Universiteit Leiden
The Netherlands

ISIM Newsletter 5

ISIM,

Citation
ISIM,. (2000). ISIM Newsletter 5. Retrieved from https://hdl.handle.net/1887/11961

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

Circulation 8,000

June 2000

48 pages

Newsletter 5

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Muslims in Europe: From Ethnic Identity to Religious Recasting

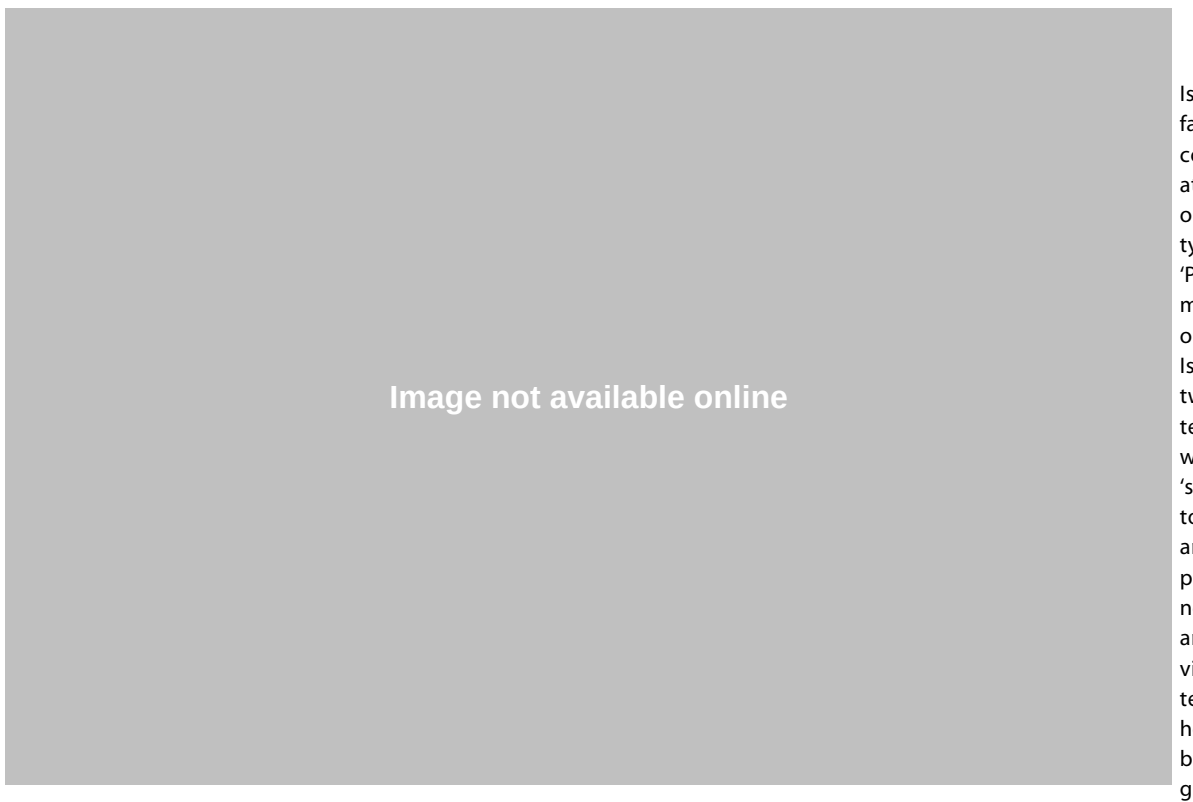
The presence of a rather important Muslim population in Western European countries is a consequence of a recent voluntary immigration of workers coming from the Middle East, North Africa or South Asia. Their administrative status and social integration vary considerably from one country to the other (often citizens in France and UK, rarely in Germany). Until recently they kept a low profile. But through upward social mobility or the 'brain-drain' from the rest of the Muslim world, a Muslim intelligentsia has slowly emerged in Europe and is now more vocal in calling for a recognition of the Muslim presence, triggering heated debates in European public opinion.

OLIVIER ROY

What do we call a 'Muslim' in Europe? This is a seldom-asked question in response to which there are two approaches: the ethnic one and the purely religious one. The more common approach in Europe is to consider Muslims as a quasi-ethnic group, identifying them with people originating from Muslim countries, as it is the case in Belgium.[1] Many British Muslims are campaigning to make the 'Inter Races Relations Act' (which allows to sue for defamation) applicable to Islam. In this sense, being Muslim has nothing to do with faith and belief, but rather with origin and culture. The *stricto sensu* religious aspect is diluted in a larger form of identity.

But the problem is that nowadays pristine ethnic cultures are fading away, either through assimilation or because they are recast into new sets of identities. Nevertheless, for the first immigrants as well as the European public opinion (comforted by the culturalist approach of many anthropologists or social workers), Islam is embedded in such pristine cultures ('Arab', 'Asian'). But these cultures are not transmitted as such from generation to generation: language might be lost (as is colloquial Arabic in France) as well as dress and diet. A process of acculturation is under way, even if it does not lead to integration, but to other patterns of differences. The *beur* (slang for Arab) culture of the suburbs in France has nothing to do with Islam or even with Arab culture: the slang (*verlan*) is French, the diet and the clothing are American (Mc Donald's and baseball caps), the music is western (rap, 'hip-hop'), they are fond of dogs such as, for example, pit bulls. In fact, this is a typical western urban youth sub-culture: the terms used to qualify such groups might be taken from the ethnic register, but we have here the process of ethnicisation of a space of social exclusion along the patterns of a western urban sub-culture, and not through importation of patterns from the primary culture. In this sense, any endeavour to define a 'Muslim community' by retaining the criteria of origin, does not refer to Islam as such. It also does not refer to 'real' cultures. What we have here is the fabrication of a neo-ethnicity. It may work, but has little to do with Islam.

We have to go back to a very basic idea: Islam is a religion, not an ethnic identity, not even a culture as such. But how can this religion be expressed as such? It is not a question of inter-faith dialogue: Europe is no longer a Christian society, it is a secular one. What we see is that Muslims do adapt, not by changing Islam, but by adjusting their way of thinking of themselves as believers.



Muslim girls and boys preparing food for 200 schoolmates inDeventer, theNetherlands, at the end of theRamadan.

Islamic identity

Believers who want to maintain a purely Islamic identity are also confronted by the fact that pristine cultures divide the Muslim community in Europe. Mosques tend to be attended in Europe according to common origin, dialect, or by belonging to community groups. There are 'Moroccan', 'Algerian', 'Punjabi' and even 'Kurdish' mosques. For many second or third generation Muslims, or even for 'born-again Muslims' identifying Islam and culture of origin is a mistake for two reasons: it is a dividing factor, but it also tends to embed Islam in cultural traditions which have little to do with 'true Islam'. The 'salafist' approach, which stresses the return to an authentic Islam, rid of local traditions and superstitions, fits well with the contemporary process of acculturation. Its proponents strive to build non-ethnic mosques and communities. To bypass the cultural divisions brought by pristine cultures, they tend to advocate the use of language of the host country (English, French, etc.), which is, by the way, the main if not the sole language understood by the youth, or to push for modern Arabic. In both cases, they go along with the process of acculturation and globalization. In this sense, modern fundamentalism is not a leftover of traditional cultures, but on the contrary, an expression of modernization and globalization. Religion is voided from its cultural content (there is no such thing, for a fundamentalist, as 'Islamic' music, or even an Islamic novel). Religion is assimilated to a code of behaviour ('do's' and 'do not's'), and not to a culture. In this sense, it can adapt to a world where national cultures are giving way to codes of communication and sub-cultures.

'Born again Muslims'

A second consequence of the immigration is that there is no longer any social evidence of religion. Of course in neighbourhoods where large Muslim populations are concentrated, there is some social pressure to adopt a conservative way of life (especially for women). But there are no social constraints or even inducements to behave as a good Muslim; praying, fasting, eating halal require personal involvement. One has to re-create, on an individual basis, the patterns of an everyday life for a Muslim. Even if one joins specific communities (with or without a neighbourhood basis), this community is established on the basis of a volunteer and personal engagement. In fact, to be a 'true' Muslim is an individual choice, because it usually means a double break: with a too traditional familial environment and with the dominant secular society. Here we meet the phenomena of the 'born again Muslim', who after a very mundane and sometimes dissolute life (e.g. womanizing, alcohol, drugs) goes back to Islam, after a spiritual experience, on patterns very similar to many 'born again Christians': the emphasis is here on personal conversion, redeeming and expression of self, not on community and social conformism. The terms 'faith', 'salvation', that is the quest for identity and psychological balance, are more important than 'licit' and 'illicit'. Stories of conversions underline this quest for equilibrium and happiness. Fundamentalism, even in its stress on the communitarian nature of Islam, goes also along the individualization of social life, common to the western societies.

This lack of evidence can also been seen in the problem of authority: Who is entitled to teach Islam? The famous institutions of the Muslim world, like the University of Al Ahzar, in Cairo, retain some prestige but are unable to meet the religious needs of the Muslim in Europe: training of modern imams, adaptation of the curriculum of studies, etc. But the problem is not so much a lack of trained ulema: in fact the vacuum is filled by self-proclaimed thinkers, who, whatever their intellectual background, claim that they know and can teach 'true Islam'. The web is full of sites emanating from individuals or small communities, which share two patterns: a high level of fragmentation and the stress on

Continued on page 29

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ISIM Newsletter 5
June 2000
48 pages

ISSN 1 388-9788

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De Kreeft, Amsterdam
Printing
Dijkman Offset, Diemen

Coming issues
ISIM Newsletter 6
Deadline: 1 August 2000
Published: October 2000
ISIM Newsletter 7
Deadline: 1 November 2000
Published: January 2001
ISIM Newsletter 8
Deadline: 1 February 2001
Published: April 2001

The ISIM solicits your response to the ISIM Newsletter. If you wish to contribute to the Newsletter, style sheets may be obtained upon request from the ISIM Secretariat or on the ISIM website. In order to offer update information on activities concerning the study of Islam and Muslim societies, along with news on vacancies, grants, and fellowships, the ISIM relies on its readers. The information will be made available on the ISIM Website.

The ISIM Newsletter is a tri-annual publication of the International Institute for the Study of Islam in the Modern World (ISIM). Responsibility for the facts and opinions expressed in this publication rests solely with the authors. Their views do not necessarily reflect those of the Institute or its supporters. The ISIM Newsletter is free of charge.

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Editorial

The ISIM initiated a wide range of activities in 1999-2000, including the design of its education and research programmes, the organization of academic meetings and lectures (see pages 3 and 5), the construction of a database and a website, and the establishment of national and international networks of cooperation. These and other ISIM activities are an indication that ISIM is quickly expanding its horizons.

Within two years' time the ISIM has been shaped in such a way as to attract the intellectual curiosity of many in the broad field of the study of Islam and Muslim societies, in particular because of its unique thematic profile and its broad geographic focus. The ISIM has established its name in this international field, a process in which the *ISIM Newsletter* plays an essential role. While the diversified and dynamic approach of the ISIM is clearly reflected in this publication, the institute is far from being its only source. Its pages are filled with contributions by highly active researchers in the field. Its contents echo the trends, ambitions, and even future prospects of the study of Islam and Muslim societies.

Vital to the development of this field of research are methodology and theoretical approaches. Gudrun Kr mer critically addressed a number of these issues at the ISIM Annual Lecture (page 6-7). She starts with the simple question: 'Why do we study Islam and how should we do it?' She advocates focusing on actors rather than systems, concentrating on intra-cultural variation rather than homogeneity. Another important issue is that of modernity, which is of particular interest to the ISIM as it forms one of the founding concepts of the institute. Patrick Chabal (page 9) approaches the concept of modernity in Africa by dissociating it from the notion of development. In a provocative essay, Sadik Al-Azm (page 11) calls for a critical reflection upon the position Arabs and Muslims take *vis- -vis* modernity and the West. David Shankland (page 43) comments on current tendencies in the study of Muslim societies, in particular Turkey. He warns against overemphasizing Islamist trends and underestimating the importance of non-religious movements and practices.

In recent months, the position of Muslims within the Netherlands, and in the West in general, has gained prominence in the discussions of multi-cultural society. These discussions clearly demonstrate the need for further research as well as for a critical assessment of identity – whether that be cultural, national, religious, or ethnic identity. In this debate, an increasing number of players foresee the development of an European (or for that matter, Dutch, French, or German) Islam. Some even argue that this is the inevitable outcome of the integration of (post-)migrant Muslim communities. However, Olivier Roy (page 1) argues that other processes, such as individualization and restructuring of identities, are at work and that they prevent the coming into being of an European Islam. In some radical cases, individual believers have the choice of opting out of society. And although some of them may well be in the spotlight, they are unlikely to attract a large and lasting following as the case of Metin Kaplan shows (Werner Schiffauer, p. 27). The examples given in Yasha Lange's article (page 29) demonstrate that no matter what direction is taken in the process of integration and (mutual) adjustment, the scrutinizing of existing laws and the seeking of new precedents can not be avoided. The problematic relationship between cultural, national and religious identities informs the debate on the position of Islam in Europe, including the difficult position of Europe's autochthonous Muslims, in particular in the Balkans (Raymond Detrez, page 26) and Russia (Vladimir Bobrovnikov, page 25). The problematic of religion and nationality is nonetheless not limited to Europe; it is indeed a worldwide issue of particular interest in an increasing number of Middle Eastern countries (Henry Munson, page 10).

The *ISIM Newsletter* has once again tried to give attention to the diversity of approaches to Islam and Muslim societies. Among the most dynamic research domains at present, health and the body are dealt with in the articles of Sylvia Wing Önder (page 12) and Sabine Strasser (page 13) respectively. Yet another booming field of research is that of the role of the new media in the expanding public space (Jon Anderson, page 39). Media coverage strengthens the mobilizing force of Islamic notions of national and international order, including those concerning the politics of humanitarian aid in local (Imad Sabi', p. 24) as well as global contexts (J r me Bellion-Jourdan, p. 15). The persistent relevance of the more syncretic – and even heterodox – trends and movements in/to the lives of many Muslims is clearly demonstrated in the cases of Jammu (Yoginder Sikand, p. 19), Bengal (Anne-H l ne Trottier, p. 17), Iran (Matthijs van den Bos, 18), and Turkey (Krisztina Kehl-Bodrogi, p. 23).

The *ISIM Newsletter* would like to continue to expand on these and other issues, by tapping into new resources within the field. In order to do so, however, we depend on the critical input of our audience. ✦

DICK DOUWES | *editor*

MISCELLANEOUS

ISIM Academic Committee New Members

The ISIM would like to announce the appointment of two new members to its Academic Committee. Kees Versteegh, Professor of Arabic and Islam and Chairman of the Department of Middle Eastern Studies of the University Nijmegen (the Netherlands) is now the representative of this participating university. He has published widely on linguistics.

Léon Buskens, Professor of Law and Culture of Islam at Utrecht University, succeeds Professor Martin van Bruinessen as the representative of his university in the Academic Committee. He has published on law and anthropology.

Our Apologies

In the *ISIM Newsletter 4*, the following error was made in our Info Pages, page 39. The address of the New Masters of Arts Programme at the University of Melbourne, Australia, was inadvertently omitted. The relevant information is as follows:

Contact: Abdullah Saeed, Melbourne Institute of Asian Languages and Societies, the University of Melbourne, Parkville, Victoria 3252, Australia

Tel: +61 3 9344 5555 / 9344 / Fax: +61 3 9349 4870
E-mail: enquiries@asian.unimelb.edu.au
URL: www.arts.unimelb.edu.au

Further, we would like to apologize to Dr Elizabeth Attané (*ISIM Newsletter 4*, page 11) for having referred to her in the author's description as Dr Isabelle Attané.

ANNOUNCEMENT

ISIM Fellowships

The ISIM invites applications and research proposals for various fellowships. Applications from candidates in all fields of the social sciences, humanities, and religious studies will be considered. Applicants should be competent in academic English. The ISIM fellowships include the following:

– *PhD fellowships* are granted for a period of four years to students who have an MA degree or its equivalent. The fellowships are awarded twice annually for a period of up to four years.
– *Post-doctoral fellowships* are granted for a period of up to two years and are available to junior scholars who have received their PhD degree less than 5 years prior to application.
– *Visiting fellowships* are granted for a period of up to 3 months. Some of these senior fellowships are offered upon invitation. Others are awarded in an open competition.
– *Sabbatical fellowships* are offered to academic staff of participating and other universities to conduct research. In specific cases, the ISIM makes funds available to finance the temporary replacement for teaching at the home university.

For more information on the various fellowships, please consult the ISIM website: http://www.isim.nl/
All those interested are invited to apply. Application forms may be downloaded from the website or obtained upon request from the ISIM secretariat.

ISIM Fellowship Programmes
P.O. Box 11089, 2301 EB Leiden, The Netherlands

Institutional Activities

MARTIN VAN BRUINESSEN

Islam and the Electoral Process
An International Conference

ISIM's first international conference held in Leiden, 10-12 December 1999, concerned the role of Islam, Islamic political thought, Muslim parties and organizations, and the responses of secular or non-Muslim circles to the resurgence of Islam in the electoral process. The stimuli for this conference were the fact that 1999 was witness to important elections in three major countries, Turkey, Indonesia and Nigeria, and that Islam had been a crucial factor in these events – although in a different way in each case.

Indonesia experienced its first free elections since 1955, and a wide range of parties took part. In the months leading up to the elections, the country was afflicted by a series of violent conflicts that often took the form of Muslim-Christian clashes. The leaders of Indonesia's largest Muslim organizations, Abdurrahman Wahid and Amien Rais, played central roles in the transition to the post-Suharto era. Both chose, however, to style themselves as national rather than Muslim leaders. The political parties with which they are most closely associated are secular parties that attracted also non-Muslim votes. The explicitly Muslim parties polled considerably less strongly than had been expected.

The 1999 elections in Turkey indicated that the apparently irresistible rise of the Islamist Virtue (Fazilet) Party has been brought to a halt. The 'silent coup' of February 1997, by which the military leadership forced prime minister Erbakan to resign, and the repressive anti-Islamist policies of the following years have not led to greater numbers of pro-Islamic protest votes. Many of those who voted for the Islamist party in the past appear to have voted for conservative or ultra-nationalist parties this year.

In Nigeria, where Muslims make up about half the population, none of the candidates in the 1999 presidential elections were Muslim. Nonetheless, Islam did play an important role in the elections as the votes of the Muslim electorate were to be decisive. In order to win, the candidates had to gain the confidence and loyalties of a large part of the Muslim voters.

The aim of the Islam and the Electoral Process conference was to highlight the various modalities of the democratic process and the place of Muslim political behaviour in it through comparisons between countries and by a juxtaposition of different perspectives on the electoral process. In order to broaden the range of comparison, two other countries where elections took place in 1999 were added: Yemen, which is practically 100% Muslim, and India, where the Muslims constitute a minority.

For each country, two to four scholars were invited to contribute papers on different aspects of the electoral process. The papers were grouped not by country but in three broad thematic categories:

PHOTO: WIM VREEBURG

Participants in the workshop listen attentively to James Piscatori's opening lecture.

- Muslim political thought and ideology (for the panel entitled 'Expressing Islam')
- the organization and performance of Muslim political parties or non-party associations (for the panel entitled 'Empowering Islam')
- the responses of other political actors (notably the military, but also civilian non-Muslim groups and secularist politicians) to Islamic political activity (for the panel entitled 'Disarming Islam').

The conference was opened with a keynote speech by Professor James Piscatori (Oxford) on the origins and development of the idea of representation in Muslim political thought. Tracing the historical dialectic between theocratic elitism and democratic populism, and showing how in one form or another, the concept of democracy has – at least in principle – found almost universal acceptance in the Muslim world, this introduction provided an excellent backdrop to the entire conference. Each of the contributions illustrated how flexible and responsive to concrete situations Muslim politics tends to be.

Papers contributed to the conference:

- James Piscatori (Oxford)
  'The origins and development of the idea of representation and election in the Muslim world' (keynote address)
- Masykuri Abdillah (Jakarta)
  'Indonesia's Muslim intellectuals in the 1999 elections'
- Amiq Ahyad (Surabaya)
  'The debate in Indonesian Muslim circles on the uses and dangers of Muslim political parties'
- Burhanettin Duran (Sakarya, Turkey)
  'Muslim intellectuals, Islamist media and the elections in Turkey'
- Zoya Hassan (New Delhi)
  'Muslim discourse on elections in a minority situation: India'
- William Miles (Boston)
  'Muslim political discourse and the elections inNigeria'
- Menderes Cinar (Ankara)
  'Why has the Welfare Party failed in Turkey?'
- Renaud Detalle (Sanaa, Yemen)
  'Islam and the electoral process in Yemen: the routinization of fitnah?'
- Thomas Blom Hansen (Copenhagen)
  'Muslim politics in Mumbai'
- Mochtar Pabottinggi (Jakarta)
  'Indonesia's Muslim parties and the recent elections'
- Hakan Yavuz (Utah)
  'The Welfare / Virtue Party in Turkey's most recent elections'
- Raufa Hassan (Sanaa, Yemen and Amsterdam)
  'Yemeni ulama and their attitudes towards women's participation in elections: experiences of a woman activist'
- Toyin Falola (Austin, Texas)
  'Muslim and non-Muslim in the Nigerian elections'
- Andrée Feillard (Paris)
  'Responses in military and civilian circles to the recent resurgence of political Islam in Indonesia'

Electoral Politics

In most electoral democracies, the vote of an illiterate peasant has the same weight as that of a secular nationalist intellectual, a Marxist ideologist, or a learned religious scholar. A single woman's vote, moreover, is worth as much as that of any man, and an unbeliever's equals that of a pious Muslim. Much as democracy may be applauded in principle, all elites are uncomfortable with the egalitarianism of the voting booth. Nationalists, socialists and Islamists may claim to speak on behalf of the masses, but the voting behaviour of the masses has been notoriously out of step with the wishes of those ideologists. Understandably, the purveyors of ideologies that appeal to the masses tend to be suspicious of the masses whom they claim to represent, and they are often inclined to reserve privileged roles for ideological avant-gardes – a concept that appears to be incompatible with 'one person, one vote' democracy.

The attitudes of Muslim thinkers and activists towards the established democratic process have ranged from an aversion to politics or a total rejection of the existing system and its values, through aloofness or pragmatism, to a wholehearted endorsement of politics, in which the act of voting can be seen as an affirmation of religious commitment. Periods in which elections and parliamentary politics were seen as the major avenue towards desired changes have alternated with periods of dismay and disappointment with this particular form of mobilization.

Military elites in most Muslim countries have had, at best, ambivalent attitudes towards the mass mobilization taking place in the electoral process. They too have claimed to represent the real interests of the entire nation and have arrogated themselves the right to intervene in the electoral process (by banning parties or imprisoning leaders) in order to safeguard the alleged common interest. Whereas in the 1960s and 1970s such interventions were commonly directed against the left, more recently they have primarily targeted the perceived Islamic threat (e.g. Algeria, Turkey).

In those cases where electoral democracy was introduced or restored after a period of authoritarian rule (as in Turkey in 1950 and again a few years after each military coup; in Indonesia in the early 1950s, to some extent in 1971 and fully again in 1999), Islam became a major factor in the sense that appeals to Muslim sentiment by certain parties could mobilize large numbers of votes. The parties that managed to sweep the Muslim vote in various Muslim countries appear, however, to have little in common, and few of them had an explicitly Islamic political programme. The so-called Muslim vote has often been a protest vote against the establishment. Islamist parties have generally not been very successful, with the exception of Algeria's FIS and Turkey's Refah Partisi (the advance of both of which was stopped by military intervention).

Even the non-Islamist Muslim parties have been able to gain the support of only a fraction of the committed Muslims. Individual Muslims, but also major Islamic movements have for various reasons preferred to support secular parties. Personal, class or other group interests may be at stake; the movement may wish to alleviate suspicions on the part of the secular (military) establishment or may genuinely believe in a separation of religion from politics; or priority may be given to other ways to gain power or establish a more Islamic society (such as *daʿwa*, (general) education, journalism, infiltration of the bureaucracy and the army).

Changes in the nature of Muslim electoral politics may be related to the tremendous demographic and socio-economic developments that all Muslim countries have experienced in the course of the past few decades (although their effects have been far from uniform and by no means easily predictable). Mass literacy and mass education have not only made new forms of mass mobilization possible, but have also facilitated the dissemination of new types of Muslim literature. Rural-to-urban migration brought numerous people into closer physical contact with politics, and to some extent decreased their dependence on traditional relations of power and patronage. Transistors, computers and satellites have completely changed the nature of the public sphere; such media as radio and television, the audio cassette, fax and e-mail have made unprecedented numbers of people informed participants in it. Access to these media, however, although widespread, is essentially unequal, which may introduce new social cleavages or reinforce old ones. Islamists have often been among the first to understand and utilize the possibilities of these new media (and of technology in general), which may have helped them to gain influence at the expense of the ulama. They have, of course, not been the only ones, nor have they been the most successful in utilizing the media; the struggle for control of the media has been part and parcel of the electoral process. ✦

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ISIM
MARY BAKKER

Tribute to ISIM's former Director in Charge: **Prof. Dr W.A.L. Stokhof**

The veritable driving force behind the start-up phase of the ISIM, Wim Stokhof guided the institute as director in charge for almost two years, until shortly after the appointment of Khalid Masud as the ISIM academic director in May 1999.

PHOTO: WIM VREEBURG

Prof. Stokhof addresses the public at the opening of the ISIM.

Wim Stokhof, born as the son of an Amsterdam craftsman in 1941, began his fruitful career as a scholar in Slavic Languages. Having been asked by the Indonesian literature specialist, Hans Teeuw, to conduct linguistic research on the remote island of Alor, Indonesia, Stokhof published several articles and books on the linguistic aspects of the local 'Woisika' and other related languages. During his 10-year stay in Indonesia, he also expanded the successful Indonesian Netherlands Development Project (ILDEP), which was to last for 14 years. In 1986, Stokhof returned to the Netherlands where he was appointed chair of Austronesian Linguistics, succeeding the well-known linguist, Joop Anceaux.

At the same time, he founded the Projects Division of the Department of Languages and Cultures of Southeast Asia and Oceania of Leiden University, where he initiated the Indonesian-Netherlands Cooperation in Islamic Studies (INIS) Programme. Furthermore, he established two programmes on Irian Jaya Studies and a Public Administration Project in Indonesia, to name but a few. Apart from these projects, he initiated and stimulated several influential series on linguistics in Indonesia, such as the *ILDEP-series*, and *Pacific Linguistics: Materials in Languages of Indonesia*. His interests, however, reach beyond the archipelago and his endeavours are far too numerous to be listed here.

The most well known of his projects, INIS, was first financed by the Dutch Ministry of Development Cooperation. In 1992, after a major crisis between the Minister and the Indonesian government, relations between the two countries came heavily under discussion. From then on, projects could only be initiated under the headings of 'mutual benefit' and 'equal footing'. Stokhof succeeded as one of the very few to save his project and became a partner of the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Sciences, a relationship that continued successfully for several years.

In 1993, he also became director of the International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS), a post-doctoral institute jointly established by the Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW), Leiden University, the Free University and the University of Amsterdam. Even at that time, Stokhof had already begun to launch ideas about an institute for research on modern Islam. The Islam in the 21st-century Conference, organized in 1996 by the INIS, helped in making clear that the strengthening of a global, interregional academic dialogue was needed.

At the end of 1997, a constitutional document was written, upon which the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sciences, the Ministry of Development Cooperation and three main universities in the Netherlands agreed to establish an institute for Islam Studies. Stokhof was asked to become the 'building pastor' of the institute, until an academic director was found to develop research and fellowship programmes.

Stokhof operated, together with a Working Group consisting of crucial advisors from each of the participating institutes, to design the scientific programme. He recruited the necessary staff for the office and organized the remarkable opening of the ISIM on 20 October 1998. Finally, he led the search for an academic director. Four months after Khalid Masud was appointed, Stokhof withdrew from the institute. Nevertheless, his input is still vital as reflected in his position in the International Advisory Committee of the ISIM. ✦

ERIK J. ZÜRCHER

Visions of Modernity in the Islamic Middle East
ISIM-CNWS masterclass

Between 21 and 24 February 2000 a joint masterclass was held in Leiden, the Netherlands, organized by the Research School of Asian, African and Amerindian Studies and ISIM. The theme of the class was 'visions of modernity in the Islamic Middle East.' The objective of the class was to gain an understanding of the quest for the elusive concept of 'modernity' which has played such a dominant role in the political projects of intellectuals, governments and social movements in the Middle East during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

The class was open to students in the Advanced Master´s Programme of the research school, students in ISIM's Mphil programme and Ph.D. students. During the class, four prominent authorities in the field gave lectures while the students presented papers on the basis of required reading. The students had prepared themselves by reading and discussing a set of articles and chapters dealing with the problems of modernity and modernization in different contexts and from different theoretical angles before the start of the masterclass. This set, with texts by Bearman, Appadurai, Eisenstadt, Keyder, Göle gave rise to lively discussions in preparatory tutorial meetings.

The convener of the class was Erik-Jan Zürcher (Turkish studies, Leiden University) and the guest lecturers were Professor Khaled Fahmy (Hagop Kevorkian Centre, New York University); Professor Shükrü Hanioglu (Near Eastern studies, Princeton University); Dr Alexander H. de Groot (Middle East Studies, Leiden University) and Dr Touraj Atabaki (Oriental studies, Utrecht University).

The class started with a lecture by Khaled Fahmy in which he illustrated the process of modernisation and the different concepts of modernity in nineteenth-century Egypt on the basis of the efforts to introduce European-style healthcare and hygiene in Cairo. A comparative aspect was introduced in the shape of the nineteenth-century development of Paris as a 'healthy' city described by Alain Corbin in his famous *The Foul and the Fragrant*. The second lecture was by Shükrü Hanioglu. It concerned the vision of modernity of the most radical section of the Young Turk movement, the ' Westernists' whose ideas were realized only in the Turkish Republic from the mid-nineteen twenties onwards. Alexander de Groot treated the last generation of high-ranking religious scholars of the Ottoman Empire, who were in search of a 'liberal' religious culture and many of whom had no problem in transferring their allegiance to the government of the republic, which they served until the nineteen fifties. The final lecture, by Touraj Atabaki, was entitled 'Modernization or Pseudo-Modernization in Iran? The advocates and their opponents'. In it the speaker drew attention to the close relationship between visions of modernity and nationalism in late Qajar and early Pahlevi Iran.

The class gave rise to lively debates, particularly on issues like the validity of the modernization paradigm, with its black and white opposition between 'modern' and 'traditional' sections of society, the relevance of theories of incorporation and dependency and the uses of post-modernist discourse analysis and deconstruction. ✦

Institutional Activities

MARTIN VAN BRUINESSEN

ISIM Workshop: **Muslim Intellectuals and Modern Challenges**

From 26-28 April 2000, twelve prominent Muslim thinkers from a wide range of regional backgrounds (Tunisia, Egypt, Iran, India, Malaysia, Indonesia, South Africa and the European diaspora) met at an ISIM workshop to discuss some of the major intellectual and political challenges facing the Muslim world at present. Each of them presented a paper on an important aspect of the encounter with modernity, to which he or she had been devoting much thought recently. Several of the papers explicitly addressed the question of compatibility between Islam and modernity (or rather, as several participants emphasized, interpretations of Islam and conceptions of modernity). Some engaged in such sensitive issues as minority rights, women's rights and pluralism and called for the development of a contemporary religious discourse based on rights to balance the traditional emphasis on obligations or contributed to a theory of civil society. Others focused on (reformist revisions of) the relationship between the sacred texts, context and contemporary discourse.

The development of contemporary Muslim thought constitutes one of ISIM's primary areas of research interest, and by providing a platform for discussions between leading thinkers from various parts of the Muslim world and for meetings between Muslim intellectuals and scholars studying the Muslim world, ISIM hopes to play a stimulating role in both intellectual worlds. The April 2000 workshop was intended in the first place as a forum for Muslim thinkers from different cultures to exchange ideas and experiences and to identify the most important themes for further debate. In order to allow the discussions to be as frank and unrestrained as possible, the workshop was not public and only a small number of scholars and students attended. (Edited versions of the papers and excerpts of the discussions will, however, soon be published on the ISIM website.) Parallel to the workshop were a number of public events involving the participants, including public lectures for academic and general audiences in the Netherlands and a panel discussion with an audience of second-generation young Muslims living in the Netherlands (see the boxes).

▶ **Nurcholish Madjid**

▶ ▶ **Khira Chibani**

▶ **Abdul Karim Soroush**

▶ ▶ **Saif Abdel Fatah**

▶ **Tariq Ramadan**

▶ ▶ **Fltr: Abdelmajid Charfi, Nasr Abu Zayd, Muhammad Khalid Masud**

▶ **Asghar Ali Engineer**

▶ ▶ **Mahboobeh Abbasgholizadeh**

▶ **Jalaluddin Rakhmat**

▶ ▶ **Ebrahim Moosa**

▶ **Fltr: Nurcholish Madjid, Muhammad Khalid Masud, Farish A. Noor**

▶ ▶ **Abdelmajid Charfi**

PHOTOS: WIM VREEBURG

The participants

Those attending the workshop represented all the major regions of the Muslim world, from the Maghreb to Indonesia and South Africa, and a great diversity of views. All were invited because of their contributions to public debate in their own countries, and as had been hoped, their coming together gave rise to stimulating discussions. The participants and the titles of their contributions were as follows (in alphabetical order):

- Mahboobeh Abbasgholizadeh, a prominent representative of Iranian Islamic feminism, book-publisher and chief editor of the Iranian journal of women's studies Farzaneh, and an active participant in the present reform movement in Iran: 'Islamic feminism in Iran'.
- Saif Abdel Fatah, political scientist at Cairo University, previously affiliated with the International Institute of Islamic Thought, concerned with the question whether modern political concepts such as civil society have an authentic counterpart in the intellectual heritage of Islam: 'Umma institutions and civil society in Islamic thought and practice'.
- Nasr Abu Zayd, Egyptian Muslim thinker and professor of Arabic literature whose critical research on the sacred texts of Islam aroused so much controversy that in 1995 he had to leave his country for the Netherlands, where he is now affiliated with Leiden University: 'Codification of the Shari^{c}a in Egypt: a problem of power struggle'.
- Asghar Ali Engineer, prominent liberal Muslim thinker in India, concerned with the democratization of the Muslim community and known for his efforts to develop an Islamic theology of liberation: 'Islam and modernization: compatibility and values'.
- Khira Chibani, professor of philosophy at Zaytuna University, Tunis: 'Civil society and the problematics of identity'.
- Abdelmajid Charfi, professor of humanities and Islamic studies at the University of Manouba (Tunisia), presently at the Wissenschaftskolleg in Berlin: 'Intellectual or psychological, sociological and cultural challenges?'.
- Nurcholish Madjid, the most prominent reformist Muslim thinker in Indonesia, who played an important role in the process of gradual democratization of that country: 'Reflections on the challenges and opportunities of Islam in the modern age: with special reference to Indonesia's current experimentation with democracy'.
- Ebrahim Moosa, South African Muslim reformist thinker, formerly active in the anti-apartheid movement in Cape Town; presently visiting professor of religious studies at Stanford University (USA): 'Islamic modernities revisited: a critique'.
- Farish A. Noor, Malaysian human rights activist, presently conducting research at the Wissenschaftskolleg in Berlin on the rise of the Islamist party PAS in Malaysia: 'From cultural authenticity to the politics of difference: Islamism's entry into Malaysian politics and its consequences'.
- Jalaluddin Rakhmat, prominent Muslim thinker, academic and educational reformer in Indonesia, who played an important role in introducing modern Shi^{c}i thinkers such as Shari^{c}ati and Mutahhari, and became a popular Sufi teacher in urban middle class circles: 'The revival of Sufism: Does it help? A Glance at the Modern Sufi Associations in Indonesia'.
- Tariq Ramadan, European-born Muslim intellectual of Egyptian origin, who now teaches at the University of Geneva, and who in his writings is particularly concerned with the issue of being a Muslim in Western secular society: 'Islam and Muslims in Europe. a silent revolution: towards rediscovery'.
- Abdul Karim Soroush, arguably the most influential contemporary Muslim thinker in Iran, often viewed as the successor of Ali Shari^{c}ati but much more steeped in the philosophical and mystical tradition of the Iranian Shi^{c}a. Initially a supporter of the revolution, today his ideas play a significant role in the Iranian reform movement: 'Revised modernity versus revised Islam'.

Follow-up

It was agreed that edited versions of the papers and excerpts of the discussions first be published on ISIM's website. Additional contributions will be sought, and the participants will be requested to respond to each other's contributions, so that the workshop finds a continuation on the website. A number of smaller meetings will be organized in the future so as to pursue in greater depth a number of the themes that surfaced at the workshop. ✦

Public lectures

- Ebrahim Moosa (Cape Town, presently at Stanford University, California): 'Challenges to rethinking Islam', Leiden, Thursday, 27 April 2000.
- Mahboobeh Abbasgholizadeh (Tehran): 'Islamic feminism and its challenges: the Iranian experience', Amsterdam, Friday, 28 April 2000.
- Nurcholish Madjid (Jakarta): 'Tensions between Christians and Muslims in Indonesia: the present situation and prospects for the future', Amsterdam, Friday, 28 April 2000.

Panel Discussion

Utrecht, Wednesday 26 April 2000
In cooperation with a local Muslim counterpart, the Foundation for Higher Islamic Education, ISIM organized a meeting between young educated Muslims living in the Netherlands and four of the workshop participants, Asghar Ali Engineer, Jalaluddin Rakhmat, Tariq Ramadan and Abdul Karim Soroush. The panel attracted a large and enthusiastic audience; the speakers' thought-provoking comments gave rise to lively, and at certain moments heated, discussions.

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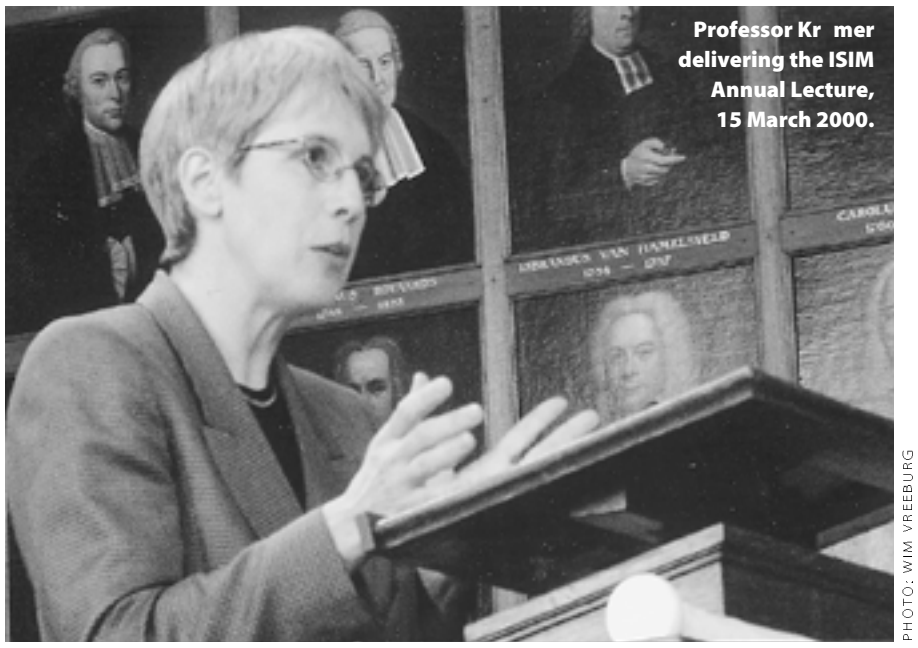
ISIM Annual Lecture

GUDRUN KRÄMER

On Difference and Understanding: **The Use and Abuse of the Study of Islam**

Why do we study Islam, and how should we do it? As usual, what appears like a simple question poses the most intricate problems. Compared to the 'how', the 'why' is relatively easy: culture is very much in fashion, and it has been so for a while. The 'cultural turn' is widely debated, not only in the humanities, but also in the social sciences. This includes the discipline I was first trained in and remain attached to: history. The cultural turn has made an impact on sociology and political science, and to a lesser extent on economics and law. Its strong appeal has certainly to do with politics, for there can be little doubt that the demise of the Soviet Empire and the intensification of ethnic conflict in many parts of the world have contributed towards giving so high a profile to matters of culture and identity. The fact that there should be a link to politics (and I hasten to emphasize that I do not subscribe to monocausal explanations) need not render the interest in culture and identity, variously and often ill-defined, suspect or illegitimate: I at least can see nothing intrinsically wrong with an approach that looks at politics, society, law and the economy with a greater awareness of, and sensitivity to, cultural norms and aspirations. But there are disturbing aspects to this preoccupation with culture, if it is not an outright obsession; aggressive ethnic assertiveness on one hand, and the talk about a potential if not inescapable 'clash of civilizations' on the other, are among them. The latter in particular would not have found such fertile ground and reached so wide an audience, had it not been for the cultural turn in academic as well as in what is commonly considered to be 'real' life.



Professor Kr mer delivering the ISIM Annual Lecture, 15 March 2000.

PHOTO: WIM VREEBURG

The attraction of the cultural turn for the scholar is obvious: if culture is seen not as a separate compartment of life, let alone a system of its own, where literature, music and the arts belong (at least good literature and what in German is called serious music), but as a mobile configuration of patterns of perception, representation and conduct that guide and inspire the way we live our lives both individually and in communion with others, including society at large or any other community real or imagined, then much can be gained from a close scrutiny of these patterns and configurations: their making and unmaking, their complex interplay, their meaning to different people in different contexts, their ambiguities and contradictions, their variations over time and space, their adaptations and transformations. The risks involved in focusing on culture rather than the social order, power or the international system are equally obvious: there is a danger that economic reductionism as propagated not so much by Marx himself but by some of his more simple-minded adherents (or were they just single-minded?) could be replaced by cultural determinism. There is a risk that intra-cultural choice, change and conflict be overlooked. This is difficult to avoid when culture is understood to be uniform, timeless and totalizing, creating discrete units that are fully integrated internally and sealed off by watertight boundaries against an outer world of equally distinct entities. But we could aspire to more sophistication. If the analogy of the personality that is sometimes used in this context was taken more seriously (for we used to hear much about the German or the Egyptian personality), the reductionist temptation could be resisted: no personality is fully integrated and free from contradictions, nor does it develop in splendid isolation. For the personality to grow it needs external stimuli. There is, to my mind, no way around taking culture seriously. It is a must for both the scholar and the politician. Culturalism, by contrast, is a trap studiously to be avoided.

