the claim to plurilingualism in fiction.

For the coordinator of the seminar devoted to architecture, Jean-Charles Depaule, director of research at the CNRS and specialist in urban sociology and architecture, what distinguishes architecture from other arts is that it is part and parcel of daily life – it is necessarily more frequented. With this observation, he opened three areas of reflection: the influence of architecture in the elaboration of mental structures, the weight of Islamic heritage, and the particular status of architects in Islamic regions.

Architecture gives order to space. It contributes to the structuring of the *habitus*, to organizing a certain way of life, and to the rapport with the 'other' within space. It gives coherence to space and thus to social relations. Not limiting itself to certain elements or landscapes, architecture is a veritable matrix of signs linked with a tradition. Islamic heritage in contemporary architecture is very present and the referent to Islam remains an obligatory discourse. However, as noted by Jean-Charles Depaule, the status of the architect is far inferior to what it was in France or in Renaissance Italy, never occupying a central place in the capital.

This programme will produce a collective publication prepared under the direction of Jocelyne Dakhlia. The research axes and problematics presented will be developed and enriched by the confrontation of different regions of interest (Maghreb, Machrek, Black Africa, Central Asia, etc.) during the one-day seminars on the different sectors of contemporary creative production. Before the end of 2002, a dozen scheduled gatherings will offer forums for debate amongst artists and other creators, gallery owners, museum directors and art critics.

For a schedule of seminars, please contact the IISMM. See e-mail address below.

Agnès Devictor, Ph.D. in political science, focused her doctoral thesis on 'The cultural policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the example of cinema (1979-1997)'. She currently directs seminars on 'Cinema, Islam and Modernity' at the IISMM, Paris, France.
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International Workshop
EKKEHARD RUDOLPH

Muslim Minorities and European Identities

Muslim minorities, having been part of European societies for generations, are currently going through a profound process of transformation and differentiation. At the same time Europe is confronted with the rapid process of political and economic integration, which raises urgent questions on the state of cultural and social cohesion. In this context the role of Muslim immigrants within outwardly secular-defined societies is increasingly reflected in public as well as in academic discourse. The international workshop on 'Muslim Minority Societies in Europe', convened from 2-3 March 2001 at the University of Erfurt, was inspired by this dynamic European debate.

As Jamal Malik, initiator of the workshop, pointed out, Islam is constantly being shaped and constructed by Muslims as actors. This means that one has to deal with controversial manifestations of Islam in Europe, a reality more or less neglected in the public debate. The workshop emphasized the notion of societies insofar as they are able to set norms and to participate in the hegemonic discourse. The workshop also looked at Europe as a geo-political and cultural space characterized by an ongoing discussion about its identity and its boundaries.

Of the three panels, the first was devoted to the process of institutionalization within Muslim minorities in Europe. The second panel paid attention to the interaction between Muslims and their societies of residence in the social, political and legal spheres. In the third panel participants discussed the ways Muslims of different backgrounds, generation and gender understand, use and transform public spaces.

Ziauddin Sardar, British-Pakistani scholar and critic (London), raised thought-provoking questions. He stated that Muslims often perceive their history to be somewhat 'frozen in time'. Both Muslims and native Europeans are dependent on such 'frozen images', which cause acute problems of identities. To him a solution would require synthesis, meaning appreciation of the integral role of Islam in the shaping of Europe's past, present and future; and acknowledgement that Muslims must transcend their 'frozen' history and reformulate Islam as a contemporary global worldview. The development of a new Muslim identity then is intimately connected to the development of a new European identity.

Ataullah Siddiqui (Islamic Foundation, Leicester) also pointed to the identity problem when analysing the situation of the Muslim youth in Britain. According to him, Europe has a large number of 'Muslims without Islam', which belong to a silent majority. This was contrasted to the media's mostly 'noisy picture of Islam'.

Some participants highlighted the ambivalent role of written tradition in the community-building process. P.S. van Koningsveld (Leiden University) emphasized the value of texts distributed, for example, in a great number of Muslim periodicals. He proposed that these sources should be preserved and analysed in the framework of a European research project.

Stefano Allievi (University of Padova) pointed to the role of global networks and mass media to demonstrate that new communication technology helps create new transnational Muslim communities.

Gerdien Jonker (Philipps University Marburg), whose research was based on the Islamic Cultural Centres in Europe (Süleymancilar), demonstrated the ability of an influential Turkish-Muslim organization to find a successful balance between continuity and change in its religious ideas and structures. Günter Seufert (Istanbul Institute of the German Oriental Society) dealt with the Turkish state's reactions to institutionalized Islam in the European Union. Pnina Werbner (Keele University) spoke on Sufi networks in Britain, based on empirical research in the area of Manchester which underlined the flexibility and transnational perspectives of British-Pakistani immigrants in the UK.

Referring to the influence of satellite TV on Muslim immigrants in Sweden, Anne-Sofie Roald (University of Malmö) showed the ambivalent relationship of Muslim communities to their countries of residence. She questioned whether media consumption had an integrating or segregating effect.

Paul Weller (University of Derby), in his contribution on the prestigious Discrimination project supported by the British Home Office, explained that Britain's state law against religious discrimination is highly debated. Jocelyne Cesari (Columbia University, New York) asked whether pluralism offered a means for common agreement on cultural, political and religious values within European societies or whether we are unable to move beyond shallow civility. Mathias Rohe (University of Erlangen) dealt with the issue of adjusting the *shari*ᶜ*a* to the situation of Muslim believers in a non-Muslim context. Finally, Valérie Amiraux (European University Institute, Florence) reminded the participants of the inconvenient but necessary task of a critical evaluation of scientific production.

One of the results of the workshop in Erfurt is the awareness that concepts such as diversity or pluralism of cultures do not sufficiently meet the concern and self-understanding of Muslim minorities in their interaction with majority societies in Europe. In the course of the debate it became clear that 'transnationality' or 'translocality' offer more suitable conceptual frames for future inter-cultural studies.