The study of Islam serves to illustrate the point: dealing with Islam cannot but involve dealing with culture or civilization, and with the role of religion in defining the parameters of Islamic culture(s) or civilization(s), regardless of whether we put them in the singular or in the plural. Unlike Chinese, Indian or African studies, it does not really constitute an area study, for Islam is global and not restricted to any particular territory. Though it may sound offensive to say so, Islam has centres and peripheries, but the Middle East is no longer its only centre, at least not in intellectual terms, not to mention demography. The closest parallel to Islamic studies, I would argue, is Jewish studies. It is all the more regrettable that there should be so little comparative work, if any, examining the evolution, methods and organization of the two fields. One need not have to be of a deconstructivist bent to find particular interest in the kind of questions they ask and those they eschew, or exclude as taboo. The comparison would yield revealing insights into both disciplines.

Orientalism reconsidered

In Islamic studies, and here I use the term in the widest possible sense to include various area studies such as Turkish, Iranian or Indonesian studies in as far as they touch on Islam, the dangers of culturalism have been discussed at great length, only in this case culturalism has become known as orientalism, and orientalism is a very bad thing indeed. It is awkward enough to be addressed as an 'Islamist' rather than an 'Islamicist', as it frequently happens among the uninitiate, for there is after all a distinction between the practitioner of political Islam and the researcher studying the phenomenon. But as a self-respecting scholar, one would not nowadays want to be called an orientalist, much less so in Arabic where *mustashriq* (orientalist) comes perilously close to *mushrik* (pagan, heretic) – although it must be said that the connection is seldom explicitly made.

Orientalism, as we have learned, is a project that presents, or as many would say 'constructs' or 'represents', Islam as a distinct, homogeneous and timeless entity that is essentially defined by its normative texts, i.e. the Qur'an as divine word and the Sunna, or tradition of the Prophet Muhammad. For the unreformed orientalist, Muslims are sufficiently defined by their being Muslim. Little does it matter whether they live in Kuala Lumpur, Cairo or Karachi. They are over-determined by Islam. This is, of course, vintage culturalism. But orientalism, its critics continue, does not stop here: it 'constructs' Islam as the ultimate Other, using it as a negative foil against which the achievements of Western civilization, resting on the triple foundation of ancient Judaism, ancient Greece and the Christian faith, appear all the more glorious. Islam, by contrast, lacks the notion of liberty, a sense of responsibility both individual and civic, a spirit of scientific inquiry, an independent middle class, any kind of recognized community except the *umma*, etc., etc. If one adopts this logic, Islam is little but a 'cluster of absences' (Bryan S. Turner, who, to avoid any misunderstanding, does not share this view). There is little point in going into this list of 'what we have and Islam has not', though it would not be difficult to paint a much more nuanced picture. Our subject here is orientalism and its critique. To judge by their 'cluster of deficiencies', die-hard orientalists reveal not only an appalling lack of sense and sensibility. They pursue a political project that is intimately linked to colonialism past and present, and all the more powerful for its stark simplicity. Simplicity does not always equal innocence after all.

But the same is true for the critique of orientalism, or for that matter, the study of Islam if done by 'outsiders' more generally. It would come as a relief and a great encouragement to all those interested in Islam if orientalist-bashing were slowly to go out of fashion – inside the Muslim world as well as outside of it. Rather than pointing accusing fingers at certain scholars dead or alive, some of them eminent and others less so, it could prove useful and refreshing to take more notice of what is currently being done in the field, and not only in the English language. Much of it is based on rigorous self-examination that would do a puritan proud, or a strictly observant Sufi. The way out of the dilemma of taking culture seriously without making it the prime mover of history is, I think, not so much to join in the ritual denunciations of orientalism. Nor does it solve the problem to put the difficult terms in quotations marks, and therefore write 'Islam' rather than Islam, 'Islamic culture' rather than Islamic culture, and 'difference' rather than difference, or always to use the plural and so to consistently write Islams or, to be entirely on the safe side, 'Islams'. That still leaves the possibility that there *is* something that could legitimately be referred to as Islam, or culture, or difference. And how can you have something in the plural anyway that does not exist in the singular, at least not for the scholar?

Unity / diversity

A more promising way to distance ourselves from primitive orientalism, as indeed we must, is to pay yet more attention to the dynamic and plural nature of Islam, and here it does not seem to matter much whether we use the singular or the plural. This corresponds to a marked tendency in the humanities and the social sciences to focus on actors rather than on systems, and therefore to concentrate on agency, practice and processes mediating between structures, or systems, on one hand and actors on the other. 'Negotiation' is the catchword here, taking us straight to the marketplace. I will come back to that. Scholars now insist on the openness of historical processes that are neither linear nor homogeneous ('contingency' is the word to be known here), focusing on countervailing forces to megatrends such as industrialization, modernization or globalization. They highlight intra-cultural variation rather than uniformity, intra-societal conflict rather than harmony, fragmentation rather than coherence. Gender studies have contributed much to this shift of emphasis and perspective. Historians have learned from anthropologists, and vice versa. Deconstructivists have spoken about the 'cacophony' of discourse(s) that characterizes any given situation. In our context, we should perhaps rather refer to a 'polyphony' of Muslim voices, for even though they are numerous the sound need not grate on the ear, as a cacophony does.

Yet even when we focus on plurality, polyphony and variation, major challenges remain, and they do so on several levels. Islamicists may insist on the plurality of Islam(s), they may use inverted commas to express their discomfort with essentializing terms, they may even deny that there is such a thing as Islam, or Islamic law, art or architecture. They may choose to talk about

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discourses on Islamic history rather than Islamic history proper, suggesting that history proper does not exist, no matter whether Islamic or other: there still remains the fact that for ever so many Muslims, Islam is precisely the timeless, homogeneous and unique whole, the sum total of divinely ordained norms, values and aspirations Islamicists spend so much time and energy on 'deconstructing'. That they often do so in order to defend Islam (no inverted commas here) and the Muslims against those critics who seem unable to distinguish between the Taliban in Afghanistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, a mullah in Cologne and the teachings of the Prophet as understood by Muslim communities in the Netherlands, adds to the irony of the situation. How then should the student of Islam deal with the firm convictions of the Muslim believer (that is to say: not just any Muslim regardless of his or her personal views)? For it will hardly do to summarily dismiss them as evidence of false consciousness.

Culture in the market-place

One way to reconcile the demands of intellectual integrity with the recognition of strong beliefs among those who are after all the principal partners of the students of Islam, and not just the object of their research, is to look at Islam as a repertory of references, textual, visual and other, that can be variously transmitted, but which under all circumstances require interpretation if they are to acquire force, and have done so from the very beginning of Islamic history (I do not hesitate to use the term). Interpretation is done by active minds, or to put it in current scientific jargon: it is premised on agency. To speak of a repertory of references that are continually re-interpreted, and re-defined, and frequently contested, without losing their status of normativity for those involved, has a liberating effect. Among other things it frees students of Islam from the necessity to declare themselves on the highly sensitive issue of whether the Qur'an is actually God's word, and whether Muhammad was truly God's prophet, or indeed the last and final one in a long line of messengers that had been sent to humankind for God's will to be known. What matters is that Muslim believers view and revere them as such. Considering the explosive nature of the issue particularly in our times, this is an advantage not to be underestimated.

To put it bluntly then, it is not the task of those who study Islam to define Islam for the Muslim believer, to delimit its boundaries and to measure transgression. I would maintain that in spite of the current fascination with negotiated space, shifting boundaries and imagined communities, boundaries exist that cannot all be negotiated. The very notion of a repertory suggests that it is limited (or should I say 'bounded'?), and that it can be exhausted. To speak of negotiated space does not mean that 'anything goes'. Islam, Sayyid Qutb is said to have remarked, is flexible but not fluid. But it is not for the scholar to fix those boundaries. It is our task to unravel how in a given context the available (normative) references are selected, used and combined, and by whom, to what purpose and to what effect. In doing so we should perhaps be more careful when employing the market metaphor: shopping around for suitable references to uphold specific views and to further particular interests has not always been an option and may not always be one today. It is precisely more interesting to find out what references are available to specific people in specific situations. In many cases, the choice could turn out to be more restricted than it might appear to the scholar with full access to all kinds of ideas, sources and resources. At the same time I would be more cautious when speaking about inside and outside views, for in many situations the divide is by no means as clear as some seem to think. I see, at any rate, no reason why the 'understanding' of an urban middle-class academic of Muslim faith should by definition be more authoritative, and insightful, than the 'interpretation' of an urban middle-class academic of Hindu, Christian or uncertain leanings; otherwise European medievalists would not face the methodological problems that they do in trying to understand medieval history.

On difference and modesty

If the concept of 'understanding' culture(s), no matter whether it is done from the inside or the outside, is so problematic and Islam so elusive, why should we make the effort in the first place? There are, of course, practical reasons: the presence of growing numbers of Muslims in Western societies, not as migrants and visitors, but as integral parts of these societies; the rise of political Islam; the call for an application of the Sharia, for an Islamization of knowledge, etc. As is well known, these practical concerns are all too often tied to some sense of threat coming from Islam, or at least of a challenge to be faced. But there is another dimension that has little if anything to do with fear or confrontation: it involves curiosity, be it intellectual or of a seemingly less elevated nature. Curiosity presupposes difference, which in anthropology and oriental studies more specifically has fallen into such disrepute that many dare not use the word without visible signs of distaste. My initial motivation to study Islam was precisely the assumption that it was somehow different from the life I was familiar with. I wanted to know to what extent that was true and in which way – if it was true at all. There was incidentally little romanticism involved: orientalist painting held no attraction for me, nor did I feel any desire to go native in the desert. My interest had to do with the possibility that there might be alternative ways of living and of thinking and of organizing society, and I assume that many of our students feel the same (unless, of course, they are looking for their roots…).

We are constantly faced with questions which are not predicated on a sense of distance or superiority that is so often associated with the notion of difference, or not necessarily so. If Muslims believe that there is such a thing as Islamic values, what are they? If Islamists advocate an 'Islamic order', what is so specific or possibly unique about it? Unlike many Islamists, I do not think that it has to be unique in order to merit attention. If the critics of modernization theory (simplified, unilinear modernization theory) consider the possibility that there might be several paths towards modernity, or that we should think in terms of plural modernities that transcend the Western model (of which, again, there are several), what exactly does this plurality exist of? Is it possible to distinguish a stable core of Islam, constituting its essence and foundation, from its more malleable elements that can adapt to the most diverse circumstances in order to make Islam, as the well-known formula has it, relevant to all times and places? And how does this correspond to the familiar claim that whereas techniques can be freely adopted from non-Islamic sources, Islamic values must by all means be preserved intact? It is certainly important to analyse the function of these claims and convictions. However, I do not think we should stop there, but look at content as well. Human rights, good governance or social justice provide excellent examples of what is at stake.

These are big questions, and they must be approached with modesty. But then, if I may be allowed a moral note at the end of my remarks, modesty may be a crucial prerequisite if we are to continue the study of Islam in all its rich diversity without falling into the trap of culturalism. This particular modesty code does not apply to women only, nor is it restricted to non-Muslims. The study of Islam is a joint venture. We all share the risks and the benefits – and the doubts. ✦

This article is an adapted version of Gudrun Krämer's lecture given in Utrecht, the Netherlands, for the occasion of the ISIM Annual Lecture, 15 March 2000.

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VACANCIES

A consortium of the International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS),
The Institute for the Study of Islam in the Modern World (ISIM) and
the Research School of Asian, African and Amerindian Studies (CNWS)
has initiated a project on
'*The Dissemination of Religious Authority in 20th Century Indonesia*'.
The project is part of the programme of the Netherlands-Indonesian
Co-operation, funded by the Netherlands Minister
of Education, Culture and Sciences.

The research project will deal with the study of four major themes:
(a) Traditional religious authority: *ulama* and *fatwa*;
(b) Mystical associations (*tarekat*) in urban communities;
(c) *Dakwa* (Muslim propagation) activities in urban communities; and
(d) Education and the dissemination of religious authority.

The project seeks:

4 Part-time Post-docs (each 0.5 fte)

to do research in one of the four themes
(a combination of two themes in 1.0 fte is negotiable).

Requirements:

Applicants should:
¶ hold a PhD degree in Islamic studies,
the social sciences or another relevant discipline;
¶ have a solid disciplinary background
which guarantees competent research on the subject;
¶ be familiar with Islam in Indonesia;
¶ have a good command of Indonesian.

Appointments:

¶ As soon as possible;
¶ Salaries will be according to Dutch faculty regulations;
¶ Appointments will be for a maximum of four years

Further information on these positions can be obtained from
Professor Dr W.A.L. Stokhof (phone: +31-71-527 22 27;
e-mail: iias@rullet.leidenuniv.nl).

Applications (including a curriculum vitae) should be sent
before 1 August, 2000, to Professor Dr W.A.L. Stokhof,
Director IIAS, P.O. Box 9515, 2300 RA Leiden, The Netherlands.

Law

LÉON BUSKENS

An Islamic Triangle
Changing Relationships between *Sharīᶜa*, State Law, and Local Customs

The installation of large numbers of Muslim immigrants in Western Europe and the United States has contributed to a renewed interest in Islamic law in these countries. Knowledge of Islamic law is considered necessary in order to understand the behaviour of Muslims, especially in cases in which it conflicts with indigenous norms in Western societies. In addition to the emphasis on Islamic law, it is important also to study the diversity of norms governing the behaviour of Muslims. Apart from *sharīᶜa,* norms related to state law and to local customs are also signficant as is the relationship between these different sets of norms considered in a historical perspective.

Léon Buskens was appointed to the Chair of Law and Culture of Islam at the Faculty of Law, Utrecht University. This article is an extract from his inaugural lecture delivered on 23 February 2000. The full text of the lecture will be published separately in Dutch.

The attention on the plurality of norms in Muslim societies has a tradition of more than a century in the Western study of Islamic law. Instead of the binary opposition of theory and practice, as can be found in the work of founding fathers like Goldziher, Snouck Hurgronje and Schacht, I propose a triangular model, related to an approach in the anthropology of law, which stresses the plurality of legal norms.[1] The three domains in this triangular model are the *sharīᶜa*, state law as developed by the government, and a rather diffuse complex of local customs. This last domain is the most difficult to define, also because of the problematic character of notions such as 'folk law' and 'customary law'. Considering the dominance of an Islamic idiom in all three domains, as well as in the discourse on legal norms in general, it is possible to speak of an 'Islamic' triangle.

In this model, the emphasis is on the necessity of considering the different domains in relationship to each other, instead of viewing them as isolated entities. Study of the process of state formation, in which a central government claims the monopoly on the imposition of uniform and generally valid legal norms, offers a key to understanding the constantly changing relationships between the three domains. The model provides a better understanding of the diversity of norms in Muslim communities. As a starting point for discussion, a schematic overview of the development of legal norms in Islamic societies and in immigrant communities in Western Europe is presented below.[2]

A triangle in development

In pre-modern Islamic states, the central government generally had rather limited control over the contents of Islamic law. The *ᶜulamā'* were the main agents in the interpretation of God's will and thus developed legal rules. The state could try to direct the course of legal thinking, as in the Ottoman Empire, but in general this did not lead to independent state legislation. Furthermore, the state hardly had the power to impose these official interpretations of the *sharīᶜa* on the population. In practice, local customs often played an important role in the regulation of daily life. *ᶜulamā'* did their best to integrate these customs in official Islamic legal thinking in as far as they did not conflict too flagrantly with orthodox norms.[3] This condition of accommodation between state and Islamic law, and local customs, was characterized by considerable flexibility and dynamism.

Colonial rule pretended to aim at a so-called modernization and rationalization of the state. Generally this meant strengthening the central government and importing legal norms from the European 'mother country'. However, it was also often part of colonial policy to strengthen the plurality of legal norms by transforming local customs into folk law.

Elevating customs to that status of law went hand in hand with a marginalization of Islamic law, which allegedly did not work 'in practice'. The role of the *sharīᶜa* was limited and placed in the framework of the state legal system. A government-led confrontation between Islamic law and local customs replaced the pre-colonial situation of accommodation. The opposition to this colonial policy joined forces with Islamic purification movements that developed in the same period. These nationalist puritans wanted to cleanse Islamic orthodoxy from local, 'un-Islamic' practices. Their struggle for a pure Islam was simultaneously a struggle aganist colonialism and customary law. According to this view, the *sharīᶜa* should be the law of the independent state for which they were fighting.

After independence, the new power-holders readily took over the colonial legacy of a strong, centrally-governed state. State law functioned in these new states as an ideology of national unity. There remained hardly any space for diversity of legal norms. Customary law was abolished as a colonial invention, even if it lived on in daily practice. Negation of other legal norms replaced the colonial tradition of confrontation.

However, the creation of a national legal system did not mean (re)introduction of Islamic law as it existed before colonization. In the view of many independent governments, the classical learned law books were not suitable instruments to administer a modern state. Only legislation could perform this new task. Only in the 1970s was a further Islamization necessary in some states to legitimize existing regimes. A favourite symbol with which to create such a new legitimacy was the invention of an Islamic penal law with ample attention for corporal punishment and public executions. Another popular measure was the creation of Islamic banks. Even in Iran, the revolution of 1979 did not mean a direct return to the rich *shiᶜī* legal literature, but a large-scale codification of Islamic law according to Western textual forms.

Post-modern Islamic law

There are many indications that nowadays the relationship between *sharīᶜa*, state law and customs is again drastically changing. In Indonesia, the limits of the power of the central government has become obvious. Militant Muslims no longer accept the pluralism of *pancasila* ideology and demand an Islamic state. At the same time Indonesian intellectuals dare to think in an unorthodox way about the contents of this 'post-modern' Islamic law. Increasing literacy and the introduction of new means of communication affect the monopoly of the traditional scholars on the interpretation of Islamic law. On the Internet, Muslims from all over the world discuss – in English – these new forms of Islam. Cheap CD-roms of classical texts produced by *mullah*s in Qum enable ordinary believers to browse, in an unorthodox manner, in what was until very recently an enclosed garden for initiates.[4]

Muslims in Western Europe and North America play an important role in the development of these post-modern forms of Islam. Not only do they have easier access to schooling and modern communication technologies, they also enjoy in most cases a greater freedom to exchange their religious and political ideas. In Western societies, Muslims from all parts of the world meet, and get to know their diverse customs and beliefs. For Muslim immigrants of the first generation, their mutual differences are often of great symbolic importance, but the governments of their European host countries take another view. For these governments, these strangers are all Muslims, and they should organize themselves in one group, with one clear set of opinions. Religious young persons of the succeding generations seem to be willing to comply with this wish for unity. Many of them seem to give more importance to a shared Islamic identity than to differences in law schools and customs. They consult modern 'restatements' of Islamic law, such as al-Zuhaylī's *al-Fiqh al-islāmī wa-adillatuhu* (fourth edition, 1997), instead of the classical manuals of the respective *madhhab*s.

Customs in the diaspora

In the 'diaspora', state law and customs change as well. In addition to the state law of their countries of origin, the immigrants are faced with the state law of their country of residence, partly in the form of private international law.[5] At the same time, their customs can no longer be described as local. In these new communities of immigrants, normative customs are not tied to one locality. The members of the 'moral community' are scattered all over Western Europe. In the well-known cases of 'crimes of honour', the behaviour of people living in Western Europe is governed by considerations of public opinion in the villages of origin, thousands of miles away. The killing of a daughter might be meaningless in the eyes of German neighbours, for example, but inevitable and honourable according to the standards of grandparents and cousins in Turkey.

Research on these legal customs is of great importance to understand the behaviour of Muslims living in Western Europe. Many Islamic immigrants come from societies in which customary law traditionally played an important role, such as the Rif in Northern Morocco, Kabylia, Anatolia, Kurdistan, and recently also Somalia and Albania. Special attention should be paid to changes in these customs which are linked to the context of migration. Do Islamic or state norms replace these 'older' values and norms? Knowledge of these issues can be of great importance in order to properly prosecute behaviour which is defined as 'criminal' by the laws of Western European countries. This research is also of scholarly value, because this kind of research is often difficult to conduct in the countries of origin where their governments prefer to deny the existence of other, non-official norms.

A plea for comparative studies

The triangular model which is presented here is not intended as a general outline of the 'nature' of Islamic legal systems. On the contrary, this contribution is a plea for research on the diversity of legal systems and their historical development. In my own work on the genesis of the modern Moroccan legal system since the 19th century, attention is paid to the interaction of the three domains of legal norms.[6] A comparative perspective is vital in order to understand the pecularities of the different legal systems of the Islamic world. Our discipline might greatly benefit from a comparative essay which might be entitled, as a pun on Clifford Geertz' famous book, *Islamic Law Observed*. ✦

Notes

1. See, for example, Dupret, Baudouin, Maurits Berger, and Laila al-Zwaini, eds. (1999). *Legal Pluralism in the Arab World*. The Hague, etc.
2. See Messick, Brinkley (1993). *The Calligraphic State: Textual Domination and History in a Muslim Society (*Berkeley, etc), for a study of the transformation of the Islamic legal system in Yemen, to which I am greatly indebted.
3. See Johansen, Baber (1999). 'Coutumes locales et coutumes universelles aux sources des règles juridiques en Droit musulman hanéfite', in his *Contingency in a Sacred Law. Legal and Ethical Norms in the Muslim Fiqh*. Leiden, etc; and also Masud, Muhammad Khalid (1995). *Shāibī's Philosophy of Islamic Law*; Islamabad, especially chapter 10.
4. See, for example, Eickelman, Dale F., and Jon W. Anderson, eds. (1999). *New Media in the Muslim World. The Emerging Public Sphere.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press, especially John Bowen's contribution 'Legal Reasoning and Public Discourse in Indonesian Islam'.
5. See, for example, Strijbosch, Fons, and Marie-Claire Foblets, eds. (1999). *Relations familiales interculturelles. Séminaire interdisciplinaire juridique et anthropologique / Cross-Cultural Family Relations. Reports of a Socio-Legal Seminar*; Oñati, especially Fons Strijbosch's contribution, 'The Anthropological Study of Customary Law for Practical-Juridical Ends: Some Remarks on Methodology'.
6. For example, in my *Islamitisch recht en familiebetrekkingen in Marokko* (Islamic Law and Family Relations in Morocco). Amsterdam: Bulaaq, 1999.

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Debate

PATRICK CHABAL

Africa: Modernity without Development?[1]

Events in Africa over the last two decades have puzzled many. Worsening poverty, corruption, as well as the repeated occurrence of coups or extreme civil violence, all conspire to give a cheerless, if not downright frightening, image of the continent. Are the causes of this crisis to be found in Africa's place in the world economy or in the continual disorder which afflicts the continent? Is the present turmoil a temporary setback or has it become a permanent condition? Why is there such breakdown of society? Will the present efforts for democratization ensure an improvement in the living conditions of the vast majority or merely benefit the elites? Has the continent been 'left behind by the rest of the world', as some have argued? Taken together, these issues raise the more general question of modernization.

The chief challenge facing the analyst of contemporary Africa is to explain how the continent can be both 'modern' and undeveloped – that is, what modernization might mean in a context where there is no development as is normally understood in the West. What we observe in Africa is paradoxical from this point of view: nowhere else is the juxtaposition of the obviously 'traditional' with the patently 'modern' more striking. Africans are not slow in adopting the latest technological aids, computers or mobile phones, but at the same time they seem locked into what outsiders all too readily tend to see as 'backward' social or psychological conventions – such as ethnicity or witchcraft. Above all, their governments seem unable, or unwilling, to devise and implement policies favouring sustained economic growth. There is no development, as it is commonly understood in the West.

PHOTO: ROEL BURGER

What is modernization?

The common assumption of existing paradigms in the social sciences is that modernization is the coherent outcome of the combined and self-reinforcing effects of social and economic development as we have experienced them in the West. This is another way of saying that modernization is perceived as the form of development which makes it possible to evolve an economically dynamic, technologically sophisticated and politically open society. It is accepted that non-Western societies may have different cultural attributes. However, so long as they meet the two criteria of economic success and technological advance, they are considered to have modernized – even if, as in some contemporary Asian societies, their record on human rights and individual freedoms is less than impressive. What is perplexing about Africa is the extent to which, unlike most of the rest of the world, it fails on both counts. In such conditions does it make sense to claim that Africa is 'modern'?

I do not approach the question of modernization from a normative or teleological perspective – seeking to explain why Africa has not followed the same path as other parts of the world. I want instead to make sense of what is happening on the continent from the viewpoint of the logic of those concerned. If Africans believe that being 'modern' is compatible with being 'traditional', then we must understand not just what this means but precisely how it is possible. In so doing, we might well be called upon to consider the possibility that there are different types of modernity – though they might not all be endowed with the same potential for scientific and economic development. My concern is thus not to dispute existing notions of modernity but merely to assess the texture of Africa's own path towards modernization.

Modernity, as I see it, is a dynamic process rather than a state of equilibrium. As such, it is pointless to deem one part of the world categorically 'modern' and another irredeemably 'traditional'. They are simply 'modern' and 'traditional' in different ways. What it is important to distinguish is the instrumental quality of distinct types of modernity. Western modernization has been uniquely effective in combining science and technology with bureaucratic and managerial efficiency, thus establishing the benchmark for what is commonly labelled 'modern' society. East Asia seems today to be in the process of developing its own type of modernity, based on an equally impressive admixture of engineering sophistication, business acumen and organizational capability.

What is noteworthy about Africa is that modernization has not engendered the same forward movement, in terms of economic progress, as in Europe, America or the Far East. The continent appears to have evolved a form of modernity which provides for the ability both to utilize the implements (technological and scientific) of Westernization and to remain obdurately 'traditional' in what we would qualify broadly as social and cultural terms. What is more, there is scarcely any evidence that the use of 'modern' technological instruments has made Westernization more likely. The reverse seems to be true – as though Western modernity was being Africanized.[2]

Politics in Africa

This approach helps us to understand a world in which politics, for example, is driven by considerations that range from the most decidedly contemporary to the most obviously archaic.[3] What it makes clear is that, far from behaving randomly or irrationally, African political actors make sound and shrewd instrumental use of the different registers upon which they can legitimately draw. Two complementary logics bind the 'modern' and 'traditional' in Africa today.

The first consists in what can be called the re-Africanization of Western concepts or customs according to local socio-cultural norms.[4] This has led to a re-shaping of Western political institutions and political actions by more informal and personalized (infra-institutional) African codes of practice. Nevertheless, an interpretation of African politics based simply on a notion of the hybridization of Western norms is misleading, unless it is made clear that the graft did not have the intended results.[5] To pursue the biological analogy, African genes proved dominant while the imported European ones turned out to be recessive. It is for this reason that, as argued in *Africa Works*, the realm of politics in Africa is very largely informal.

The second centres on the ways in which Africans operate simultaneously on what can be described as different, and largely discrete, registers. What is meant here is that Africa's political modernity is characterized by a combination of attitudes and habits which draw from a singular fusion of what we would identify as 'modern' or 'traditional' rationalities. Understanding politics in Africa, therefore, is to understand the ever-changing recourse to the logic of different rational registers – and thereby to realize the extent to which it is profitable to operate within such a range of 'modern' and 'traditional' approaches. Thus, for example, the resort to ethnicity may appear to us to be 'traditional' or even backward, but the ways in which elites employ such an instrument must also be seen as a 'modern' face of African politics. Ethnicity is, in this way, both 'modern' and 'traditional', part of the modernity of the continent.[6]

In the West, societies are organized, regulated and run on principles of instrumental modernity which brook very little dissent. The realm of the 'traditional' is very largely left to individual preferences, desires and beliefs. The 'modern' and 'traditional' do not have the same status. Westerners behave in society on the assumption that they are all in agreement with the rules of modernity which govern their lives. The 'traditional' has no legitimacy in this respect and it is of limited practical use in their professional environment. The same is broadly true of the Far East where, cultural differences notwithstanding, societies are similarly regulated.[7] An appeal to ethnicity, to pursue the same example, is not considered politically legitimate.

This is not the case in Africa. My point is that on the continent, it is both legitimate and advantageous to operate according to different logics of modernity and tradition in all areas of life and work. It is thus not a question of Africans being more 'traditional' (meaning backward) than others. Rather it is the much more pertinent fact that being both 'traditional' and 'modern' is at once justifiable and instrumentally profitable. Having recourse to 'modern' and 'traditional' rationalities, as discussed above, is the norm rather than the exception: it is the reality which any framework of analysis must take into account. We thus need to conceptualize Africa's modernization as embodying a constantly evolving dynamic of apparently disconnected, though in reality overlapping, registers.

Understanding 'disorder'

Such an analytical framework makes it clear why Africa's present modernity encourages the creative use of the 'traditional'. To speak of the 'traditional' in this way, however, is not to imply that this approach is culturalist. Although careful attention is given to the political significance of culture, I do not in any way maintain that politics in Africa is to be explained solely in cultural terms. My argument is that cultural dynamics, which are most often subsumed under the label of 'tradition', need also to be examined from their 'modern' instrumental perspective. Cultural factors are no more and no less significant in Africa than they are elsewhere. What is important to analysis is the way in which they are utilized politically in a modern setting.

The paradigm developed in *Africa Works* shows that what is distinct in Africa is the creative manner in which this overlap of 'modernity' and 'tradition' combines to create a form of political accountability which is rooted in the instrumentalization of disorder. By providing a coherent framework for what might otherwise appear merely as chaos or anarchy, we establish the foundations for an analysis of politics in Africa which is open to meaningful comparison. This re-interpretation thus helps to explain how the continent might be modernizing whilst at the same time failing to develop economically in the ways we normally would associate with 'modernity'. ✦

Notes

1. This article has been adapted from ideas presented in my latest book: Patrick Chabal & Jean-Pascal Daloz, *Africa Works: Disorder as Political Instrument* (Oxford: James Currey, 1999).
2. To take but one example, an African academic with an American PhD in engineering will not find it inconsistent to defer to the demands of witchcraft in his village.
3. African leaders, for example, may well combine the most modern polling techniques with a consultation of their village ancestors (by way of the local medium).
4. On the concept and implications of political Africanization, see Patrick Chabal, *Power in Africa: an essay in political interpretation* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1992 & 1994), Chapter 12.
5. See here chiefly Jean-François Bayart, *L'Etat en Afrique: la politique du ventre* (Paris: Fayard, 1989).
6. See here John Lonsdale, 'Ethnicité morale et tribalisme politique', *Politique Africaine*, 61, March1996.
7. Though it is fair to say that, since our notion of the modern is very largely determined by the experience of the West, it is difficult at this stage to know precisely in which ways Asian modernity will eventually differ from that of the West.

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Debate

HENRY MUNSON

Islamism and Nationalism

Islamism and nationalism are conventionally thought of as antithetical ideologies, yet there is in fact often a nationalistic dimension to Islamism. One is reminded of the relationship between Marxism and nationalism. In principle, Marxists condemn nationalism, as do Islamists. Yet the revolutions waged in the name of Marxist ideology since World War II were all fuelled by nationalistic resentment of foreign domination. Such resentment, among other things, also fuelled the principal Islamist movements of the late 20th century. In both cases, an ostensibly universalistic ideology has actually often had a more parochial nationalistic character in practice.

Religious and national identity tend to be fused in many parts of the world. One thinks, for example, of the linkage between Eastern Orthodoxy and Russian and Serbian national identity, between Roman Catholicism and Croatian, Irish, and Polish national identity, and between Hinduism and Indian national identity. To be a Serb is to be Orthodox, to be a Croatian is to be Catholic, and, from the point of view of Hindu nationalists at least, to be an Indian is to be Hindu. In all these cases, religion serves as a badge of national identity. This has also been true in the Islamic world.

Arab nationalism in the 20th century usually had an implicitly Sunni Islamic hue to it. To be sure, Christians played a prominent role in creating the concept of Arab nationalism, based upon common language and culture rather than religion (a point invariably stressed by Islamist critics of nationalism). But the fact remains that in the popular imagination all over the Arabic-speaking world, to be an Arab is to be a Muslim – a Sunni Muslim. Similarly, to be an Iranian, a 'real' one, is to be a Shiᶜite.

When the European empires subjugated the Islamic world in the 19th and early 20th centuries, anti-imperialist resistance was articulated in Islamic terms. Most Muslims thought of their wars against European imperialism as forms of jihad. The distinction between Muslim and infidel became intertwined with the distinction between the colonized and the colonizer, the oppressed and the oppressor. Thus, traditional hostility toward the unbeliever qua unbeliever was now infused with new meaning. This had unfortunate consequences for religious minorities in the Islamic world. Christians were suspected of sympathizing with Christian Europe. Jews were suspected of sympathizing with Zionism and, after 1948, with Israel.

Secular nationalism did of course play an important role in the Middle East in the middle of the 20th century. One thinks, for example, of Mossadegh and the National Front in Iran, Nasser and 'Nasserism' in Egypt, and the emergence of the PLO among the Palestinians. But all these forms of nationalism eventually failed to produce liberation from foreign domination, not to mention the various other social and economic problems found in most of the 'Third World'. Moreover, all these forms of 'secular' nationalism were in fact imbued by Islam at the grassroots level. At the height of their power in the early 1950s, Mossadegh and the National Front depended on the support of the Ayatollah Khashani and the *mullah*s. Nasser may have opposed the Muslim Brotherhood's goal of a strictly Islamic state, but his public persona was that of a Muslim fighting to free Muslims from Western imperialism. Had his first name been Butros, Nasser would never have become Nasser. As for the Palestine Liberation Organization, its core group was al-Fatah, which always made extensive use of traditional Islamic concepts such as jihad and *shahid*, 'martyr'. The more secular Marxist Palestinian movements led by the Christians George Habbash and Nayif Hawatmeh never had anything like the popular appeal of al-Fatah.

Nationalistic resentment of foreign domination – the Iranian case

Islamists tend to lament the Western domination of the Islamic world as a whole and portray the emergence of nationalism as part of a Western and Jewish conspiracy to divide and conquer the Islamic world. Yet the rhetoric of these fiery critics of nationalism often has a decidedly nationalistic ring to it.

In 1964, the Ayatollah Khomeini gave a speech in which he criticized the Iranian parliament, or Majlis, for passing a bill granting diplomatic immunity to American military and civilian personnel:

> *'Do you not know that this agreement reduces the Iranian people to a level lower than that of an American dog?*
>
> *If someone [an Iranian, that is] runs over an American dog with his car, he is subject to investigation and prosecution even if he is 'the shah' himself. But if an American cook runs over 'the shah of Iran' himself, or any other important person, he will not be subject to prosecution.'*

This statement articulates resentment of foreign domination in an earthy, populist idiom that both an illiterate labourer and a well-educated secular nationalist could understand. Khomeini's reference to 'the Iranian people' is quite striking given his condemnation of nationalism in his later writings.

It must be recognized, however, that Khomeini often spoke of the Western domination of the Islamic world in general, not just Iran. In 1972, he declared:

> *'If the Muslim states and peoples had relied on Islam and its inherent capabilities and powers instead of depending on the East (the Soviet Union) and the West, and if they had placed the enlightened and liberating precepts of the Quran before their eyes and put them into practice, then they would not today be captive slaves of the Zionist aggressors, terrified victims of the American Phantoms, and toys in the hands of the accommodating policies of the satanic Soviet Union. It is the disregard of the noble Quran by the Islamic countries that has brought the Islamic community to this difficult situation full of misfortunes and reversals and placed its fate in the hands of the imperialism of the left and the right.'*

Passages like this are commonplace in Islamist literature, though we do find some variation in this respect from country to country and group to group. In many cases, the resentment of foreign domination articulated in such passages is expressed in terms of preposterous theories that attempt to blame 'crusader' and Jewish conspiracies for all the problems of the Islamic world. As illusory as these explanations may be, the resentment they reflect is real. And it is a major source of the appeal of Islamism.

For Khomeini and many Islamists like him, the idea of a 'return to Islam' and the establishment of a strictly Islamic state and society are linked to the goal of overcoming foreign domination. The underlying logic of the Islamist argument is familiar: The believers are suffering because they have deviated from the laws of God. To end their suffering, they have to conform to God's laws. God has allowed the infidels to dominate the believers because they have deviated from His laws. Once they conform, He will grant them victory. Such reasoning is often meshed with more subtle themes, notably that of cultural authenticity. The return to Islam becomes a means of regaining one's true cultural identity – as opposed to mimicry of the dominant West.

Nationalistic resentment of foreign domination – the case of Hamas

We have already noted the Islamic rhetoric employed by al-Fatah, the principal group in the PLO. Equally striking is the nationalist rhetoric of Hamas, the principal Islamist opposition to the PLO. We find the following passage in a flyer distributed by Hamas in January 1988, at the beginning of the Intifada:

> *'What has happened? The awakening of a people. The Muslim people avenges its honour and renews the glories of the past, this people that refuses to give up the smallest piece of its homeland [shibr min watanihi], that rejects Camp David, that rejects the international conference and humiliating peace, that rejects imprisonment and banishment, that rejects capitulation of all kinds.'*

The phrase 'Muslim people' in this passage clearly refers primarily to the Palestinian people. And the passage focuses primarily on the liberation of Palestine. Hamas leaders and supporters do of course condemn the PLO for its failure to fight for an Islamic state, but they also frequently condemn it for having capitulated to Israel by signing the Oslo Accords.

The Oslo Accords of 1993, and the various agreements that followed them, created a plethora of little urban islands ruled by the Palestinian National Authority. To go from one such island to another entails humiliating interrogations and searches at Israeli checkpoints. When Israeli soldiers prevented him from travelling from Gaza to his home on the West Bank, Ahmad Qureiᶜ (Abu al-Ala), one of the principal negotiators of the Oslo Accords and president of the Palestinian parliament, declared: 'Soon, I too will join Hamas.' Qureiᶜ did not really mean this. But his words reflected the fury of a man outraged by the subjugation of his people. Such fury fuels Hamas.

Conclusion

It would be absurd to argue that nationalistic resentment of foreign domination is the sole source of the appeal of Islamism. An adequate explanation of Islamism must also take into consideration the dire economic situation in much of the Islamic world. One must also recognize that many of the secular grievances that fuel Islamist movements also exist elsewhere in the Third World without resulting in the creation of militant religious revivalism. There are specific aspects of Islamic doctrine that encourage the emergence of such movements. Once must also recognize that Islamism is at least partially fuelled by moral outrage provoked by the violation of traditional religious values. The outrage provoked by Salman Rushdie's *Satanic Verses* cannot simply be attributed to resentment of Western domination or economic discontent. But while all these points are important, the fact remains that the Iranian revolution of 1978-79 was, among other things, a nationalist revolution. And Hamas is, among other things, a nationalist movement. ✦

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Forum

SADIK J. AL-AZM

Owning the Future: Modern Arabs and Hamlet

Responsibility for the future is very often a matter of foresight and foresight is always based on insight, as we all know. What does my insight tell me about this whole issue or problem? It informs me that the modern Arabs are truly the Hamlet of the 20th century. Like the endlessly celebrated prince, they seem able continually to join the underlying passion of the elemental to the brooding intellectuality of the cerebral to the lyrical sensitivity of the poetic but only to end up in unrelieved tragedy. The tragedy consists of unending hesitations, procrastinations, oscillations and waverings between the old and the new, between *asalah* and *muᶜasarah* (authenticty and contemporaneity), between *turath* and *tajdid* (heritage and renewal), between *huwiyyah* and *hadathah* (identity and modernity), between religions and secularity.

In this way, the 21st century can only belong to the conquering Fortinbrases of this world and never to the Hamlets hung up on interminably rehearsing that classic – but now totally *depassé* – European *pièce* called *La querelle des Anciens et des Modernes*. No wonder, then, to quote Shakespeare's most famous drama, that 'the times seem out of joint,' for the Arabs and 'something looks rotten in their state.' No wonder as well if they keep wondering, like the fabled Prince of Denmark himself and with as much tragic intensity, 'whether they are the authors of their woes or there is a divinity that shapes their ends.'

This analogy leads me to dig deeper inside ourselves and to think that for us Arabs to own our future, to hold ourselves responsible for it, we have to come to terms with a certain image of ourselves buried very deeply in our collective subconscious. What I mean is the following: As Arabs and Muslims (and I use Muslim here in the purely historical, cultural and civilizational sense), we continue deep down to image and imagine ourselves as conquerors, history-makers, pace setters, pioneers and leaders of world-historic proportions.

Reconciling self-image and reality

In the marrow of our bones, we still sense ourselves as subjects of history not its object, as its agent and not as its patient. We have never come to terms realistically with, let alone reconcile ourselves to, the marginality and reactiveness of our position in modern times. In fact, deep down in our collective soul, we find intolerable this monstrosity of a supposedly great *ummah* like ourselves standing helplessly on the margins not only of modern history in general but even of our local and particular histories.

We find no less intolerable the condition of being the objects of a history made, led, manipulated and arbitrated by others, especially when we remember that those others were (and by right ought to be) the objects of a history made, led, manipulated and arbitrated by ourselves. Add to that a no less deeply seated belief that this position of world-historical leadership and its glories was somehow usurped from us, *fi ghaflah minal-tarikh* as we say in Arabic, by modern Europe. I say usurped – and usurpation is at the heart of Hamlet's tribulations and trials – because it is supposed to belong to us by right, by destiny, by fate, by election, by providence or by what have you.

With this belief goes the no less deeply seated conviction that eventually things will righten themselves out by uncrowning this reigning usurper, whose time is running out anyway, and by restoring history's legitimate leaders to their rightful place, former station and natural function.

This kind of thought and yearning comes through loud and clear in the work of authors like Egypt's Hasan Hanafi and the later work of someone like Anwar Abdel-Malek, as well as in the tracts, analyses and propaganda of the more sophisticated Islamist thinkers and theoreticians.

The constellation of ideas that they lean on for a crutch may be summarized in the tittle of a most famous European classic: Spengler's *The Decline of the West*, the false implication being, if the West is declining then the Arabs and Islam must be rising. Or, to put it somewhat differently (i.e. in terms of the title of Abdel-Malek's book *Rih al-Sharq*, *The Wind of the East*), if the wind of history is abandoning the sails of the West, then it must be automatically filling those of the East and East means principally, here, Islam and the Arabs. If we use the title of an equally famous Islamist classic by Muhammad Kutb, *Jahiliyyat al-Qarn al-ᶜIsrin* (*The Jahiliyyah of the 20th Century)*, then the implication would be: now that European Modernity has come full circle to the *jahili* condition, the Arabs and the Muslims must be on the verge of leading humanity once more out of the *jahiliyyah* created by Europe and defended by the West in general.

Arab nationalism: retrieving the usurped role of world leadership?

But this is not the end of the story. Reviewing the classics of Arab nationalism, it now often appears to me that the deeper objective of these works was not so much Arab Unity as an end in itself, but as a means for retrieving that usurped role of world-historical leadership and of history making. In fact, I can easily say that the ultimate but unarticulated concern here was not so much colonialism, imperialism, foreign occupation, liberation, independence, prosperity, social justice, equality, freedom as such, but the restoration of a right usurped from this great *ummah* to exercise the world-historical role and function naturally and/or providentially suited to its nature and mission. After all, the historic civilizations of our part of the world have always been of the conquering and extroverted type: Ancient Persia descending on Greece, Alexander conquering Persia and everything else within reach, Hannibal, Rome, Islam, the Ottomans, European modernity and so on.

Now, when this unexamined, unexorcized, highly potent and deep-seated self-image collides with the all-too evident everyday actualities of Arab-Muslim impotence, backwardness, frustration and insignificance, especially at the level of international relations, then anything becomes possible on the Arab side. This includes at least grand illusions, massive inferiority complexes, huge compensatory delusions, wild adventurism, heedless political recklessness, desperate violence, and so on. Obviously, this is a recipe for owning neither the present nor the future. In fact, it is a recipe for the abdication of all responsibility *vis-à-vis* both the present and the future.

The contradiction that I have been trying to delineate and that I think we have to openly come to terms with if we are going to have any future at all is perhaps best captured – quite gently but very ironically – in the title of Hussain Ahmad Amin's pointed and lively book, *Dalil al-Muslim al-Hazin ila Muqtada al-Suluq fi al-Qarn al-ᶜIsrin*. The author is a well-known Egyptian historian and high-ranking diplomat and the son of Ahmad Amin, the great historian produced by what the late Albert Hourani called the Arab Liberal Age. Interestingly enough, the title of Amin's book hints at the great classic of Moses Maimonides, *Dalalah al-Ha'irin* (*The Guide for the Perplexed*.) So a free translation of Hussain Ahmad Amin's title would read: A Guide for the Sad and Perplexed Muslim concerning the sort of behaviour required by the 20th century.

The contemporary Arab: sad, melancholic, perplexed and vexed?

The contemporary Muslim and/or Arab and/or what have you is so sad, melancholic, perplexed and vexed in Amin's account because his instinctive convictions, profound self-image and cherished illusions about his *ummah*, religion, culture, civilization, providence, their role and function in modern history are all given the lie by the hard realities and harsh actualities of the contemporary world at every waking minute of his life. Furthermore, the radical transformations, revolutions, sacrifices, changes, losses, etc., required to transcend this contradiction continue to be deemed unbearable, unacceptable and undesirable by Amin's totally frustrated Arab and/or Muslim. So what else is left for him to do except to muddle through his sad, melancholic perplexity right into the 21st century carrying with him the pious conviction that perhaps one day God or history or fate or the revolution or the moral order of the universe will undo the usurper and again raise his *ummah* to the status of world-historical leadership. Meanwhile, the Fortinbrases of this world will have inherited the earth at his expense.

Modernity is basically a European invention. Europe made the modern world without consulting Arabs, Muslims or anyone else for that matter, and made it at the expense of everyone else to boot. There is no running away from the fact that the Arabs were dragged, kicking and screaming into modernity, on the one hand, and modernity was forced on them by superior might, efficiency and performance, on the other.

The Crusades were ultimately repulsed, but Bonaparte's militarily insignificant expedition and adventure in Egypt and Palestine not only won the day but actually made a clean sweep of all that had historically lost the ability to live and continue on our side of the Mediterranean. The massive difference between the results of the Crusades and the results of the French expedition of 1798, distills the essence of European modernity as far as we are concerned and puts it on show for our chastisement and edification.

In fact, the modern European violent intrusion into Islamdom and Arabdom created, in my view, a final, decisive and definitive rupture with the past that I can only compare with the no less final and definitive rupture effected by the violent Arab-Muslim intervention into the history of Sassanid Persia. And just as the history of post-conquest Persia stopped making sense without the Arabs, Islam and their eruption on the local Farsi scene, similarly, the post-Bonaparte history of Arabdom stopped making sense without Europe, modernity and their eruption on the local Arab scene as well. In my view, there is no running away from this reality no matter how many times we re-iterate the partial truth and often lame rationalization to the effect that Modern Europe got it all from us anyway: Averroes, Andalusian high culture and civilization, Arabic science, mathematics, philosophy and all the rest.

Without finally coming to terms, seriously and in depth, with these painful realities and with their so far paralyzing contradictions, tensions, paradoxes and anomalies, there is neither an owning of the future for the Arabs, nor any real responsibility for the present on their part. In other words, either we come to terms critically with this deep-seated, ritualized and stratified complex of highly emotional beliefs, valuations and images that in their turn give the sanction of sacredness, taboo and immutability to inherited illusions, archaic institutions, dysfunctional attitudes and arrangements, anachronistic but cherished modes of living, thinking and governing, or, again, the Fortinbrases of this world will win the day and have the final say.

In any case, in Mamdouh Adwan's adaptation of Hamlet, staged some years ago in Damascus, by the time the Prince wakes up, it is already far too late. ✦

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Health

SYLVIA WING ÖNDER

Indigenous Evaluations of **Health Care in Turkey**

Research conducted in five interconnected villages on the Black Sea Coast of Turkey has shown that general cultural ideas about family and social relations combine with traditional and clinical medical theories and techniques to shape health care practices. By studying the health care choices of patients and their families, cultural values can be observed in action. Studies of health care institutions in rural areas have typically treated traditional healing and indigenous theories of health as obstacles to be overcome in the pursuit of maximum health benefits for the population. On the other hand, efforts to validate indigenous techniques and knowledge often present clinical medicine as an unmitigated threat to traditional ways. The following demonstrates how traditional and clinical healing practices interact and combine in a system which is actively negotiated and consumed by patients and their families.

Examples of how social values and family ideals shape the ways in which people judge health care practices, thus influencing future decisions, can be delineated into three culturally specific concepts: *bakmak, ilgi,* and *torpil*. These are cultural values which relate to all realms of social interaction, including relationships between individuals and state-run institutions such as clinics and hospitals. Although these concepts were found to be important in the Black Sea village context, it can be said that they are also current in the wider Turkish context. The following aims to show the ways in which cultural standards for appropriate family behaviour determine the criteria by which clinical medical professionals and institutions are judged. The family is considered the primary care unit, and all other health care is judged by the standards of the family. Although there is no direct mention here of the interactions between patients and traditional healers, many instances in which traditional healers were judged by similar standards have been observed.

'Looking after someone' (*bakmak*)

The first concept can be called *bakmak*, which translates simply as 'to look' but is used also in the sense of 'to look after someone', 'to watch out for someone', or 'to take care of someone'. In common parlance, the term expresses a sense of family responsibility. Traditionally, in the case of an illness, the patient is expected to become passive, leaving to others the decisions about measures to be taken. The person who assumes responsibility for the pursuit of care for the patient is the grammatical subject of the verb *bakmak*. The actions described by the term range from bringing a glass of tea and showing concern, to finding a medical expert and paying for treatment. The person who looks after the patient is most likely to be a close female relative, although decisions about transporting the patient or paying for care tend to involve male relatives. In a waiting room of a clinic, I observed individuals working aggressively as advocates for a seated and silent patient, trying to secure attention and efficiency for their charge, often in competition with those responsible for other patients. In a doctor's examining room, traditional and modern medical expectations may clash when a doctor wants the patient to respond directly to questions about symptoms, but is answered instead by the accompanying person.

'Concern' (*ilgi*)

The second term used is *ilgi,* which means 'interest', 'concern' and 'compassion.' It is related to *bakmak* in that one of the most important ways to look after a person is to demonstrate *ilgi*. *İlgi* requires an intensification of physical contact with a suffering family member or friend, in contrast with the avoidance behaviour observable in cultures which base theories of illness on ideas of contagion. The traditional Turkish theory does not allow for illness to spread between family members. At home, a patient should be shown plenty of *ilgi*, and a family member's willingness to display *ilgi* is carefully watched by all. Daughters-in-law often have a heavy burden of health care responsibilities for their husbands' parents, especially in cases of chronic illnesses, and are socially judged for their *ilgi*. *İlgi* is also expected of medical professionals. The most commonly heard complaint about the state-run hospitals is *ilgilenmiyorlar* or *ilgi göstermiyorlar* – meaning, 'they don't pay (enough) attention', or 'they don't show interest'. People express approval of medical professionals demonstrating *ilgi*, and compare them on this basis.

'Social influence' (*torpil*)

The third term is *torpil*, which can be translated as 'social influence', 'pull', or 'networking'. To get anything done which involves an official institution and the related bureaucracy, connections are crucial. Family connections are the most reliable and powerful forms of *torpil*, but almost any relationship can be drawn upon for influence. Addressing an unrelated person in familial terms is a strategy used to build *torpil*. The term relates to what Jenny White calls 'a web of mutual support', 'reciprocity', or 'indebtedness' and which she finds important in Turkish family relations and social interactions.[1] In daily life on the Black Sea Coast, during contact with any government officials, be they police, school teachers, tax collectors, or doctors, *torpil* is crucial. Lack of personal connections can result in harsher penalties, longer waits, and bigger fines. In the pursuit of health care, *torpil* can have life-or-death significance. In sum, when a patient is taken to a health clinic or hospital, the family members responsible for the action *bakmak* will try to make the most of *torpil* in order to increase the chances of appropriate demonstrations of *ilgi*.

The state hospital and the family

A basic provincial state-run hospital in Turkey is not set up to provide the patients with the comforts of home. A hospital stay, unless it is in an expensive, private room, means that family members feel obliged to bring food, sheets and towels, changes of clothing, and visit with the patient to pass the time. A patient who has no family in evidence in a hospital room is greatly pitied and often brought into the circle of a more fortunate patient with gifts of food and conversation. The most frequently heard criticisms of the local hospitals are that they are dirty, depressing, and smelly; that they are a source of illness because sick people are all thrown in together, and that the staff is uncaring or rough. In contrast, home care is considered much more sanitary, comfortable, gentle, and healthy. The doctors and nurses in the hospitals realize the benefits that family visits can bring to the patient. They recognize the lack of resources such as food and bedding for patients, although they consider hospital conditions to be much more sanitary than those in the village home. A compromise is continuously being worked out as the hospital staff tries to restrict the numbers and noise-levels of visitors, while each patient's family and friends try to maximize the benefits of the stay for the patient. As in all Turkish institutions, most official rules are flexible, according to the social connections of the patient and his or her family.

The hospital as family

In Turkish culture, the hospital is judged in direct relation to family care at home. The strongest critiques of hospital care are those which find it lacking in the emotional support, wholesome food, cleanliness, and *ilgi* – which can be found at home. When hospitals are praised, it is generally for their technologies and for the skills of specialists, not for their atmosphere or sympathetic care.

White has noticed that '[r]elations of obligation in society beyond the family are often represented metaphorically as family relations, as for example between the citizen and what the Turks call "Father State" (*Devlet Baba*).'[2] In terms of the state-run hospitals, it is no wonder that the institutions of the *devlet* (State) are seen as lacking the *ilgi* required to become well – the patriarch is meant to be aloof from the day-to-day care which is the province of women. The state builds physical structures, like hospitals and clinics, and stocks them with technological equipment, concrete examples of the patriarchal ability of the state to provide care for the 'family' of citizens. What goes on in the daily routine inside the hospital is of less concern to the state, which is meant to maintain a dignified and elevated status.

In contrast, the women within the state-run hospital are criticized by patients for their lack of *ilgi*, as if they were members of the family, bad daughters-in-law or ungrateful daughters. The irony is that they have no family obligation, and their rewards are meagre for the work they do. Like all state employees, they can consider themselves secure in their jobs but have no motivation to provide anything but the absolute minimum of service. If the nurses within the *devlet* hospital do not show enough *ilgi*, then the families must step in.

New cash-based health care

Recent years have brought about an increase in private clinical medical care throughout Turkey.[3] Paying for health care has added a new standard for judging a medical professional or procedure: if it costs more, it should be better. Private facilities put much stronger controls on the visitors to patients – keeping strict hours, limiting the number of visitors allowed, and regulating or prohibiting items brought from home. The understanding is that the patient will be well taken care of in exchange for the high price of care. In conversations about private health care, people still use traditional concepts to choose professionals, articulating *torpil* connections and judging them from their demonstrations of *ilgi*. With the new economy, however, family members are now likely to perform duties related to *bakmak* by sending money, especially from distant cities or from outside of Turkey; *torpil* is often 'bought' with a kind of bribery; and *ilgi* is expected as a part of the services of a paid professional. Another new means of judging Turkish heath care is comparison with European practices which are increasingly familiar throughout Turkey. ✦

Notes

1. White, Jenny (1994). *Money Makes Us Relatives: Women's Labor in Urban Turkey*. Austin: University of Texas Press, pp. 9-17, 84-102.
2. Ibid., 15.
3. Although the wealthy have been paying for care in private and foreign-run hospitals since the days of the Ottoman Empire, the national system was meant to provide free or inexpensive care for all citizens. Now even villagers, although they may first try the state-run institutions, usually eventually spend money to go to a private doctor if they are not satisfied.

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The Body

SABINE STRASSER

Impurity as Criticism
Reports from a Black Sea Village in Turkey

Essays on gender relations in rural Turkey end up all too often in the pitfall of fixed ascriptions that portray women mainly as victims of their own society. The following is an attempt to challenge this discourse of victimization and fixity by drawing on female bodily expressions. Women in rural Turkey[1] counteract social expectations and male dominance through bodily crises. This case study shows the potential for change that is inherent in spirit possession, which is commonly considered backward or traditional. Bodily crises in this sense are conceptualized not only as an expression of weakness, but also as a female counter-hegemonic potential to express the unspeakable.

Canım sıkılıyor! (My soul is bored!) is the term by which women in rural Turkey describe their bodily crises. *Hasta* (being ill) or *rahatsız* (restless) are other terms used to express suffering and anxiety. Villagers, especially the elderly, are convinced that doctors are not able to do anything about these conditions. In their opinion, there is no biological or medical cause, and these crises are considered *cincilik*, an issue for a *hoca* (healer). Men and women who experience such attacks are mainly seen as *perilenmiş* (possessed by demons) and since they no longer meet social expectations, they are sometimes referred to as *akılsız* (unreasonable, crazy) and not *temiz* (decent, clean), or even as too *akıllı* (intelligent, clever).[2]

Dilek: a woman from the town[3]

Dilek did not feel welcome in her husband's house: because she had been brought up in a nearby town, she was considered a stranger (*yabancı*) in her new village. Having to stay with her widowed mother-in-law, with whom she did not at all get along, Dilek suffered terribly – not from village work but from loneliness and desire. Her husband was then working outside the village and sometimes did not return for weeks at a time. After being married for about two years and still without child, Dilek worried that she would never conceive. She was convinced that a child would have supported her in overcoming the difficult situation in which she was living. She could not turn to her own family either, because she had run away from her father's house to follow her husband (*kız kacırmak*) to the village.

Dilek's 'attacks' began after a dispute with her mother-in-law for not allowing her to visit her parents. While retrieving water from the well, she suddenly had a vision of her mother and as she ran over to welcome her, fell to the ground and lost consciousness. From then on Dilek is said to have behaved strangely: it appears that she would, at times, lay her head on her husband's lap in public, cursing or crying for her mother like a child. She began to talk to invisible people and often lost consciousness. Oddly enough, after such an episode, she could not recollect disrespectful or strange behaviour, but could only remember feelings of relaxation once she came to.

Finally, her own father (though her husband's family was ultimately responsible for her) took her to a *hoca* where she was examined and received treatment. The *hoca* concluded that there was a *muska* (spell) affecting her, which was also preventing her from having a baby. The *muska* was put on her by her first fiancé, whom she had rejected. Dilek explained that the *hoca* was told by the *peri* (demons) that she should stay with her parents for a while and not be brought back to her husband's village immediately. After several weeks, she nevertheless decided to go back to join her husband's family, where she again began to feel lonely and eventually suffered a relapse.

Dilek was convinced that living in town with her parents would have been the best remedy, and that a baby would have been supportive, since she would have someone for whom to live. She strongly believed in the *hoca's* treatment, but was still afraid of becoming ill again. The *hoca's* rituals, Dilek stated, strengthened her so as to cope with the situation, but of course could not change it. Her seizures continued.

Several months later, her husband came back home from his military service and decided to rent a house in a town close to Dilek's family. She became pregnant for the first time soon after.

Gül: a girl on her own

Gül was 19 years of age. She had always known that her father's support and control would be very important at that age, but her father had died years before. His death not only meant suffering from the loss and economic shortages, but also suffering from the strict social control by her brothers and *amcaoğlu* (father's brother's son). Girls without a father are believed to show less respect to elderly people and men.

Gül was actually very much concerned about her behaviour and thus rejected these ascriptions. Seen as unprotected by a father, she herself felt instead unprotected from public opinion. Women looking for a suitable bride for their sons would not prefer girls such as Gül, who in turn feared the very idea of being married to a poor farmer in need of a labourer, or a widower looking for a woman to bring up his children.

When feeling insulted or excluded, Gül would initally become angry and aggressive, but would then faint. People began to say she was *perilenmis* (possessed by demons) since she was under shock at her father´s funeral. She, on the contrary, was convinced that the anxiety about her reputation, the brother's strict control and her fear of being married to somebody she did not love had caused the crises. She went to a *hoca* and kept stressing that she felt better after the treatment. However, she also insisted on a medical examination, which her family could not afford. Several years later she was married to a young man in the city of Trabzon. Since that time Gül´s body has remained quiet.

Hatice: a woman abroad

Hatice had been married to a relative living in Vienna, Austria, where she was staying for about 10 years when her bodily problems began. At the climax of her crises she frequently suffered from cardiac arrhythmia and numbness of the limbs. She was brought to a doctor several times and once even to the hospital. Medical examination, however, did not lead to any results but rather confirmed that Hatice was physically healthy. Hatice's husband was convinced that 'there's nothing wrong with her, she's *calgılı, perilenmiş* (possessed by demons) and the whole affair is a matter for the *hoca*. I will send her to Turkey, there is nothing they can do about it here.'

I accompanied her to Turkey and she insisted on seeing a *hoca* in the area of Adapazarı, where we were staying in the house of her father-in-law. This was surprising because I knew that Hatice usually used these trips to Turkey to see her sisters and aunts in Trabzon. It was, as I realized later on, not the outstanding capacity of the *hoca* which led us to this area but Hatice's capacity to negotiate a delicate situation.

The *hoca*'s interpretation after the Islamic treatment of the *cin* (demon) was clear enough. He first explained the fear, which led to these crises, he spoke about the suffering of women in foreign countries (*gurbette*). And in the following interpretations of this suffering it turned out that Hatice's husband 'had left the way of God' and was involved in a relationship with an Austrian woman. Hatice´s mother-in-law got the point, took her responsibility and called her son to account. Two months later Hatice was pregnant again and gave birth to a third son. Since then she did not have any bodily expressed problems anymore. Hatice couldn't talk about her husband's behaviour to anybody, she was too scared of getting divorced. But she found a way to let her body and the *hoca* talk.

Cincilik: confirmation or criticism?

At that time, most villagers believed that demons could cause various complaints. Women are much more often affected by crises than men, a *cinci-hoca* once stressed, because they menstruate, become pregnant and give birth. In Islam, these events are all signs of fertility but also of gender-specific impurity. Body fluids are connected to demons in general. Sperm, menstrual blood, vaginal fluids, urine and faeces are considered impure and, when leaving the body, may attract demons. But whereas men are able to control their body-fluids and may restore their state of purity at any time through purification rituals, female impurities must be suffered cyclically for a period of time. Spirit possession occurs mainly after the first menstruation, before or after marriage and before the first pregnancy, periods during which respect for social rules is particularly important.

Narratives on *cincilik* in this sense not only report about women's bodily crises but also express their criticism of normative values and their longing for social change. All women mentioned in this contribution are married today and all, even Dilek, have children. The crises passed by, as soon as the women changed the social situation they were living in. These women were using the languages of their bodies to express their suffering. We do not yet know what kind of language the next generation in Turkish villages will use facing new challenges in an ongoing global integration after the Cold War. But I am convinced the body will be important in finding a language for counter-hegemonic strategies. ✦

Hoca designates several social functions but always indicates well-educated and literate persons: teachers, imams, people who are able to read and interpret the Koran and also different kinds of healers. Depending on the urgency and duration of the case, local healers (reading the Koran) or distant but well-known *cinci-hoca* (masters of demons) are consulted. Their services are demanded in the case of infertility, impotence, fainting and other bodily expressed crises.

Notes

1. In this context 'rural' or 'local' does not mean timeless and tradition-bound, but a constantly changing place.
2. For a further discussion of the connection of fertility, impurity, female fainting and spirit possession in the context of Islam, see also Boddy, Janice (1989). *Wombs or Alien Spirits. Women, Men and the Zar Cult in Northern Sudan.* Madison (Wisconsin): The University of Wisconsin Press; Strasser, Sabine (1995). *Die Unreinheit ist fruchtbar! Grenzüberschreitungen in einem türkischen Dorf am Schwarzen Meer*. Vienna: Wiener Frauenverlag; Strasser, Sabine (1998). 'Ambiguïté de l´impurité: Corps de femme, moment critiques de la vie, et possession par les esprits dans un village de la côte est de la mere Noire en Turquie'. In *Le corps humain. Supplicié, possédé, cannibalisé*, Maurice Godielier and Michel Panoff. Amsterdam: Overseas Publishers Association, pp. 29-54.
3. The following examples stem from my field research in a Turkish village conducted between 1989-1993. The village, I call Yeşilköy (Green Village), is situated within the district of Trabzon.

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Dance

AISHA ALI

Dances of the Ouled Na l

During the 19th century, Algeria became familiar to the Western world through the paintings of the French Orientalists and, towards the end of the century, through photographs of the elaborately adorned dancers of the Ouled Naïl. A confederation of tribes, the Ouled Naïl originate from the high desert region and can be found living in towns such as Bou Saada, Biskra and Chellala.

UNLISTED PHOTOGRAPHER

Female from the Ouled Na l tribe, *Frauen Des Morgenlandes,* Z rich.

In the Middle East and North Africa it is generally assumed that a woman who dances professionally is of questionable reputation. The dancers of the Ouled Naïl, however, were born into a tribe where the arts of the entertainer were not only condoned, but also valued and their young girls approached this profession free of inhibitions. Their earnings in the form of gold and silver coins were made into necklaces and other jewellery that both ornamented their costumes and provided tangible evidence of wealth. Once a sufficient dowry had been amassed, they found no difficulty in finding a suitable marriage partner among their own people and raising a family.

The fame of the Ouled Naïl reached a high point during the time of the French occupation, when they attracted a large patronage from among the military personnel. After Algeria's independence, however, their good fortune was not to last as demands for their talents were once again limited to performances at weddings and festivals for a mainly local clientele.

Today there are fewer young women entering into the profession, and although their costumes are still traditional, they have changed to a certain extent. The silk brocades, golden diadems and festoons of coins are rarely seen. Now layers of diaphanous dresses are worn, sometimes covered with a *palla*, and their turbans and headscarves are usually made of synthetic materials. Some dancers completely cover the face with a transparent veil, while others wear no veil at all. Dancers who also sing command a higher fee and their careers may continue to an advanced age.

The best known troupe of Ouled Naïl dancers and musicians is located at Bou Saada, where occasional tourists may still visit. Many performances begin with a procession led by the musicians. The exciting call of the *ghaita* (a folk oboe) and the women's high-pitched *zaghareet* (ululation) announce to all that there will be a performance, and the audience gathers. When they arrive at the stage area, the dancers and musicians sit together on a platform while the soloists and groups take their turns. The men of the tribe also perform, their repertoire including a rifle dance. When dancing, the men of the Ouled Naïl cover the lower part of their faces with a portion of their head wraps in the manner of the Tuaregs.

In Chellala, tribes gather to set up their tents at the times of festivals and holidays. During the rug festival, the Ouled Naïl perform informally for the buyers and sellers of carpets. Each tent shelters a different group of singers, dancers and musicians. Sometimes a man sits at the entrance to encourage passers-by to enter. Here the dancers are mostly women presenting the *danse du ventre*. As in the past, dance performances continue to be an occasion for displaying the attractions of the dancers to potential patrons. ✦

Some of the preceding material appears in Aisha Ali's contribution to the International Encyclopedia of Dance *(Oxford University Press), published in 1997 as well as the booklet accompanying the ARAF (Associated Research Arabic Folklore) CD, Music of the Ouled Naïl.*

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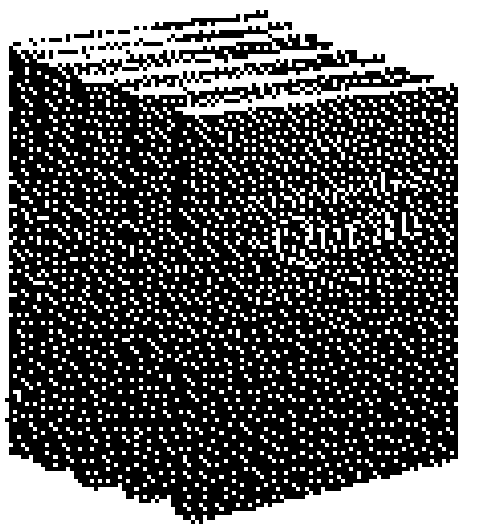
MISCELLANEOUS

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

Encyclopaedia of the Qurʾān

Volume I (A D)

EDITED BY JANE DAMMEN MCAULIFFE



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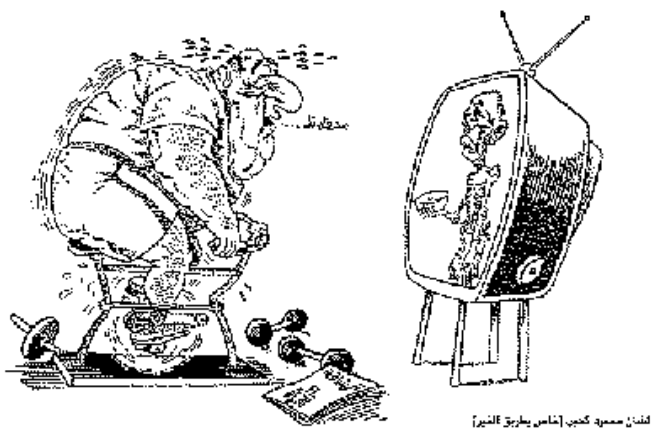
Aid

JÉRÔME BELLION-JOURDAN

Islamic Relief Organizations: Between 'Islamism' and 'Humanitarianism'[1]

The predominant conception of international aid remains anchored in a dualistic vision of the world: a 'North' considered wealthy and developed comes to the rescue of a poor and under-developed 'South'. The 'civilizing' missions that justified 19th-century imperialism were substituted by themes – such as 'third world-ism' and development aid – of the second half of the 20th century. After the Biafra war, defence of fundamental human rights begins to justify claims to the 'right to intervene' as practised by non-governmental organizations, such as Doctors without Borders, setting the tone for what humanitarian action should be.

Despite its heterogeneity, the field of international aid seems to function according to the North-South principle, the North often being assimilated with the West and the Judeo-Christian tradition. However, it should be noted that this vision of international humanitarian aid is incomplete: from the Sudan to Afghanistan, to Bosnia, Kosovo, or Chechnya, Islamic organizations have established emergency programmes and development projects. Generally ignored in the numerous publications of international non-governmental organizations, the activities of these Islamic organizations also remain unanalysed in the abundant and irregular literature devoted to Islamist mobilizations. In the latter type of publications, the role of charitable associations of Islamic reference has at times been dealt with, but the emphasis is placed on local associations that have taken charge of activities that the State does not fully assume (e.g. health care, education).



***Tariq al-Kheir*, n°2, Summer 1995, p.7.**

Of particular interest are organizations that develop activities at the trans-national level and that are found in different zones in 'humanitarian crisis', and more generally, where there are populations in need of assistance. Thus, in Khartoum just as in Islamabad and Sarajevo, one obviously finds offices of both Doctors without Borders and the International Islamic Relief Organization (IIRO). Created in 1978 in Jeddah as a branch of the Islamic World League, the IIRO is one of the many Islamic relief organizations *(al-ighatha al-islamiya*) that have come into existence since the late 70s. It was then that those Islamic organizations whose principle activity was oriented towards teaching and the *da'wa* (call to Islam) invested in the field of humanitarian aid so as to respond to two different situations. On the one hand, there was the need to face up to the humanitarian consequences of famines and the wars affecting the African continent. The Islamic African Relief Agency (IARA) was created for this reason in 1981 in Khartoum as a humanitarian branch of the Organization of the Islamic Call (Da'wa Islamiya) to come to the aid of the Ethiopian and Eritrean refugees in Sudan. On the other hand, it was also necessary to face the consequences of the war in Afghanistan that broke out after the Soviet invasion in 1979.

The Afghan war

The Afghan war incited numerous mobilizations in the Muslim world, notably amongst movements that advocate the establishment of an Islamic society, such as the Muslim Brotherhood or the Jama'at i-Islami. In the mid-1980s, several relief organizations were created to come to the aid of the Afghans: in 1985, the Egyptian Union of Doctors created a humanitarian branch, the Lajnat al-Ighatha al-Insaniya (Human Relief Agency); in 1986, the Organization for Social Reform in Kuwait created the Lajnat ad-Da'wa al-Islamiya (Islamic Mission Agency) to collect funds for Afghanistan; and in 1987, Yusuf Islam (formerly Cat Stevens – pop singer converted to Islam) took the lead of a collective of associations in England and founded Muslim Aid. These organizations and others such as IIRO, the Islamic Relief Agency (international network of the Sudanese organization IARA), and Human Concern International regrouped themselves in Peshawar as the Islamic Coordination Council, in which also Kuwaiti and Saudi Red Cross associations take part.[2]

In order to analyse the development of these organizations, one must place value judgements aside and avoid the simple implicit or explicit oppositions in which praise is given to humanitarian aid and condescension to Islamism: humanism / obscurantism, liberalism / holism, political disinterest / interest. From all sides, the reality of the situation is obviously more complex, and the Islamic relief organizations do not escape this complexity. It is a question of looking at how they developed and entered the field of international humanitarian action. Would Islamic relief organizations be irreducibly different from their Christian or secular homologues? These organizations constituted themselves in reaction to 'Western' hegemony in the field of humanitarian action: for that reason, they claim specificity, a rooting in the Islamic tradition. But simultaneously, their insertion in the field of humanitarian action contributes to a reformulation, even a re-interpretation, of this tradition to be able to compose with the dominant norms. Also, to analyse the practices of these organizations allows one to see how they combine various registers of action.

They look to inscribe their action in the heritage of the Islamic tradition of charity. The emphasis is placed on the Qur'anic injunctions or the texts of the *hadith*, which call upon Muslims to do charitable works: whether it be by the donning of *zakat* and the *sadaqa*, or the *qurbani*, donation for the occasion of sacrificial festival. With the exception of several Muslim countries that have reintroduced an official system of *zakat* collection (principally Pakistan and Sudan), the practice of *zakat* is largely left to private initiatives. It is in this 'empty space' that different types of *zakat*-collecting institutions have multiplied: from Islamic banks to local *zakat*-collecting committees (such as the *lajnat al-zakat* in Egypt) affiliated with a mosque or an Islamic association. On their side, the Islamic relief organizations intend to re-develop a *zakat* practice at the level of the *umma*: by a form of transnationalization of the *zakat*, they become intermediaries between donors and beneficiaries that are culturally and geographically distant. Hence organizations such as Islamic Relief or Muslim Aid instil a policy of fundraising to convince, for example, the practising Muslims of France that it is legitimate to offer their *zakat* to an organization based in England for projects in Sudan, Kosovo, or Pakistan.

Universality of aid

Do only Muslim populations benefit from the aid of these organizations? The question is recurrent and points to the problem of the universality of aid. This principle is recognized as fundamental in the field of contemporary international humanitarian action: each and every human being should be aided unconditionally. The universality of aid reveals itself difficult to realize: the logic of preference and the conditioning of aid have not disappeared from the field of international humanitarian aid. Most Islamic relief organizations do not conceal the fact that they develop projects in which priority is given to those that benefit Muslim populations. This is based on three reasons: political, pragmatic, and dogmatic. The political reason has to do with the fact that the concerned organizations hold a worldview that identifies 'Islamic causes', from Bosnia or Kashmir to Palestine, where the victims are Muslims and (it is often added) are victims precisely *because* they are Muslims. This form of 'martyrologie' justifies an aid that gives priority to the Muslim 'brothers'. This political dimension is supported by a pragmatic one: it is often repeated, as in the brochure of the International Islamic Relief Organization, that 'more than 80% of the refugees and victims of war and disaster in the world are Muslim'.[3] Finally, the dogmatic reason: according to certain interpretations, the *zakat* should be collected and distributed within the Muslim community. These three dimensions seem to justify a particularistic aid in which only members of the Muslim community may benefit.

Nevertheless, according to their brochures, the organizations' intentions are to offer aid 'according to purely humanitarian criteria devoid of any ethnic, linguistic, or religious distinction'.[4] The idea of non-differentiation of beneficiaries of aid which characterizes modern humanitarian aid seems to have become the norm for Islamic relief organizations. In fact, they do not exclude coming to the aid of non-Muslims. Intervening in zones where there are groups of various origins (e.g. refugee camps), the organizations are more and more concerned with demonstrating the universality of their actions: for Islamic Relief, the beneficiaries are all those populations in need, whether it be for projects in Bosnia or in Africa, or for the distribution of warm meals for the homeless in France.[5]

However, the displayed universality of aid does not necessarily have the same significance. Three explanatory types for this demonstrated universality can be retained. Within the Islamic relief organizations, the '*da'wa*-ist' attitude towards aid is always present: it justifies the universality of aid by the universal ambition of Islam as a religion destined for the whole of humanity. The principal of non-differentiation of beneficiaries is thus distorted in the sense that a distinction amongst beneficiaries is in fact operated between Muslims and the others, for whom there is hope of conversion. In certain organizations, universality rejoins more the problematic of the notion of 'third world': compassion for human misery marks most notably the workers who have been 'in the field' and is sometimes accompanied by bitter criticism of the inequalities and the division of resources at the global level. An example of this caricature was published in *Tariq al-Kheir*, information brief produced by Islamic Relief: an obese man struggling on his stationary bicycle to try and lose weight, is shown in front of a television report displaying an image of a rachitic African.[6] The demonstrated universality is equally a question of marketing: just as their Christian or secularized homologues, Islamic relief organizations do not escape the market logic of the international humanitarian scene. ✦

Notes

1. This article is based on research conducted with the framework of a PhD in political science at the Institut d'Etudes Politiques in Paris, under the direction of Prof. Jean Leca. It is based on interviews held with the employees and management of Islamic relief organizations in France, the United Kingdom, Sudan, Egypt, Bosnia, and Pakistan.
2. Sometimes placed within the same category as Islamic relief NGOs, the Red Cross societies have nonetheless a specific status in that they belong to the International Federation of Red Cross Societies and the Red Cross and are expected to obey the principles of the movement founded by Henry Dunant in 1863: 'humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity, universality.'
3. Brochure IIRO (in French).
4. Ibid.
5. This universality of action implies developments at the level of interpretation of the usage of the *zakat*. For certain organizations like Islamic Relief, the solution consists in differentiating funds: the *zakat* funds are destined for Muslims and other funds are allocated to projects that aim at mixed populations.
6. *Tariq al-Kheir* (1995), Summer (2), p. 7.

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Southeast Asia

AHMAD F. YOUSIF

Religious Life and Institutions in Brunei

The Sultanate of Brunei Darussalam, located on the island of Borneo, has a small but diverse population. The majority of the population adheres to Islam, which is manifest at many levels of Brunei society. Indeed, this monarchy is founded upon the teachings of Islam and the state supports the institutional development of the faith. A third of the population, however, belongs to various non-Muslim faiths, with their own religious institutions and organizations, particularly among the ethnic Chinese community.

The Sultanate of Brunei Darussalam has a population of 323,600. Slightly over two-thirds of this number comprise ethnic Malays, the majority of which are Sunni Muslims who follow the Shafi'i *madhab*. Other ethnic Malay groups include, amongst others, the Muruts and Dusuns, most of whom practice animism and shamanism – although a few have converted to Christianity and Islam. Ethnic Chinese account for 15% of the population and generally adhere to Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, or to Christianity, a handful having converted to Islam.

The 1991 census indicated that 67% of the population of Brunei Darussalam identified themselves as Muslims, 13% Buddhists, 10% Christians, and the remaining 10% as 'other' (including free-thinkers, Hindus, Sikhs, Bahais, or undeclared.) Although Islam is the official religion, religious minorities have the right to observe their religious values and traditions. In this regard, the Constitution of the State of Brunei (1959) holds that 'the religion of the State shall be the Muslim religion, provided that all other religions may be practised in peace and harmony by the persons professing them in any part of the State.'

Islamic values, traditions and ethics have been incorporated and manifested within Brunei culture, society and politics. The concept of the MIB (*Melayu Islam Beraja* or Malay Muslim Monarchy) has been the cornerstone of the religio-political philosophy of Brunei, which stresses the importance of maintaining the Malay race, language, culture and Muslim religion of the nation.

The significance of the MIB concept was affirmed during the reign of Sultan Haji Omar Ali Saifuddien (1950-1967), when it became officially recognized in the 1959 Brunei Constitution, and even more so upon Brunei's declaration of independence on 1 January 1984. On this occasion, Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah asserted that Brunei Darussalam would be 'forever a sovereign, democratic and independent Malay Muslim Monarchy [founded] upon the teaching of Islam according to *Ahli al-Sunnah wa al-Jamaah* and […] the principle of liberty, trust and justice.'

Omar Ali Saifuddien Mosque. Brunei, Darussalam.

Religious institutions and organizations

Religious institutions for both Muslims and non-Muslims are scattered around the country. According to the Department of Mosque Affairs, there were 102 mosques and prayer-halls as of 1999, including two major state mosques, *Masjid Omar Ali Saifuddien* and *Jame' Asr Hassanal Bolkiah*, both of which are considered major tourist attractions. There are seven Christian churches, most of which are Catholic. There are also three Chinese temples and two small Indian temples. Although the small Sikh community in Brunei (approximately 500 people) has no official religious institutions, weekly services are held in member's homes.

The majority of Islamic organizations or departments in Brunei are established and maintained by the government. The Ministry of Religious Affairs, established in 1986, is comprised of five different departments, namely, Mosque, Hajj, Islamic Studies, Islamic Law, and Islamic Da'wah (propagation) Centre.

The Islamic Da'wah Centre is responsible for the propagation and expansion of Islamic teachings among both Muslims and non-Muslims in Brunei. It also undertakes research and studies on Islam-related subjects, publishes Islamic books, pamphlets, and periodicals and networks with other Muslim countries by exchanging information and organizing conferences, seminars and meetings on various Islamic issues. The Centre's Publication Control and Censor Unit censors books, periodicals, journals, and newspapers which contradict Islamic belief and teachings.

In recent years, a number of Islamic economic institutions have been established in Brunei, supervised by specialists in the sharia, Islamic economics and finance. Among these institutions are the Tabung Amanah Islam Brunei (TAIB), an Islamic trust fund founded in 1991, the Islamic Bank of Brunei (IBB) and Insurance Islam TAIB, both of which were established in 1993. The IBB provides a variety of financial and commercial services and transactions such as *al-wadiah* (savings deposit), and *al-mudharabah* (profit sharing), which function according to sharia principles. Insurance Islam TAIB provides and facilitates different kinds of Islamic insurance for individuals, families and groups, including coverage for accidents that may take place during Hajj and Umrah.

The government also established the Mulaut Abattoir in August 1990, under the auspices of the Agriculture Department. The Abattoir provides slaughtering facilities to local farmers and butchers to enable them to slaughter their livestock according to the requirements of Islamic law. The Abattoir also offers services for various Islamic rituals. Certification by the Abattoir guarantees that all meat products sold, bought, or cooked, fulfil Islamic requirements. Furthermore, the newly established Halaqah Food store markets all kinds of halal meat products, while the Brunei Meat Company (BMC) maintains several branches in the country to sell halal meat to the public.

There are, however, a number of non-halal restaurants in the country that cater to non-Muslims. In addition, most supermarkets have a partitioned section for non-halal meat and food products.

Non-governmental organizations

There are only a few non-governmental Islamic religious organizations in the country. These include the National Association of Qur'anic Reciters and Memorizers (IQRA), which trains and assists members in reading and memorizing the Qur'an, the New (Muslim) Converts Association and the Ikhwan al-Muslimeen, based in the district of Kuala Belait. Of these groups, only the first two are genuinely active.

In addition to the above organizations, Sufi groups or *tariqahs* (mystical orders), particularly al-Ahmadiyyah and al-Naqshabandiyyah have also established themselves in the country. Some of these *tariqahs* trace their roots directly to the Middle East, while others entered Brunei via neighboring countries such as Indonesia and Malaysia. Many of these groups engage in Mawlud Dhikir, a socio-religious ceremony in which religious poems are read and chanted.