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Book Presentation
ARMANDO SALVATORE

Yearbook of the Sociology of Islam

***Muslim Traditions and Modern Techniques of Power, Yearbook of the Sociology of Islam* deals with historical and contemporary articulations of the relation of tension between the civilizing impetus of Muslim traditions, and modern forms, fields and techniques of power. These techniques are associated with the process of state-building, as well as with the related constraints of disciplining, normative cohesion, control of the territory and monitored social differentiation.**

The entry point into the investigation is the following question: Is there any method to conceive of Muslim traditions in sociological terms, while at the same time avoiding to reduce traditions – as Western sociology mostly does – to either cultural residues of the social contexts where modernization did not work out well enough, or to 'local resources' for modernization strategies? A third option (or a culturalist variant of the second) that has acquired currency in recent years is to see Muslim traditions as a legitimate locus of authenticity within global modernity.

The fourteen contributions to this volume basically discard all three options. They conceptualize Muslim traditions as deriving their legitimacy, authority, as well as normative and organizing power from being embedded in Islamic discourses and institutions, which constitute one major centre within world history, by now also encompassing Muslim communities within Western societies. The specific context of the analysis of Muslim traditions is given by the transformations associated with the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire and the formation of modern nation-states, as well as with the new conflicts taking place in Europe due to the presence and rooting of migrant communities of Muslim faith.

Though the approach adopted might appear at first sight as a move toward re-essentializing Islam, it turns out to be exactly the opposite. While analysing the multiple workings of Muslim traditions, the authors of the volume operate a shift of focus from the Islam that is the object of a reifying 'hyperdiscourse' engaging both Western authors and media and their Muslim counterparts, to Muslims as individuals, devotees, and citizens. While they are committed to various forms of Islamic faith and 'culture', they are also involved with local, national and global networks and institutions. It is shown that Islam – through Muslims, their practices, and discourses – is entangled in a world of multiple commitments, loyalties and conflicts, yet as a discursive tradition it is able to keep some autonomy from social constraints and structures. It is also able to engage projects of reform of the discourse itself as well as of the normative models of self and of community. Therefore, modernity impacts Islam not as a 'rival tradition', but as a set of techniques of power which affect the authority and regulating-disciplining impetus of Muslim traditions.

Yearbook of the Sociology of Islam 3 / 2001

MUSLIM TRADITIONS AND MODERN TECHNIQUES OF POWER

Armando Salvatore (Ed.)

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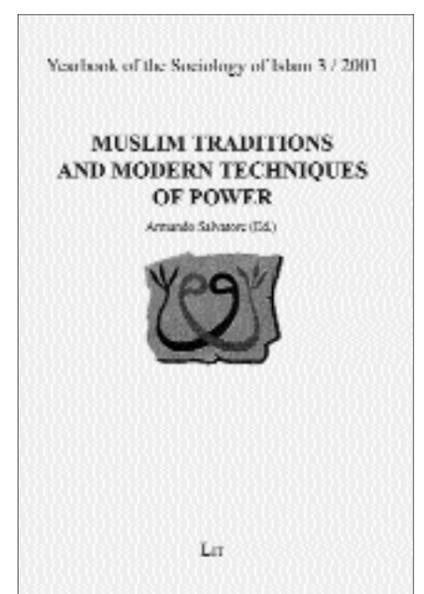
IIS Seminar Series
AMYN B. SAJOO

Revisiting the Muslim Public Sphere

'Civil Society in Comparative Muslim Contexts' is an ambitious series of seminars hosted by the Institute of Ismaili Studies (IIS) in London, with leading scholars exploring issues ranging from human rights and engaged citizenship to the interplay of ethics, law, culture and information technology. The series will culminate in a volume of essays in 2002, aimed at contributing to a vital discourse in and about transitional societies as diverse as Tajikistan, Pakistan, Iran, Turkey, Morocco, Indonesia and Malaysia.

At the inaugural seminar in this series last November, Professor Mohammed Arkoun asked about the relevance of discussing civil society in contexts where 'intellectual modernity' remains at best a Western import – quite aside from the creeping pace of democratization. Again, Dr Shirin Akiner wondered in her January presentation whether states freshly emerged from civil war and Soviet rule – like Tajikistan – have the luxury of discoursing on civic culture amidst new threats of religious radicalism and social decay.

One response to such scepticism, by Dr Olivier Roy in February, was to observe that 'networks of solidarity' are a pervasive feature of the new Central Asia – the more so because of the weakness of formal state structures. Whether derived from clan/village traditions (as with *mahalla* or neighbourhood groups) or from Soviet economic

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Mohammed Arkoun and Azim Nanji at the IIS seminar.

planning (as with *kolkhoz* or farm collectives), these networks show the way ahead for fostering genuine civic engagement in these non-Western settings. Indeed, Roy argues that Western policy-makers and their local interlocutors ignore such indigenous networks at their peril, in favour of trendy new institutions of private enterprise and law.

In a different context, Dr Iftikhar Malik noted in his March seminar that the disruption of traditional networks as well as the thwarting of new ones in South Asia – which would empower civil society actors like women and minority groups – stems from the 'modern' assaults of colonial dominance, militarism and fundamentalism. In other words, the notion that civil society is strictly a contemporary phenomenon that challenges narrow 'primordial' bonds not based on common citizenship[1] is contested. Indeed, as IIS director Professor Azim Nanji noted in his subsequent talk on 'the Good Society', the ethical dimension of civic culture has premodern roots – which underscores the need to synthesize tradition and modernity in fostering democratic legitimacy.

Perhaps nowhere is that need more conspicuous than in the discourses on gender in post-revolutionary Iran, the subject of Dr Ziba Mir-Hosseini's session in June. In her now-famous interviews with a broad spectrum of Iranian clerics and intellectuals, as well as in her films that bring those discussions alive to publics abroad, Mir-Hosseini has shown that for many urban women and even for an influential modernist thinker like Abdolkarim Soroush, 'tradition' can be empowering. This is especially so in drawing upon sacred texts and the corpus of *fiqh* (jurisprudence) as legitimating claims of equity – even as ethical critiques are applied to readings of those sources.