Non-governmental organizations are more numerous amongst non-Muslim communities: more than 40 socio-religious and cultural Chinese associations have been established in Brunei. These include dialect locality groups, trade-occupational, cultural-recreational, mutual help/benevolent, religious and community-wide associations. The primary Christian association in Brunei is the Borneo Evangelical Society, which is an umbrella organization operating on behalf of Christians on the Island of Borneo (i.e. including the East Malaysian states of Sabah and Sarawak). In addition, there are two Indian-related associations in Brunei. The oldest is the 50-year-old Hindu Welfare Board, which functions as a Hindu religious organization with approximately 3000 members. The second major Indian organization is the 43-year-old Indian Association, which is a social organization for the Indian community and has 300 registered members.

Religious education

The 20th century witnessed the growth and development of Islamic religious education in Brunei. In 1956, seven full-time Islamic schools were officially opened. Since then, the number of religious schools has increased to 115 (1999 figures).

Religious (*ugama*) classes are also taught in the public schools. The majority of students have four hours a week of Islamic studies at the elementary level and three hours at the secondary level. Under the 'new system', which is presently in operation in fifteen schools in the country, Islamic instruction has been increased to eight hours per week for elementary students and six at the secondary level.

Islamic education is also promoted in schools and colleges affiliated with the Ministry of Religious Affairs where traditional Islamic subjects are taught in both Malay and Arabic. Some of the more renowned religious institutes in the country are the Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Tahfiz al-Qur'an Institute, the Brunei College of Islamic Studies (Ma'had) and the Religious Teachers Training College (Maktab Perguruan Ugama). The Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Tahfiz al-Qur'an Institute, located in the heart of the capital of Brunei, operates under the Ministry of Education, and presently accommodates 105 male and 40 female students. The Institute was established to produce Qur'anic prodigies who could further their studies in academic institutions overseas, particularly Arab countries.

The Brunei College of Islamic Studies (Ma'had) in Tutong and the Religious Teachers Training College (Maktab Perguruan Ugama) operate under the auspices of the Ministry of Religious Affairs. The Ma'had is an Islamic secondary school which accommodates approximately 500 students, who study for a duration of five years. The Maktab offers a three-year training programme for more than 400 students in an effort to qualify them to teach in religious schools around the country. At the tertiary level, the Sultan Haji Omar Ali Saifuddin Institute of Islamic Studies at the University of Brunei Darussalam (UBD) provides three different areas of specialization – Islamic Law, Theology and Propagation, and Arabic Language. Presently, more than 300 students are registered in its undergraduate and postgraduate programmes.

A number of Christian-based schools, established during the colonial period, are still in operation today. Such schools include St. George's and St. Andrew's in BSB, and St. Michel's and St. Angela's school in Seria. There are eight Chinese schools in Brunei managed by the Chinese community, including the well-known Chung Hwa Middle School in the country's capital. It should be noted that non-Muslim students at St. George's, St. Andrew's, and Chung Hwa, have recently been required to take a Kefahaman Islam (Islamic understanding) course, on a trial basis.

Media

Islam is well represented in the local print and electronic media. For example, Radio-Television Brunei (RTB) devotes more than 20 hours a week to religious or religious-related television programming. Religious input includes a short Qur'anic recitation to begin and close broadcasting every day, daily broadcasts of the *Azan* (call to prayer), coverage of the weekly Friday *khutbahs* or religious sermons, congregational prayers, lectures and forums, the annual Qur'an competition, Islamic entertainment shows and songs, and Muslim festivals and celebrations.

The government also funds Nurul-Islam (Light of Islam) radio station and the National Radio Station (Rangkaian Nasional). Both stations broadcast Qur'anic recitations, the call to prayer, Friday prayers, and other ceremonies and activities.

Islamic values, traditions and ethics continue to be incorporated and manifested within Brunei culture, society and politics in the modern period. Although the government has played a significant role in creating and developing Islamic religious, educational and financial institutions, as well as supporting Islamic programmes in the media, religious minorities have maintained the right to observe their own religious values and traditions. ✦

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South Asia

ANNE-HÉLÈNE TROTTIER

A Case of Grassroots Syncretic Sufism
The Fakir of Bengal

Ever since Islam came to Bengal in the 13th century (and probably earlier, through individual Muslims' interaction with local bearers of other traditions) it participated, via a merging of Sufi inputs with vernacular strands of Vaisnavism (Vishnuism), tantrism and local folk cults, in a very rich blend of religious beliefs and practices in the lower strata of society. The Fakir, as a sub-section of the Bengali Bāul with a more or less defined Muslim identity, are at present the largest group in Bengal perpetuating this form of 'Islamic syncretistic tradition', to use Asim Roy's phrase.[1] In the complex picture of present-day religious politics of East and West Bengal, and in the context of Bangladesh as the second largest Muslim country in the world, these Fakir seem, somewhat paradoxically, to be both under threat and very much alive as contributors to local spiritual and cultural vitality at a grassroots level.

In territorial Bengal (i.e. the area comprising present-day Indian West Bengal and Bangladesh), folk religious syncretism has over the centuries produced a variety of cults and sects, amongst which the Bāul emerged in the late 15th century as a major group strongly influenced by Caitanya Vaisnav devotion and (post?–) Buddhist sahajiyā tantrism. After Caitanya, the next figure of historic importance for the Bāul was that of Lālan Shah or Lālan Fakir (?1774-?1890). Whereas Caitanya belongs to a sectarian Hindu movement that extends far beyond Bengal and has its focal mythological anchorage outside Bengal (in Vrindavan and Mathura), Lālan is a product and proponent of purely Bengali syncretism. His hagiography and his teachings tell a story of merging Hinduism and Islam into a universalistic religion transcending the boundaries of any single religion. As such, he is *par excellence* the Bāul figure that all present-day Bāul and Fakir identify with, to a greater extent than with Caitanya. The Kushtiā district (now in Bangladesh) where he spent most of his life and where his tomb is located, is in the heartland of territorial Bengal, and very much a central point in the geographical distribution of the Bāul.

Before addressing Bāul/Fakir syncretism in the present religious configuration of the two Bengals, brief reference should be made to the past development of Bengali Islamic syncretism.

The development of Bengali Islamic syncretism

The spread of Islam in Bengal[2] was largely rural, village-based, and the result of the interaction of immigrant Sufis with local pre-Aryan and Hindu cults and yogic and tantric practices and beliefs. Such interaction contributed, as early as the 13th-14th centuries, both to the development of local forms of what would later be termed 'heterodox cults' and 'folk Islam', and to the expansion of agriculture over a largely untouched territory of jungle, marshes and waterways. Islam thus extended its presence as a religion of the axe and plough, creating settlements and producing something of a 'civilizing' effect. It was, however, far removed from canonical Islam and far more a matter of saint cult. Bengali grassroots syncretism was a case of assimilating a new form of divine force, or grace, into an already multiform substratum and a case of this addition – Islam – not being intrinsically or transcendentally powerful, but one of its being relevant through the charisma of individual leaders. The latter were the Sufi saints who were living embodiments and mediators of the new divine grace, and who did not claim this to replace the older substratum as a new religion. The case is thus not one of straight conversion to Islam, but of active/interactive forms of syncretism that depend not on the pre-eminence of a transcendent divinity but on the latter's merging with, and thereby enriching, another pre-existing ordaining of the universe. In this process it is the living saint as a human-and-divine person who is the crucial actor, crystallizing and catalyzing people's aspirations and beliefs in both the other-worldly and this-worldly dimensions of human life. These saints were simultaneously spiritual leaders, warlords and rulers for their constituencies, who would recognize allegiance only to them.

Such local forms of Islamic syncretism flourished in rural Bengal, particularly in the eastern areas, until a new development appeared on the scene of Bengali Islam a couple of centuries ago. Under British rule, there emerged amongst the elites of the Indian subcontinent a sense of religious identity – both Hindu and Muslim. In the 19th century, the Muslim upper classes of Bengal, who had clung to an idealized and frozen self-image of ethnic and Islamic purity connected with their immigrant (Turkic, Afghan) origins and deliberately disconnected from the ethnic and religious realities of the local populations, woke up to the reality of their having somehow taken root in the land of Bengal and to the fact that the people over which they ruled were dreadfully un-Islamic by their Koranic criteria.

Vigorous efforts were launched by orthodox Muslim leaders to eradicate the impure vernacular from Bengali Islam. The conversion to 'pure' Islam often went hand in hand with laudable efforts at improving the social and economic conditions of the lowest strata. In some places, open persecution hit the more heterodox groups, calling for total annihilation of all cults of a Bāultype.[3] Such reformist movements continued into the 20th century, and are still at work today. Fatwas specifically against the Bāul and Fakir are documented in the literature.

The current situation

What is the picture now, considering that in Bangladesh the Muslim population has grown to 90% of the total – the Hindu population having dwindled due to emigration and considering that in Indian Bengal, communal hostility is alive as elsewhere in northern India? More than ever, Bāul and Fakir tradition-bearers invoke the anti-communal teachings of Lālan, whose time was precisely that of growing reformist action in Bengal encouraging in both communities a sense of religious identity fraught with potential for conflict. Lālan was a child and lover of his particular motherland, Bengal, where the 'little people' had traditionally been mutual integrators of creeds and rites rather than opponents on communalistic grounds.

Of the many syncretistic heterodox groups and movements of the past documented in 19th and 20th-century literature, many seem to have disappeared. Members of such groups have gone more or less underground under pressure and persecution, so it is difficult to assess what remains alive. But Lālan and Fakir presence is very much a reality alongside that of another universalistic group, the Kartābhajā (in central Bengal). The Bāul and Fakir remain the largest extant group at present, numbering perhaps several hundred thousand persons.

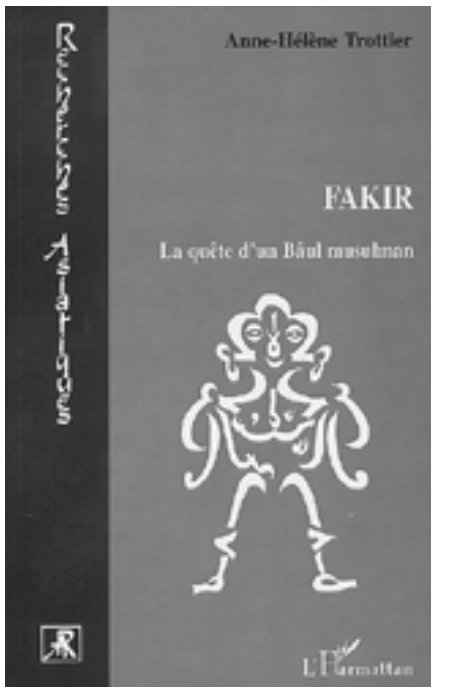
The Hindu Bāul and the Muslim Fakir share the same tenets of an esoteric quest based on the intimate human-divine connection within every human being, cultivated through a philosophy and practices that emphasize the human body as locus and means for finding the essence of God. The path is taught in the traditional guru-disciple relationship where the guru is like the figure of the above-mentioned Sufi saint, in whom the divine is accomplished, merged with the human.

The Fakir call themselves Bāul. The Bāul in a Hindu setting do not call themselves Fakir but Vaisnav – it may be that the differentiation is connected with the influence of the respective surrounding mainstream religions. At any rate, and significantly, it appears empirically that there is more syncretism on the Fakir side than on the Bāul; the latter, in West Bengal at least, leaning more towards a strongly Vaisnav type of devotion, while the Fakir of central territorial Bengal bring together the different strands. As one Fakir of Kushtiā told me: 'There is Allah in every human being. Caitanya is the synthesis of Rādhā and Krisna, thereby there is Allah in Caitanya.'

Continued syncretism?

There is still considerable interaction in northern Bangladesh[4] between the heterodox Fakir and more mainstream imams, Sufis and *mollahs* (figures of authority in the mosque and the *madrasa*). All-night debates are held between leading proponents of the two approaches. Some orthodox Muslims are known to have substantial affinities with the heterodox tradition.[5] In the lower strata of the population, but also increasingly in the educated urban elite, many people can be attracted to a charismatic Bāul guru, learn Bāul songs, and seek initiation. Thus the syncretic approach within the context of an Islamic country still exists.

However, the syncretic tendency, apparently the 'natural' one of the children of the Bengali motherland, is not the only factor at hand: there is the continued reformist aspiration of mainstream Islam. Many Bāul and Fakir have been subjected to harassment and persecution in recent decades and, at another level, there is the appropriation by institutions of the vivid folklore surrounding the figure of Lālan, increasingly taken over by cultural authorities as part of an official Bangladeshi identity and heritage. The shrine of Lālan at Kushtiā is no longer in the hands of the Fakir wise men; Lālan's anniversary festival is now officially organized by the local authorities. The food, traditionally given free to Fakir and Bāul initiates, had to be paid for at the 1999 festival, a major breach of an age-old rule. The local government has a construction plan underway for a big cultural complex near the shrine. By turning Lālan into a 'respectable' part of Bangladeshi heritage, will the political and religious powers-that-be succeed in sterilizing this still lively force of counterculture inherent in Bengali syncretism? Bangladesh is still a frontier land, from an Islamic, cultural, economic, and developmental point of view. As long as the spirit of Lālan is alive, say the Fakir, there is much this counterculture can contribute. ✦



Notes

1. Roy, A. (1983). *The Islamic Syncretistic Tradition in Bengal*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
2. See Roy, A. and also J.N.Sarkar (1972). *Islam in Bengal*. Calcutta: Ratna Prakashan; Eaton, R. (1994). *The Rise of Islam and the Bengal Frontier, 1204-1760*. Delhi: Oxford University Press.
3. See S.N. Jhā (1997). Collected articles on persecutions in *Bartikā*. Calcutta.
4. I owe this information to Syed Samīm, a Dhaka film-maker and a knowledgeable source on Bāul/Fakir matters. I have witnessed similar interaction in northwest Bengal.
5. Such as Mansur Ali of Kushtiā, a mainstream erudite who hints at the heterodox Fakir approach in parts of his *Secret Koran* book, published perhaps about 30 years ago.

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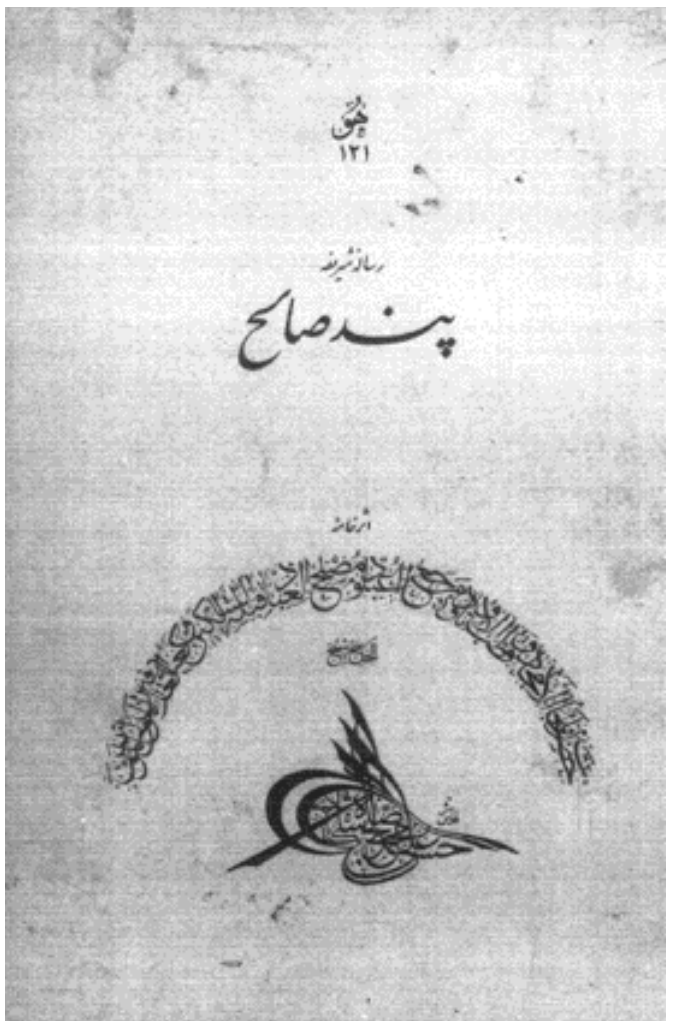
Middle East
MATTHIJS VAN DEN BOS

Roots of modern Shiᶜite Sufism in Iran

Theories of cultural stagnation and decline or of modernization's devastation in the realm of Sufism have not only figured in orientalist or social science repertoires. Conversing with contemporary Iranian Sufis, one comes across a remarkable consensus: the Safawid rise to state power coincided with the eclipse of Sufism's radiant sun in Iran, and it has never since regained its former brilliance. Whether such views hold true in the history of ideas or at the strictly literary level remains for specialists to decide. However, various social and political transformations that have conditioned Iranian Sufism as it is presently known, contradict the idea of Sufism's stagnant and therefore negligible religiosity.



Pand-e Ṣāleḥ **booklet, Tehran 1365/1986 (second edition), written by Hajj Sheikh Mohammad Hasan Salehᶜalishah.**

The long-term survival and modern development of Sufism in Iran has its foundation in the Neᶜmatollāhī order's 18th -century socio-political renaissance, after the fall of the Safawids. In the 19th century, religiously influential Sufis found royal patronage in the courts of the late Qajar shahs. Sufi spiritual authority was sometimes conceptualized as a worldly realm, autonomous from royal or jurist power. These Iranian developments were contemporaneous with increasing repression of Sufis by reformist jurists elsewhere in the 18th and 19th-century Islamic world. While Sufism in Turkey and Egypt suffered from 20th-century modernist regimes and subsequently declined, the Solṭānᶜalīšāhī-Neᶜmatollāhī order redefined its traditional, Shiᶜite Sufi religiosity in the face of 20th-century modernity, and expanded.

Sufism and the nation-state

Nationalist modernization in the early Pahlavi polity (1921-1941) has been associated with the repression of Sufism as a component of anti-religious policy. However, there are also different accounts that defy the alleged incongruity of religion and nationalist modernization. While the nationalist historian Ahmad Kasravi proclaimed that all books of the Sufis had to be thrown into the fire, Sufism made its way into schoolbooks. The shah himself, Reza Shah, is reported to have been closely associated with the Sufi member of parliament Sheikh ol-Molk Owrang.

In the Solṭānᶜalīšāhī order, the state context of nationalist modernization made its impact upon Sufi religiosity. Where formerly the community of believers in general had been a target audience, Sufi leaders now specifically targeted the Iranian nation. In order to support his claim for the Solṭānᶜalīšāhī leadership, Nūrᶜalīšāh (d.1918), for instance, 'issued a proclamation […] in which he called upon the nation to accept him as its head.'[1] His claim was challenged by KeyvānQazvīnī (d.1938), who in 1926 departed from the Sufi path as it was predominantly known in Iran.[2]

While Qazvīnī witnessed the shah's demolition of the traditional clergy's religious institutions, it is unlikely to have eluded him that 'some audacious thinkers attempted to reconcile […] intellectual modernism with a renewal of religion.'[3] The sermons of the influential ayatollah Sangelağī (1890-1944), for instance, attracted many from the state and societal elite. Central among his ideas was the need for a more rigorous monotheism that would do away with the belief in sacred intermediaries, i.e. the imams, and their 'intercession' (*šefā'*at). The 'emulation' (*taqlīd*) of *moğtahed*s ought to be replaced by everyman's direct 'interpretation' (*eğtheād*) of the sacred sources.

While Sangelağī attacked Shiᶜite *taqlīd*, Qazvīnī assaulted the traditional authority structure of master and disciple, and juxtaposed the 'formalist' (*rasmī*) Sufism of Sufi orders to 'true' (*ḥaqīqī*) Sufism. At its core lay the idea that mysticism could be a modern scientific enterprise. The 1930 version of his *Book of Mysticism* (ᶜ*Erfān-nāme*) used the measure of the modern age: the Gregorian calendar.

Qazvīnī's Sufism was strongly condemned by the Solṭānᶜalīšāhīs: 'One cannot count this to be Islamic Sufism anymore, it was a new religion.' They furthermore protested that 'sometimes [Qazvīnī was] particularly interested in the Wahhabi religion' and that 'like the Sunnis, he did not recognise "being divinely chosen" (*naṣṣ*) and "authorisation" (*eğāze*) as necessary conditions.'[4] In other words: in attacking all established Shiᶜite bases of spiritual authority, Qazvīnī was a heretic unbeliever.

Qazvīnī's challenge presents a distinctly modernist struggle: not only personal claims to spiritual authority were questioned, but also the nature of authority itself. In addition, his questioning of Sufi authority had the nation-state as an organizing motif. He outlined a vision of 'classes in society [that] are like organs in the body, [and] that must be present in the society to the extent that they are necessary, not too much and not too little, otherwise [society] would become defective like the man with four eyes and one hand, or four feet and one tooth'. Of the clergy, few were functional. If there were many clergymen, there would be more corruption (ᶜ*Erfān-nāme*, p. 313). Even less leniency was left over in his consideration of Sufism. In Qazvīnī's functionalist mode of reasoning, the organ of traditional Sufism was not only un-Islamic, but nationally dysfunctional (p. 311).

Admonitory advice

After Nūrᶜalīšāh died in 1918, his son Ṣāleḥᶜalīšāh (d.1966) assumed the order's leadership. His position was enhanced by well-to-do and influential affiliates, including the premier Qavām os-Salṭana. There are, moreover, several narratives of direct contacts between the Solṭānᶜalīšāhīs and Reza Shah, which concerned one son Ṣāleḥᶜalīšāh's sheikhs, Ayatollah ᶜAbdollāh Ḥa'erī Mazanderani. Before his ascent to power, Reza Shah had been impressed in an encounter with Hā'erī, who predicted: 'You will be shah', and added that the king-to-be ought to treat the people right.[5]

The present leader of the order, Mağẕūbᶜalīšāh, recollected three reproaches during the Reza Shah era: the Solṭānᶜalīšāhīs were accused of smoking opium, of bribing judges, and Qazvīnī had written that son Ṣāleḥᶜalīšāh pretended to kingship. Mağẕūbᶜalīšāh also recollected a visit by Reza Shah during which the king requested – to the background of these allegations – the writing of an instruction from which it would become manifest what constituted legitimate Sufi behaviour. The manuscript that resulted in 1939 was 'Ṣāleḥ'sAdvice' (*Pand-e* Ṣāleḥ), a booklet which more than any other established the Solṭānᶜalīšāhīs as a legitimate religious force in modern Iran. According to another manifesto, the booklet became 'a household word amongst the religious of Iran.' The order's respectable mission aimed at the broadest possible audience, as *Pand-e* Sāleḥ 'makes clear for the ordinary man and woman how to practice this moral and spiritual discipline [of Sufism], and so to enjoy the fruits of the spirit in daily life in this world.'[6] *Pand-e* Sāleḥ was recently observed to be 'a work filled with platitudes and hackneyed moral exhortations, the mystical content of which is insignificant.'[7] Whether or not one accepts this qualification, there is indeed nothing in it that would put Solṭānᶜalīšāhī Sufis up against the national, societal or stately order. When son Sāleḥᶜalīšāh did call upon the state, it was in a bid for support of traditional crafts and industries, a token of the (great) nation of Iran.[8]

Communalism

National integration had been a cause of great concern for Kasravi, who had 'focused on the question of communalism in [his treatise] *Sufigari*', and held Sufism, as a religious sect, among the primary causes of national disintegration.[9] But Nūrᶜalīšāh had promised 'to remove all discord from the nation in the space of two years' (if only the nation would recognize him as its spiritual leader).[10] Son Sāleḥᶜalīšāh had not verbally countered Kasravi's assault, but Sāleḥ's national advice (*Pand-e* Sāleḥ) contradicted any potential challenge in Sufi authority and developed the Solṭānᶜalīšāhī order in ways to make it seem idle.

One finds traces of modern Shiᶜite Sufism in the Solṭānᶜalīšāhī order, then, not only in the conspicuously revolutionary innovations of Qazvīnī. It is also to be found in Nūrᶜalīšāh's nation-wide appeal for spiritual recognition and national unity, and in the streamlined religiosity which stories surrounding *Pand-e* Ṣāleḥ claim was commissioned by the (state's) leader of the nation. Thus, the Solṭānᶜalīšāhī order evolved from being a powerful but localized *ferqe* (sect) into, to some outward extent at least, becoming a subdued but nationally integrated socio-religious organization. ✦

Notes

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5. Interview Mağẕūbᶜalīšāh, 04/19/97, cf. Owrang, ᶜA. 'To solṭān-emoqtader-e īn mamlekat ḫwāhī šhod' in *Sāl-nāme-ye Donyā,* 22, p. 218; Neᶜmatollāhī, ᶜA (1361/1982). *Tīq-eBorande*. Tehran: Payām, p. 80.
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I would like to express my gratitude to Dr Bernd Radtke for his comments on earlier versions of this article.

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South Asia

YOGINDER SIKAND

The Sufi Shrines of Jammu

The more than a decade-old civil war in the disputed region of Jammu and Kashmir, which till today shows no sign of abating, has resulted in the death of an estimated 40,000 people. Inter-community relations, which have historically been relatively cordial as compared to the rest of South Asia, have sharply deteriorated, and today a gulf of hostility and suspicion separates Hindus and Muslims. However, despite this hardening of communal boundaries, at the popular level many Muslims, Sikhs and Hindus in the Jammu province continue to share a common religious culture, centred round the shrines (*dargahs*) of Sufi saints.

Jammu is popularly known as the 'City of Temples', owing to its large number of Hindu shrines. However, Jammu is also home to numerous Sufi *dargahs*, which are important centres of pilgrimage, bringing together people of different castes and communities. In this, these shrines play a unique role, there being no other such structures which perform a similar function. In a society where caste and religious differences are so marked, this role of the shrines is a particularly important one. For the Hindus and Sikhs who flock to the shrines, the buried Sufis are seen as powerful spiritual beings (*devtas*) that can grant them their wishes. For the Muslim devout, they are considered to be intermediaries (*wasilah* or *zariya*), who can plead with God on their behalf in times of need, to have their requests fulfilled.

The following article deals, briefly, with the principal Sufi *dargahs* of Jammu town. It may be noted here that although these are Muslim shrines, they are today, for the most part, frequented more by Hindus than by Muslims. Muslims form only a very small proportion of the population of Jammu town. In the 1947 Partition riots, Jammu saw a large-scale slaughter of Muslims, with thousands killed and many more forced to flee to Pakistan. Jammu town was almost completely depleted of its Muslim population, and it was only from the 1950s onwards that small numbers of Muslims began settling here from other parts of the state.

We now turn to a brief discussion of the major Sufi *dargahs* in Jammu town.

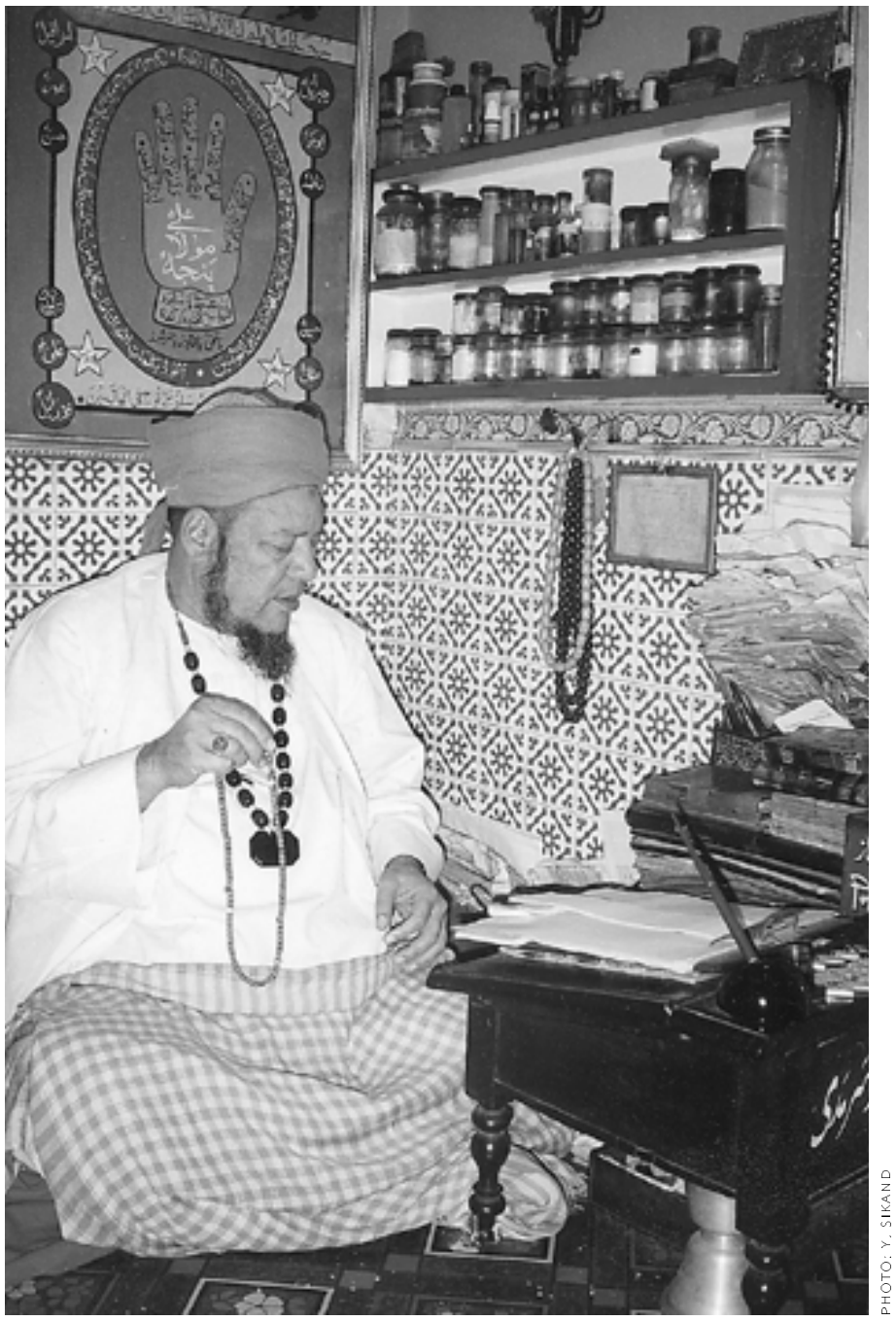

PHOTO: Y. SIKAND

▶ **A *faqir* at a Jammu Dargah, medicines in the background.**

Pir Raushan ᶜAli Shah

The first major Sufi to come to the Jammu region was Pir Raushan ᶜAli Shah, whose *dargah* is located at Gumat, in Jammu town. Some believe him to have been one of the Prophet's companions (*sahabi*),[1] but Kardar estimates his arrival to have been in the 13th century, before Timur's invasion of North India.[2] He is said to have performed many miracles, by which the Raja was so impressed that he became his devotee and requested him to settle in his city. When the Pir died, the Raja laid him to rest with full honours and had a grave of stone and mud constructed for him. The grave is a simple, dome-less structure some 20 feet (9 *gaz*) long, hence its name, Maqbara Naugazan. The saint is also remembered as Naugazi Pir, apparently because he measured 9 *gaz* in height. Today, his *dargah* is a major place of local pilgrimage. Both Hindus and Muslims light little clay lamps and place them in an alcove adjacent to the grave, in the hope of the Pir being able to help them. His ᶜ*urs*, the festival commemorating his death, which attracts thousands of people from Jammu, Kashmir and Punjab, is held every December.

Pir Lakhdata

The name *lakhdata* literally means 'the giver of hundreds of thousands'. It signifies this Pir's status as a giver of Sufi wisdom. The *dargah* of Pir Lakhdata is located in a bazaar named after him in the heart of Jammu town. The life of Pir Lakhdata is shrouded in mystery. He is said to have been a close associate of Guru Nanak, the first guru of the Sikhs. The cult of Pir Lakhdata is particularly popular among the agriculturist castes of Punjab and Rajasthan, both Hindu as well as Muslim. This tradition is linked with the cult of Guga Pir, said to be a Rajput chieftain who converted to Islam. In some versions of the account of Guga Pir's life, he and Pir Lakhdata are presented as one and the same person. According to local tradition, after his death, half of Guga Pir's body was taken by his Muslim followers and buried according to Muslim rites, and to them he is known as Zahir Pir. The other half of his body was cremated by his Hindu followers, who revere him as Pir Lakhdata.[3] Some writers hold that Pir Lakhdata never actually came to Jammu and that the shrine that stands today at Lakhdata Bazar was later built in his name by some of his followers.[4]

Baba Budhan ᶜAli Shah

Another noted Sufi whose shrine is located in Jammu and who is associated with Guru Nanak was the Qadri Baba Budhan ᶜAli Shah. His real name is said to have been Sayyed Shamsuddin, but he is known more popularly as Baba Budhan ('The Old Baba') because he was blessed with a very long life. Baba Budhan was born near Lahore in the village of Talwandi, the birthplace of Guru Nanak. Tradition has it that he was a very close friend of Guru Nanak, and the two would often meet to discuss spiritual matters. The *dargah* of the Baba is visited every day by scores of people, mainly Hindus and Sikhs. On Thursdays, several thousands gather here, and at the ᶜ*urs*, held on the first Thursday of the local month of Har, the crowds are enormous.

Pir Mitha

Pir Mitha's *dargah* is located on a hillock on the banks of the river Tawi. According to local tradition, he came to Jammu from Iran in 1462 CE during the reign of Raja Ajaeb Dev. It so happened that one day the Raja's wife fell seriously ill.[5] The Pir is said to have cured the queen, as a result of which the king and many of his subjects became his disciples. An entire Hindu caste group, the 'low' caste *bhishtis* (water-carriers), accepted him as their spiritual preceptor. Soon, the Pir's fame spread far and wide, and many began converting to Islam under his influence. Because of this, the Pir was faced with stiff opposition from some Hindu priests. His most vehement opponent was Siddh Garib Nath, a Shaivite Gorakhnathi yogi. However, as the story goes, the two soon became friends.[6]

The association between Pir Mitha and Siddh Garib Nath is particularly interesting. Banihali writes that after the yogi overcame his initial opposition to the Pir, the two 'developed a great respect for each other'.[7] They decided to settle down together in the cave where Pir Mitha lived. This cave is known as Pir Khoh or the 'Cave of the Pir'. According to one writer, '[t]his clearly shows that in God's court there is no question of caste and creed'.[8] Legend has it that the yogi entered the cave and travelled all the way to Matan in Kashmir, never to return. After he disappeared, his disciples came to the Pir and requested him to accept them as his followers. The Pir declined, saying that they should be faithful to their guru. When this failed to satisfy them, the Pir said that they could, if they wanted, take his title of 'Pir' along with theirs. That is why the cave is today called as Pir Khoh and the heads of the Nath yogis who reside there are known as Pirs.[9]

Pir Mitha died in 1476 CE and is buried in a locality in the heart of Jammu town named after him. Like the other Sufi shrines in Jammu town, Hindus vastly outnumber Muslims at his *dargah*. The majority of the pilgrims belong to the *kashp* caste, a Hindu community traditionally considered 'low' in the caste hierarchy. Some believe that the *kashps* are descendants of the early *bhishti* disciples of Pir Mitha. Although they are all Hindus, they regard Pir Mitha as the guru of their community. It is the custom for the *kashps* of Jammu to visit the *dargah* every morning after having a bath. All their auspicious ceremonies are conducted only after paying respects at the shrine.

Baba Jiwan Shah

Baba Jiwan Shah was born in 1852 at Salehpur Chaprar in the Sialkot district of Punjab, to a Hussaini Sayyed family known for its piety. At the age of 23, upon the advice of his preceptor, the Chishti Pir Sain Baqr ᶜAli Shah, he left his village, spending 12 years in meditation and austerities at Akhnoor on the banks of the river Chenab.[10] He then went to Jammu town, where he took up residence in a graveyard, meditating inside the grave of the Sufi Sher Shah Wali for 12 years. After this, he spent the rest of his life in the region around Jammu, preaching Islam and acquiring disciples.[11] His *dargah* is found in Jammu town at a locality named after him.[12]

Baba Jiwan Shah's disciples came from all backgrounds and included Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and others. Notable among his followers were Maharaja Pratap Singh, ruler of Jammu and Kashmir (1885-1925) and his brother Amar Singh. The king fixed a regular monthly stipend (*wazifa*) for him and would often invite him to the royal palace.

Baba Jiwan Shah died on 25 December 1919. His ᶜ*urs* is celebrated every year on this day. For the occasion, food is distributed to the poor and the Holy Qur'an is recited. In addition, every Thursday several hundred followers visit his *dargah*, Hindus outnumbering Muslims. The oil that burns in the clay lamps there is taken as a special ointment to cure ailments. Many childless mothers come here to request the Baba to plead with God for a son for them.

Panj Pir

At Ramnagar, in the outskirts of Jammu town, is the shrine of the Panj Pirs, or 'Five Pirs'. The Panj Pir cult is widespread all over northern India and Pakistan. The composi-

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tion of the Panj Pirs varies from place to place. In some cases, it includes both Muslim as well as Hindu figures. The origins of the cult have been traced back to the Hindu cult of the five Pandava brothers, heroes of the Hindu epic, the Mahabharata, as well as the Shi^{c}a tradition of revering the five members of the *ahl-ul-bayt*, the 'holy family' consisting of the Prophet Muhammad, his daughter Fatima, her husband ^{c}Ali and their sons Hasan and Hussain.

Little is known about the history of the Panj Pir shrine in Jammu. Legend has it that five brothers of a Muslim family spent many years there in meditation and austerities and then they all left to go their own ways.[13]

According to local tradition, one day the five Pirs appeared in a dream to the Maharaja and admonished him for sleeping with his feet pointing to their *chillah*, the placed they used to meditate. The next morning, the Maharaja ordered the spot to be excavated, and an umbrella and five kettledrums were found. Believing this to be a holy place, he ordered the construction of a *dargah* there.[14] He then appointed his royal charioteer, Alif Shah, and a Muslim woman, Khurshid Begum, as custodians of the shrine.

The great popularity of the Panj Pir *dargah*, especially among the local Hindus, is believed to be a largely post-1947 phenomenon. It is said that following the Partition riots in which thousands of Muslims in Jammu lost their lives and many more were forced to flee to Pakistan, some Hindus attempted to take over the shrine, claiming that it was actually a temple of the five Pandavas. They went so far as to forcibly install a Shiva *linga*[15] on top of the grave-like structure inside the *dargah*. Local legend has it that the next morning the people discovered that the *linga* had cracked into pieces on its own. The Hindus took this as a sign that the shrine was actually a Muslim *dargah* and so withdrew their claims.

At present, the *dargah* is looked after by a Hindu Rajput, Kuldip Singh Charak. He is the husband of Shamim Akhtar, the daughter of Khurshid Begum, the first custodian of the shrine.[16] He took over this responsibility following Khurshid Begum's death in 1986. Like a Muslim Pir, Kuldip Singh Charak also hands out *tawiz,* or amulets, for cures to those who come to him in need. These amulets are made of what is called *pir ka panchratna* ('the five jewels of the Pir'), consisting of marigold flowers placed on the grave-like structure inside the shrine, a piece of white thread, soot and oil from the clay lamps that burn at the shrine and the ash of incense sticks.

PHOTO: Y. SIKAND

The Hinduized *dargah* of a Sufi saint at Charmaliyal, Jammu.

The Panj Pir shrine in Jammu is particularly popular among the local Hindus. It is customary for drivers and travellers in buses, cars and trucks who pass by the shrine to stop there, bow their heads in respect and to offer token sums of money. Large crowds gather here every Thursday. As at other *dargahs* at Jammu, they place little balls of sugar (*prasad* or *tabarruk*) on the grave-like structure, light incense-sticks, rub the oil from the clay lamps on their bodies and apply a small dot (*bindi*) on their foreheads with the soot from the lamps. They also press the grave-like structure with their hands as if massaging the body of the Pir.

From this description of the history of the major Sufis and Sufi shrines of Jammu, it appears that Sufism has played multiple social roles in this region and is still a vibrant force and a deep-rooted part of people's cultures and traditions. By far, the most important role of these shrines today is to bring people of different castes and communities together in worship. Furthermore, as in much of the rest of South Asia, in the Jammu area, too, many Sufis have played an important role in the process of social reform, with their message of ethical monotheism, love for all creatures of God and the equality of all human beings. This is why, in particular, as the case of Pir Mitha's *dargah* shows, large numbers of 'lower' castes were attracted to the Sufis, and in the process many of them embraced Islam. The remarkable egalitarianism of the cults of the *dargahs* is readily apparent in the case of the Jiwan Shah shrine, where a 'low' caste Chamar, regarded as a saint, is buried alongside his spiritual preceptor. It is because of this great legacy of the Sufis that, centuries after their deaths, they continue to play such an important role in the lives of their followers, irrespective of religion and caste. ✦

PHOTO: Y. SIKAND

Pir Mitha *dargah*, Jammu.

Notes

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5. Khatoon, op.cit., p. 19.
6. Kardar, op.cit., p. 88.
7. Banihali, op.cit., p. 236.
8. Nath, Surendra. *Shiv Jambavant Gufa Rahasya Pir Khoh*. Jammu, n.d., p. 10.
9. The present head of the Nathpanth monastery at Pir Khoh is Pir Shivnath.
10. Interview with Muhammad Aslam, custodian of the *dargah* of Baba Jiwan Shah, Jammu, 2 December 1999.
11. Pandit Tilak Raj, *Hazrat Baba Jiwan Shah* (Hindi mss. in the possession of Muhammad Aslam, custodian of the *dargah* of Baba Jiwan Shah).
12. Sharma, Vikas (1998). 'Qutb-i-Zaman Hazrat Baba Jiwan Shah'. *Yojna* 2 (2-3), May-June, pp. 51-52.
13. Khatoon, op.cit., pp. 37-38.
14. Banihali, op.cit., p. 248.
15. A phallus-shaped stone, believed by Hindus to be the symbol of the god Shiva.
16. Interview with Kuldip Singh Charak, Jammu, 7 December 1999.

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Middle East
ZIBA MIR-HOSSEINI

Debating Gender with Ulema in Qom

Following the Iranian Revolution of 1979 and the re-introduction of *shari^{c}a* law relating to gender and the family, women's rights suffered a major setback. However, as the implementers of the law have faced the social realities of women's lives and aspirations, positive changes have gradually come about. Since the late 1980s there has been a growing debate in Iranian books and journals between proponents of different approaches to gender in Islam. During 1995, a series of discussions were held with clerical contributors to the debate in which clarification was sought for the jurisprudential bases for their approaches to gender issues.

Qom is the main centre of *shi^{c}i* religious learning and power in Iran. After the foundation of the Islamic Republic, clerics were charged with establishing the religious basis of the new regime's programme and its social, economic and political order. Besides, they had to manage the difficult transition from a standpoint of opposition to one of power. As the regime has increasingly faced the real contemporary issues of social policy and practice, the religious scholars have had to make accommodations in many key areas of Islamic doctrine and law. One of the key areas has been that of gender relations, and the legal, social and political rights and roles of women. The process of accommodation intensified after Ayatollah Khomeini's death in 1989, and has been accompanied by lively debates about the 'question of women'.

Defending or reconstructing notions of gender

I have been following these debates as an anthropologist and a student of Islamic law. My aim is to understand the varying notions of gender that lie at the root of *shari^{c}a* family rules, and how the custodians of the *shari^{c}a* in Iran today – the *shi^{c}i* clerics – attempt variously to perpetuate, modify, deconstruct and reconstruct these notions of gender. At first, the main sources used were a number of books and journals, published in Qom and Tehran, which clearly formed part of a public debate in which highly divergent perspectives were being aired. Two journals of particular interest and significance were found. Both were launched in 1992, but they took radically different positions. One, *Payam-e Zan* (Women's Message), based in Qom and run by male clerics, defended the *shari^{c}a* and the gender inequalities inherent in its legal rules. The other, *Zanan* (Women), based in Tehran and run by women, argued for gender equality on all fronts.

Zanan advocated a brand of feminism that takes Islam as source of legitimacy. Each issue had a legal section which examined and discussed the restrictions placed on women by *shari^{c}a* laws. From May 1992, the tone and style of these legal articles began to change, slowly but surely taking issue with the very premises on which the official *shi^{c}i* discourse on the position of women is based, and laying bare their inherent gender bias. These articles were unprecedented: first, they made no attempt to cover up or to rationalize the gender inequalities embedded in *shari^{c}a* law. Secondly, they had something new to say, a thesis. There was consistency in the approach and the progression of the arguments. Each article built upon the premises and arguments established in earlier ones. They were published under different male and female names, but it was evident to me that they were written by a single person, someone well versed in the sacred sources and in the *shi^{c}i* art of argumentation.

Before long I found out who the author was: a young cleric, Hojjat ol-Eslam Seyyed Mohsen Sa^{c}idzadeh. In April 1995, two women activists I knew, the lawyer Mehrangiz Kar and the publisher Shahla Lahiji, organized a meeting for me with him. I had just finished a paper in which I analysed *Zanan*'s legal articles, pointing out their novel approach. We discussed my paper and Sa^{c}idzadeh agreed with my analysis of his writings; we began a programme of collaborative research. He provided me with his unpublished manuscripts to study and comment. He also introduced me to gender debates in Qom and facilitated my research there.

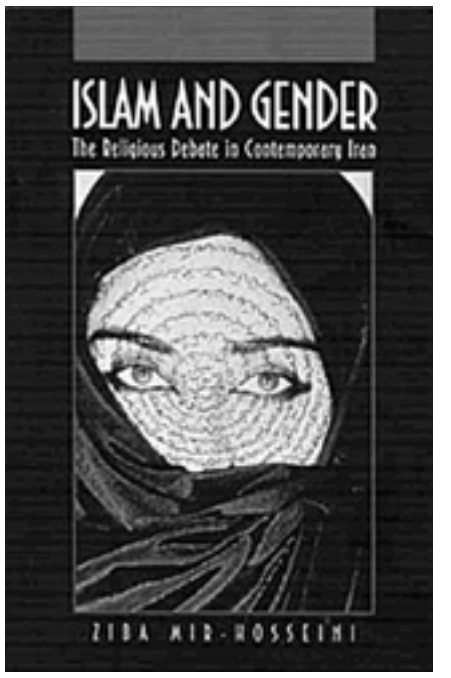
This was my first experience of the clerical way of life and thinking. The strict codes of gender segregation and *hejab* that organize time and space meant that I spent most of my time with women. Sa^{c}idzadeh's teenage daughter, Zahra, was always present. In Qom, I stayed in the house of a pious preacher of modest means; his home was small, consisting of three connecting rooms and a courtyard housing the washing and toilet facilities. He had six children, one of them a boy of eighteen, yet gender segregation was so effectively maintained and the space so innovatively divided by curtains that I never set eyes on this young man – nor he on me, as I was told. I also spent long hours with the women of this family and many others in Qom, many of whom saw no contradiction between Islam and their rights as women, wholeheartedly believing in and drawing power from all the rules that I saw as limiting and oppressive to women.

Traditionalists, neo-traditionalists and modernists

Between September and November 1995, and then in winter 1997, I met and interviewed a number of leading protagonists of gender debates in Qom, including the clerical editors of *Payam-e Zan*. I also searched for books, pamphlets, and tape recordings of sermons that dealt with women and gender relations. I found three main perspectives: 'traditionalists' insisted on patriarchal interpretations based on 'complementarity' but 'inequality of rights and duties' between women and men; 'neo-traditionalists' attempted to introduced 'balance' into traditional interpretations; and 'modernists' sought a radical rethinking of the jurisprudential construction of gender.

In my book *Gender and Islam: The Religious Debates in Contemporary Iran* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999: London, I. B. Tauris, 2000) I relate the three perspectives and place them in their social, cultural and political contexts. I examine key passages in written and oral texts and narrate my discussions with the authors, presenting them in an order that reflects the chronological development of the concepts and conveys something of their context, while relating my engagement, as a Muslim woman and a social anthropologist educated and working in the West, with *shi^{c}i* Muslim thinkers of various backgrounds and views.

There are three parts to the book. The structure and format of chapters in each part differ, reflecting the nature and extent of my engagement with the texts and their authors. The two texts discussed in Part One represent the viewpoint of clerics who see the gender model in *shari^{c}a* law as immutable and their mission to be to convince others of this truth. One is by Ayatollah Madani Tabrizi, a senior Qom cleric, the other by Ayatollah Azari-Qomi, a government cleric who played an important role in the first decade of the Islamic Republic. Although I talked with both ayatollahs, my engagement with their texts is limited to selecting passages for full translation, and paraphrasing and summarizing the rest: our views on gender and our understandings of Islam were so different that there was little room for a constructive dialogue.



The four chapters in Part Two recount my discussions with the clerics of *Payam-e Zan* and their mentor Ayatollah Sane^{c}i – known for his progressive views on women's issues. Although they too staunchly defend the immutability of the gender model manifested in Islamic law, they admit the need for change in practice and seek new interpretations. They published transcripts of these discussions in their journal in 1996. I use them to shed light not only on the gender debates but also on clerical modes of thinking and argumentation. Unlike Part One, where the authors of the texts and I could only repeat our positions, here the clerics and I managed to engage critically with each others' premises and arguments. These four chapters are, in effect, co-authored.

The two chapters in Part Three concern texts which represent a theoretical break from conventional legal wisdom, and my engagement with them goes further than with those discussed earlier. One deals with lectures by Abdolkarim Sorush, the most prominent among contemporary Islamic intellectuals in Iran. Although he is neither a cleric nor an exponent of gender equality, I devote a chapter to his ideas for two main reasons. First, his approach to sacred texts has not only enabled women in *Zanan* to place their demands within an Islamic framework, it has encouraged clerics for whom gender has become a 'problem' to address it from within a legal framework. Secondly, it is in response to the challenge implicit in Sorush's ideas that some clerics have had to admit that their understanding of the *shari^{c}a* is subject to change and that they must find new arguments, or else they must abandon the claim to rule in the name of *shari^{c}a*. Sorush's ideas undermined the very basis of their exclusive right to religious authority.

In the final chapter, I discuss the work of my guide Sa^{c}idzadeh, whose articles in *Zanan* provided the impetus for my research. He calls his approach the 'equality perspective', contending that it is found in the work of some eminent jurists, alongside the dominant approach, which he calls the 'inequality perspective'. He sees his achievement to be in articulating the 'equality perspective' coherently and shaping it to accord with current realities. Sa^{c}idzadeh was the only cleric I could find who had radical ideas on gender and was willing to air them in public. He later became a victim of the struggle between modernists and traditionalists, which took a new turn following the 1997 presidential election that brought Mohammad Khatami in power. In June 1998, following the publication of an article in the liberal daily newspaper *Jame^{c}eh* (now closed), in which he compared the gender views of religious traditionalists in Iran with those of the Taliban in Afghanistan, he was arrested. Five months later he was released; his crime was never announced, but he lost his clerical position and is now forbidden to publish his writings.

The three parts are framed by an Introduction and a Conclusion, placing Iranian texts and debates in the context of religious politics and approaches to gender in Islam. Each part begins with a brief introduction to a defining text on women, and each chapter builds on and adds a new dimension to the arguments presented in the preceding one. Chapters in the first two parts begin and end with narratives of my visits to Qom in 1995 and 1997 and meetings with the authors whose texts are discussed. These accounts are intended to draw attention to the taken-for-granted, shared meanings that underlie life in Qom, the familiar routines that inhabitants take as natural. By narrating an ethnography of my personal engagement with a series of texts and their authors, I aim to provoke other Muslim women to write more revealingly of their changing trajectories. We need to know more about these personal trajectories if we are to understand the relationship between feminism and religious politics. ✦

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Middle East / North Africa
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Transformation through Monarchy in Morocco and Jordan

In 1999 two young Arab kings succeeded their fathers to the throne: King Hussein of Jordan had reigned for 46 years and King Hassan of Morocco for 38 years, when their eldest sons, Abdullah and Mohammed (both born in the first half of the 60s) succeeded them. The new kings have a European education and distinctly westernized behaviour. It is for this reason that many observers were expecting a legitimacy crisis. But thus far, the two monarchs seem to propose a different conception of political order which has gained widespread support: they are regarded as the new heralds of Moroccan and Jordanian youth. The support of the youth is one of the major challenges in societies where more than half of the population is under 25 years of age.

The new kings of Morocco and Jordan both benefit on the national level from the inherited royal legitimation, on the international level from the support of the Clinton-administration and on the personal level from an effort to introduce a new concept of authority. The rumour that King Abdullah went around the country in disguise talking to people in a government hospital or in the bureaucracy in order to avoid being isolated from the complaints of the masses is not unsubstantiated. Mohammed VI is called by teenagers 'M 6' or 'King of the Poor'. In 1987 he received his diploma in political science from the University of Rabat. Six years later he submitted his doctoral thesis at the University of Nice on the cooperation between the Maghreb and the European Union. Meanwhile he accompanied Jacques Delors, in his capacity as President of the European Commission, for eight months in order to learn EU diplomatic policy making. Contrary to many comments after the death of his father, Mohammed VI was prepared to succeed him but did not play an important public role within the court ceremony nor had he voiced any political opinions prior. What was formally known as the 'reign of *hiba*' (fear) is now being transplanted by a wave of trust.

PHOTO: A. LINH

King Mohammed VI of Morocco

New values or better public relations?

It is too early to evaluate the sustainability of the introduction of new norms and values and the direct influence of this discourse on *Realpolitik*. It was, without a doubt, a courageous act when Mohammed VI ousted long-term Minister of Interior, Driss Basri, after 25 years. This event supports the hypothesis that the more humble behaviour of the heads of states and a new etiquette at the royal palaces is not merely a masquerade or political tactics. Further research is necessary, however, to analyse the effectiveness of the changing images of Mohammed VI and Abdullah II in order to assess their influence on the collective cultural identity.

One important historical study on Morocco has been presented by Abdellah Hammoudi, who has examined 'the exact ways in which these abstract principles of legitimation are vested with an emotional impact sufficient to foster action' (Hammoudi 1997: 2). The author looked at the ideological and cultural foundations of the persistent authoritarianism from an anthropological point of view. From a political science approach, new questions arise in order to explore whether and how the images of both kings foster legitimacy among the youth. It needs to be assessed whether and how Mohammed VI can still be the sacred commander of the faithful and at the same time break through the authoritarian style of rule. The recent web chats among Moroccans that have appeared – with the anonymity of the Internet – containing questions about the possibility that a descendant of the Prophet be gay, show the sensitivity of this debate.

Hassan II: the last king of divine right in Morocco?

The relationship between the Moroccan king and his subjects is one of direct allegiance. The televised ceremony of allegiance, performed every year on March 3, equals the submission of the whole population in one instant. The monarchy becomes the one point of reference for the vast majority of Moroccans. The opposition journalist Hamid Berrada pointed out that when the people mourned the loss of their father in July 1999 this was not a metaphor; they had been literally turned into orphans. The strength of the monarchy lies in its direct religious ties between the king-sultan-caliph and the subject-believer-citizen. '[A]ttacking him would be both a crime and a sacrilege – inseparable notions in this logic – at once a violation of divine law and the desacralization of a figure of Islamic piety', notes Hammoudi (1997: 13). The identification with the leader is not only based on divine authority and sharifian descent, but also derived from the anti-colonial stance of the monarchy. Due to Moroccan colonial history, identification with the regime is much greater than in any other Arab country.

What constitutes legitimacy?

The point of departure here is the assumption that religious conceptions of order and legitimacy do not only have a dogmatic dimension but are also part of a changing social praxis. Legitimacy is not understood as an inherent characteristic of monarchical rule as such, but as the result of a process of bargaining and counterbalancing. The Alawite dynasty that has ruled Morocco since the 17th century has relied on very flexible conceptions of order and legitimacy, which partly explains their continuous and stable rule. The Makhzen's (literally 'storehouse' – centre of power, state) strategy to counterbalance urban and tribal society, Arab and Berber, and reformers and the orthodoxy, has a long successful history in Morocco.

The sacralization of the monarchy in the post-colonial constitution of 1962 (Art. 23) can be seen as one example of the (re-)construction of religiously founded conceptions of political legitimacy in contemporary Morocco. The constitution, originally a secular instrument, now establishes the sacredness of the person of the king – an idea completely alien to classical Islamic law. Hereditary monarchy is another concept that is highly controversial among Muslim scholars. Even the ceremony of the *bayᶜa* (oath of allegiance to the sultan/king) does not mean a return to Muslim traditions, but is very much a backward production. Today high officials from the Ministry of Interior and members of parliament are swearing allegiance – and the ulema as well. The combination of traditional form with modern content is supposed to constitute historical continuity and therefore legitimacy.

A new challenge for Islamist opposition groups

Whereas their fathers had been proponents of an authoritarian cultural symbolism, their young successors depict themselves as citizens among citizens. The mosque of Hassan II in Casablanca is an architectural manifestation of the former tradition-bound authority (see *ISIM Newsletter* 3/99). In Morocco, streets and public buildings are either named after Hassan II or Mohammed V but never after ordinary citizens. Mohammed VI is still considered to be a direct successor of the prophet in the 36th generation. This line of legitimation is not being erased now, but is mixed with elements of modern popular culture.

The young king's new semiology represents a cultural re-evaluation in the Middle East. It is being debated whether the obvious metamorphosis of the holy will end in a position of the king comparable to the Spanish monarch after Franco. Or is Mohammed VI just trying to secure the position of the crown above the constitution by applying a modern outlook?

In both cases, the new symbolism means a different challenge for the Islamist opposition than the types of regime with which they were formerly confronted. So far they had presented themselves as the 'voice of the poor'. Faced with a choice, many young people now prefer the cosmopolitan outlook of their young leader to the inward looking worldview of the Islamists who demand not to listen to music or to separate the sexes.

The importance and profundity of certain actions can best be deciphered by the reactions they call forth: In November 1999, Abdessalam Yassine, the leader of the most important Moroccan Islamist group *al-ᶜAdl wal-Ihsan* (Justice and Welfare) wrote a remarkable letter addressing Mohammed VI. Yassine depicts the young monarch as highly admired by Moroccan youth. '[They] regard him as a friend, a symbol of liberation and a promise for a better future. During the first weeks of his reign, and wherever his inaugural campaign took him, the young king is greeted with genuine and youthful enthusiasm. The Makhzen machinery, which organised the funeral of the late Hassan II, plays a full role to present to the crowd, overcome with cheers, a young man having great presence, smiling and gesturing benevolently to the warm welcome of the public.'*

Despite Yassine's proposal to repatriate the royal family's fortune in order to reduce Morocco's foreign debt, poverty and the unemployment rate – a proposal considered offensive by the king and therefore censured – Yassine in his letter does not suggest that Mohammed VI is not to be trusted or that his mission has already failed. 'In this beginning of November 1999, the young king has won the first round in his glorious battle against "*l'empire du mal*". He has dismissed the central pillar of the Makhzen. Hassan's odd-job man. Hassan's right-hand man. Public enemy 2… In his speeches, the new king talks about a "new concept of authority". He has brilliantly proven that he intends to act accordingly. However, does he really intend to break off with the past? Can he do so? When is the great revolution to take place?' (Yassine: 1999)

The old generation of leaders in the Middle East chose to counter the growing tide of Islamism with more and more public space for a paternalistic interpretation of what were deemed to be Muslim traditions and practices. With the death of Hassan II, many observers doubted whether Mohammed VI would acquire the spiritual authority as commander of the faithful and the theological authority as highest religious scholar that would guarantee him the support of the ulema. Now it seems that this might not even be his strongest asset against the Islamist opposition. It will be of interest for the whole Arab world to see which notions of legitimacy and type of power will be put forward in a society which is heavily struck by a crisis of religious and political meaning. ✦

Note

* Yassine explained that he had originally written the Memorandum in French in order to reach Morocco's westernized French-speaking elite who regard Arabic as a '"vernacular" language used only to communicate with illiterate people.'

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Turkey

KRISZTINA KEHL-BODROGI

The New Garments of Alevism

In the past decade, Turkey's official image as a country of Sunni Muslims has been vigorously challenged by the 'coming out' of the Alevis, a large heterodox Islamic minority, which consists of approximately 15 million Turkish- and Kurdish-speaking members. Until that time, due to the official definition of Turkey as an ethnically and religiously homogenous nation, public expressions of deviating collective identities had been banned by law. However, a shift in government policy in the early 1990s enabled the Alevis to come to the fore and to inaugurate an ethno-political movement to achieve official acknowledgement.

The politicization of Alevi identity is accompanied by a religious revivalism which – regarding the nature of traditional Alevism – appears to result in a re-construction of community structures, beliefs and rituals.

Concealment and secrecy

Expelled by the larger society as heretics and afflicted with the stigma of immorality, the Alevis practised for centuries *taqiyya*, the concealment of one's own religious identity. They guarded their doctrines as mystery (*sır*), not to be disclosed to anyone but those born into the community. The esoteric knowledge was handed down orally in a number of holy lineages (*ocak*) – which claim descent from the Prophet – and passed on to the laymen (*talip*) in special initiation rites. Though a kind of hierarchy existed among the *ocak*, none of them exercised the role of a central religious authority. This segmented organization along with the lack of a binding script forestalled the development of a single and uniquely valid religious tradition among the Alevis.

Aside from strong Shi'i (and extreme-Shi'i) influences, the Alevis preserved several non-Islamic religious traditions. What brings them into sharpest contrast with Islamic orthodoxy is the rejection of the shari'a. Rather, the Alevis claim that as they possess the esoteric (*batini*) meaning of the faith, they are exempt from the observance of its external (*zahiri*) laws. The 'hidden truth' appears to be the doctrine of *vahdet-i mevcut,* which denies the separateness between Creator and creatures. The Alevis express this by saying that there is no man without God and no God without man. An outstanding feature of Alevism is the veneration of the fourth caliph Ali, who, along with Allah and Mohammed, forms part of a trinity. Ali and Muhammad are regarded as pre-existent, the former of the two often believed to be God himself. Further beliefs refer to metempsychosis (*tenasüh*) and the incarnation of God in man (*hulul)*. The Alevis fast 12 days in Muharrem, in memory of the murder of Ali's son al-Husain at Kerbala. In addition, there exists a wide range of local beliefs and customs in accordance to the various sub-groups or a given region.[1]

Secularization and politicization

The manifold transformations of republican Turkey put an end to the spatial and social marginality of the Alevis. However, their gradual integration into the majority society – migration to the towns, school attendance, state employment and the involvement in the national economy – led in the long run to a secularization of the community. As a result, the social-religious system collapsed and religion as a whole lost its previous importance. This development reached its peak in the 1970s, when the overwhelming majority of the Alevis devoted itself to leftist and universal ideologies. In this period a whole generation had grown up without being initiated into the secret doctrines and the Holy Men (*dede*) lost their function and authority. The oral transmission of knowledge was interrupted and mostly fell into oblivion.

Back to the roots or toward a new Alevism?

Local and global developments in the 1980s – disintegration of the Left, Islamism and the world-wide collapse of socialism – led to a re-discovering of Alevism as a main source of collective identity, accompanied by a reawakened interest in its cultural and religious traditions. Manifold efforts have been made to adapt Alevism – which is actually a village phenomenon – to the conditions of urbanity and modernity, the most significant among them being the scripturalization of the oral traditions, the abandonment of concealment and secrecy, and the transition of authority from the Holy Men to members of a new middle-class elite, who in majority belong to the traditional 'laity'. They take over leading functions in the community-based associations, which since 1990 have been established all over the country and carry out manifold political activities in the name of Alevism. Under the motto 'We have nothing to hide', educated members of this new elite openly discuss beliefs and rituals of the community in the print media, on TV, and in hundreds(!) of book publications.[2] The renewed interest in religion becomes apparent in the rapidly growing number of houses of worship (*cem evi*), being erected in the towns. After an interruption of nearly 30 years, religious ceremonies (*cem*) are observed again.

The manner in which the *cem* are currently carried out marks a gradual transition of Alevism into an open community of belief with more or less formalized forms of ritual. *Cem* ceremonies are offered weekly by the worship houses as a religious service and last about 2 hours (in contrast to the past, where they went on the whole night). They are now open to the public, not only because an exclusion of non-Alevis would be politically unwise, but given the anonymity of urban life, it could not be controlled anyway. Also, secrecy would contradict the new self-image of the Alevis, which represents a universally valid and modern form of faith. In addition, the *cem* in the towns have lost their former function as a social regulative and controlling trial and even as an instrument of religious education. Thus they lack former indispensable elements such as initiation (*ikrar*) and the ritual of *görülme*, a kind of 'trial' in which quarrels among the disciples were settled and those who committed an offence called to account. If they are carried out at all, they appear to be merely a symbol of belonging. (In a case recently witnessed in Istanbul, more than 70 men were questioned and initiated within 4 hours.) Under such conditions, the function of the Holy Men – a part of them becoming active again – is limited to the observance of ceremonies which consist of special prayers (*gülbenk, dua*), hymns (*nefes*), music, and ritual dance (*sema*).

The Holy Men are no longer the only – and not even the most important – transmitters of knowledge. Often uneducated and unable (or reluctant) to speak on religious matters in a way accessible to the new urban generation, they can hardly gain back their previous authority. The post-Marxist generation does not consider descent as a value in its own right and demands scientifically trained and 'enlightened' *dedes*. 'Acquired' knowledge is increasingly taking precedence over 'inherited' knowledge and written sources over orality. However, the demand for a textbook on Alevism with a clear explanation of its essentials is out of sight at the present. Competitions among the new community leaders and among the Holy Lineages, as well as ideological divergences forestalled, until now, serious attempts to develop a coherent belief system out of the components of Alevi syncretism. In this situation the books of Alevi intellectuals become the main source of information.

However, the more books are published the more confusion increases. Most of the authors are 'laymen' and belong to the generation which had no access to the sacred knowledge. Their books are generally based on second-hand information and strongly reflect ideological and political orientations. Thus the authors make a selective use of Alevi beliefs and rituals: they stress elements which underline their position and neglect others. Some emphasize the Islamic features while others bring the mystical elements to the fore. While the majority of the authors declare Alevism as part of Islam, some define it as a religion in its own right. Again others divest Alevism of its religious dimension, defining it as a social movement, humanism or even atheism. Authors affected by Turkish or Kurdish nationalism interpret Alevism as being based on Shamanism or on Zoroastrianism. Thus scripturalization has not yet resulted in fixed and unified doctrines.

For different reasons, however, the lay authors as well as the Holy Men avoid treating some of the most heterodox elements in public. Themes such as the deification of Ali, incarnation or metempsychosis are equally not touched in the *cem* held in public, which are rather dominated by the Shi'i components of the faith (although without paying any reference to the shari'a). And there are strong hints that certain essentials, today known only to some Holy Men and their close adherents, are still hidden. Alevism as it is presently offered to the public (Alevi and non-Alevi), appears to be filtrated of most of its gnostic and extreme Shi'i elements. It is improbable that the esoteric teachings will completely disappear. Alevism is more likely to become divided into two parts: the one being a public religion, purified of its extreme elements and exercised by the majority, the other being hidden from the masses and limited to a smaller number of initiated members. Thus Alevism could bring out a *tarikat* from itself, analogue to Bektashism. ✦

PHOTO: KRISZTINA KEHL-BODROGI

One of the new erected houses of worship (*cemevi*), Ankara.

PHOTO: KRISZTINA KEHL-BODROGI

Singing *nefes* in a *cem* in Istanbul (February 2000).

Notes

1. See, for a detailed description of Alevi history and religion, Kehl-Bodrogi, K. (1988). *Die Kızılbaş/Aleviten: Untersuchungen über eine esoterische Glaubensgemeinschaft in Anatolien.* Berlin: Klaus Schwarz Verlag.
2. For an analysis of the new Alevi group-literature, see Vorhoff, K. (1995). *Zwischen Glaube, Nation und neuer Gemeinschaft: Alevitische Identität in der Türkei der Gegenwart*. Berlin: Klaus Schwarz Verlag.

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Turkey

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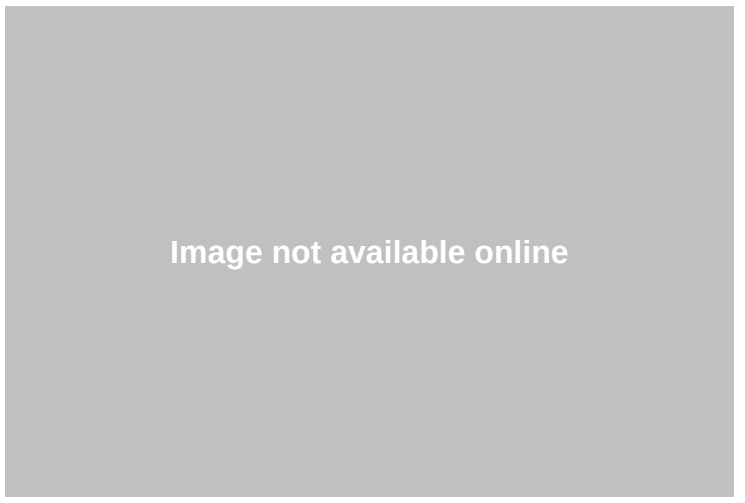
Islamic Associations in the Politics of the Turkish Earthquakes

The two devastating earthquakes that hit Turkey last year, resulting in more than 17,000 deaths and causing extensive material damage to the country's industrial heartland, triggered continuing debates in which the state, state-society relations, and civil society are all being questioned. Particularly in the western press, popular anger with the state's slow and inefficient response to the disaster was portrayed as having reached an unprecedented level, de-deifying the Turkish state which had historically commanded unquestioned trust and fear. In contrast to a state depicted as heavy, shackled and corruption-riddled, the western media and parts of the Turkish press celebrated the birth of a new and vibrant civil society in Turkey. Responding much faster than the state to relief needs, Turkish associations and foundations were hailed as the expression of a new civic consciousness and as an emergent social force driving for democratization.



Rescue workers recover a man from the earthquake debris in Duzce, Turkey.

Disasters are complex and dialectical social phenomena. They are also political events and need to be recognized as such. Post-disaster situations are usually marked by political manipulation of the disaster for short-term gains (either by the state, political parties, or both), by struggles over the distribution of aid and the benefits of reconstruction plans, and by local power contestations. Inasmuch as a disaster uncovers pre-existing economic, social and political structural maladies, it creates an arena for political struggle in which multiple actors are involved (e.g. Guatemala 1976, Mexico City 1985, and Cairo 1992).

Another aspect of disasters that is politicized in certain contexts is how they are explained. Divine wrath is often invoked as the cause of an earthquake, flood, or hurricane. Voltaire's famous poem in response to the 1755 Lisbon earthquake is part of a centuries-old polemic between religious and non-religious explanations of causality. The rise of political Islam renders these polemics deeply political as the post-earthquake situation in Turkey (and before it the Cairo earthquake of 1992) clearly show.

How to explain the earthquake?

The earthquake as a manifestation of divine wrath was a frequent depiction by the Islamic media and Islamic figures. Necmettin Erbakan, the historic leader of the Turkish Islamic movement, described it as 'a warning signal'. In a clear reference to the meeting held at the Gölcük naval base on 28 February 1997, when the army issued an ultimatum for the immediate curtailing of Islamic activism, the thesis that Gölcük (rather than İzmit) was the epicentre of the earthquake was advanced. This had the clear political meaning that the quake was divine retribution against anti-Islamic measures decided in that location. In that meeting, which ultimately led to the downfall of the Welfare Party-led government, a list of measures against Islamists was drawn up to be presented to the National Security Council (MGK). The measures included a stricter implementation of the Kemalist dress code, especially for women students in institutions of higher education.

Particularly controversial were the statements of Mehmet Kutlular (leader of the Nur Cemaati and owner of the *Yeni Asya* newspaper) directly connecting the earthquake to the February 28 meeting. According to newspapers, Kutlular said: 'When Allah is denied, the prophet questioned, and believers persecuted, the Quran says that such disasters will follow. Quite naturally, Allah will send disasters to those who do not believe in Him and are disrespectful of His laws.'[1] Immediately, three separate state bodies launched investigations. Bülent Ecevit, the Prime Minister, described the statements as 'primitive thinking' and 'an ugly exploitation of religion'.[2]

Distancing itself from the controversy, the Virtue Party (in the person of Deputy leader Veysel Candan) stressed that the recovery process should be the focus of discussion: 'Is [the earthquake] a divine warning or not? I do not approach the issue from this angle. If you do not put the required amounts of cement and reinforced concrete in buildings, some disaster will inevitably follow. We need to comprehensively assess where we erred and what mistakes were made in the construction and building-technology sectors'.[3]

The army saw in statements, such as those made by Kutlular, a direct attack on it and a smearing of its name. In September 1999, the MGK reacted against what it termed 'reactionary forces' seeking to exploit the earthquake and warned them of immanent constitutional and administrative measures.[4] Support for the army was supplied by Kemalist NGOs, led by the Association in Support of Contemporary Living (ÇYDD). Pointing out that Islamists blame Turkey's secularism for the earthquake, ÇYDD's director spoke of the imperative to 'prevent Islamic sects and radical groups that disguise themselves as civil society organizations from hunting down our children in the reigning chaotic situation.'[5]

Islamic associations in the earthquake

The past decade witnessed a significant increase in the number of registered Islamic associations and foundations in Turkey. By 1995, they accounted for 10.4% of the Istanbul associations. In addition to the traditional associations engaged in building mosques and teaching the Quran, a new breed of Islamic associations providing diverse social services spread, targeting poor urban neighbourhoods in particular. The body of Islamic associations is large and diverse in its composition. It includes women's and human rights organizations, foundations that engage in research on Islamic and Ottoman themes, and two prominent associations of industrialists and businessmen (MÜSİAD and İŞHAD).[6] MÜSİAD in particular is significant as the organizational expression of the Islamic business sector that boomed in the aftermath of post-1980 economic liberalization. It is now one of the more important 'new alternative spaces' to the hegemonic Kemalist state ideology and institutions,[7] and is a major financial contributor to Islamic associations, mirroring and guiding their focus on social justice-oriented grassroots work.

In general, the diversity and sophistication of the Islamic associations parallels the rise of both Islamic business activity and the electoral successes of political Islam at the national and local levels. They also benefit from the proliferation of Islamic media. The richness of this new Islamic associational activity is also a manifestation of the weight accorded to the issue of 'civil society' by Islamic groups. The Welfare Party had first introduced the theme of a system of 'multiple-legal orders' as a promotion of an Islamic understanding of civil society against the modern, totalitarian Turkish nation-state.[8] The theme was subsequently taken up by the Virtue Party, which formulated an agenda for Quality Management in Politics.[9] An important component of the agenda is strengthening Turkish civil society and establishing links between the party and CSOs.[10] Recognizing the significance of a broad human rights and legal reform agenda for the party's own survival and uninterrupted activity, the Virtue Party – even if out of self-interest – has taken the issue of 'civil society' to heart.

Following the earthquake, Islamic associations formed special task forces and dispatched volunteers to the disaster area. Coordination centres were established to channel information about needs and distribute assistance to victims. In addition to handing out relief assistance, Islamic NGOs set up communal kitchens and childcare centres, established fixed and mobile medical units, and provided tents – some of which had originally been bought for the Kosovo Albanians. A number of these NGOs had plans to erect new tent-camps or prefabricated housing sites.

The contribution of Islamic associations can be summed up as follows: focused on relief and visible, but not dominating the post-quake non-governmental scene. Islamic associations were one of an array of Turkish NGOs active in the disaster area. The earthquake's proximity to Istanbul, the magnitude of the disaster, and extensive media coverage, had all brought forth unprecedented civic activism and volunteerism. The rush of NGOs to the scene, together with hundreds of individual volunteers, was nevertheless accompanied by factional competition, most notably between the antithetical Islamic and Kemalist associations. Islamic relief was also criticized by a number of Turkish NGOs for being partisan and discriminatory, and deliberately oppositional to the state.

MÜSİAD complained of 'bureaucratic hurdles' in the face of assistance delivery. In this it was reiterating what other Turkish NGOs and international aid agencies were experiencing. The state's unease with criticisms of its inefficiency and its discomfort with the portrayal of civil society as a better alternative, led it to centralize all aid and relief operations in state organizations (measures that were later eased). Restrictions – which were uneven and discriminatory – were placed on the collection and distribution of aid by independent and voluntary organizations. Islamic associations in particular were targeted. The bank funds of İHH and Mazlum-Der were confiscated, and those of HakYol Vakfı blocked and minutely scrutinized. In Gölcük, Islamic NGOs were asked to cease their activities and to physically leave the area. Islamic associations, however, show sophistication and tenacity in dealing with state restrictions. Many employ a legal expert who 'clears' their documents of any problematic terms. They are also experienced in re-forming themselves and camouflaging their activities. Activists in the disaster area said that this is what they will continue to do and that they will stay as long as the humanitarian emergency situation deems.

Concluding words

The two earthquakes in Turkey generated a significant collective questioning of the state establishment and institutions. It also increased the visibility of a 'civil society' that has resources and potential, but is fragmented, conflictual and often elitist. As civil society activism came into public and state attention, the strength and sophistication of Islamic voluntary associations also became evident. The 'cat and mouse' game between the Turkish state (led by the army) and various Islamic groups will no doubt continue, but the proliferation of diverse Islamic associations with strong grassroots linkages is a testimony to the embeddedness of political Islam and its multiple sources of power. It is also one expression of broader processes within Turkey pressurizing the state to become responsive, accountable, and to open up democratic spaces. ✦

Notes

1. *Star*, 11-10-1999.
2. *Zaman*, 12-10-1999.
3. *Cumhuriyet*, 12-10-1999.
4. Ibid. 1-10-1999.
5. Ibid. 21-9-1999.
6. MÜSİAD is the Independent Association of Industrialists and Businessmen, with a membership of more than 3,000 individual companies. İŞHAD is the Solidarity Association for Business Life (İş Hayatı Dayanişma Derneği), associated with Fethullah Gülen's Nurcu movement, includes over 2000 businessmen and merchants.
7. Yavuz, Hakan (1999). 'Towards an Islamic Liberalism? The Nurcu Movement and Fethullah Gülen'. *Middle East Journal* 53 (4) pp. 584-605, at 585.
8. See Gülalp, Haldun (1999). 'Political Islam in Turkey: The Rise and Fall of the Refah Party'. *The Muslim World* 89 (1), pp. 22-41.
9. Siyasette Toplam Kalite Yöntemi.
10. See Recai Kutan's speech to the Virtue Party's Consultative Council, 5 September 1998 (full text on: http://www.fp.org.tr/khamam-dm-acl.htm).

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Caucasus

VLADIMIR BOBROVNIKOV

Mythologizing Sharia Courts in the Post-Soviet North Caucasus

The discourse on re-enacting Islamic law in the post-Soviet North Caucasus uses key terms such as sharia courts, highland Muslim traditions, and Islamic insurgency. What seems important here is to shed light on these notions by answering such questions as: To what extent do these terms reflect the post-Soviet legal reality or diverge from it? What can be said of the sharia mythology shared by both adherents and opponents of re-Islamization in the North Caucasus? What is the historical background of discourse on sharia courts?

Public debates on and attempts at introducing Islamic law have become characteristic of post-Soviet Muslim and non-Muslim areas, and are especially vivid in the North Caucasus. In recent years, the so-called 'sharia courts' or *mahakim shar'iya* were established de facto by reopened mosques in a number of villages and towns in Dagestan, Chechnya, Ingushetia, North Ossetia-Alania, Karachaevo-Cherkessia and Kabardino-Balkaria. The majority of mosques are located in Northern Dagestan and Southern Chechnya. They settle small inheritance and criminal cases including divorce, theft, drinking alcoholic beverages, and the like. The decisions of these courts are final and not subject to appeal. They usually impose both fixed sharia and non-Islamic penalties. Dagestani chairmen of village and district administrations often call upon local *qadis* to settle family and land trials.

Articles 212 and 235 of the Soviet criminal code of the Russian Federation prohibiting the application of sharia norms regarding marriage and inheritance practices were abolished in its new version passed in 1996. But sharia courts have not been legalized in post-Soviet Russia with the exception of Chechnya and Ingushetia. In December 1997 the Ingush president Ruslan Aushev enacted mediating judges who are to follow 'the *adat* (i.e. local customary law) and sharia norms' while settling criminal and civil cases. Sharia norms relating to marriage (*zawaj*) and feuding (*qisas*) were legalized in the republic in 1996-1999. The Chechen Republic of Ichkeria officially proclaimed itself an independent Islamic State in 1996. The preamble of the Chechen Constitution was amended such that it then read: 'Quran and sharia are the principal source of legislation'. In September 1996, acting president Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev brought into force the new criminal code copied from the 1983 sharia criminal code of Sudan. The Supreme Sharia Court and corresponding district institutions were created. Public punishments with fixed penalties (*hudud*) were introduced for selling alcoholic beverages, illegal sexual intercourse and severe criminal offences like robbery and homicide. In reality, few death sentences and corporal punishments sentenced by Chechen sharia courts have been applied to date.

Muhammad-Sayyid Gaziev, *qadi* and chairman of sharia court, Khushtada village, Dagestan.

PHOTO: VLADIMIR BOBROVNIKOV

Sharia and state-building

As soon as the first death sentence of the Supreme Sharia Court of Chechnya was given in Grozny in April 1997, vigorous debates on sharia began in the North Caucasian and Moscow media. One can identify two competing attitudes towards this issue. The majority of Muslim clergy are in favour of introducing Islamic law, regarded as the tool of national liberation and social modernization. They consider sharia as the magic solution to the problem of growing criminality and social instability caused by the collapse of Soviet rule.

The distinct flavour of this view was captured by Seyyid-Muhammad Abubakarov, the former Dagestani Mufti, in an interview with 'Izvestia' just before his assassination in August 1998: 'Do you remember the recent execution of the death sentence imposed by the sharia court in Chechnya? And such trouble and harrowing reminiscences made of it? Even those who had agreed with this sentence hesitated, their souls having been disgusted. But let's think of a quite another thing. The problem is what we should do with those who deal in kidnapping and trade the captured, turned into living goods, or with those who kill their victims and sell their cadavers. I consider sharia court as a preventive measure against new murders, not as a pure cruelty. Today a criminal knows that his case will be arranged, decided in his favour, that punishment is not inevitable. According to sharia, his responsibility is full – thus it is a good preventive measure, isn't it?'

It is amazing, that many Moscow journalists and academic scholars, quite unfamiliar with Islam, also support re-enacting the sharia law in the North Caucasus. They believe that it is the only means to maintain order and to prevent Chechnya and neighbouring Caucasian republics from anarchy. As a former member of the Soviet Union Communist Party Central Committee and now political scientist, A.S. Tsipko, put it: 'Let's take a sober view of things. The sharia laws protecting the Chechens from self-degradation are much more progressive than other laws and culture (i.e. neo-liberal) stipulating self-destruction of the people'. This view is widespread among Moscow intellectuals. A journalist, A. Fedin, expressed it as follows: 'The Chechen society is still mainly pre-state and traditional. It is based on the unwritten customary law […] Public executions sentenced by the sharia court appear to be the beginning of the state-building of Chechnya, which is to be an inevitably bloody affair'.

Opposing views

There is also an opposite notion of sharia as 'a barbarous remnant of the middle ages' that 'judges brutality in the Chechen manner' associated with public flogging, cutting off of hands, throwing stones, and therefore quite unsuited for the modern law and society. This view is shared by the top-level officials in the Russian Federal government such as K.M. Tsagolov, a deputy to a former minister of nationalities of the Russian Federation, and the majority of the pro-Moscow Caucasian authorities. They accuse adherents of the sharia courts of working for Chechen terrorists. Part of the Moscow mass media siding with the Putin's government propagated such a negative vision of 'Shariatists'. As another minister of the Russian Federation, Ramazan Abdulatipov, pointed in August 1999: 'Against a background of the war in Dagestan and the aggravated situation in the North Caucasus, an impression has been spread in Russia that every Muslim is an Islamic extremist'.

Paradoxically, both of these antagonistic visions of sharia have a somewhat common core. The first striking thing is the almost total absence of knowledge of Islamic law among the majority of adherents and opponents of re-enacting Islamic courts. In their view sharia is reduced to some elementary norms of criminal and family law. No one can distinguish the Shafi^{c}ite legal school, traditionally dominant on the territory of Dagestan, Chechnya and Ingushetia, from the Hanafi one prevailing among the other Caucasian and Russian Muslims. Due to such ignorance, the Chechen authorities adopted the Sudanese sharia code based on the Malikite *madhhab*. The majority of participants in the debates are unable to judge numerous deviations from the classic Islamic doctrine as they were attested in the work of re-enacted sharia courts in the last decade.