However, to the extent that civil society is about the public sphere where (after Habermas) 'citizens want to have an influence on institutionalised opinion- and will-formation',[2] Mir-Hosseini argued that the constraints on feminist expression through magazines and other media are acute even in the 'liberalizing' Iran of President Mohammed Khatami. This was reinforced by the glimpse into the private sphere offered by an excerpt from her latest film, *Runaway*, in which the gap between personal aspiration and social reality seemed as oppressive as ever for a younger generation of reform-minded Iranian women.

Also at the June session, Professor Abdou Filali-Ansari (on the Maghreb) and Dr Norani Othman (on Southeast Asia) drew attention to the waxing and waning of 'autonomous' civic culture in the shadows of authoritarianism, often condoned by the prospect of fundamentalist encroachment – real or imagined. The correlation between the strength of civil society and that of the state also remains contested: both may be weak (Indonesia, Egypt, Algeria, even Turkey), or both may be robust (Canada, the Netherlands, Sweden, United States). Indeed, Filali-Ansari was inclined to question whether the concept of civil society can
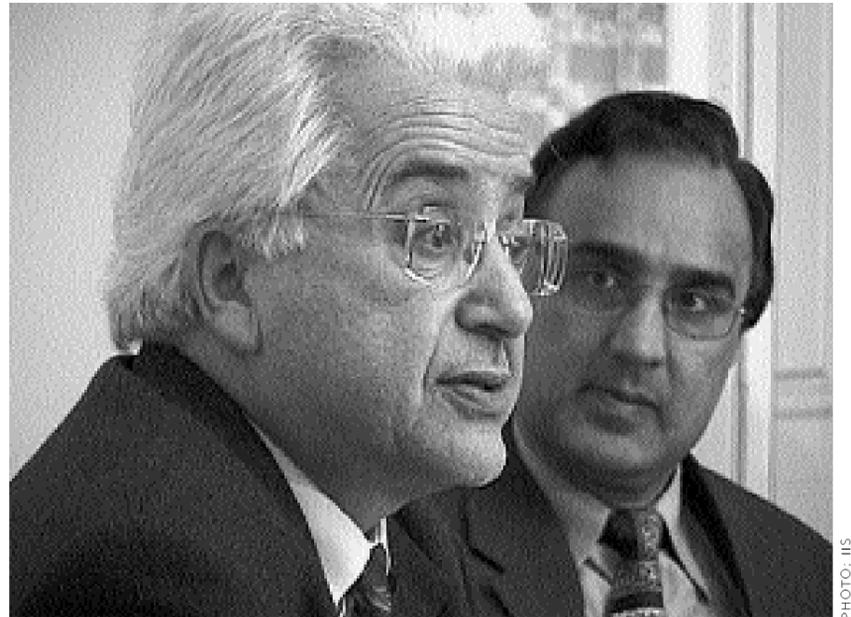
usefully capture the complexities of particular cultural and historical contexts, or whether it is too arbitrary in the manifold uses to which it is put.

What's in a square?

In any case, from issues of equal treatment under the law to democratic accountability and access to political power, there is more to the quest for civic engagement than can be captured by easy normative dichotomies that tend to dominate debates about civil society. For some, this may reflect the fragmented mess of postmodernism that is our shared reality – magnified in a public sphere dominated by 'new media', fuelling what Gary Bunt calls the 'digital umma'.[3] For others, it may seem like the empire striking back, as postcolonial publics find their voices to re-appropriate the most basic elements of democratic discourse.

But whether postmodern or postcolonial, an aspect of this reality that Muslims are obliged to confront is: What kind of public space is civil society to be located in? If it must be secular, as many observers insist, then what would be the nature of secularity in a milieu whose religious tradition actively merges *din, duniya* and *dawla* (faith, world and state)? Muslim societies offer contrasting, and internally contested, responses to the nexus between secular/religious space and the prospects for civil society.[4]

Certainly this is an issue that the presenters in the IIS series must grapple with in grounding the idea of civic culture, and in appraising actual socio-political realities.

In a pluri-cultural and multivocal Muslim universe, the seminars seek to interrogate the concept of civil society in terms of its implications for polities and public squares where tradition and modernity, secular and sacred, are very much at the forefront of quotidian experience.

Yet, no matter what the specific perspectives in a given Muslim context, civic discourse will likely reflect ethical values that draw far more explicitly on 'Islam' than any comparable experience one can invoke in a Western society *vis-à-vis* Judeo-Christian

ethics. There is nothing inherently nativist about this notion: on the contrary, an array of Muslim activists and intellectuals have drawn attention to its pluralist and humanist impulses.[5] Moreover, ethical norms are all the more critical in transitional societies and civic contexts where the rule of law is fragile.

Notes
1. As claimed notably by Ernest Gellner (1994), *Conditions of Liberty: Civil Society and Its Rivals*, London. Cf. Ellis Goldberg's imaginative probing into rich veins of civic culture in pre-modern Islam: 'Private Goods, Public Wrongs, and Civil Society in Some Medieval Arab Theory and Practice', in Goldberg, Ellis (1993) Kasaba, Resat and Migdal, Joel S. (eds.), *Rules and Rights in the Middle East*, London, p. 248.
2. Habermas, Jurgen (1996), *Between Facts and Norms: Contributions to a Discourse Theory of Law and Democracy*, trans. William Rehg, Cambridge, UK, p. 367.
3. Bunt, Gary (2000), *Virtually Islamic*, Cardiff, p. 17.
4. See, *inter alia*, Filali-Ansari, Abdou (1996), 'The Challenge of Secularisation', *Journal of Democracy*, 76; and Arkoun, Mohammed (1994), *Rethinking Islam*, Oxford, esp. at pp. 18-26.
5. See generally Cooper, John, Ronald Nettler and Mahmoud, Mohamed (eds.) (1998), Islam *and Modernity: Muslim Intellectuals Respond*, London; Ibrahim, Saad Eddin (1995), 'Civil Society and Prospects for Democratisation in the Arab World', *Civil Society in the Middle East*, Vol. 1, Leiden, pp. 27-54; and Sajoo, Amyn B. (1995), 'The Islamic ethos and the spirit of humanism', *International Journal of Politics, Culture and Society*, New York, p. 579.