It is noteworthy that no Muslim judges or even academic legal theoreticians specializing in Islamic law take part in this public debate. Its participants are mainly journalists, politicians and academic scholars including political scientists, historians and anthropologists. The only exception is Prof. L.R. Syukiyaynen from the Institute of State and Law in Moscow. Syukiyaynen is Russia's leading expert on Islamic law, although his opinion is uncommon and much more realistic. While recognizing the great advantages of sharia in resolving social problems and in relaxing local tensions in present-day North Caucasus, he argues that there has not yet been adequate application of Islamic law in this region.

Myth-making about the sharia is characteristic of both opposing sides of the debate. The concepts of both are more or less divorced from reality. 'Highland Muslim traditionalism' is seen as the key to the nature of the North Caucasian law and society. This notion does not take into account the radical social and legal changes that have been inevitably caused by drastic state reforms in this region for more than a century (from the 1860s); the mass resettlement of Muslim highlanders to the plain; and even forcible deportation of entire groups that took place under the Soviet rule. Moreover, the authors cited above completely ignored the fact that the criminal laws of the sharia were not applied in the pre-modern Caucasus. Historically, highlanders settled criminal cases in accordance with their customary laws or imposed state legislation.

Another myth typical of the discourse on sharia courts is the vision of Islamic law as a natural antagonist of the Russian state. Participants of these debates argue that in the past sharia played a significant role in the political resistance of the North Caucasian highlanders, first to the Russian conquest and later to the Soviet reforms. From this, they conclude that restored sharia courts must undermine Russian rule in the present day Caucasus. This mythology has a long history, embedded in the colonial policy of late Imperial Russia, which considered Islamic law unfavourable. After the Caucasian war of the 19th century, the possibility of Islamic uprisings haunted the mind of top-level state officials such as S.M. Dukhovsky, Governor-General of the Turkestan Province, or K.P. Pobedonostsev, Procurator-General of the Saint Synod. This fear lead the state to restrict the use of sharia norms for the Russian Muslims and to keep Muslim clergy of the North Caucasus under tight control. In turn, Muslim political opposition arose at the end of the 19th century, constantly reclaiming the full application of the sharia law.

This mythology had much influenced legal and social development of the North Caucasian Muslims in the 20th century. First, it led to the introduction of sharia courts after the Revolution of 1917 and the collapse of the Russian empire. These courts were enacted by revolutionary decrees passed by the First Congress of the Highland Peoples of the Caucasus and that of the Terek peoples held in 1917-1918. They worked under different political rules including the early Soviet one and were abolished only by 1925-1927. For the second time, the idea of 'Islamic resurgence' was realized in the North Caucasus following the break-up of the Soviet Union. Sharia courts were introduced here again. But the social and legal situation in the region had completely changed.

One should take into account that re-Islamization emerged in a context of, and in reaction to, the Soviet legacy. It presents a specific modern answer to challenges originating from the collapse of the Soviet rule in the Caucasus. Now the myth of sharia is embodied in the post-Soviet flesh and is fraught with all its negative effects due to the degradation of Islamic legal culture and growing criminalization of power and society in the region. ✦

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The Balkans

RAYMOND DETREZ

Religion and Nationhood in the Balkans

In the Balkans, religion seems to have played a much more important role in the process of nation building than language. Speakers of Serbo-Croat fell apart in three national communities on the basis of religion. Thus emerged the Bosniak nation, which identifies itself with Islam and clearly distinguishes itself from the Catholic Croats and the Orthodox Serbs. The establishment of the national states in the Balkans was accompanied, from the beginning of the 19th century, by attempts to restore the pre-Ottoman Christian states. The population was ethnically homogenized by expelling ethnic and religious minorities or by forcibly assimilating them. In particular the Muslims in the Balkans, and especially the Muslim Turks, fell victim to this policy.

It is generally assumed that in the Balkans, religion – including Islam – rather than language, plays a decisive role in the process of nation building. The former Yugoslavia is a case in point. In the central part of the eastern Balkans, where the former Yugoslavia was situated, a South Slavic language is spoken which used to be called Serbo-Croat or Croato-Serb until recent times. In the 19th century, the very similar dialects of Serbo-Croat were standardized into one single literary language, intended to demonstrate the 'oneness' of the Yugoslav or South Slavic nation *vis-à-vis* its many enemies (Germans, Hungarians, Turks).

In the same period, however, within the community of speakers of Serbo-Croat, national identities began developing on the basis of religion; or rather, national communities emerged, coinciding greatly with religious communities. Catholics speaking Serbo-Croat, living in the Habsburg Empire, identified themselves as Croats, whereas the Orthodox speakers of Serbo-Croat, living scattered over the Habsburg and the Ottoman Empires and in their own principality of Serbia, considered themselves Serbs. The development of a Bosnian national consciousness among the Muslim speakers of Serbo-Croat was slightly retarded, due to the Serbs' and Croats' attempts to incorporate them at least conceptually in their own respective national communities as Serb or Croat Muslims, and to the fact that belonging to the Muslim community traditionally was far more important to the Bosnians than belonging to one or another national community. The Yugoslav nationalists, endeavouring to create a single Yugoslav nation, tended to minimize the religious differences among Bosnians, Croats and Serbs, as they thwarted the process of South Slavic unification.

In the 20th century, however, especially after the establishment of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes in 1918 (renamed Yugoslavia in 1929), as a result of the Serbs monopolizing political and military power in the new state, Croats started distancing themselves from the idea of a single, South Slavic nation and state and developed a national identity of their own, emphasizing the particularities of the Croat language and the Catholic faith as distinctive features of the Croat nation *vis-à-vis* the Serbs. After an abortive and rather compromising attempt to establish an independent Croat state under Nazi protection during the Second World War, Croatia was re-integrated into Yugoslavia, which had become a communist federal state in 1944. The Croats finally achieved their aim in 1991, when the Republic of Croatia was internationally recognized.

Bosnian nationhood

In post-war Yugoslavia, the formation of a Bosnian national consciousness was finally completed. The official recognition of Bosnian nationhood in 1969 – under the clumsy denomination 'Muslims in the ethnic sense of the word' – resulted mainly from the need for a national community whose representatives would balance Croat separatism and Serb hegemonism at the level of the federal government and of the government of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina. This does not mean, however, that the Bosnian nation was an artificial creation. The Bosnians constituted already then a very distinct national community, defining itself through Islam, just as Croats and Serbs defined themselves through Catholicism and Orthodoxy respectively. In fact, the very insistence of Croats and Serbs on religious affiliation as a basic component of national identity had largely contributed to preventing the Bosniaks from considering themselves Muslim Serbs or Croats, as both Serbs and Croats indefatigably attempted to make the Bosnians believe. How could a Muslim be a Serb, if being Orthodox is fundamental to being Serb? Besides, just as Croats think of their nation as a part of West European civilization and Serbs have the sense of belonging to Slavic Orthodox Eastern Europe, the Bosnians consider their nation a full member of the large family of Islamic peoples with their own age-old and rich cultural traditions, which are an integral part of the Bosnian national identity.

To be sure, in the Balkans, religion in general has little to do with devoutness. Forty years of communist rule dramatically reduced church and mosque attendance. The religious revival of the last decade is mainly the result of the people's desire to express their belonging to an ethnic or national community. As religion is the basic component of national identity, church and mosque attendance appears to be a demonstration of national awareness. Of course, the clergy (be it Catholic, Orthodox or Muslim) has seized the opportunity to strengthen its position in society and to acquire a more or less official 'national' status. This may – and often does – threaten the secular character of the state granted by the Constitution. It has, however, less to do with religious fanaticism than with nationalist fanaticism. This goes for Bosnians, Croats and Serbs alike.

National and religious identity

The identification of national and religious identity (in the sense of belonging to a religious community) is the least articulated with the Bosnians. The same phenomenon can be observed with the other Muslim communities in the Balkans. The Pomaks (Bulgarian Muslims) in the Rhodope mountains in Southern Bulgaria, in spite of their being linguistically related to the Bulgarians, seem to associate more with the Turkish minority in Bulgaria than with the majority of Orthodox Bulgarians. Here, religion is apparently a stronger uniting factor than language. In Greece too, the Pomak minority is steadily absorbed by the Greek Turks, notwithstanding the attempts of the Greek authorities to impose upon them a Pomak consciousness, separate from the Turkish (and Bulgarian).

The identification of national and religious identity is the strongest with the Orthodox nations in the Balkans – Bulgarians, Greeks, Macedonians, and Serbs. This is the result of the Byzantine legacy of 'national' churches. Nation, state, religious community and ecclesiastical organization are supposed to be congruent. The Bulgarian Constitution states that Orthodox Christianity is the traditional religion of the Bulgarian people; the Greek Constitution is promulgated in the name of the Holy Trinity. Consequently, non-orthodox minorities – Muslim Pomaks and Turks, but also Catholics and Protestants – are considered, sometimes quite explicitly, as 'defective' Bulgarians, Greeks or, for that matter, Macedonians and Serbs, and as a threat to national unity and solidarity.

The identification of national and religious community has determined the attitude of the Orthodox peoples in the Balkans towards Islam in yet another way. In the 19th century, urged by nationalism, the Balkan peoples began their struggle for national independence against the Ottoman domination, established at the end of the 14th and during the 15th century. Independence was perceived by the leaders of the respective independence movements as the restoration of the former mediaeval, pre-Ottoman states. Since the mediaeval Balkan states repeatedly went through periods of imperial growth and feudal disintegration, the borders were not very well defined. As a rule, every national community aimed at the re-establishment of its respective mediaeval state at its maximum size – which resulted in legion territorial overlappings and border conflicts. In addition to the former size, the Balkan peoples also wanted to restore the ethnic composition of the population of their former states. As religion was one of the main distinctive features of national identity, the former religious community was to be restored as well. In contrast to historical evidence, the population of the Balkan mediaeval states was perceived by the 19th-century Balkan nationalists as ethnically and religiously homogeneous.

Thus, in order to re-establish the mediaeval situation, ethnic and religious minorities that came into being after the Ottoman conquest had to be eliminated. In some instances, the identity of these minorities was 'reconstructed' in such a way that they could be incorporated in and consequently assimilated by the majority. The Greeks labelled their Slavic co-religionists (about 150,000 people) in Greek Macedonia as 'Slavophone Greeks' and have been treating them as ethnic Greeks ever since. The Turks in Greece too are officially called 'Greek Muslims'. Calling them Turks is punishable. An attempt to 'reconstruct' the Bosnians as Islamicized Serbs or Croats failed. For the time being, Bulgarians have been more successful in preventing the Pomaks from developing a separate Pomak national consciousness – though they have been helping them by explicitly identifying Bulgarianhood and orthodoxy.

The main victims of the Balkan Christians' endeavours to restore their mediaeval states are those communities that differ both ethnically and religiously from the majority: the Turks and the Kosovars, being neither Slavs, Greeks, nor Orthodox Christians. As Islam was introduced in the Balkans mainly as a result of the Ottoman conquest, there was no place for Albanian and Turkish Muslims in the restored Christian Balkan states. As the double barrier of ethnic and religious 'otherness' made it impossible to reconstruct their national identity in a way to make them – albeit conceptually – disappear into the majority, more radical ways to eliminate them had to be resorted to. All independence wars in the Balkans (the Serb Uprisings in 1804-30, the Greek War of Independence in 1821-30, and the Russian-Ottoman War in 1877-8) were accompanied by massacring and expelling not only the Ottoman officials and military, but also the Muslim Turkish population. During the First Balkan War in 1912, not only Turks but also Albanians fell victim. The ethnic cleansing of Bosnians in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo is a resumption of this 'method' of nation building in the late 20th century.

Having lost most of its non-Turkish and non-Muslim populations, the late Ottoman Empire and the subsequent Turkish Republic resorted to similar practices in order to ultimately create a homogeneous Turkish state. The treatment of the Armenians, Greeks and Kurds in Anatolia are the most notorious of these measures. However, the identification of nationhood and religious affiliation is less apparent in the official Turkish (Kemalist) interpretation of national identity than it is in the Christian Balkan countries. ✦

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Western Europe

WERNER SCHIFFAUER

The End of the Caliphate State? The Metin Kaplan Case

Against Metin Kaplan, self-proclaimed head of the Caliphate State, proceedings were taken up by the Oberlandesgericht Düsseldorf in February 2000. The 'emir of the believers and caliph of Muslims' had been charged with incitement for the murder of his opponent Halil Ibrahim Sofu in Berlin in 1997, and with running a criminal organization. The process may very well mark the end of most radical Islamic group which has developed in the German diaspora of Turkish migrants.

The community was founded by Metin Kaplan's father, Cemaleddin, in the early 80s as a breakaway from the National View – the European branch of the National Salvation Party in Turkey. In 1983-84, the leadership of the former National Salvation Party split on the issue of whether the party should be re-established after the *coup d'état* of 1980. All parties had been outlawed but now new national elections were scheduled. When Erbakan and the party establishment opted for the foundation of a successor party (the Refah (Welfare) Party), a revolutionary wing headed by Kaplan separated. For them the history of the *coup d'état* had demonstrated the limitations of a parliamentary way to an Islamic rule. As soon as an Islamic party became strong enough to form the government and to introduce serious reforms, it would be suppressed. Kaplan's teaching can be summed up under three headings: (1) Following Sayid Qutb, he proclaimed a revolutionary situation: Turkey was in a state of barbarity, analogous to the period of *cahiliyet* in pre-Muslim Mecca. In this situation, no compromises with the system were possible. (2) The revolution could be achieved by building up an extra-institutional grassroots movement by means of *tebliğ* (preaching with words and practice): On the sole basis of the Koran, the disastrous frictions between Muslim communities worldwide could be overcome, a mass movement would be established and the unity of the *ümmet* could be restored. (3) Revolutionary pan-Islamism: The reunification of Islam has to start from below with a coalition/cooperation of all revolutionary Islamic groups (including the Islamic Republic of Iran). The final aim would be the re-establishment of the caliphate. The new revolutionary community set up by Kaplan called itself 'Union of the Islamic Communes and Communities' (*İsâmî Cemaatleri ve Cemiyetleri Birliği*).

The movement had a good start. Many sympathizers of the National View in Europe were weary of the compromises made by the party establishment. Typical slogans were those such as: 'Does Islam exist for the party or does the party exist for Islam?' In many of the mosques established by the National View, the Revolutionary wing found a majority and took over the mosque.

A religious military order

It soon became evident, however, that the movement was not able to keep up the momentum it had in the beginning. It remained restricted to the Turkish diaspora communities in Europe. But even there it did not appeal in a significant way to Muslims who were not members of the National View (like member of the Süleymancı or Nurcu communities). In 1985, the Kaplan movement stagnated and in 1986 an erosion process began. This process culminated when Ahmed Polat, one of the founding members, left the movement together with a considerable number of followers in 1987. An erosion process is particularly problematic for a charismatic movement in which fascination born out of success is of existential importance. A charismatic movement either grows or declines at an exponential rate. The secession of Polat, therefore, could have meant the end of the community. In order to cope with this crucial situation, Kaplan re-organized the hitherto rather open movement into a closed sect.

An issue of crucial importance was the relation of the movement to the Islamic Republic of Iran. In the early 80s, the Sunni-Shia split seemed to be a matter of the past for many Muslims who were enthusiastic about the possibilities of Islamic revolutions. However, the Iranian revolution remained a singular event (and became stuck in the dirty war with Iraq). The hopes for other revolutions waned. Parallel to disillusionment, the old resentments against Shiites re-surfaced again. After Polat had defended his secession with a criticism of Kaplan's pro-Iranian stance, Kaplan saw himself forced to redefine his position. He now began to insist on the basic dogmatic differences between Sunna and Shia. This dogmatic clarification had practical consequences. Kaplan stopped the practices of a group of enthusiastic believers, who had sworn an oath of allegiance to Khomeini and had also insisted on putting up Khomeini posters in mosques. Dogmatic clarification thus implied centralization, i.e. a stronger control of the local mosques. In order to be able to control the mosques which were spread all over Europe, Kaplan began to control personally the appointment of persons in charge (preachers and heads of mosques). The autonomy the mosques had enjoyed in the early phase of the movement thus came to an end. The drastic changes led to conflicts in the community and to the divorce from dissenting members. Kaplan interpreted this process as one of purification. He thus implied that the loss of numerical strength was more than compensated by an increase in spiritual strength: While the fearsome and weak parted, the strong and courageous remained. A further aspect of this process was an increased drawing of boundaries. The attendance of mosque services and prayers also by members of other communities which had been the practice during the first years ceased and only members of the Kaplan community proper now frequented the mosque. A more or less exclusive in-group thus evolved within which increasingly non-conformist positions were developed, emphasizing the differences to other Islamic communities.

Ideologically all this was reflected in the transformation of the movement's self-perception: the Kaplan community no longer conceived itself as a movement open to all but rather as a closed religious military order. The steps for becoming initiated were centered around the institutions: school (*medrese*), mystical convent (*tekke*) and barracks (*kışlak*). The sectarian process culminated in Kaplan declaring himself *locum tenens* of the caliph in 1992. He also proclaimed a government in exile. With this step, the differences to the other Islamic communities in Europe became irreconcilable.

Kaplan as caliph

The radicalization of the movement went along with a dramatic change in the social composition of the community. The first followers of Kaplan had been autodidacts of the first generation, men who had little or no formal education, who had taught themselves to read and write, and who had discovered Islam on their own terms. They had found in Kaplan a figure that expressed their scepticism towards the wider society. They associated Kaplan's programme with the hope for the restoration of the unity of Islam – an issue of central importance to them. Most of these men left Kaplan when he became more sectarian. They realized quite clearly that any claims to the caliphate were unacceptable to the other Islamic communities and would therefore deepen the frictions rather than help to overcome them. However, younger migrants of the second generation took their place – among them a considerable number of academics and high school students. These students introduced new practices into the community. They set up groups for learning Arabic, studying Islamic law, learning about the life of the Prophet, and so on. In short, they developed a rather academic approach to Islam, using the intellectual tools they had acquired in German institutions of higher education. They stressed truth more than unity and therefore had fewer problems with the increasingly sectarian nature of the community. Kaplan's success with regard to the recruitment of new members stabilized and reinvigorated the community. The number of members, which had dropped from approximately 12,000 in 1985 to 1300 in 1992, has remained stable ever since.

The years 1992-1994 saw further developments toward an elitist cadre party which increasingly viewed itself as the spearhead of the Islamic revolution. In 1994, Kaplan finally declared himself Caliph-proper. This rather presumptuous step was justified with the notion of a historical turning point. After centuries of the decline of Islam, only a small but powerful elite was left (all other Muslims being trapped in compromises with the world). Under the leadership of the new Caliph, a *reconquista* would commence. Sceptics were reminded of the small number of believers Muhammed commanded in the battle of Badr. This construction is characteristic of the hermetic logic that had developed in the sect during the first half of the 90s. Although internally coherent, it could no longer communicated to members of other Islamic communities.

In 1995, on his deathbed, Cemaleddin Kaplan appointed his son Metin as successor to the Caliphate. Metin, who did not have the charisma of his father, faced considerable problems in the community. In early 1996, the movement split and a counter caliphate under Ibrahim Sofu was proclaimed in Berlin. Both caliphs issued diatribes, brandishing each other as *deccal*. In summer 1996, Metin issued a fatwa condemning the counter-caliph to death. In May 1997 Ibrahim was actually killed by a death squad in his apartment in Berlin. Although – of course – Metin was under suspicion, nothing could be proven. There is the suspicion that the murder was committed by volunteers who had served as mercenaries in Kosovo and in Afghanistan and had learned to kill in these wars. In October 1998, Turkish authorities claimed (in what looked very much like a set-up by the Turkish Secret Service) that the police had prevented an attack on the Anıtkabir (the mausoleum of Atatürk) during the festivities celebrating the 75th anniversary of the revolution.

In 1999, Metin Kaplan was arrested, though the charges against him seem to stand on rather shaky grounds. The state attorney admitted during the first day of the trial that a direct link to the murder of Ibrahim Sofu cannot be established. A conviction seems doubtful. But even if the trial is inconclusive, it is increasingly placing political pressure on the movement and might very well mean its end. ✦

Fieldwork was conducted among the Kaplan community in Germany between 1985 and 1993 with funding provided by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft.

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North America

MICHAEL W. SULEIMAN

The Arab Community in North America

Arabs have been emigrating to North America for over a century, and they now number approximately three million. For most of this period of emigration, the overwhelming majority of Arab immigrants to America were Christian. However, large numbers of Muslim Arabs (and other Muslims) have settled in the New World, especially since World War II. Almost from the beginning, the Arab community in North America suffered from negative attitudes directed against it by the host society. An important ingredient in negative stereotypes of Arabs is the general American impression that Arabs and Muslims are essentially the same people. Indeed, to Americans, the term 'Arab' or 'Muslim' conjures up hostile reactions to a large group of nations or countries (e.g. Arabs, Turks, Iranians, Muslims, etc.) which are seen as indistinguishable. Such views have had a definite impact on the Arab community in North America.

Until World War I, Arabs in North America may be considered sojourners exhibiting many traits of a middleman minority, that is, a community whose members primarily engage in one particular specialized activity such as migrant work or peddling. Indeed, substantial numbers of Arabs in America engaged in commerce, most often beginning as peddlers commissioned by their own countrymen. Their objective was to make the greatest amount of money in the shortest possible time in order to help their families in the country of origin and/or to eventually retire in comfort in their village or neighbourhood. In the meantime, in America, they spent as little of their income as possible, often living in crowded tenements and, while on the road, in barns, or shacks to avoid expensive hotel costs. They did not live rounded lives, allowing themselves no luxuries and finding contentment and solace in family life. They developed few lasting relationships with 'Americans.' *Al-Nizala*, the term the Arab-American community used to refer to itself, is a name which clearly described its status and purpose. It means a 'temporary settlement', and it was used in contrast to 'the Americans' to indicate the alien or stranger status of Arabs in America.

World War I was a watershed for Arabs in North America, cutting them off from their people back home. An important identity crisis occurred when these peripatetic sojourners realized that they had to make a major decision about whether to become 'settlers' or return to their former homelands. It had become increasingly difficult for them to function as temporary aliens. After World War I, it became clear to large numbers of Arabs in North America that it was not possible to go 'home' again and that, in fact, the United States and Canada were their homes. This change from sojourner to permanent settler necessitated, and was accompanied by, other changes, both in the way Arabs in America thought and in the way they behaved. Arabs in America now saw more clearly that they had to become full-fledged Americans. Assimilation was now strongly and widely advocated, and citizenship training and naturalization were greatly encouraged.

In the heyday of the melting pot approach to assimilation, Arabs in America strove to remove any differences separating them from the general American population, except perhaps for food and music. They also neglected (or deliberately chose not) to teach their children Arabic or to instill in them much pride in their heritage. The result was that, by World War II, Arabs in North America were, for all practical purposes, a group indistinguishable from the host society. It took a second wave of immigration and other developments to rekindle interest in their Arab heritage and to revive them as an ethnic community.

Building a new future

Among the most important issues with which Arabs in America have had to wrestle is the definition of who they are, their sense of identity as a people, especially as they encountered and continue to encounter bias and discrimination in their new homeland.

While Arabs in the United States and Canada constitute an ethnic group, they were not an ethnic minority in their former homelands. Their new identity has been shaped by many factors but especially by an active and continuing interaction between conditions in the old and the new homelands – as well as the interplay between their perceptions of themselves and how others see them. Thus, while the early immigrants spoke Arabic and came from a predominantly Arabic culture and heritage, they nevertheless did not think of themselves as 'Arabs'. The main bond of solidarity among them at that time was familial, sectarian, and village- or region-oriented. In fact, the plethora of names by which they were known in the New World reflects both their own lack of 'national' identity as well as ignorance or confusion on the part of the host society.

In a very real sense, the search for an adequate or 'comfortable' identity for Arabs in America has been guided (or perhaps complicated) by the need to feel pride in their heritage and simultaneously avoid prejudice and discrimination in their new homeland. For most, the search is neither successful nor final. They continue to feel and experience marginality in American society and politics.

They try to overcome this in various ways. Some resort to ethnic denial: they de-emphasize their Arab background by claiming connection with what they believe is more acceptable in America. Instead of proclaiming their Arabism, for instance, they claim that they are Lebanese or Egyptian. Some may even deny their heritage altogether, claiming to be Greek or Italian. Some new arrivals, however, choose ethnic isolation. They are unwilling to change themselves, and do not believe they can change the host society.

Among those who want full integration or assimilation into American society, especially middle-class Arab Americans, many emphasize the strong cultural link between Arabs and Americans. For most, accommodation is the easiest and most comfortable stance. These men and women consciously or subconsciously act in ways that reduce their differentness from the American dominant group. They attempt to blend in. Others, especially those who seek material success, and particularly those who are in 'public professions' (television, radio, movies, etc.), often give in and convert to the prevailing view. Not infrequently, these individuals – the very individuals who are looked down upon by the Arab-American community – are then selected to speak for and represent Arabs in America.

The Arab-American community in the 1990s

After more than a century of immigration, it is clear that the basic reasons that Arabs came to America are no different from those that drove or attracted other groups to come. They came for a variety of reasons: the promise of a quick fortune and a sense of adventure; the threat of war or economic disaster; education, training, and technology; or the thrill of living in a free democratic system. Whatever their reasons, true integration and full assimilation have so far generally eluded them. In part, this is the result of the many developments leading to the debunking of the notion of a melting pot and greater tolerance of a multicultural society. The more important reason, however, has been the hostility the host society has shown toward Arab immigrants.

Nevertheless, on the whole, Arabs in America have done very well. Since the 1960s, there has always been at least one representative of Arab background in the US Congress (for example, James Abourezk, Mary Rose Oakar, Mark Joe (Nick) Rahal II). Others have served as state governors (Victor Atiyeh) or on the White House staff (John H. Sununu). Similarly, individuals of Arab descent have been elected to the Canadian parliament (for example, Mac Harb and Mark Assad), as well as to provincial legislatures.

Furthermore, Arab Americans have not only done well, but have even fared better economically than the general population average in many areas. The 1980 and 1990 US census data, for instance, show that Arab Americans reached a higher educational level than the American population as a whole. In fact, according to the 1990 census, 15.2% of Arab Americans have graduate degrees or higher – more than twice the national average of 7.2%. Household income among Arab Americans also tends to be higher than the average. They have also proven to do well in professional, management, and sales professions.

Although many Arabs in America have reached the highest level of their profession, in almost all professions, the American media primarily highlight the negative achievements of Arabs. Quite often, in fact, the media will announce the 'Arab' (or 'Islamic') origin or affiliation of anyone accused of a terrorist act – even before they know whether the perpetrator is indeed Arab or Muslim. In the case of positive role models, however, such as Michael DeBakey or Ralph Nader, the media rarely, if ever, mention that these individuals are of Arab background. In part, the reason is that, because of racism, many find it necessary to hide their origins. Every now and then, lists of prominent Arab Americans are published in the press to inform the public about the community's accomplishments. But the very fact that such lists are compiled indicates that Arab Americans feel the sting of negative stereotyping and try to correct such bad publicity.

Despite the fact that Arabs have lived in America for over a century and despite their major successes, they are still struggling to be accepted in American society. Full integration and assimilation will not be achieved until that happens. ✦

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Western Europe

YASHA LANGE

A Handshake May Be Refused

When may a headscarf be forbidden or not? Case law determines where the boundaries of an individual culture are drawn. The alderwoman of education in Almere, a town in the vicinity of Amsterdam, the Netherlands, extends her hand in a friendly way towards the director of the Islamic school. He keeps his arms stiff at his sides. The alderwoman's extended hand dangles uncomfortably in the air. A discussion takes place. The council of the Al-Iman school says that Muslims are not permitted to have physical contact with the opposite sex. The alderwoman eventually decides to respect this. What else can she do?

PHOTO: MAURICE BOYER

▶ **Role-play at the Fatima School in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. Mothers learn to listen to adolescents.**

In a reaction in the Dutch daily *Trouw*, Mayor of the conservative Christian municipality of Staphorst, W. Plomp asked rhetorically, 'How far should the tolerance [of the majority] go if this gives minorities the room to exercise a form of intolerance that serves what we, in our culture, consider as rudeness and discrimination against the opposite sex? Shouldn't you expect some give and take from both sides?' Of course, but the council of the Islamic school is still within its rights – that is, if the findings of the Commission of Equal Treatment are any indication.

At the end of 1998, an Muslim couple goes to the dentist. The wife refuses to shake hands with the male dentist. The dentist is so angry that he, in turn, refuses to examine the husband's teeth. He also submits a complaint to the Commission of Equal Treatment: discrimination on the basis of gender. However, the Commission rules that there is no discrimination. The Muslim woman is within her 'rights'. Religion wins over social norms.

Around ten years ago, the concept of 'integration with the preservation of culture' was introduced. A stroke of genius, a 'win-win' situation, everyone happy. Sometimes, however, integration and the preservation of culture seem to clash. And now and then, that sort of collision is fought out in court. Then, case law also gives a reasonable amount of insight into the question of where the boundaries are drawn between the two sometimes conflicting ideas.

An example: a Moroccan father does not want his daughter to participate in the required mixed swimming lessons at school. He points out a verse in the Koran to the judge. The judge finds that the text in the Koran has been interpreted quite freely and that it is not explicitly stated that mixed swimming is forbidden. The case goes to the Supreme Court. The judgement is ambiguous. The school is right because the father had never submitted a formal request for exemption. But the father is right in that the Dutch judge should not have pretended to be an authority on the Koran.

Another example: a woman has already worked as a hairdresser for six years. One day, she decides to wear a headscarf. The owner of the hair salon believes that this cannot be permitted; his clientele will drop off and he wants to fire the woman. She fights her dismissal in court, which decides in her favour. According to the judge, the owner has 'not sufficiently demonstrated' that a hairdresser wearing a headscarf would be detrimental to his business. In the discussion over integration and the preservation of culture, the term 'making space' regularly surfaces.

Representatives of minority organizations believe that the Netherlands should not only profess integration in theory, but should also make room for different cultures in practice. Therefore, they want days off on Islamic holidays, Eid al Adha (Festival of Sacrifice) to be a national holiday, a place for prayer in the workplace and single-sex gym classes in school. They believe that integration will go more smoothly if the Netherlands makes space for the cultivation of individual identity.

Minister Van Boxtel (Minority Policy) is indeed in agreement. His position: everything is fine, as long as the borders of the Dutch legal system are not crossed. 'I think praying in a public school is fine. But the boundary is the Dutch constitution. That should not be touched.'

According to Susan Rutten, teacher of private law at the University of Maastricht, that also does not happen in practice. Years ago, she wrote an overview on *Moslims in de Nederlandse Rechtspraak* (Muslims in the Dutch Justice System), for the Ministry of the Interior. Since then, she has kept up with all case law. 'In decisions regarding compulsory education or in criminal cases, the fundamentals of Dutch law are not touched.'

However, it is not always so clear. Recognizing a child from a polygamous marriage? An employee who wants to pray during working hours? Who gets custody of a child? Mostly the mother in the Netherlands, always the father in Morocco. In these sorts of cases, judges seldom give an across-the-board verdict, says Rutten. 'A weighing of interests occurs.'

As an example, she takes the case of an Muslim woman who receives unemployment benefits. The woman refuses a job because only men work in the company. Her benefit payments are threatened, legal proceedings follow and the woman is judged to be within her rights. It would cause problems with her faith, her husband and her environment if she went to work for that company. Thus, 'within reason' it can not be required that she accept the job.

However, that is true for just this case. A Moroccan woman requests benefit payments and says at the same time that she is not suitable for the work market because she already does housework. The benefits are denied, the woman initiates legal proceedings, but does not win the case and receives no benefits.

Different factors influence the judges' weighing of interests. 'The call of religion is a strong argument', says Rutten. 'To counteract that, you need something very important.' An example is the verdict of the Supreme Court on the wearing of headscarves by students at a public school in the town of Alphen aan den Rijn. Since then, almost all cases concerning the headscarf have been won by the wearers – except in gym class. Rutten: 'The Commission of Equal Treatment then asked the girls to do a somersault, to see if the headscarves presented a danger. Good, huh? Finally, the Commission found that for safety reasons, it was not discriminatory to forbid headscarves during gym class. In another case, however, the Commission found that long sleeves may indeed be worn in gym class.

Other influential factors are the fairly broad equality principle and the degree to which an individual is integrated in the Netherlands. The better integrated, the less the claim to a 'cultural background'. A good example of the weighing of interests is the groundbreaking decision of the Supreme Court in 1984 regarding a woman who was fired on the spot because she refused to work on an Islamic holiday. Verdict: if someone asks well in advance for an extra day off for an important holiday, that cannot be grounds for firing the person. But the Supreme Court also had a proviso: if the interests of the employer would be seriously impaired, then no day off.

It appears from case law that judges take into account the cultural background, faith and sometimes the inequalities between the sexes in other cultures. Is that also true for incidences of crimes of honour, such as the recent shooting at a school in Veghel? Rutten: 'The judge will never say: someone is not punishable because "honour" crimes are seen differently in Turkey. But the circumstances of each individual are considered. It is not unthinkable that in such cases, cultural background could fall under the category of overpowering psychological factors.' ✦

This article is a translated version of Lange's 'Een handdruk mag worden geweigerd', NRCHandelsblad*, The Netherlands, 23 March 2000.*

Yasha Lange is an editor of the NRC Handelsblad*, the Netherlands.*

Continued from front page: Muslims in Europe / *by Olivier Roy*

true Islam. In a word, the modern community is virtual, and not embedded in a society or a territory.[2] This individual re-appropriation of knowledge and authority is also an indicator of the westernization of the relation to religion.

Of course, the 'salafi' or fundamentalist answer to westernization and globalization is not the only answer, even if it is the more visible. In fact most of the Muslims who would define themselves as 'believers' tend to find their own personal way of adapting to this western environment, which by the way is not a 'Christian' one, but a secular one. There is no symmetry between religions, because the western religions have left the public scene to become private. The process we are witnessing today is one of individualization and privatization of religious practices, of the relation of the self with religion.

Here we come to another issue. It is widely admitted, among western public opinion, that westernization should go along with an *aggiornamento* in theology and religious thinking, a 'liberal Islam' as opposed to fundamentalist Islam. Of course there are many Islamic thinkers working on this issue. But their impact on the Muslim population seems rather weak. Any visit to an Islamic bookshop shows that the most popular books are not related to an 'enlightened' perception of Islam, but to basic or even fundamentalist description of what religion is and what the duties of the believer are. But this is not in contradiction with the 'salafi' trends within the Muslim populations. In fact, the two real trends which are working among the European Muslims are: firstly, a vocal fundamentalist school of thought, trying to build a reconstructed community by preaching individuals, and addressing the real concerns of individuals who lost most of their community links; and secondly, the silent majority of the believers, who found their way on the basis of compromises, adaptations, and makeshift theology. The real processes at work among the Muslim are that of individualization and reconstruction of identities along different patterns, all phenomena that undermine the very idea of 'one' Muslim community in Europe. There is no Western Islam, there are Western Muslims. ✦

Notes

1. The confusion between religious and 'ethnic' groups, or more exactly the perception of a religious group as a quasi one has some antecedents in Europe: one can be an atheist 'Protestant' or 'Catholic' in Northern Ireland.
2. 'La communauté virtuelle: l'Internet et la déterritorialisation de l'islam' (2000). *Réseaux*. Paris: CENT/Hermes Science Publication.

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Education

NIMAT HAFEZ BARAZANGI

The Equilibrium in **Islamic Education in the US**

American Muslims do face misconceptions, yet their view of the woman as morally dependent, hence socially and politically non-central to issues of Islamic and multicultural education is indeed problematic. How is it plausible for a morally dependent individual to instil the character of an autonomous spiritual and intellectual Muslim who can integrate effectively in a 'pluralistic' society? A change in the paradigm of moral or religious education – beyond multiculturalism – may be the solution.

In 1998, a special edition of *Religion and Education* (*R&E*, 25, 1&2, Winter 1998, St. Louis, MO: Webster University), a journal of the National Council on Religion and Public Education, focused on 'Issues of Islamic Education in the US', suggesting a transformation in the framework of investigating moral or religious curricula if we seek significant changes resulting from the contemporary 'educational reform' movements. As issues of character building and religious identity are making a visible dent both in educational assessments and religio-ethnic cultural studies, a main concern comprises cross-cultural understandings of education that take religion, values, character, or morals as a sub-text, particularly when a woman's morality is viewed as a proxy to that of her male household.

The theme of this special edition of *R&E* is *taqwa*. *Taqwa* is an Arabic word often oversimply translated as 'piety', but which bears the meaning of 'a conscious balance between the individual, the society, and the limits set by Allah or God as the source of value and knowledge.' As the guest editor of this edition, three overarching issues formulated my thinking on it – from selecting the theme to the significance that this edition of *R&E* may have for the debate over education in the US as a whole. The first issue is how to achieve a balance between the belief systems of individuals (often referred to as religion or philosophy) and the US universal schooling system which has traditionally intended, to a large degree, to meld diverse individual views into the 'common ground' of a 'pluralistic' social framework.

The second issue is questioning the efficacy of 'teaching about religion' and 'teaching a religion'. This issue comes out in particularly sharp relief in teaching about Islam as a belief system, and about Muslims, in a 'neutral' manner when many teachers have little or no knowledge of Islam, and what they do know too often offers an inaccurate picture.

The third issue, which was the core of this edition, is how to introduce a discourse on 'Islamic education' from females' perspectives – only two of the thirteen contributors are males – when females have traditionally been perceived as lacking the full privilege to interpret Islam.

The centrality of Muslim women's and girls' education and acculturation (Barazangi and Mohja Kahf's articles) to Islamic education – and even their very contribution to this edition of *R&E* – may seem contradictory and perhaps difficult to understand by those whose knowledge of Islam is limited to the perception that males are the only 'legitimate interpreters' of Islamic texts or the perception that females are 'oppressed by their patriarchal religion'.

Challenges and responses

The challenge facing Muslim educators – and those who would learn or educate others about Islam – is twofold. On the one hand, teaching about religion, particularly about Islam, has been relegated to courses in history, social sciences, area studies or world religions (Maysam al Faruqi and Gisela Webb's articles address the higher education dilemmas). This relegation makes 'religion' seem as if it were something of the past, neglecting the lived experience of it, even though some, particularly Muslim educators, have made great strides not to let that happen (Susan Douglass, Audrey Shabbas and Sharifa Alkhateeb's articles). On the other hand, Muslim educators are trying to restore the relationship between 'values' and 'facts', or soul and mind, while nonetheless ignoring their discrepant practices concerning women's autonomous morality. The US constitutional framework that separates 'teaching about religion' from 'teaching religion' may have resulted in a split between teaching and educating, but more problematic is the Muslims' splitting between the female's ability to consciously choose Islam as her worldview or belief system and her ability to cognitively participate in the interpretation of this belief system.

The first matter is being addressed by introducing 'Islamic education' as an alternative measure (Salwa Abd-Allah and Zakiyyah Muhammad's articles). The demand on teachers to be 'neutral' when teaching about religion and its 'sacred language' – or values in general – can reduce teaching to the transmission of 'facts' and reduce religion to a sterile 'factual' entity. This reduction seems to disregard the human need for a value system that is learned in a particular language and taught within a specific historical and cultural environment (Mary El-Khatib and Yahiya Emerick's articles) using specific instructional material (Abidullah Ghazi and Tasneema Ghazi's article). The second matter, the conscious choice of the belief system needs to be addressed further.

We educators – Muslim or non-Muslim – have missed the practice of the basic principle for clear cognition and constructive behaviour, autonomous morality, especially when we continue to rely solely on male interpretations of Islam and of woman's morality from her male household.

Prospects of change

No matter what we call this process of imparting knowledge, the problem lies in that we continuously talk about change, expecting change by the 'other' without changing ourselves first. Some refer to the Qur'an as stating that God will never change the condition of a people until they change what is in themselves (Qur'an, 13: 11). How can we, for instance, teach about Abrahamic religions equitably, or about other worldviews, when some of us still perceive the 'other' as inferior without attempting to understand the basis of the particular behaviour we find objectionable?

When the majority of us still consider our own standard interpretations and practices as the measuring stick for how others think and what they 'ought to do' – instead of considering facilitating them to learn to think autonomously – then we have not yet acknowledged our shortcomings as human educators. Various teachings and philosophies have set certain limits, yet these teachings also remind us that the judge of our work and intention is not our own criterion, but the guiding principle of *taqwa*, or the equilibrium between autonomy and heteronomy. How constructive this balance is in our own character and interaction with ourselves, others and nature, is what makes us human. We need a constant reminder to recognize our human limitations, and so our job is to figure out how to strike this balance, not to dictate the criterion to each other.

To recognize that Muslim learners in the US need a different schema from that of non-Muslim learners is as significant as realizing that these Muslim learners also need a different schema from that of Muslims anywhere else. How we may bring an equilibrium between the ideals of Islamic pedagogy, and the prevailing views and practices of education in the United States, based on Piaget, Dewey and others is one step forward. To recognize the centrality of Muslim women's Islamic higher learning and active agency in interpreting Qur'anic pedagogy is the first step toward equitable Islamic education.

I am concerned with integrating these and other views into a balanced pedagogy for Muslims – both males and females – and for teaching (about) Islam in the United States at the turn of the 21st century. This implies a pedagogy in which there is equilibrium between the need for deciding the moral, religious, as well as secular foundations of multicultural education and the need for determining how best we may prepare the next generation to consciously think about, and to effectively act within, the parameters of these foundations.

One of the focal points of Piaget's social theory is the concept of equilibrium. 'Equilibrated exchanges among adults', writes Rheta De Vries, 'are those in which discussants share a common framework of reference (which may be political, literary, religious, etc.), conserve common definitions, symbols, etc., and coordinate reciprocal propositions. Piaget (1941/95) calls this phenomenon "reciprocal valorization" by "co-exchangers" within a particular scale of values.' (*Educational Researcher*, 1997, 26: 11).