Readers are invited to view highlights of this series – including a forthcoming session on Turkey by Prof. Ersin Kalaycioglu – on the Institute's website: www.iis.ac.uk

Dr Amyn B. Sajoo is a visiting fellow at the IIS, coordinator of the civil society series, and editor of the forthcoming volume of essays stemming from the series.
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PHOTO: IIS

Chair of Paleography and Codicology of the Islamic World
Professor Jan Just Witkam

The Board of Directors of Leiden University decided on 1 June 2001 to create a new chair for Paleography and Codicology of the Islamic World (Handschriftenkunde van de islamitische wereld). Dr Jan Just Witkam was appointed as its first holder.

Jan Just Witkam (born in Leiden, 1945) studied Arabic, Persian and Middle Eastern History at Leiden University from 1964 to 1972, and attended the University of Teheran in 1970. Since 1974 he has been a curator at the Leiden University Library, and since 1980 he is the curator of Oriental Collections. In 1989 he obtained his Ph.D. in Leiden with a thesis on the life and work of the Egyptian physician and encyclopaedist, Ibn al-Akfani (d. 1348). From 1991 to 1998 he served as president of Melcom International, the European Association of Middle East Librarians. The prestigious title of 'Interpres Legati Warneriani' was conferred to him in 1992. Prof. Witkam has taught Middle Eastern paleography and codicology for over 20 years, using the Islamic manuscript treasures of the Leiden Library as illustrative objects for his students.

Among Prof. Witkam's best known publications in book form are the final volume of A.J. Wensinck's *Concordance et Indices de la Tradition Musulmane* (Leiden 1988, with W. Raven); *Seven Specimens of Arabic Manuscripts* (Leiden 1978); and the *Catalogue of Arabic Manuscripts* (ongoing project, since 1982). In 1998 he was co-author of the *Catalogue of Malay Manuscripts* (with E. Wieringa). He published several volumes in the series, *Manuscripta Indonesica*, of which he is a co-founder. In 1986 he founded the international journal, *Manuscripts of the Middle East*. He also serves on the editorial boards of *Codices Manuscripti*, a series of manuscript catalogues, and of *Kleine Publicaties*, a series of exhibition catalogues, both published by Leiden University Library. Presently he conducts research on the techniques and approaches of Muslim scholars, and more specifically he is working on the analysis of readers' protocols (*ijazat, sama'at*) in Arabic manuscripts.

Art & Culture Agenda

THE NETHERLANDS

Exhibitions

Wereldmuseum Rotterdam
Willemskade 25
3016 DM Rotterdam
Tel: +31 10 270 7172
Fax: +31 10 270 7182
E-mail: mediatheek@
wereldmuseum.rotterdam.nl

SELECTION: EGEE ART GALLERY, LONDON

▲ Ali Omar Ermes, 'The Seventh Ode', 1993, 250 x 225 cm, acrylic and ink on paper, fixed on canvas.

6 July 2001 – 24 March 2002
- Contemporary work by 12 artists selected by Egee Art Consultancy, London. Contemporary Arab artists are flourishing in Europe as well as the Arab world. This exhibitions presents a brief overview of twelve of the best from Morocco to Iraq. They have all exhibited prolifically and internationally, many with careers spanning 20 years or more.

Continuing
- Islamic art from its own collection.

Den Haag Gemeentemuseum
Stadhouderslaan 41
2517 HV The Hague
Tel: +31 70 338 1111 / 365 8985
URL: www.gemeentemuseum.nl

Continuing
- Islamic crafts. The renewed exhibition from its own collection, in particular ceramics; other objects illustrating Islamic art.

Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkunde
Steenstraat 1
2312 BS Leiden
Tel: +31 71 516 8800
Fax: +31 71 512 8437
URL: www.rmv.nl

27 April – 30 September 2001
- 'Through Afghanistan on the Royal Enfield – Photos by Jeroen Nooter'. On his way from India to the Netherlands on a 40-year-old Royal Enfield motorcycle, Jeroen Nooter finds himself in Pakistan and is faced with the decision of whether to follow a dangerous route through Pakistan or to continue straight ahead through unpredictable Afghanistan. Once in Afghanistan he finds the local population extremely curious and friendly. That very evening, in the restaurant where he will also sleep amongst 50 Afghans, the many people who want talk to him are dispersed by the Taliban.

Music

RasaNetwerk Non-Western Music
Pauwstraat 13a
3512 TG Utrecht
Tel: +31 30 2330123
Fax: +31 30 2330122
E-mail: rasa@rasa.nl
URL: www.rasa.nl

Throughout 2001
- Music from Uzbekistan, Iran, Turkey, and Morocco. Concerts are organized in a number of cities in the Netherlands and Belgium. Programme to be obtained from Rasa.

FRANCE

Exhibitions

Institut du Monde Arabe
1, Rue des Fosses St. Bernard
75236 Paris
Tel: +33 1 40 51 39 60/ 33 1 0
URL: www.imarab.org

22 October 2001 – 10 March 2002
- 'The Orient of Saladin during the time of crusade'. The exhibition shows the history of the artistic and cultural development of the Ayyubids and the different contributions of the Fatimids, Seljuqs and Zangids; military architecture from the citadels of Cairo, Aleppo and Damascus as well as the architecture of science. More than 250 objects mainly from Egyptian and Syrian collections.

GERMANY

Exhibitions

Museum of Islamic Art
Museuminsel, Berlin-Mitte
Tel: +49 30 2090 5401

Continuing
- This continuing exhibition is dedicated to the art of Islamic peoples from the 8th to the 19th century. The works of art originate from an area stretching from Spain to India.

Ethnologisches Museum
Lansstrasse 8, Berlin-Dahlem

28 September 2001 – 3 March 2002
- With pack and sack: The Nomads of Iran and their textile art.

Linden-Museum Stuttgart
Hegelplatz 1, 70174 Stuttgart
Tel: +49 711 202 23
URL: www.lindenmuseum.de

14 July 2001 – 27 January 2002
- Afghanistan – Tree of Life and Kalashnikov: more than 20 years of war, civil war, displacement of people, and the Taliban's iconoclasm have led to immense losses of cultural treasures. At the same time, the brutalities of war have inspired a new form of popular art. Baluch and Turkmen tribal women and those from other western Afghan groups weave carpets that depict automatic guns, tanks, helicopters and other motifs. The exhibition exemplifies important periods of the region's culture since the bronze age and displays a selection of war carpets from a private German collection.

Rautenstrauch-Joest Museum
Ubierring 45, 50678 Köln
Tel: +49 221 – 33 694 13
Fax: +49 221 – 33 694 10
URL: www.museenkoeln.de/Rjm

13 December 2001 – 29 September 2002
- Fascination Orient, Max von Oppenheim, scientist, collector and diplomat. Jubilee exhibition celebrating the 100th anniversary of the museum.

Museum fur Islamische Fliesen und Keramik
Westerhof-Klinik
Olaf-Gulbranson strasse 19
83684 Tegernsee
Tel: + 49 8022 1810

Continuing
- Dr Theodor Sehmer collected, since the 1950s, Islamic Ceramic, in particular tiles from Turkey, Iran and Iraq. Some 300 pieces of this very interesting collection dating from the 10th – 19th century are to be admired at the Westerhof-Klinik.

Ifa-Galerie Berlin
Linienstrasse 139/140
10115 Berlin
Tel: + 49 30 226 796 16
Fax: +49 30 226 796 18
URL: www.ifa.de

17 August – 14 October 2001
- Beautiful Strangers: Art from Albania

Ifa-Galerie Stuttgart
Charlottenplatz 17
70173 Stuttgart
Tel: +49 711 2225 173
Fax: +49 711 2225 194
URL: www.ifa.de

30 November 2001 – 13 January 2002
- So Near and yet so Far Away: New Palestinian Art.

IRAN

Exhibitions

Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art
Tehran

21 July – 4 October 2001
- The First Iranian Conceptual Art Exhibition. This event showcases works created with novel elements, media and tools of conceptual expression. The exhibition and the side line seminar aim to encourage artists toward new artistic novelties by utilisation of the latest modes of innovation and expression in art.

8 October – 7 November 2001
- The Fifth Tehran Cartoon Biennial. 'Immigration' is the theme for the cartoonists' top works, which will be judged by a jury comprised of Iranian and international members. Portrait caricature comprises part of this exhibition. A related seminar is to be conducted by prominent Iranian and non-Iranian artists.

11 November 2001 – 10 January 2002
- Three Modernist Iranian Pioneers – Nasser Ovaisi, Hossein Zandehroudi, Massoud Arabshahi. The tendency toward national ideals and identity along with the use of traditional Iranian motifs are prominent features in works of Iranian artists during the 1940s and 1950s. The creations of these three artists are an indication of a praiseworthy effort to establish 'national painting' emanating from Iranian identity by way of modern modes of artistic expression.

Islamic Period Museum
Tehran

Continuing
- Continuing exhibition of Qur'anic manuscripts, ceramics, metalwork and textiles.

JORDAN

Exhibitions

Darat al Funun
P.O. Box 910406
Amman
Tel: +962 6 4643251/2
Fax: +962 6 4643253
E-mail: Daratf@arabbank.com.jo
URL: www.daratalfunun.org./

September and October 2001
- Traditional costumes from Jordan and Palestine: the private collection of Widad Kawar.

November and December 2001
- Centenary of the late Turkish-Jordanian artist Fahrelnissa Zeit (1901-2001).

MALAYSIA

Exhibitions

Islamic Art Museum
Pusat Islam Malaysia
Jalan Perdana
50480 Kuala Lumpur
Tel: +60 3 2274 2020

Continuing
- Collections of local and international Islamic art objects. The museum holds local and international-oriented exhibitions at regular intervals.

RUSSIA

Exhibitions

The State Hermitage Museum
St Petersburg
Tel: +812 110 9079 / 96 25
Fax: +812 312 1550
URL: www.hermitage.ru

Continuing
- Art of the Near East is represented in the museum by an excellent collection covering the 7th to 19th centuries which includes several exquisite masterpieces.

IRAN

TURKEY

Exhibitions

The Museum of Turkish and Islamic Art
Istanbul

Continuing
- Exhibition of Ottoman and Islamic Art, Folk Art and Folk Life

UNITED KINGDOM

Exhibitions

British Museum and Museum of Mankind
Great Russel Street
London WCIB 3DG
Tel: +44 171 412 71 11
Fax: 44 171 3238614/8480
URL: www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk

18 May – 2 September 2001
- 'Jewelled Arts of India in the Age of the Mughals' – a spectacular exhibition which celebrates the jewelled arts. The exhibition will leas with 300 pieces of Indian jewellery dating from the reigns of the Great Mughals who ruled India from the mid-16th to the early 18th century.

Hermitage Rooms at Somerset House
Strand
London
Tel: +44 20 784 54 630

25 November 2000 – 23 September 2001
- 'Treasures of Catherine the Great', among which are beautiful examples of art from the Islamic World.