The equilibrated education

Valorizations – being 'affective and cognitive', and eventually social – represent the 'equilibrated exchange' that the contributors (the 'valorizers') in this special edition of *R& E* hope to achieve. As important is recognizing a representation of these valorizers' frame of reference – being predominantly feminine and paradigmatically different from those who follow precedent (*muqallidun*). Also significant is the realization that learners who identify themselves with Islam as a worldview (encompassing both religion and culture) or with Muslims as a cultural group have special needs.

Depending on the reader's frame of reference, this special edition of *R& E* may achieve either a 'cooperative equilibrium' or result in a constraining system that I would call 'window-dressing tolerance'. I am not 'reading history backward' when I bring to the readers' awareness the fact that equilibrium, *taqwa*, in the Qur'an is the measuring stick by which a human character is judged (Qur'an, 49:13). By extension, I argue that *taqwa* can also be the criterion by which a course of study is declared 'Islamic' or 'non-Islamic'. It is only when education achieves this (conscious) balance, this equilibrium, that we can call it 'Islamic'. To focus on whether Muslim/Islamic schools are imparting 'Islamic education' or 'religious education', and what is being projected as 'Islamic', is to understand the relationship between two domains in the pedagogy of moral judgement and 'religious education', particularly in 'pluralistic' societies like the US. The relationship between the ontological domain (the beliefs about the nature of reality) and the intellectual domain (the causal and associational standards by which we investigate reality) is almost absent in the American Muslim educators' debates, especially when women's perspectives and participation in jurisprudence and consultative community affairs are concerned. Furthermore, these are rarely discussed in contemporary educational debates. Is there a relationship between the absence of such discussions and the misunderstandings that surround Islam (and Muslims)? How does this relate to the prevalent views of Muslim women's and girls' morality, education and acculturation? I challenge the reader to find the connection. ✦

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Book Review

ALLAN CHRISTELOW

Re-collecting Algerian Cultural History: **The Work of Bilqasim Saᶜadallah**

On his way through an airport in 1988, Professor Bilqasim Saᶜadallah of the University of Algiers experienced a scholar's worst nightmare. He lost a briefcase containing a partially completed manuscript, research notes, and documents difficult to replace. This disaster might be read as a metaphor for his object of study, Algerian cultural history. On a far larger scale, French colonialism posed a potentially irreversible disaster for the Arabic and Islamic cultural heritage of Algeria. With the initial French onslaught in the 1830s, many documents and manuscripts were destroyed; some for no better reason than that French soldiers found them convenient for lighting their pipes. French confiscation of Islamic endowment properties in urban areas left educational institutions dependent on meager allocations from colonial authorities. The prolonged upheaval of the revolution from 1954 to 1962 also took its toll as the militant settlers of the Secret Army Organization (OAS) used their incendiary skills on the National Library, and as private collections of books and periodicals were destroyed or dispersed, and archives were carted off to France.

PHOTO: ALLAN CHRISTELOW, EL OUED, SOUF OASIS, 1972.

▶ **Traditional bard performing.**

The task of re-collecting the materials of Algeria's cultural heritage is, despite all that has occurred, by no means impossible. To Professor Saᶜadallah it was a compelling task. He continued with his work and, some ten years after the briefcase disaster, published a nine-volume work, *Tarikh al-Jazai'ir al-thaqafi* (*The Cultural History of Algeria*) with Dar al-Gharb al-Islami, a Beirut publishing house specializing in works on the Maghrib.

Scope of the Work

This work is encyclopedic in scope, covering aspects of Algerian culture ranging from Quranic interpretation and Islamic law to decorative arts and music. Several sections reflect the Islamic tradition of scholars' biographies. The first two volumes cover from 1500 to 1830, from the eve of the Ottoman era to the start of the French conquest. The next six volumes cover the colonial era, and the final volume consists of an exhaustive index.

The *Tarikh al-thaqafi* casts a wide net, covering not only major and minor Algerian Islamic scholars and religious leaders but also French educators, interpreters, and Orientalists, as well as French educated and bi-cultural Algerian Muslims. Its encyclopaedic style, at once broadly comprehensive and narrowly segmented by topic, offers an alternative to the monograph, a Western scholarly format that has dominated the writing of Algerian history in the post-colonial era. It allows for the exploration of persons, events, and themes that escape the attention of scholars guided by narrow theoretical concerns.

The immediate purpose of the *Tarikh al-thaqafi* is to create a practical reference work. But it is hard to separate this practical task from larger issues. A product of the 1980s and 1990s, this work appears at a time when it has become evident that Algerians cannot simply retreat comfortably into their Arabic-Islamic tradition, and that Algeria is inextricably involved in a wider global society. In these decades, many Algerians, both of secular and Islamic orientation, have found themselves destined to live and raise their families in Europe or North America. An element in the evolving identity of these communities is the conviction that dialogue between Islamic and Western cultures is possible, and that Algerians, because of their long and intense exposure to the West, have an important role in spearheading such dialogue. In this context, an investigation of cultural interactions in the colonial period is highly relevant.

Second, the relation between religion – and, more broadly, culture – and the state has emerged as a central problem for Algeria. A reasoned discussion of the issue requires an examination of the three decades prior to the First World War (abundantly covered in these volumes), a period when Islamic policy was at the heart of France's *politique coloniale*. The colonial authorities then nurtured an orthodox religious establishment in Algeria but, as alliances between religious elites and governments often are, it was fragile.

Saᶜadallah's work does not propose any simple, clear-cut thesis about the evolving relationship between Islam and the state. Rather, he provides examples that might serve as grist for discussion of the issue. He often displays his greatest enthusiasm when discussing individuals who defy easy categorization, who invite us to see the complexity of forces shaping the Algerian past.

Launching Arabic journalism

Take for example Jeanne Desrayaux, daughter of an Algiers *lycée* professor, and herself recipient of a diploma in Arabic. In 1905, she was sent by the then Governor General Charles Jonnart, along with her father, on a mission to Tunisia and Egypt. There she studied girls' education and Arabic publications. Inspired by what she saw, she returned to Algeria to establish *al-Ihya* (*Revival*), the first Arabic-language magazine published in Algeria. Leading Algerian figures in the state-sponsored Islamic educational establishment collaborated on the publication. It published articles on the cultural and political ferment sweeping the Islamic world at the time. A key premise of *al-Ihya* was that assimilation had failed and the future well-being of Algeria depended upon moral and intellectual regeneration based on Arabic-Islamic tradition. Though it lasted less than two years, publishing some thirty-four bi-weekly issues, *al-Ihya* helped inspire a number of other Arabic newspapers in the years before the First World War.

Saᶜadallah contrasts Desrayaux to her contemporary, Isabelle Eberhart, a figure who has attracted much attention from Western academics, drawn to her image of swashbuckling adventure and lifestyle experimentation. Desrayaux receives scarcely a line in the major French language studies of Algeria. If her photograph is an accurate indication, she was prim and proper. She also appears to have been at least partly of African ancestry, perhaps with family origins in the French West Indies. It may be that part of Jonnart's intent in fostering her enterprise was to create a socially conservative alternative to *al-Akhbar*, the paper run by French radical Victor Barrucand, chief promoter of the Eberhart mystique.

Jonnart's efforts to create a sort of Franco-Algerian synthesis in early 20th-century Algeria soon broke down, and for many reasons. It was an imperial cultural synthesis, built from the top down, opposed from the outset by French settler politicians, supported by diverse individuals who, because of their education or disposition, identified with the effort to promote what we would now call a multi-cultural society. The effort was also crippled by the French law on separation of state from religion, passed in 1905.

Islamic activist with a colonial medal

As the imperial synthesis crumbled, new expressions of Islam in Algeria took on a more popular and political character. Symptomatic of this transformation was ᶜAbbas Bin Hamana, who was instrumental in establishing the first community-supported modern Islamic school in Algeria, in Tebessa, a town near the Tunisian frontier, some 200 kilometres south of the Mediterranean. Tebessa was remote in location, yet situated so that it was exposed to new winds blowing in from Tunis and Tripoli.

Bin Hamana was in many ways a model colonial subject, decorated by the French for his zeal as an agricultural entrepreneur. But when the Italians invaded Libya in 1911, Bin Hamana, like many assimilated Algerians, became an ardent supporter of the rebels. He corresponded with Tripolitanian rebel leader Sulayman al-Baruni.

Not long after this Bin Hamana got caught up in the fray of municipal politics in Tebessa. He incurred the wrath of the local French mayor, who had him thrown in jail. But he also struck up an alliance with Charles Michel, an engineer posted in Tebessa to work on the nearby phosphate mines, and a partisan of the Société des Droits de l'Homme. As a result, Bin Hamana's case was taken all the way to the Chamber of Deputies in Paris where he was vindicated in 1913. The following year he was murdered, ostensibly as a result of a local political vendetta.

Bin Hamana's career, while obscure, might be seen as a microcosm of themes that continued to weigh heavily on Algerian political life: links with international Islamic and anti-imperialist causes; human rights activism; Islam as a factor in popular mobilization; and factional violence, perhaps manipulated by higher authorities, but with a dynamic of its own, and the potential for undermining projects to build a stable political hierarchy.

A reformer in the *zawiya*

Another complex figure that captured Saᶜadallah's attention is ᶜAbd al-ᶜAziz Bin al-Hashimi Bin Ibrahim. Though he was head of a Qadiriyya Sufi lodge, or *zawiya,* in the oasis community of El Oued, his father had sent him to study at the Zaytuna Islamic university in Tunis where he absorbed *salafi* critiques of Sufism. In 1937 he joined the Association of Algerian ᶜUlama, who supported modern Islamic education with a strong *salafi* orientation. He opened a school under the aegis of this association in the family lodge in El Oued. But soon thereafter he fell victim to a combination of local rivalries and international tensions. He was accused of supporting German and Italian plots and incarcerated in the notorious Kudiyit Aty prison in Constantine.

From El Oued to Minneapolis

The story is of particular relevance to Professor Saᶜadallah, for he was growing up in El Oued when the above events occurred. With the support of the Association of ᶜUlama, he pursued his education first in Tunis, then in Cairo. His educational career took a novel turn in 1962 when he went to the University of Minnesota on a Fulbright grant to prepare a PhD in history. Some three decades later, he was to conduct much of the work for the present volume in the quiet stacks of the University of Minnesota library, with the aid of its interlibrary loan staff, who helped him pull together some of the dispersed fragments of Algerian cultural history that the winds of fortune had transported to North America. ✦

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Book Presentation

PATRICIA SLOANE

Islam, Modernity and Entrepreneurship among the Malays

Islam, Modernity and Entrepreneurship among the Malays **is the result of nearly four years of research conducted between January of 1993 and January of 1998, on entrepreneurship, networking, and corporate culture among the middle- and upper-middle-class Malay population of Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The book is an analysis of an initial period of fieldwork (from 1993 to 1995). It is the first in-depth anthropological study of Malay Muslim enterprise and entrepreneurial culture since the inception of the New Economic Policy (NEP) in Malaysia in 1970, a systematic programme intended to develop the economic skills of Malays in an ethnically diverse nation after the ethnic riots in 1969.**

Certain ethnographic studies have discussed the economic situation of Malaysians – Malays, Chinese, and Indians – who have been *disadvantaged* by the dramatic changes brought about by the NEP. This study, however, discusses the lives and enterprises of the Malay men and women who have been *advantaged* the most by Malay-only government policy. Many economists and political scientists have argued over the consequences of NEP for the Malaysian nation as a whole and the economic and social consequences of Malaysia's ethnicized politics, but there have been few ethnographic studies of the social group most directly involved in and affected by NEP – the new Malay middle and upper-middle class. Although there is recent literature focusing on the spectacular culture of consumption and choices of the new rich of Asia (one publisher even has a series dedicated to that subject), the analysis in *Islam, Modernity and Entrepreneurship among the Malays* provides insight into the culture of business – the economic decisions, the investments, and the capital and social networks – that have resulted in Malay wealth. There is also very recent literature on the spectacular economic downturn among the Asian 'Little Dragon' economies in late 1997; I venture to suggest that the book offers retrospective insight into why that crisis occurred in one Little Dragon, and perhaps even offers prognosticative insight into the nature of Malaysia's recent, but exaggerated, economic recovery, which also silenced the voices of political dissent in 1999.

Research among Malay entrepreneurs

Entrepreneurship is, in Malaysia, what NEP intended it to be: a middle-class, even elite, phenomenon. It earns grand-scale public attention in the Malay community; the government honours individuals who are deemed successful entrepreneurs, bestowing titles and honorifics upon them, while magazines and the media report endlessly on the lifestyles and management secrets of Malay entrepreneurs. Hundreds of Malay entrepreneurial people, who were participating in the modern economy in Kuala Lumpur or attempting to cast a wider net to economic and social niches in the rest of Malaysia, Southeast Asia, and the world, offered insight through our conversations. I interviewed people in their houses and their offices, factories, and country clubs. Male and female entrepreneurs – both participated with equal fervour in the modern economy – were contacted. Also interviewed were parents and children, students, and teenagers (every one of them wanting to be an entrepreneur one day); recent university graduates (all wanting to be entrepreneurs); professors and professionals in big corporate businesses who were planning to go out 'on their own' or were already doing so on the side. Furthermore, groups were met with or spoken to, such as women's and men's entrepreneurial societies, college alumni cohorts, and executives' networking organizations established to capture greater entrepreneurial opportunities. I attended workshops (accompanied by informants) on Malay entrepreneurship, Malay entrepreneurs' clubs, entrepreneurship talks, entrepreneurial development societies, entrepreneurial award ceremonies, and huge conferences and trade shows sponsored by government ministries and agencies to develop local, regional, and global Malay entrepreneurial networks.

Malay entrepreneurship and the changes it implies affected other, less visible aspects of life, especially in relationships between men and women, children and parents, brothers and sisters, individuals and cohorts, even human beings and Allah. As such, I spent a great deal of time in Malay homes, discussing marriage, family, modern women's roles, and the consequences of rapid social change. It was found generally everywhere that Malay men and women actively seek to understand the role of Islam in contexts of social and economic change, and follow or react to *dakwah,* the intensification of Islamic practice in Malaysia since the 1980s.

Later on in the first period of fieldwork, increasing focus was placed on several particular ventures which seemed characteristic of the various kinds of entrepreneurship in which my informants were engaged. These were established businesses, a year or so old, well beyond the drawing-board stage in the sense that they had already been capitalized, registered with the government, and so on. The enterprises focused upon had been formed with the injection of government or private capital, and consisted of several large manufacturing concerns, as well as enterprises which represented the non-industrial sector into which much Malay private capital is flowing: real estate, insurance, tourism, advertising, publishing, communication, and consultancies.

Good works – Malay entrepreneurship and Islamic values

The first part of the book, presented under the rubric of 'Good Works', argues that among the Malay middle class, entrepreneurship has become the main vector of ethnic, religious, and moral worth, and a test of virtue and modernity among the beneficiaries of the NEP. The complex themes of Islamic duty and financial obligation, which enframe Malay life in relationships with parents, spouses, cohorts, and the communal group, are explored. Also explored are the crucial, self-consciously 'modern' redefinitions of Islamic economic beliefs and meanings which have shaped the Malay understanding of entrepreneurship and human agency. Focusing upon several individual stories of eschatological and economic self-development, I examined the ways in which a Muslim world-view establishes balanced definitions of self-interest and group interest and clarifies the culture of social and moral entailments in which the informants operate. Also examined was the belief informants had that they were preserving – through entrepreneurship – egalitarian and communal traditions and values from the Malay past, when in fact, entrepreneurship has resulted in greater social distinctions and the formation of a new elite. I argue that entrepreneurship implies, to the informants concerned, an Islamic development process which could reveal key, group-oriented moral and traditional behaviours – the material demonstration of 'good works' – until Malay entrepreneurs see themselves acting not just for themselves, but for all Malays, Muslims, and the very fate of the nation and Malaysian society.

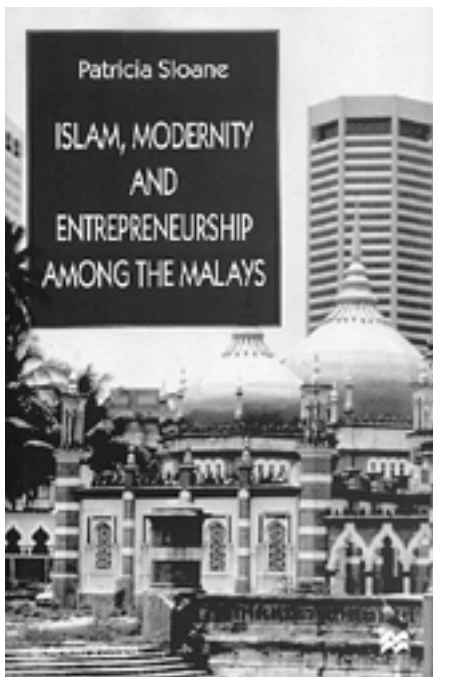
Networks – Malay entrepreneurship in action

The second part of the book, presented under the rubric of 'Networks', is an attempt to elucidate how the informants enact their understanding of Malay economic modernity and entrepreneurship; that is, how they infuse their altruistic image of 'good works' into economic and social action. A description is given of the way in which networks and relationships form in Kuala Lumpur society and the ways in which social life can be manipulated in pursuit of economic gain. Case studies of entrepreneurial networking and the entrepreneurial objectives of three of the enterprises concerned are given. The first case study illustrates how alliances form among Malay entrepreneurs, often as a consequence of the way in which the government represents modern economic opportunity and enterprise to Malays. The expectations informants had of each other and of their ventures in pursuing such opportunities, and the often disappointing returns that their swiftly formed alliances brought are dealt with.

The second case study examines the consequences of achieving a high profile for one female entrepreneur in Kuala Lumpur. The positive effects of networking used for building alliances are described along with the negative effects of networking – when gossip and rumours of sorcery are used by network participants to diminish the identity of an entrepreneur who is thought to be dangerously self-interested, and even un-Islamic. It is suggested that these consequences are often experienced by autonomous women in Malay entrepreneurial society, who induce a certain cultural ambivalence about the true source of their powers.

An entrepreneurial venture that harnessed its very existence to the role of Malay networks to the point at which networking became the primary purpose – indeed, the product – of the enterprise itself, is examined. These networks are then related to other forms of Malay action which explicitly use social relations for economic ends, and it is shown how this strategy has become increasingly concatenated to the Malay theory of 'good works'.

Finally, the crucial role of entrepreneurship in establishing and legitimizing Malay identity and representing Malay ideals of morality, egalitarianism, harmony, and tradition in the contexts of rapid social and economic change is discussed. It is demonstrated that through its seemingly endless incorporativeness, through the enmeshing of material and affective ties in networks, Malay entrepreneurship, to its actors, symbolizes diminished eliteness and Malay classlessness, and implies openness, shared power, and free access to opportunity. What was learned from the informants can be described as a Malay theory of entrepreneurship, one which locates Malay entrepreneurs in their local culture, validates the pro-Malay policies of NEP, and connects Malay development to a global culture of capitalism. Then a theory of Malay entrepreneurship is elucidated. A description is given of the way in which entrepreneurship tends to confirm, determine the gender of, and politicize Malay eliteness, while simultaneously closing out many of the entrepreneurs aspiring to wealth and power who are met in the pages of the book. Moreover, it is argued that the theory of Malay entrepreneurship conceals the crucial role of the state in creating and supporting high-level, politically-connected Malay entrepreneurs – precisely the group that I then went on to study in later periods of research in Malaysia. ✦



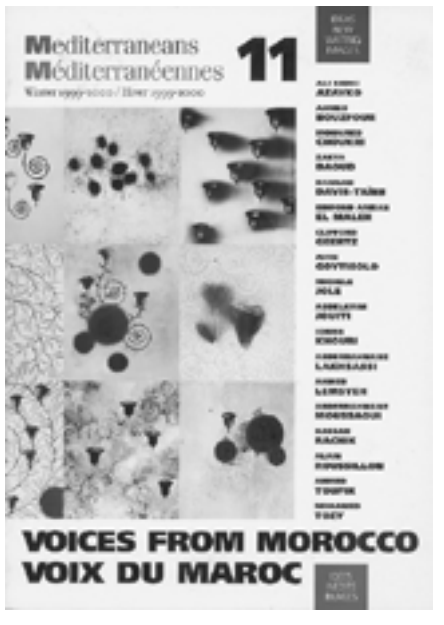
Patricia Sloane, Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology and JASO, Oxford University, earned a PhD in Social Anthropology from Oxford University in 1996. She was appointed as a research fellow at the Institute of Malaysian and International Studies at the National University of Malaysia, where she researched middle-class culture, and later conducted an in-depth study of corporate culture in a major Malay-owned conglomerate. An editor for JASO, The Journal of the Anthropological Society of Oxford, *she is currently preparing an article on sexual harassment in the Malay workplace.*

Periodical

ROBERT WATERHOUSE

The Azur Decade:
A Brief History of Mediterraneans

Millions of words are published every year by and about the peoples of the Mediterranean. Its place at the crux of Europe, the Middle East and North Africa and its historical importance overlaid with present-day relevance means that Mediterraneans are never far from the news. Many cultures, speaking many tongues, have shared interests and concerns, even if the act of sharing often seems more like smash and grab. Yet among all the words and images there are a precious few voices saying just what it is to be a Mediterranean today.



Or so it seemed to Kenneth Brown when, in the spring of 1990, he began testing his thoughts and ideas on a group of friends in Manchester, where he was a senior lecturer in sociology. Brown's working background in Morocco, Tunisia and the Middle East, and his knowledge of Arabic and Hebrew as well as Spanish and French should have warned those of us he corralled that the ride would be lively.

Made in Manchester

The first two issues of *Mediterraneans* bore the imprint of Didsbury Press, a small independent Manchester publishing house whose owner, Patrick Quinn, personally funded the venture. They carried an extraordinary selection of contributors – novelists, poets, journalists, artists and photographers – covering an extraordinary variety of topics. From the outset, *Mediterraneans* published uncompromisingly in English or French, without translation. Designed on desk-top by Trevor Hatchett, edited from the garrets and pubs of South Manchester, *Mediterraneans* proved an immediate *tour de force*: 'a new bold literary review' wrote the *Guardian*. *Le Monde Diplomatique* called it an 'éblouissant sommaire […] de très beaux écrits de poètes, journalistes, romanciers de la région.'

Goytisolo, Durrell, Moravia

Issue 1 of Summer 1991 had Juan Goytisolo on Cairo's City of the Dead, Lawrence Durrell on bull-worship in Provence, Alberto Moravia in conversation, David Hirst on Saddam before Kuwait, Clarisse Nicoidski on a French soldier's diary from the Algerian front in 1960. Mahmoud Darwish described how he risked on a daily basis a sniper's bullet to make early-morning coffee during the height of the Beirut civil war; Yigal Sarna detailed an infamous sectarian murder in Israel. Lucia Graves told how her father Robert came to Mallorca, while Claudia Roden explored Italy's regional cuisine.

So it went on. By the third issue, Brown had taken himself and the review to Paris, where the official funding climate was more promising. He found a new co-editor, Hannah Davis, and set about widening a circle of supporters who eventually evolved into an advisory panel.

Moments of destiny

The first of the themed issues, Algeria, Summer 1993, came at a moment of destiny as civil war loomed. This was closely followed by Beirut/Sarajevo and Israel/Palestine. *Mediterraneans* showed no aversion to the hot spots, though it retained a section of Varia at the back, and had the ability to attract spicy pot-pourri contributions like Andreu Martin's story of sex – and worse – among beach hoodlums (Issue 4).

Financial support from the Centre National de Lettres helped establish *Mediterraneans* in Paris, but the review remained – and remains – at the commercial margins, depending upon the goodwill of contributors and subscribers. Involvement with Med-Media, the EC programme for journalist training led to a Spring 1994 seminar in Marseille and subsequent publication of an *hors serie* title, 'Etre journaliste en Méditerranée' (also in Spanish and Arabic, but not English). A second such seminar took place in Alexandria in cooperation with *Al Ahram*, *il manifesto* and *Milliyet*. Continuation of the project awaits de-freezing of the EC Mediterranean programme budget.

For Issue 7, Autumn 1995, Brown and Davis devoted almost a whole review to the falling apart of Yugoslavia, 'Le pont détruit'. The title referred to Mostar, the Bosnian city dismembered by Croats. *Mediterraneans*' by-now proven mix of reportage, short stories, poetry and telling images described, with passion but without side, a Balkan tragedy which continues to unfold.

Alexandria, Istanbul, Morocco

More recent issues have been, perhaps, less consciously from the frontline yet are hardly irrelevant. 'Alexandria in Egypt' (Autumn 1996) found the ancient waterfront city at the point of shaking off economic doldrums and Durrellian ties. 'Istanbul, Many Worlds' (Autumn 1997) explored the Turkish dilemma of embracing the West while fighting a war in its own eastern backyard. 'Voices from Morocco' (Winter 1999-2000) captures Mahgreb aspirations at the millennium, with a change of king and perhaps of regime.

Five-year programme

Mediterraneans has survived almost a decade in the tough theatre of international publishing. It commences the millennium in good spirits with the next issue, on Marseille, planned for Autumn 2000, homes both in the Maison des Sciences de l'Homme in Paris and the Friche Belle de Mai in Marseille, and high hopes of a five-year publishing programme based on two issues per year. The proposed subjects for 2001 are Haifa and Salonika.

The struggle, as ever, is not for good material but for the financial wherewithal to publish. In a world where book selling is becoming more global by the day, small operators have a huge marketing challenge. *Mediterraneans* is soon to fight back via its own website (mediterraneansreview.com) which will offer readers the opportunity to sample back issues, as well as being able to order and subscribe on line. ✦

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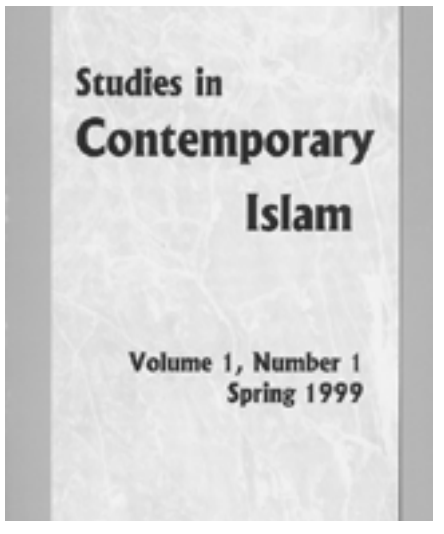
PERIODICAL

Studies in Contemporary Islam



Studies in Contemporary Islam is a new, refereed journal focusing on Islam and Muslims in the contemporary world, published by the Center for Islamic Studies at Youngstown State University. It is published two times a year and is devoted to the understanding, review, analysis, and critique of contemporary Islamic religious and intellectual developments, on the one hand, and of socio-political changes in Muslim societies, on the other. The journal aims to be interdisciplinary and international in its range and coverage. Intended to serve as a forum for scholarly dialogue and exchange, *Studies in Contemporary Islam* does not to promote a particular point of view or ideology. The editors are Mumtaz Ahmad (junaid@erols.com) and Mustansir Mir (mmir@cc.ysu.edu).

The first issue (Spring 1999) includes the following articles:

– Farhang Rajaee, 'Paradigm Shifts in Muslim International Relations Discourse';
– Anas B. Malik, 'Understanding the Political Behavior of Islamists: The Implications of Socialization, Modernization, and Rationalist Approaches';
– Timur Yuskaev, 'Redeeming the Nation: Redemption Theology in African-American Islam';
– Frederick M. Denny and the Late Olga Scarpetta, 'Jailhouse religion: The Challenge of Corrections to the American Muslim Community'; and
– Mumtaz Ahmad, 'Democracy on Trial in Malaysia'. ✦

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PERIODICAL

Prologues: Revue Maghr bine du Livre

Prologues is a Maghrebin book revue. Above all it is the voice of a group of intellectuals who seek to renew, from within, contemporary Arabic thought through debate and analysis. For this reason, *Prologues* seeks to bring together themes that are of central concern in the Mediterranean region. It aims to stimulate communication among social scientists, scholars, and intellectuals from North and South and to reach out to broader audiences. Although literacy levels in the Maghreb are on the rise, public exposure to the world of ideas remains limited. With its critical reviews, interviews and essays, *Prologues* aims to facilitate access to this world. The journal expresses disagreement over the way Islamic dogmas and laws are invoked and used in the political arena and advocates democratic alternatives, arguing that these are probably closer to Islamic ethics or, at the least, not incompatible with them.

A bilingual (French-Arabic) scholarly and cultural journal, *Prologues* has been published quarterly in Casablanca since 1993. To date, eleven issues have been published. It is distributed in particular in the Maghreb, but also reaches readers in Europe, the Middle East and North America. Abdou Filali-Ansary is the editor. ✦

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Morocco

ANTON J. ESCHER &
SANDRA PETERMANN

Neo-colonialism or Gentrification in the Medina of Marrakesh

At the beginning of the 21st century, the Medina of Marrakesh is facing significant changes. The old town had been isolated and preserved by the French protectorate policy during the first half of the 1900s. After the withdrawal of the colonial power, the former incarnation of Muslim cultural life declined to a residential area for the poorest rural population.

During the sixties, individual members of a growing gay community settled Marrakesh. In the 1980s, UNESCO acknowledged the exotic attractiveness and the cultural significance of the 'oriental Medina' of Marrakesh by including the town in the world's cultural heritage programme, and the characteristics of the Medina also attract the international mass tourism today. Helped by the structural condition of globalization, numerous western foreigners had moved into the old town by the end of the 20th century. All forms of media, first and foremost the Internet, offer real estate for rent and for sale in many quarters of the old part of Marrakesh. In the Medina, the growing group of western foreigners live excessively on a grand scale together with the increasingly impoverished Moroccans. Does all this speak for symptoms of neo-colonialism? Or, due to the fact that well-off foreigners contribute to the renovation and preservation of the fabric of the buildings, does it rather indicate gentrification?

20th-century town planning

The policy of Governor Lyautey and his chief architect Prost during the time of the protectorate helped to spatially isolate the old towns of Morocco, including the Medina of Marrakesh, from modern town expansions as well as to preserve the fabric of the buildings. This did not only include the preservation and protection of the historic old towns, but also the building of modern 'European' towns, so-called *villes nouvelles*, at a distance from the old towns.

After the end of the French protectorate in 1956, the Moroccan upper and middle class left the old town, and a poor rural population spread into the Medina. By the 60s, international tourism had already discovered the old towns along with all other old cities of cultural interest in the world. UNESCO took the cultural significance of the Medina into account by including it into the world's cultural heritage programme in 1985. However, the town-planning restoration measures were restricted at first to individual buildings and to the paving of the most important streets of the old town.

View of an inner courtyard and a roof garden with swimming pool of an old town house renovated by a European.

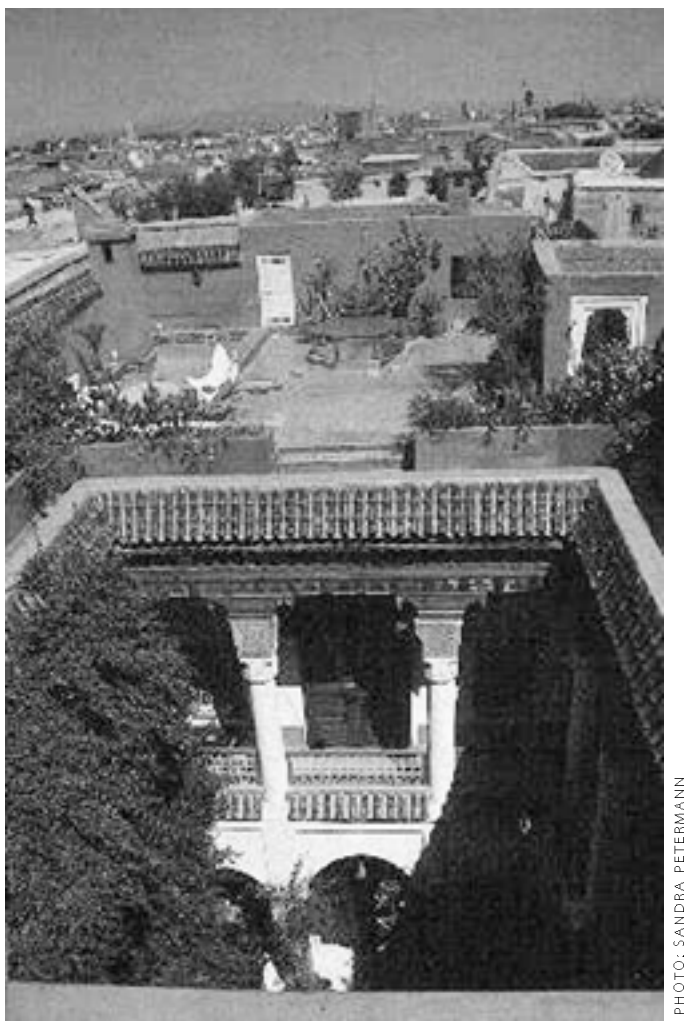

PHOTO: SANDRA PETERMANN

Western foreigners in the Medina of Marrakesh

During the 60s and 70s, the process of decolonization took place comparatively peacefully in Morocco. Foreign real estate property was not expropriated. This led to individual western foreigners settling in the Medina of Marrakesh already in the early 60s, when one could still find the French population of the protectorate in the *villes nouvelles*. That would not have been possible during the time of the French protectorate because of urban apartheid. Many of these foreigners were artists and architects 'looking for the Orient' and/or looking to 'find themselves'. An international gay community was established, which functioned as the initiator for the massive influx of western foreigners at the end of the 20th century.

A fascination with the oriental aura, the colours, the fragrances, the year-round warm climate, the reasonable cost of living, and expectations of Dionysiac joys contributed to the expansion of the community. By the mid-80s, the number of western foreigners in the Medina had risen to several dozen, but it remained a manageable quantity. By the mid-90s, Europeans had become increasingly interested in buying houses in the old town. At this time, the first inns (*maison d'hôtes*) and several exclusive restaurants were built. During the final years of the 20th century, the real estate business boomed in the old town. The demand for real estate has especially exploded in the last two years, and supply has been extended.

In September 1999, western foreigners lived in approximately 150 *riyāḍs* Most preferred were accommodations which stood out for their not yet completely dilapidated fabric, close proximity to the Jemaa el-Fna, and easy accessibility by car.

In contrast to previous years, last year's buyers no longer mainly came from the upper class or the artist scene, but rather from the broad middle class of Europe. There is a wide variety of newcomers, from immigrants and transmigrants, to bourgeoisie and illustrious holiday guests, to European Muslims.

Many buy *riyāḍs* in Marrakesh because of the comparatively low cost – with respect to European prices. However, not only the purchase price is decisive: the standard of living in general has improved. In Marrakesh, a house with an inner courtyard and employed servants is affordable for many. Other equally important arguments are individuality and independence, which one can express and enjoy behind the closed walls one's own house. The *riyāḍ* is considered a symbol of freedom by both temporary and permanent immigrants. Europeans are still attracted by a world which seems strange and mystical to them, and which may evoke sentiments of being a colonialist amidst the omnipresent poverty of the Moroccans.

Hollywood films, TV reports, magazines, newspapers, and the Internet add to the subjective conveying of information about the Medina of Marrakesh and to the promotion of living in a *riyāḍ*. Currently, architects and real estate agents are offering hundreds of *riyāḍs* on the market. French Moroccan estate agents pursue aggressive marketing strategies, which range from face to face contact on the Jemaa el-Fna to interactive communication on the Internet. Western foreigners also buy in other old towns of Morocco, such as Essaouira and Asilah.

Gentrification vs. neo-colonialism

The prominent American architect Bill Willis, who has been living in a former palace in the north of the Medina since the 60s, formulates the arguments brought into discussion on the presence of western foreigners in the old town of Marrakesh by the new inhabitants: 'It's very good for the Medina because these foreigners are bringing in a lot of money and are fixing up all these old houses that are falling into ruins […] or are tearing them down and are building something marvelous in the place […], so that's very good. […] It cleans up the city. It brings a lot of money to Morocco. It employs hundreds of Moroccan workmen, and so that part is very, very good'. These observations cannot be contradicted if one applies them exclusively to the fabric of the buildings and to the financial input. Similar to the economically and socially declined districts of industrial countries, those districts of Morocco which seem to be left to fall into socio-economic ruin are structurally saved and revalued by the wealthy population. In addition, another way of life is being established in the district: gentrification in the 'oriental town' – indeed in the 'oriental town' because the houses, apart from some exceptions, are designed in the 'oriental' style that shaped the image 19th-century Europe had of the Orient. Thus, a hybrid area was created with an imaginary oriental ambience and a sumptuous way of life, which consciously contrasted the poverty of the neighbourhoods. This contrast, which is manifest especially in the availability of servants in houses, hotels, and restaurants, adds to the fact that western foreigners feel they live in a 'sort of gracious colonial atmosphere', as Mr Willis says.

Depending on what perspective is taken, the process of change in the Medina of Marrakesh either proves to be gentrification, which is evaluated positively because it helps preserve the precious fabric of the buildings rich in tradition, or it represents neo-colonialism, which uses the product of Islamic culture to meet the expectations of the European settlers. One should recall in this context the origin of the imagination 'Orient', as Mary Anne Stevens[2] outlines: 'Between 1798 and 1914, North Africa and the Near East, as a closest non-Christian region to Europe, exercised a fascination upon the West, which responded in a variety of ways: the scholarly study of ancient civilisations and of contemporary cultures, imaginary evocations in poems and novels, literary descriptions and tourists' enthusiasms, as well as representations by artists.' More than a hundred years after the Europeans created the image of the 'Orient', they now once and for all (peacefully) start to redesign their 'Orient', i.e. the old towns of Morocco, structurally and ideologically according to their imagination. They do that from the inside, where the Islamic urban way of life, the ᶜumrân hadarî, is rooted. ✦

Notes

1. The ordinary house with an inner courtyard in the Moroccan town is called *dar*. The central element is the inner courtyard surrounded by a colonnade, at which rooms facing each other are located. In the corners are usually an entrance, a kitchen, and a stairwell with a bathroom. In Morocco *riyāḍ* stands for a special form of a house with a garden. The basic type has residential buildings on the shorter sides that face each other. The other sides display high boundary walls. In today's Marrakesh every residential house is called *riyāḍ* in colloquial context with foreigners.
2. Stevens, Mary Anne (1984). 'Western Art and its Encounter with the Islamic World 1798-1914'. In *The Orientalists: Delacroix to Matisse. European Painters in North Africa and the Near East*, Mary Anne Stevens. London: Royal Academy of Arts, pp. 15-23.

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UK
PETER CLARK

From Fantasy to Faith
Islamic Architectural Influences in Britain[1]

Islamic architectural influences in Britain from India and Andalusia go back to the 18th century. Inspiration from the Middle East appears in private houses, synagogues and mosques from the 19th century. Since the immigration and growth of a British Muslim community in the last fifty years, purpose-built mosques have been constructed and have absorbed an older 'orientalist tradition'. Other mosques have been converted cinemas, private houses, churches and factories, often with some decoration intended to Islamize the building.

PHOTO: PETER CLARK

Gujarati Mosque at Manningham, Bradford, formerly a factory.

There is nothing alien about Islamic architectural influences in Britain. Nor is British Islam a peculiarly 20th-century phenomenon. Close connections between the Islamic world and Britain go back for over four centuries, through trade, diplomacy, travel, art, the Empire and scholarship. In the early 17th century there is evidence of a small community of Muslims in London – including craftsmen and a lawyer, though there is no record of a mosque.

Imperial fantasies

The 18th century was a great age for building in Britain. Styles often reflected an attitude of philosophical curiosity about the world. From Islamic countries there were influences from buildings from Grenada to India. Mosques were designed, not as places of worship but as 'garden embellishments'. One such example was at Kew where William Chambers built an exotic collection of oriental buildings for Frederick Prince of Wales. His mosque (now disappeared) had 'Gothic ogee arches' above the doorways with quotations from the Holy Qur'an in gold lettering.

Britain's closest contacts with the Islamic world two centuries ago were through the expanding Empire in India. In the first twenty years of the 19th century there was a vogue for an Indian style. British architects relied on artists' drawings that would have been produced in expensive folio editions. One pioneering artist was William Hodges who produced *Select Views of India* between 1785 and 1788. Hodges was impressed by what he called 'Moorish grandeur' and argued, as had Sir Christopher Wren a century earlier, that there was an historic connection between Islamic architecture and the Gothic arch.

The supreme example of replication of Indian Islamic architecture was the Royal Pavilion at Brighton, whose architect, John Nash, studied volumes on Indian Islamic buildings. Though a classicist throughout his life – he designed the Regents Park estates – Nash was versatile and delighted, as one architectural historian has observed, 'in small domes or "pepper-pots" of every shape, some of them deliberately oriental.'[2]

Brighton Pavilion had an impact on many new buildings throughout the 19th century, but other influences were reaching Britain from Andalusia and from the Middle East. Orientalist painting has been fully documented. Thanks to the development of steam-driven ships, travel to the Middle East from the 1830s became easier. Travellers returned with souvenirs, and also ideas of design and notions of space and leisure.

Two outstandingly self-conscious attempts at reproducing Arab architecture in the 19th century have survived.

One is at Leighton House in London, built in 1865 for the artist Lord Leighton who collected ceramics and other Islamic artefacts during visits to the Middle East. The house was built to house his souvenirs. The model was La Zisa in Palermo, but the 17th-century wooden lattice-work came from Damascus.

Another example is the Arab Room at Cardiff Castle, built by William Burges for the Marquess of Bute. Burges had been to Turkey. He had taken time off from designing the Crimean Memorial Chapel in Istanbul to study the city's mosques. The floor pattern of the room, to quote John Sweetman, 'sets out the Islamic eight-fold figure, which is developed with pyrotechnic virtuosity in the domical ceiling.'[3]

Faith takes over

Meanwhile fantasy was yielding place to faith. The first religious buildings to owe inspiration to Islamic models were actually new synagogues. Newly prosperous Jewish communities eschewed the Gothic or the Classical styles. One was associated with medieval Christianity, the other with 18th-century rationalism. The adopting of a 'Moorish' style was a reminder of Jewish glories in Arab Andalusia. The finest examples have been in mainland Europe, but there is one good example in Liverpool. Another in the heart of Muslim Bradford has a horse-shoe arched doorway and horizontal banding of alternate colours of stone.