Egee Art Gallery
9 Chelsea Manor Studios
Flood Street
London SW3 5SR
Tel: 44 171 351 68 18
Fax: 44 171 376 85 10
URL: www.egeeart.com

Continuing
- Arabic Calligraphy 2000 – The Saudi Show. Presentation of a breathtakingly beautiful and diverse collection of contemporary calligraphy. Contemporary and antique Middle Eastern art.

Auctions

Christie's
London
URL: www.christies.com

King Street
- 16 October 2001 – Islamic Art

South Kensington
- 19 October 2001 – Islamic and Indian Costume and Textiles

Sotheby's
London
URL: www.sothebys.com
- 18 October 2001 – Islamic and Oriental Art

UNITED STATES

Exhibitions

Harvard University Art Museums
Arthur M. Sackler Gallery
Cambridge, Massachusetts
Tel: + 1 617 495 9400
URL: www.artmuseums.harvard.edu

7 July – 30 December 2001
- The Sensuous and the Sublime: Representations of Love in the Arts of the Middle East and Southern Asia. This exhibition presents many facets of love, sacred and profane, as expressed in the artwork of Iran, India, Tibet and Nepal, produced from the 13th to 19th centuries.

Costick Center
Farmington Hills
Michigan, USA

20 – 29 September 2001
- Annual Heritage Festival: exhibition of 20 miniatures of Dr Hashim Al-Tawil.

SELECTION: EGEE ART GALLERY, LONDON

Indianapolis Museum of Art
1200 West 38th Street
Indianapolis, Indiana 46208-4196
Tel: +1 317 923 4788
Fax: +1 317 931 1978

23 September 2001 – 13 January 2002
- Gifts to the Tsars, 1500-1700; Treasures from the Kremlin. Gold, silver and silver-gilt objects, jewels, precious textiles, icons, parade arms and armour, and ceremonial horse trappings are featured in this exhibition. All of the crafted and beautiful objects are drawn from the collection of the armoury; many objects never before shown outside of Russia.

Nance Museum
Lone Jack, Missouri

Permanent
- Saudi Bedouin Jewelry displays more than 100 pieces donated recently by Lewis Hatch and Marie Kukuk, which has doubled the collection of the museum.

Brooklyn Museum of Art
200 Eastern Parkway
Brooklyn, NY 11238
Tel: +1 718 638 5000
Fax: + 1 718 638 3731
URL: www.brooklynart.org

Continuing
- The Arts of Asia. The Asian collection contains some of the most comprehensive and diverse holdings in the New York metropolitan area. The collection of art from Iran's Qajar dynasty (1790s to 1924) is the only serious collection of its kind on display in America.

Metropolitan Museum of Art
1000 Fifth Avenue at 82nd Street
New York, New York 10028
Tel: +212 535-7710

11 September – 30 December 2001
- Along the Nile: Photographs of Egypt 1850-1870. This installation of approximately forty-five 19th-century photographs of Egypt will include some of the earliest camera images of Egypt's dramatic landscapes, exotic inhabitants, and imposing monuments.

2 October – 13 January 2002
- Glass of the Sultans. On display will be a selection of approximately 150 of the most spectacular glass objects from the Islamic period, ranging from products inspired by the late antique tradition in the 7th century to 19th-century Persian and Indian glass. Also included will be European glass made for the Oriental market or directly inspired by Islamic glass, dating from the 13th to the 20th century, as well as a selection of high-quality glass found at archaeological sites.

The Arthur M. Sackler Gallery and Freer Gallery of Art
Smithsonian Institution
Washington D.C. 20560
Tel: +1 202 357 4880
URL: www.asia.si.edu/exhibitions

16 December 2001 – 5 May 2002
- Paradise Unspoiled: Paintings and Drawings from Iran and India. From the late 15th century, artists in Iran and later in India created independent drawings and paintings that no longer corresponded to a specific

▲ Laila Shawa, 'Two Words: Liberation', 1994, 38 x 58 cm, photo lithograph.

text. The images were often combined with the finest examples of calligraphy in lavishly prepared albums (muraqqa) whose beauty was described as rivalling that of an unspoiled paradise. This exhibition of some 30 works includes several works by the most celebrated painter of this genre, Riza Abbasi, and of other notable artists active in 16th- and 17th-century Iran and India.

Through 10 March 2002
- 'Storage Jars of Asia': based on the Freer's rich but rarely-exhibited collection of large storage vessels, this exhibition presents a selection of the biggest and boldest jars made in China, Japan, Korea, Thailand, Burma, Iran and Syria between the second millennium B.C. and the 16th century and have never before been exhibited together.

Longterm
- 'Fountains of Light'. Islamic Metalwork from the Nuhad Es-Said Collection. This collection – arguably the finest private collection of Islamic metalwork – consists of 27 inlaid brass, bronze and steel objects dating from the 10th to the 19th century

Continuing
- 'Arts of the Islamic World'. Some 60 works – Qur'an pages, metalwork, ceramics, glass, paintings, and calligraphy – from the 9th to 17th century explore Islamic artistic traditions. Themes include the forms and functions of the works of art, the role of calligraphy, the use of figurative decoration, and the meaning of abstract designs.

Continuing
- 'Luxury Arts of the Silk Route Empires': In these two galleries connecting the Freer Gallery of Art and the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, examples of metalwork and ceramics from the collections of each museum illustrate the effect of multicultural interaction on the arts of the first millennium A.D. Ornaments, bowls, cups, bottles, jars, mirrors, ewers, and ritual objects in gold, silver or silver and gilt, earthenware, or porcelain from Iran, China, Turkey, Syria, and Afghanistan are included in this exhibition.

The Agenda is produced by the Centre of Islamic Culture in Rotterdam, The Netherlands. Please send all information with regard to activities related to culture and art in the Islamic World to:
The Centre of Islamic Culture and Art,
P.O. Box 361,
3000 AJ Rotterdam,
TheNetherlands
Fax: +31 10 270 7182
E-mail: sikc@wereldmuseum.rotterdam.nl

Academic Meetings

Upcoming Conferences, Lecture Series and Public Events

Traditions of Learning and Networks of Knowledge The Indian Ocean: Transregional creation of societies and cultures
Date: 29-30 September 2001
Venue: Oxford
Contact: Gina Burrows
   Institute of Social and Cultural
   Anthropology (ISCA)
   University of Oxford, UK
Tel: +44 1865 274 687
Fax: +44 1865 274 630
E-mail: gina.burrows@anthro.ox.ac.uk

Atelier Villes Marocaines: Recherches urbaines et processus de patrimonialisation
Date: 2-6 October 2001
Contact: Abderrahim Kassou or
   Pascal Garret
   Centre Jacques Berque pour les
   études en sciences humaines et
   sociales
   1, rue Annaba
   10 000 Rabat, Morocco
Tel: +212 37 769640 / 769641
Fax: +212 37 768939
E-mail: cjbavm@maghrebnet.com
URL: www.ambafrance-
   ma.org/cjb/avm/sed.html

24th Annual Third World Studies Conference: 'Globalization vs Regionalism'
Date: 4-6 October 2001
Venue: Omaha, Nebraska
Sponsored by: University of Nebraska
   at Omaha and the University of
   Nebraska Medical Centre
Contact: Stephanie Cannon, Third
   World Studies Conference
   Coordinator
   University of Nebraska at Omaha
   International Studies and
   Programs, ASH 241
   Omaha, Nebraska 68102-0536, USA
Tel: 402 554-2293
Fax: 402 554-2949
E-mail: Thirdworld@unomaha.edu
URL: www.unomaha.edu/~twsc

Le prospetive Europe di apertura all'Europa orientale e ai paesi del Mediterraneo
Date: 11-13 October 2001
Venue: Ravenna, Italy
Contact: Prof. Gustavo Gozzi
   University of Bologna,
   Dipartimento di Politica
   Instituzioni Storia
   Strada Maggiori 45, Bologna, Italy
Tel: +39 51 2092500
E-mail: gusgozzi@spbo.unibo.it

Cinema, Media and the Middle East – the Maghreb
Date: 24-25 October 2001
Venue: University of Mainz
Hosted by: Anton Escher and Thomas
   Koebner
Contact: Stefan Zimmerman
   Centre for Research on the Arab
   World (CERAW)
   Institute of Geography, University
   of Mainz
   55099 Mainz, Germany
Tel: +49 6131 3924494
Fax: +49 6131 3924736
E-mail:
   S.Zimmermann@geo.uni-mainz.de

Al-Ghazali's Legacy: Its Contemporary Relevance
Date: 24-27 October 2001
Venue: Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
Sponsored by: International Institute
   of Islamic Thought and Civilization
   (ISTAC)
Contact: The Secretariat of Al-Ghazali
   Conference, ISTAC
   205A Jalan Damansara
   50480 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
Tel: +603 254 4444, ext. 243
Fax: +603 254 8343
E-mail: fsistac@po.jaring.my
URL: www.ghazaliconf.com

Fifth Nordic Congress of Middle Eastern Studies The Middle East: Interpreting the Past
Date: 25-28 October 2001
Venue: Lund
Contact: Nordic Society for Middle
   Eastern Studies
   Centre for Middle Eastern Studies
   University of Bergen
   5020 Bergen, Norway
Fax: +47 555 898 91
E-mail: knut.vikor@smi.uib.no
URL: www.hf.uib.no/smi/nsm/
   nordconf.html
   www.hist.lu.se/hist/middleeast/
   middle_east.htm

30th Annual Conference of the Association of Muslim Social Scientists Annual Conference: Religion and Public Life in the Global Epoch
Date: 26-28 October 2001
Venue: Dearborn, Michigan
Sponsored by: Muslims in the
   American Public Square Project
   (MAPS) and the University of
   Michigan-Dearborn
Contact: Layla Sein, AMSS
   P.O. Box 669
   Herndon, VA 20172, USA
Tel: +1 703 471 1133, ext. 120
Fax: +1 703 471 3922
E-mail: coordinator@amss.net
URL: www.amss.net

Arab Voices in the Diaspora
Date: 17-18 November 2001
Venue: Center for Mediterranean
   Studies, Department of Arabic and
   Middle Eastern Studies, University
   of Leeds
Contact: Rhiannon Daniels
   Centre for Mediterranean Studies
   Michael Sadler Building, University
   of Leeds
   Leeds LS2 9JT, UK
Tel: +44 113 233 3569
Fax: +44 113 233 3568
E-mail: cmdtr@leeds.ac.uk

35th Middle East Studies Association (MESA)
Date: 17-20 November 2001
Venue: San Francisco
Contact: MESA
   University of Arizona
   1643 East Helen Street
   Tucson, Arizona 85721, USA
Tel: +1 520 621 5850
Fax: +1 520 626 9095
E-mail: mesana@u.arizona.edu
URL: www.mesa.arizona.edu

Annual Meeting American Academy of Religion (AAR)
Date: 17-20 November 2001
Venue: Denver, Colorado
Contact: AAR
   825 Houston Mill Rd. NE
   Atlanta, GA 30329-4246, USA
Tel: +1 404 727 3049
Fax: +1 404 727 7959
E-mail: aar@aarweb.org
URL: http://www.aarweb.org

Conservation and Regeneration of Traditional Urban Centers in the Middle East 'Learning from Regional Experiences & Building Partnerships'
Date: 24-30 November 2001
Venue: Amman
Sponsored by: Jordan University of
   Science and Technology (JUST),
   The Council for British Research in
   the Levant (CBRL), Darat al Funun
   of The Abdul Hamid Shoman
   Foundation
Contact: Rami Farouk Daher
   P.O. Box 402
   Amman 11118, Jordan
E-mail: radaher5@just.edu.jo
   turath@joinnet.com.jo

6th International Metropolis Conference
Date: 26-30 November 2001
Venue: Rotterdam, The Netherlands
Contact: Metropolis 2001 Secretariat
   c/o MPI
   's-Lands Werf 20-21
   3063 GA Rotterdam
   The Netherlands
Tel: +31 10 414 9779
Fax: +31 10 413 5022
E-mail: s.minten@mpi-rotterdam.nl
URL:
   www.international.metropolis.net

SeSaMo Conference 2001: Migrations: people, ideas, technologies and territories
Date: 29 November – 1 December 2001
Venue: Napoli, Italy
Contact: Segretaria de SeSaMo
   c/o Dip. Di studio sullo Stato
   Via Laura, 48
   50121 Firenze, Italy
Tel: +39 55 2757 073
Fax: +39 55 2345 486
E-mail: sesamo@unifi.it

Anthropology in the Middle East: Gendered Perspectives
Date: 30 November – 2 December 2001
Venue: Berlin, Germany
Contact: Anja Peleikis
   Centre for Modern Oriental Studies
   Kirchweg 33
   14129 Berlin, Germany
Tel: +49 30 803 070 / 803 072 31
Fax: +49 30 803 072 10
E-mail: anja.peleikis@rz.hu-berlin.de

3rd Mediterranean Social and Political Research Meeting
Date: 24-25 March 2002
Venue: Florence, Italy
Fax: +39 055 468 5770
E-mail: medmeet@iue.it
URL: www.iue.it/RSC/MED/meeting
   2002-callWS.htm

Cultural Change and Transformation in the Indian Ocean World
Date: 5-6 April 2002
Venue: UCLA, Los Angeles, USA
Contact: Edward A. Alpers
   Department of History UCLA
   Los Angeles, CA 90095 1473, USA
Tel: +1 310 825 2347
Fax: +1 310 206 9630
E-mail: alpers@history.ucla.edu

1st World Congress for Middle Eastern Studies
Date: 11-14 September 2002
Venue: Centre for Research on the
   Arab World (CERAW)
Contact: Prof. Günter Meyer
   Centre for Research on the Arab
   World (CERAW)
   Institute of Geography
   University of Mainz
   55099 Mainz, Germany
Tel: +49 61 31 392 2701
Fax: +49 61 31 392 4736
E-mail: davo@geo.uni-mainz.de
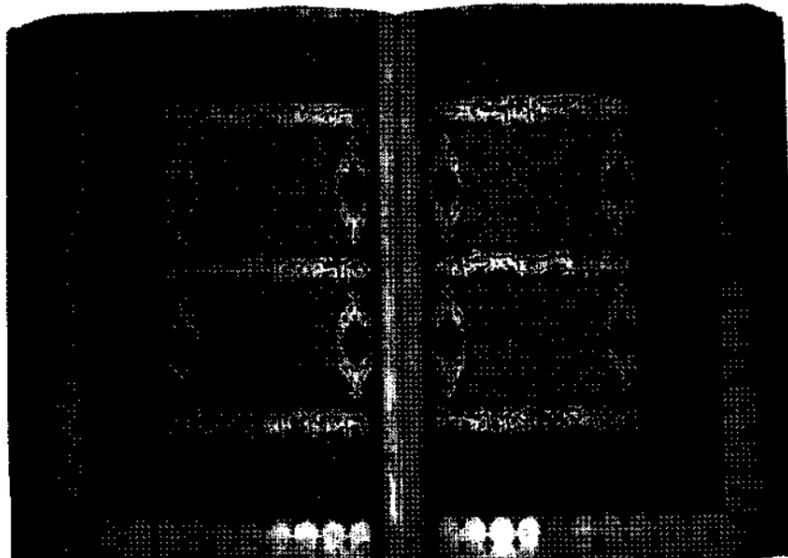URL: http://www.geo.uni-mainz.de/
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Contents

international institute
ISIM
for the study of islam in the modern world

The International Institute for the Study of Islam in the Modern World (ISIM) promotes and conducts interdisciplinary research on contemporary social and intellectual trends and movements in Muslim societies and communities.

ISIM Events

**Summer Academy:
The Production of Islamic Knowledge**
In cooperation with the Working Group Modernity and Islam
Date: 3-14 September 2001
Venue: YILDIZ Technical University Istanbul, Turkey

Lecture Series: The Production of Islamic Knowledge in Western Europe: The State of the Art

• *Fatwas for Europe: A Survey of Studies and Source-Materials*
Sjoerd van Koningsveld (Leiden University, Faculty of Theology)
Date: 3 October 2001
Venue: Utrecht

• *What Do We Really Know about Muslims in Europe? Islamic Voices and Academic Ears*
Stefano Allievi (University of Padova, Faculty of Sciences of Communication)
Date: 24 October 2001
Venue: Utrecht

• *Connecting Islamic Knowledge: How German Muslims Produce for German Schools*
Gerdien Jonker (Philipps University, Marburg, Faculty of Social Science and Philosophy)
Date: 14 November 2001
Venue: Utrecht

Workshop: The Application of Islamic Law in Muslim Courts
In conjunction with Cornell University
Date: 26-28 October 2001
Venue: Leiden

Seminar Series: Key Texts in the Anthropology of Islamic Law
Date: 2 November – 7 December 2001 (Fridays)
Venue: Leiden

Workshop: Islam, Women's Rights and Islamic Feminism: Making Connections between Different Perspectives
Date: 9-11 November 2001

ISIM Annual Lecture
Piety and Persuasion in the Modern Islamic World
by Barbara Metcalf (University of California, Berkeley)
Date: 23 November 2001, 16.00
Venue: Agnietenkapel, Amsterdam

Conference: Religion, Media & the Public Sphere
Organized with the Research Centre Religion & Society, University of Amsterdam
Date: 6-8 December 2001
Venue: University of Amsterdam

For more information on these and other ISIM Events:
ISIM Secretariat
Tel: +31 71 5277905
Fax: +31 71 5277906
E-mail: isim@let.leidenuniv.nl
Url: http://www.isim.nl/isim/activities