Some new churches also displayed Islamic influences, albeit indirect. The best example is Christ Church Streatham in South London, whose architect, James Wild, used horse-shoe shaped arches and a grand west doorway modelled on the doorway of the Sultan Hasan Mosque in Cairo.

From the late 19th century there was a growing Muslim presence in Britain. At first, prayers were held in private houses or in rented halls. Sometimes there were rallies at Leicester Square (ironically by the Alhambra Theatre, now the Odeon cinema), Hyde Park Corner or Peckham Rye. The first purpose-built mosque was at Woking, south of London. This was constructed from funds left by the Ruler of Bhopal, and was built in 1889 by a British non-Muslim architect.

Today it is reckoned that there are about 1.5 million Muslims in Britain. In addition to the small number of converts, about 600,000 are of Pakistani origin, 150,000 from India and 200,000 from Bangladesh. A majority of British Muslims have now been born in Britain.

The South Asians have tended to occupy particular areas of inner cities. In many places South Asian Muslims have often been the latest wave of outsiders. The appearance of an area may be like a palimpsest with physical evidence of earlier settlements. Manningham in Bradford, for example, has been successively the home of German Jewish immigrants, then Irish and now South Asians. Near the synagogue already mentioned, is an Irish pub. Synagogue and bar are incongruous prominent buildings in an area inhabited by people overwhelmingly of Pakistani origin.

There are today about 1200 mosques and praying areas in Britain, of which approximately a hundred have been purpose-built. The major mosques of Britain – at Regents Park London, in Whitechapel, the cathedral-mosques of Birmingham, Leeds and Edinburgh – have been built with funding from outside Britain. The others have been conversions of houses, warehouses and cinemas. Richly carpeted rooms where shoes are discarded, calligraphic texts and some decoration have helped to 'Islamize' the building. In the 1960s, the architect Gulzar Haider arrived in Britain from Pakistan and attended prayers at a Wimbledon house. 'There was no *mihrab* niche, just a depression in a side wall, a cold fireplace with a checkerboard of green and brown ceramic tiles. A small chandelier with missing pieces of crystal was suspended asymmetrically in a corner. A rickety office chair with gaudy plush rug draped over its back acted as the *minbar* pulpit.' Twenty five years later he returned to the house-mosque which was 'now wrapped with a glazed finish: arched windows sat squeezed into what seemed like an endless line of sharp crescents: and there was a number of token minaret domes, whose profile came less from any architectural tradition than from illustrations of the *Arabian Nights*.'[4]

The Sussex area has a small, but ethnically heterogeneous community of Muslims, with 39 mother tongues. Of the three Brighton mosques, one occupies a private house that was previously a Jewish school, another is a converted shop, the third is above five shops. To the east, is the Hastings mosque – a converted church – and to the west is the Worthing mosque – a converted warehouse. The new town of Crawley, inland, near Gatwick airport, has a purpose-built mosque.[5] This pattern is fairly representative of British mosques.

Orientalism revived?

By contrast, the Manningham area of Bradford is almost wholly Muslim. Of the 30 mosques in the city, four have been purpose-built, two are in former cinemas, three are former churches and nine are converted industrial premises. The rest have been adapted from private houses. What is likely to be the largest mosque, in Darfield Street, has been under construction since 1986.[6] Part of it has been opened for prayer, but problems of funding have led to slow progress. Nonetheless the architect, Neil Waghorne, has a clear vision of how the building will develop. He is a student of Turkish architecture. Part of his inspiration is the Suleymaniye mosque in Istanbul. A superb *muqarnas* doorway has been carved by a local stonemason, David Bedford, from Yorkshire stone.

Islamic architecture has historically adapted to local traditions of building. In Britain many purpose-built mosques have been in a tradition of 'orientalist' architecture, going back to the 18th century. The best models from the Islamic world have been studied, used or copied. The sponsors of the buildings today are Muslims but the architects, designers and craftsmen are likely to be non-Muslims. What makes a building an Islamic building? Its purpose? Its owners? Its source of inspiration?

Is a distinctly British Muslim style emerging? Is it the blending of work from the Islamic world with local materials? Or is it the striking adaptation of a building originally designed for other purposes? ✦

Notes

1. This article is based on a talk given at the Felix Meritis Foundation, Amsterdam, 24 January 2000.
2. Conner, Patrick (1979). *Oriental Architecture in the West*. London: Thames and Hudson, p. 141.
3. Sweetman, John (1988). *The Oriental Obsession: Islamic Inspiration in British and American Art and Architecture 1500-1920*. Cambridge: University Press, p. 193.
4. Haider Gulzar (1996). 'Muslim Space and the Practice of Architecture: a Personal Odyssey'. In *Making Muslim Space in North America and Europe*, edited by Barbara Daly Metcalf. Berkeley: University of California Press, pp. 36, 42.
5. I am grateful to Imam Dr Abduljalil Sajid JP for information in this paragraph.
6. I am grateful for guidance on Bradford to Dr Philip Lewis and Mr Neil Waghorne.

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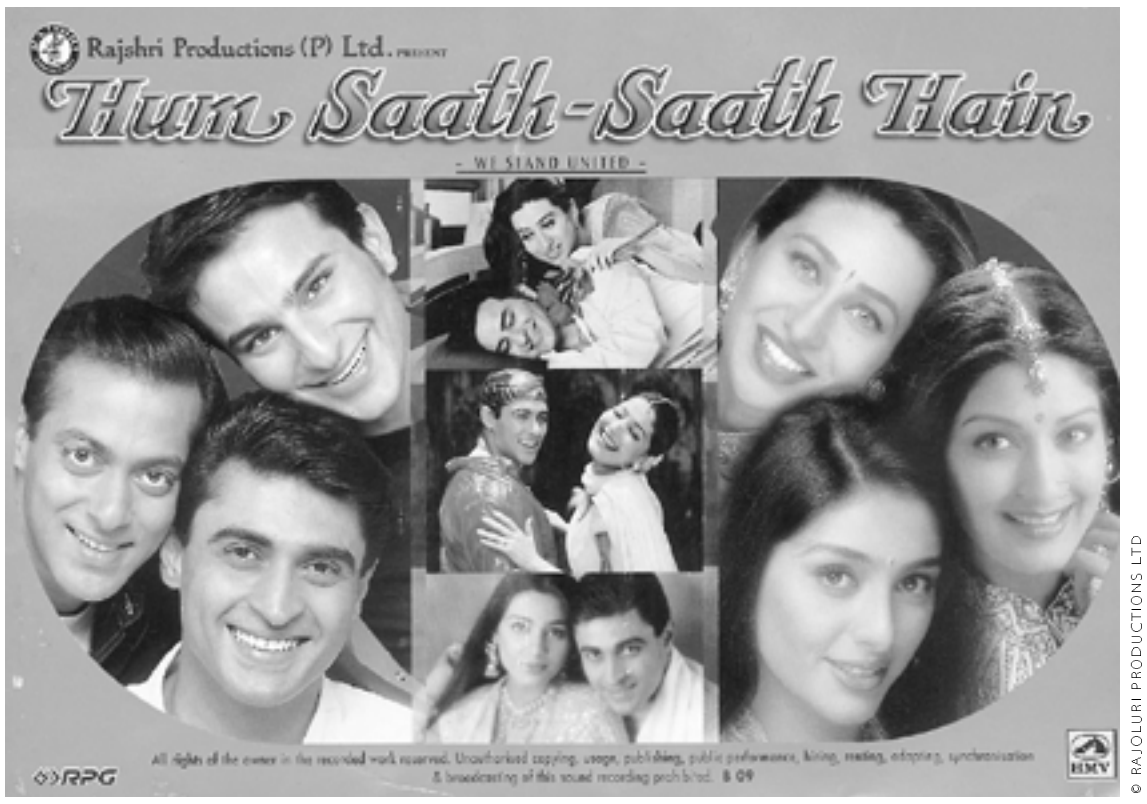
Film

CLAUDIA PRECKEL

Muslim Actors in 'Bollywood'

As could be read in the Indian newspaper *MP Chronicle* in November 1999, the word 'Bollywood', sobriquet for the glamorous Indian film industry in Bombay, will be among several new entries of Indian origin (like *bindi* or *mehndi*) to be included into the millennium editions of famous British dictionaries. Bombay has been the centre of India's film industry since 1895, when the films of the Lumiere brothers were shown in the Watson's Hotel. Although there are studios in other Indian cities where films in various languages and dialects are produced (e.g. Telugu films in Hyderabad or Tamil films in Madras), Bollywood clearly remains the most important centre for the production of Hindi films. Many Bollywood actors are Muslim – as are important composers and lyricists – and it is therefore interesting to investigate the biographies of these stars.



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Hindi films (which last at least two hours) are traditionally melodramatic love stories, *marsala western,* or adaptations of US hits. The revival of Hindi love stories has attracted, since the 1980s, millions of viewers into at least 12,000 Indian cinemas. Spectators are terrified when a hero's life or virgin's chastity is endangered, are relieved when the hero discovers the intrigue and applaud when the heroine finally falls into the hero's arms.

Some say that these romanticized love stories are a typical expression of Indian culture because music and dance are its traditional media. Other defenders of Bollywood films add that films often propagate religious tolerance and harmony, which may be an important social function for them in India's multi-religious society. Critics, on the other hand, say that Bollywood films only support the status quo of India's social system. Whatever may be said for and against it, India's film industry produces more films than any other country in the world.

A visitor to India cannot ignore Bollywood's charm and the omnipresence of its superstars, as witnessed by huge, painted film posters and video clips on MTV Asia or Channel V. Film magazines like *G* or *CinéBlitz* provide the hottest gossip about the stars, contributing to a very impressive 'star cult'.

Watching the popular music shows on television, one can easily recognize that the essential film music is very often provided by Muslim composers and lyricists, the most famous of whom is A.R. Rahman. One also notices that many Bollywood stars are Muslims, which is what inspired the examination of their biographies. The following questions were to be answered in this research: Is it important for Muslim actors to be clearly identified as Muslim? Do they convey a particular Muslim identity? Do they come from a specific social background? As there are no published studies on this matter, one begins with surfing the Internet, which is nowadays an ideal medium for the Bollywood star cult. It was very easy to trace 183 biographies of present Bollywood stars, 50 of whom are Muslims. The most popular among them are Shah Rukh Khan, Salman Khan and Saif Ali Khan. Figures indicate that 27% of Bollywood stars are Muslims, while only 12% of the Indian population is Muslim. It is also interesting to see that only five of these superstars (e.g. Tabu, her sister Farah, and Zeenat Aman) are Muslim women, whereas some decades ago Muslim female actors were much more prevalent on screen. A probable reason for this may be that with the growth of influence of several strict religious groups, Muslim families may not want their daughters to appear on screen – an issue that requires further examination.

The social origin of Muslim actors

Having stated that the percentage of Muslims in Bollywood's film and show business is above average, one may ask about the stars' social origin. Here one can clearly observe that being a Bollywood star is (mostly) an upper-class phenomenon. Actors often state that their father was a doctor, lawyer, or restaurant owner. Some come from a family of actors, directors, scriptwriters or producers. Often, the mothers were practising professionals as well. Shah Rukh Khan's mother, for example, was a well-educated Muslim woman who had studied in Oxford and later worked in social service. The most famous example of an upper-class Bollywood actor is Saif Ali Khan: his father is the famous cricketeer Mansoor Ali Khan Pataudi. His mother is the actress Sharmila Tagore (*Mississippi Marsala*), a niece of the writer Rabindranath Tagore. Before her marriage, Sharmila Tagore converted to Islam and took on the Muslim name Aisha Sultan. On his father's side of the family, Saif Ali Khan is related to two former ruling families of India, namely to the *nawab* families of Pataudi (Haryana) and of Bhopal (Madhya Pradesh). When asked about his *nawabi* origin, Saif Ali Khan stated that *nawabi* should stand for dignity, grace and good living, but had in recent years become a synonym for debauchery. However, he added that at the end of his film career, he plans to return to Bhopal to work for several social projects. This, in his eyes, would be a good means for using his popularity as well as his social background.

The question of education is connected to that of social origins. Is Islamic religious education a part of superstars' education? It is very interesting to see that many Bollywood actors (not only the Muslims) have a university degree, though none of them studied acting as such. Shah Rukh Khan, for example, studied mass communication at the renowned Jamiyya Milliyya Islamiyya in Delhi, Saif Ali Khan is Oxford-educated and Feroz Khan obtained a degree in business management from a university in the USA. None of them give out facts or details concerning religious education, the study of the Qur'an or the Arabic language. Bollywood stars seem to regard religious education as a private or family matter.

Inter-religious marriages

In this context it is interesting to observe the choices of spouse made by Bollywood actors. Whereas Muslim actresses in most cases chose (and still choose) a Muslim as husband, many male Bollywood stars have married Hindu women (e.g. Shah Rukh Khan, Saif Ali Khan, and Aamir Khan). In recent times, it has not been seen to be necessary for these women to convert to Islam before marriage, although even the superstars admit that they had to face difficulties with regard to acceptance of their marriages. Shah Rukh Khan, for example, has said that that his wife's family was at first strictly opposed to their marriage, because they considered him to be 'the wrong man with the wrong religion, the wrong attitude and the wrong profession.' Some Muslims also demonstrated in front of his house to protest against his inter-religious marriage. But this did not prevent Shah Rukh Khan and his wife Gauri from marrying in a court ceremony (which is obligatory for inter-religious marriages) as well as in a Hindu ceremony.

Aamir Khan said in an interview that he would not regard a Hindu-Muslim marriage as a problem in a secular state such as India. In his view, the fundamentalists among the Hindus as well as among the Muslims should get used to this fact. He further explained: 'Somehow I have a feeling that despite the attempts of fundamentalist parties to polarize communities – and to a certain extent they have succeeded in this polarization – when it comes to love, that polarization somehow doesn't work. That's what my experience is.' He added that, as in his case, it should be possible to celebrate Muslim as well as Hindu festivities together with the whole family without a problem.

It is also interesting to observe that children of these Hindu-Muslim couples sometimes have a Hindu name, sometimes a Muslim one. For example, Aamir Khan's son's name is Junaid, whereas his daughter has the Sanskrit name Ira. In their educational upbringing, Muslim, Hindu and even Christian ethics are taught, and their grandmothers play an important role in this religious education. Thus, Muslim actors seem to regard themselves as models for tolerance among all Indian religions. This can be stated not only for their family life, but also for their jobs as actors. There are many friendships established with Hindu colleagues. Further, most Muslim actors see no difficulty in playing characters from another religious community, as shown by Shah Rukh Khan, who played a Sikh in a television series (with a turban), thus exposing himself to heavy criticism from some Muslim organizations.

In conclusion, one can state that Muslim Bollywood stars stress their Islamic identity without, nonetheless overemphasizing it. Extreme attitudes in religious matters are totally rejected by them. They rather regard themselves as citizens of a secular India which, in their eyes, is a place of religious coexistence. However, only the future will show if they will be able to maintain their image as modes of religious tolerance in an Indian reality of growing religious tensions. ✦

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Film

LEYLA BOUZID DISCACCIATI

The Image of Women in Algerian and Tunisian Cinema

Women, taken as cinematographic figures, evoke multiple images of a cultural and social discourse and draw attention to gender and family relations in a broader sense in a specific society, in this case, Tunisia and Algeria. The process of research and analysis of the films goes beyond a simple collection of female figures. Rather, it focuses on the representation of female identity in the films and how this identity (as a mirror of society) has changed and continues to change.

PHOTO: TLATLI, TUNISIA, 1994.

Soumt al-Qusour, *Silences of the Palace*.

An analysis of the female figure in Tunisian and Algerian films[1] must take into consideration one of the dominant characteristics of the cinema of these countries, namely their short history, as they came into being only with national independence (in 1956 and 1962 respectively). As they are of recent creation, these cinemas are the articulation of a quest for a specific national identity rather than a creative need for expression. The cinema is seen as a way of expressing a socio-cultural discourse and imposing images drawing attention to specific political intentions. The representation of women in films has thus been influenced by the interpretation of women's role in society.

Mother, wife and daughter: representation in early films

There was no lack of films about women in the 1960s and 1970s. However, limited and generalized images were conveyed. Female figures were always present in the films, even if their representation was without significance. They appeared 'alongside' the main male characters or were utilized as part of the environment where the action took place. The representation of the woman in her roles as mother, wife and daughter, was linked to a socio-political discourse. The tendency of these films was, in fact, based on the need of these young nations, Algeria and Tunisia, to create a national identity. The family acted, for example, as a microcosm of the whole social system. In the familial sphere, the representation of women, in roles defined only by their relationships with male figures, consolidated religious, social and political values.

In a number of Tunisian films of the 1960s, the figure of the woman is often represented as a dominating and self-confident mother who enjoys considerable decision-making power within the family. However, in the prolific Algerian productions which idolized the war of independence, stressing and mythicizing the strong and heroic character of the male fighter, only stereotyped figures of suffering mothers or wives were portrayed. As Maherzi emphasizes, in these films women took on the classic functions of protectors and nurturers.[2] An example is the remarkably successful film *Rih al-Awras* by Lakhdar-Hamina (*The Wind from the Aurès*, Algeria, 1966), where the protagonist is a mother in despair, without a real political conscience and in search of her son who has disappeared, without whom she is lost. Likewise, in Rachedi's *Al-afyun wal-'asa* (*Opium and the Stick*, Algeria, 1969) the female figures are portrayed only in the home environment and appear cut off from the political situation of the period.

Another role for female figures is that of the wife, probably the most suitable role to consolidate the formation of a young nation. *Shams al-diba* by Behi (*Hyenas' Sun*, Tunisia, 1977) and *Dhil al-Ardh* by Louhichi (*Shadow of the Earth*, Tunisia, 1982) show wives who are attentive to the needs of their children, husbands and families, thus consolidating the identity of the Arab family nucleus.

In films which 'preach' a social debate (for this reason defined by critics as 'social films'), another image of the woman emerges: a woman oriented towards Western-style 'modernity', who fights for her rights. In many Algerian films, this image is based on a specific socio-cultural process. Following the agrarian reform in 1972, women were considered an active part of the economic process for development, based on the Socialist model. As a consequence, this political *plaidoyer* is reflected within the couple or preferably within the family. In *Al-Fahham* by Bouamari (*The Charcoal Burner*, Algeria, 1972) the wife of the charcoal burner who has gone to work in a factory following the sector's economic crisis, becomes aware of her situation and rejects her traditional role as a housewife, not because she has become aware of herself as a woman but for reasons linked to an economic change. M. Léon comments: 'Le couple n'est utilisé que comme le moyen servant le mieux à l'exposé didactique, et le plus apte à toucher la sensibilité du spectateur.'[3] Women's active participation in the national economy is shown in two other exemplary films: *Aziza* by Ben Ammar (*Aziza*, Tunisia, 1980) and *Laila wa akhawatuha* by Mazif (*Leila and the Others*, Algeria, 1978). In both films, the protagonists suggest that women's emancipation will occur (and thereby contribute to national development) if they enter the world of work outside the home environment. Both protagonists become self-aware, leading them to rebel: against the claustrophobia of the family environment (in *Aziza*) and against the ill-treatment of women in the workplace and in the public sphere (in *Laila wa akhawatuha*).

The other figure chosen by filmmakers for a social discourse is that of the daughter, representing the new generation. The main characteristic of the daughter is her controversial relationship with her father, her desire for freedom and an adequate education. In two films, *Rih al-Janub* by Riad (*Wind from the South*, Algeria, 1975) and *Houria* by Mazif (*Houria*, Algeria, 1986), the young protagonists face up to paternal authority, representing the previous generation and rebel against it so that they can gain access to education and consequently, to emancipation. For example in the first film, the protagonist explains to a shepherd in clearly didactic tones that education is fundamental for her emancipation and for national development. The girl's behaviour is given a positive value, also because economic development needed emancipated and educated women.

The search for a personal identity

In the 1980s and 1990s, with the advent and consolidation of *auteur* films, a considerable change can be noticed in the filmmaker's artistic approach and, consequently in the contents and aesthetics of film production. The search for a new identity and a personal – individual and no longer collective – dimension which has characterized *auteur* films from the Maghreb since its beginnings, also affected representations of women in film. What is new in these films is mainly the search for the past and present in the collective imagination and the surmounting of the stereotypes presented in previous films: the discourse goes from the social to the introspective and from political issues to personal questions.

The women represented are looking for new models and life styles and a dimension of their own, with the concentrated effort to be considered thinking individuals in society. The female figures are no longer 'idealistic or theoretical constructs'.[4] It is therefore the diversity and multiplicity of these figures that represents the leitmotif of films made in the past twenty years. Moreover, male and female filmmakers deepen the discourse on women, investigating the mechanisms of the relations between the sexes in a broader sense, for example touching upon such delicate taboo subjects as homosexuality or male chauvinism.

By emigrating and fleeing abroad, women look for the opportunity to express their real identity which has been oppressed by claustrophobic family environments. This is highlighted in Ben Mabrouk's *al-Sama* (*The Trace*, Tunisia, 1982) where, at the end, the protagonist, suffocated by a restrictive environment, burns her textbooks from the exams she has failed[5]and leaves for Europe. In *Cheb* by Bouchareb (*Cheb*, Algeria, 1990) and *Keswa, al-haitu al-da'i* by Bornaz (*Keswa, the Lost Thread*, Tunisia, 1998), the problematic confrontation between the culture of origin and that of the country of immigration is treated differently. The discomfort affects above all female *beurs*[6] who, having appropriated European customs and habits, find themselves at grips with a now lost identity on their return to the country of origin.

With different approaches, two other films deal with the identity of woman in society, but by observing the difficult quest by North African men for their own sexual identity and through the analysis of the controversial relationship between the sexes. *Rih al-sadd* by Bouzid (*Man of Ashes*, Tunisia, 1986) and *Asfour stah–Halfaouine* by Boughedir (*Halfaouine*, Tunisia, 1990) deal with these taboo subjects by placing the accent on the violence generated by negating sexual identity and, in the latter film, on the 'territoriality' of sexuality as conceived by Islam.

The psychological and physical violence that blocks and forms an obstacle to women's progress in the society of the Maghreb is often generated by strictly political reasons or by claustrophobic patriarchal family structures: this is the theme of films such as *Touchia* by Benhadj (*Touchia*, Algeria, 1992) and *Al-qal'a* by Chouikh (*The Citadel*, Algeria, 1988). The screams of the protagonist in the first film and of the little girl in the second, both in the last sequences, show the need to express pain and put an end to silence in order to bring about change.

The discourse of emancipation

A constant reality in Tunisian society is highlighed by two films: *Soumt al-Qusour* by Tlatli (*Silences of the Palace*, Tunisia, 1994) and *Bent Familia* by Bouzid (*Bent Familia*, Tunisia 1998). Both films focus on the discourse of emancipation and the improved social and juridical condition of women in society. In the first film, hope for change is placed in the future generations, who will conclude the slow and difficult march of progress, begun by their mothers upon the country's independence. *Bent Familia*, on the other hand, underlines that forty years on, little has really changed in how Tunisian women are considered. Despite their improved juridical position, women experience the paradox of 'false modernity' where they are not yet considered free and thinking individuals but still as belonging to a family, which thinks, decides and acts on their behalf.

In the final analysis, women's search for their own identity and dimension continues in daily life in Tunisia and Algeria. Such a search is mirrored in representations of women in film in these societies and will continue to do so as the societies themselves undergo change. ✦

Notes

1. All the titles of the films quoted are in transcribed and simplified Arabic for technical reasons and have been taken from the *Dictionnaire des cinéastes du Maghreb* (Armes, Roy (1996). Paris: Editions ATM). Where there is no original title in Arabic, the French title is quoted.
2. Maherzi, Lofti (1980). *Le cinéma algérien. Institutions-imaginaire-idéologie*. Algiers: Sned, p. 291.
3. Léon, Maryse (1981). 'L'image de la femme dans la littérature et le cinéma algérien'. In *L'Algérie vue par son cinéma*, edited by J.P. Brossard. Locarno: Editions Festival du Film, 1981, p. 122.
4. Bouzid, Nouri (1995). 'New Realism in Arab Cinema'. *Alif* 15, p. 249.
5. Symbolically this means breaking away from and eliminating every trace of the past.
6. Inversion in French of the consonants of the word *arabe* indicating the second generation of immigrants of North African origin.

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Maulana Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi (Ali Miyan)

The recent death of Maulana Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi, known by the simple title Ali Miyan, has been mourned not only in his home of India but among the many Muslims and non-Muslims throughout the world who knew him and his contributions as a scholar and public figure. He was widely respected as a scholar of *Qur'anic* commentary and other traditional knowledge; he was a prolific writer of biography, history, and contemporary commentary; and he was a renowned leader in numerous institutions focusing on the political, educational, and social life of Muslims today. He is credited with writing perhaps a hundred books in Urdu and in Arabic, many of which have been translated into English and other languages.

Born in Rae Bareli, India, in 1914, Ali Miyan was associated, from his student days, with the Nadwat al ᶜUlama in Lucknow, an institution founded early in the century to bridge the gap between the Western and the classically educated elites. A further goal of the Nadwa was to foster interaction with the Arab world and to cultivate a high standard of Arabic learning. Ali Miyan's own life richly fulfilled those objectives. His grandfather was among the founders of the institution; his father, the eminent scholar ᶜAbd al-Hayy Hasani (d. 1926), was its rector, as was his elder brother, whom Ali Miyan succeeded as rector in 1961. One significant dimension of Ali Miyan's scholarly work was to help shape a historical heritage of Muslim political, intellectual, and spiritual leadership by writing histories and biographies of the great figures of the Indian Muslim tradition from Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi in the l7th century to the leaders of the contemporary Tablighi Jamaᶜat movement.

His connection with the Tabligh movement began in 1939, and he supported the movement through his writings and also by his own participation in *dawa* as well as his influence on those associated with Nadwa to participate as well. It is as someone whose energy was focused on spiritual and educational matters that he became an influential spokesman for Muslims in India.

Those who gathered in Lucknow, Rae Bareli, and elsewhere to condole his death included Muslim leaders from India and abroad and Hindu, Buddhist, and Christian luminaries who lauded him for his compassion, tolerance, and vision as well as for his extraordinary scholarship. ✦

BARBARA D. METCALF

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Ferdinand Smit (1959-2000)

During the first week of March, the shocking news that Ferdinand Smit and two friends were brutally murdered in North Mali was made known. The three were on a motoring trip from Amsterdam to Bamako. A proficient Arabist and knowledgeable Middle East expert, Ferdinand worked as a diplomat for the Dutch Foreign Office and had extensive field experience in the Middle East. In the early 1980s, during his studies (Arabic at the Universities of Amsterdam and Leiden and Middle Eastern Archaeology at the University of Amsterdam), he served several times in South Lebanon as an interpreter and intelligence officer for the Dutch Battalion in the UNIFIL. Moreover he participated in a number of archaeological campaigns in Syria. After finishing his studies, Ferdinand entered the Dutch Foreign Service in 1986. He was posted in Cairo and Damascus and worked for some time at the Middle East and Africa Desk in the Hague. His last posting abroad was on secondment with the United Nations in Gaza.

Ferdinand was fluent in Arabic. A keen observer of Middle Eastern political affairs, he also had a great interest in academic pursuits. In his position, he was several times instrumental in setting up and finding funds for academic research projects. In spite of his busy and demanding job, he was able to complete his PhD research and write his thesis. Just before he left for Mali, he had handed in his dissertation, *The Battle for South Lebanon: The Radicalization of Lebanon's Shi'ites (1982-1985).* It is for a large part based on documents that he was able to acquire during his work as a UNIFIL intelligence officer. The Catholic University of Nijmegen, where he was to defend his thesis, has now decided to award the doctorate posthumously.

For many of us, it is difficult to realize that Ferdinand is not amongst us anymore. We will remember him as warm friend, a solid scholar and an expert with varied and multifaceted interests in Middle Eastern and Islamic affairs. ✦

RUUD PETERS

Ruud Peters, University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands.

Wilfred Cantwell Smith (1916-2000)

On the 7th of February, W.C. Smith died in his native Toronto, Canada, aged 83. To many readers of the *ISIM Newletter*, Smith's name will be associated with the founding of the modern discipline of Islamic Studies. At the age of 33, he established the distinctive Institute of Islamic Studies at McGill University, where he taught until 1963. By this time his first four books - and for some, his best known - had already appeared: *Modern Islam in India: a social analysis* (1943) and *Islam in Modern History* (1957), *The Meaning and End of Religion* (1962), and *The Faith of Other Men* (1962). Each of these books reflected the author's special relationship to the study of Islam as well as his deep concern for the personal, individual quality of faith inspired by the world's religions as key to their being vital, living traditions.

The Smith years still marked the Institute's ethos when I became a graduate student there shortly after his departure from Montreal for Harvard. Scholars and students, both Muslim and non-Muslim, shared in a joint venture of scholarly enquiry formerly dominated by Western orientalists. Here, understanding a religious tradition entailed a degree of empathy with its participants but without surrendering critical and historical analysis. This was in fresh contrast with the vestiges of a colonial, orientalist mind-set which lingered on at the School of Oriental and African Studies, London, where I had just completed an undergraduate degree. Smith, although ordained to the Presbyterian ministry and who had taught at the Forman Christian College in Lahore, brought to the study of Islam a broader, sharper vision of a modern, pluralist world that previous generations of missionaries to the sub-continent had lacked. His sensitivity to other cultures and languages also informed his approach to Christian theological debate, possibly best expressed in his book *Towards a World Theology* (1981) which had built upon his earlier *Questions of Religious Truth* (1967) and *Religious Diversity* (1976). Writing a new preface for his *Faith of Other Men* (re-issued 1998 as *Patterns of Faith around the World*), Smith expressed his irenical approach to comparative religion in these characteristic terms, 'Classically the Church, or similarly the Muslim world, was right that faith is fundamentally one, wherever it be found. They were wrong that its only form is a particular pattern with which they were familiar.' ✦

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Knowledge and Technology

JON W. ANDERSON

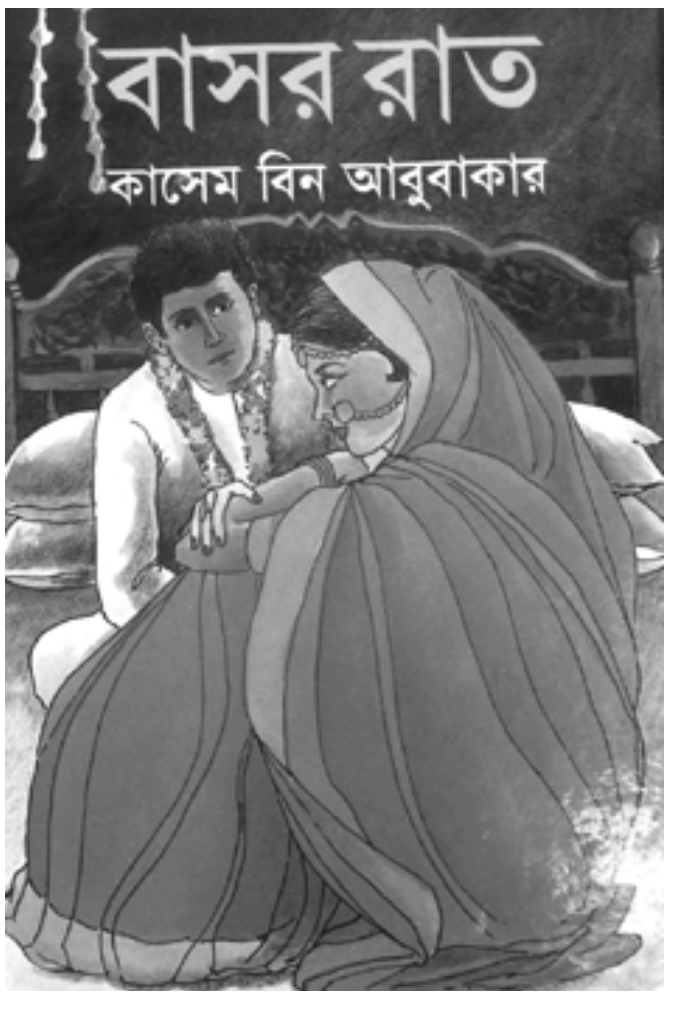
New Media in the Muslim World: The Emerging Public Sphere

The Muslim world is experiencing a media explosion – from street-corner kiosks to satellite television and the Internet. Islamic messages and discussions of them are everywhere. They are proliferating, thanks to increasingly accessible, user-friendly technologies, from the already-familiar tapes and the lowly telephone to the hi-tech Internet, from pulp fiction to new law review journals, from popular culture magazines to multimedia Islamic educational material. Redrawing the dimensions of Islamic discourse, identity, and consciousness extends beyond audience fragmentation to an expanding public sphere of new genre and channels of expression for new voices and interpreters.

Observers and analysts of the Muslim world have become familiar with how cassette tapes and satellite television have changed the propagation of Islam. The face-to-face of sermons and fatwas are increasingly mediated, and Islamic discourse is increasingly embedded in the media tools of modern life. This integration process is as diverse as its channels, as messages migrate between media and the range of interpreters, if not of interpretation, expands accordingly. Expansion is not just of the field. Through the new media, increasing numbers of participants take part in a public sphere in which all have an authority to talk about Islam. In the process, ideas and understandings about Islamic thought and practice may be fragmented and recombined with ideas and experiences of contemporary, often immediate, contingencies of how to lead Muslim lives in increasingly global societies.

The new media enabling these changes extend functionally and experientially beyond the already familiar tapes of preachers and their satellite outlets. They are vernacular and down-market, often overlooked in text-based scholarship focused on intellectuals and the more social and behavioral analyses applied to the masses. The new media range from pulp novels and popular culture magazines to new kinds of law reviews in which non-*ᶜulama'* join the *ᶜulama'* in thinking about the *sharicᶜa* and its contemporary applications. They also discuss how to be and become Muslim, and how to share Islam with others in non-Muslim countries and in the face of existing Islamic conventions. The same themes are taken up on Internet chat and World Wide Web sites. The channels of such discourse also include desktop publishing, faxes, the increasingly ubiquitous telephone, and the Internet. These genre and channels dramatically lower the barriers and risks of entry to the public sphere, and elude efforts to contain communication within acceptable – most narrowly within ritual – terms.

In this blurring of boundaries, a vast middle ground is opening between elite, super-literate, authoritative discourse and mass, non-literate, 'folk' Islam thanks to increasingly accessible technologies for mediated communication. The old communications ecology of the mass media, with their few senders and many receivers, is giving way to a new public space with nearly as many senders as receivers. Cast in the vernacular, they are rooted in the conditions of modern life – which they often address – are multi-channel, and tied to consumer-level technologies that are associated with and sometimes essential for contemporary professional and middle class life. Above all, they are participatory. Reception, and the sorts of informal deconstruction among intimates, is replaced by participation that displaces authority with engagement, broadening both the forms and content of engagement. Precedents range from the introduction of printing to desktop publishing, from leaflets to home-produced tapes of everything from sermons to folk music. The range of skills linking the singer and the studio, for instance, is increasingly available through user-friendly and distributed 'intelligence' built into consumer technology – and into consumers through two generations of spreading mass education.



Cover of an 'Islamic romance' published in Bangladesh.

The horizontal circulation of communication

The ground is shifting and enabling more than opportunities to answer back. While dissent initially attracts attention (of analysts, if not of authorities), the new media facilitate a much wider range as well as volume of views in entering the public sphere. These include alternative views, to be sure, but also mobilization that is horizontal and structured around shared interests and concerns in contrast to the top-down model in mass communications. The telephone becomes a tool for extending personal networks into community mobilization, and new law journals offer arenas for engaging a wider range of actors than traditional authorities in the *ᶜijtihad* that actually links the *sharicᶜa* to contemporary life. Similarly, pulp romances with Islamic themes exemplify the increasing prominence of the vernacular in new media while the Internet, the medium *par excellence* of the 'virtual community', creates them on a global scale.

In the past, information deficits encouraged reliance on skilled interpreters to fill in the gaps and impose structure. Such structures of political, religious, intellectual authority are giving way to skills to compose and sift messages, to link and also to move messages between media, to translate and apply both messages and channels. Modernity poses such surpluses of representation in multiple, sometimes alternative lifestyles, concepts, and ideas about how to live properly; modernity itself becomes a topic of representation and discussion in the popular press, where it is endlessly deconstructed, and also instructed. The slippage between subject and object can be seen in the blurred genres of Islamic novels that introduce themes of Islamic manuals written by *ᶜulama'* into vernacular fiction and pop culture magazines, both significantly aimed at female audiences. Other messages also migrate from one medium to another, increasing the horizontal circulation of communication and shifting its registers toward a sense of participation quite beyond the experience of mere reception.

These are indicators of an emerging public sphere of mediated communication between elite and 'folk' representations, of intermediate forms between face-to-face interaction and mass media speaking to mass audiences, and of increasing participation through a continuum of forms, discourses, and channels. Its significance is that this range is both broader and more embedded than the limiting cases captured in the 'civil society' discussion focused on associations, citizenship, and civility or in characterizations of 'activist,' even 'fundamentalist', Islam that increasingly appear overloaded as categories for analysis. Those limited cases are embedded in a wider range which is expanding and emerging along multiple other dimensions that come into view in the volume, *New Media in the Muslim World: The Emerging Public Sphere*.[1]

Multiple dimensions of new media in the Muslim world

Continuities in Egyptian popular culture commentary, Walter Armbrust shows, form a tradition of reflection and self-reflection deconstructing alternative framings of modernity that belie easy interpretations of 'hybridity.' In a ground-breaking discussion of Islamic romance novels, Maimuma Huq re-sorts the contest of Islamists and secularists in Bangladesh. John Bowen focuses on contemporary proliferation of Islamic law reviews in Indonesia that engage a wide range of contributors, who in turn explore western social science as well as Islamic learning, to give a close account of contemporary consensus-building in one of the Muslim world's larger publics. The multiple registers of connections with wider publics is the subject of Gregory Starrett's account of the consumption and reuse of Islamic teaching materials in an American Black Muslim congregation. In it, issues of personal morality are tied to knowledge, including both technology and knowledge of the community of Islam. Hakan Yavuz provides an account of today's media-saturated Turkey, where new media figure prominently in community-building that circumvents rather than merely challenges authority and previously fixed positions and interpretations. Eickelman describes the censors' new dilemma with a world where messages easily migrate into alternative channels, alternative media, sometimes subtly borrowing their authority as well as their means. Jenny White tells a more grassroots story of how television in Turkey puts events before the public as they happen, and compares that to how people use the telephone for mobilizing and combining personal networks for public action. On a more global level, the Internet has become a favoured tool of the dispersed and of emerging elites across the Muslim world, from ordinary Muslims with extraordinary command of the medium to vernacular preachers. They in turn lead the way for more orthodox institutions, including new, international Islamic universities, Muslim academies that arose in response to colonialism, and now the venerable Al-Azhar University and Sufi orders that were already transnational.

Commenting on this practical pluralism, Richard Norton describes responses of 'the slowly receding state'. Behind the specific face of dissent, 'the discourse that will give shape to change', he argues, emerges from a broader society in which new media are moving to the centre.[2] Media have been a measure of modernization at least since Daniel Lerner's *The Passing of Traditional Society*.[3] Mass media were channels of nation-building states and stages for ritualized communication to mass citizens as witnesses. The new media, in their comparative diversity, flexibility, and lower barriers to entry, are channels for diverse, flexible, and more accessible participation than mere witness. This emerging public sphere is not only one of talking back to power, but also one of a wider range of actors who talk to each other, sometimes about power, and often about the power of the new media in their communication. What also emerges from *New Media in the Muslim World* are the multiple dimensions of their embeddedness.

We are widely recognized to be in a period of exploration, which moves into increasingly accessible media with more diverse players, means, and channels. Cassettes, pulp fiction, cheap magazines, but also law reviews and the Internet, are media of migrating messages and 'blurred genres', which confound authority, including that formerly reserved (sometimes self-reserved) for intellectuals. This is also a period of exposition, of messages moving into mediated communication from more restricted face-to-face realms. Here, a new communications ecology is emerging that expands the public sphere and participants in it. It is clear that we need to pay more attention to precisely where and how contemporary Islamic (and other) ferment is occurring, including the range of media between its anointed exemplars and supposed bases. ✦

Notes

1. Edited by Dale F. Eickelman and Jon W. Anderson (1999). Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
2. 'New Media, Civic Pluralism, and the Slowly Receding State'. In *New Media in the Muslim World: The Emerging Public Sphere*, edited by Dale F. Eickelman and Jon W. Anderson, p. 27.
3. New York: The Free Press, 1958.

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Project Presentation

LIISAMAIJA JURVALA

Islam in the Far North of Europe:
The Tatars of Finland

'An old Muslim minority in Finland'; 'an officially acknowledged religious community since 1925*…'; 'Secularization or still active religious worship…'. Such statements about the Tatars of Finland caught my attention some years ago. The Tatars are an old ethnic Turkic Islamic national minority consisting of about 850 people, hardly known either in Finland or the rest of Europe.

The ISIM Newsletter would like to urge researchers to introduce their projects in this section. Introducing new research in the field of Islamic studies can serve to stimulate interest as well as to strengthen networks amongst researchers.

I have been writing a dissertation on the contemporary religious worship of the Tatars in Finland since February 1999, specifically concerning such matters as the importance of Islam to the Tatars in ordinary everyday life, their understanding of essential Islamic concepts, norms, values, moral conception and their contacts abroad. From August to October 1999, I conducted research in Finland: establishing contact with the Tatars, making inquiries, interviewing the imam Ahmet Naim Atasever, and participating as an observer in Friday prayer at the community centre in Helsinki.

Framework of the dissertation

I intend to focus on the following questions: What is the role played by the five pillars, i.e. the creed, prayer, the alms tax, the fast in the month of Ramadan and the pilgrimage to Mecca? What does the celebration of religious festivals mean to a Tatar? Is religiosity visible in everyday life and behaviour? Who transfers religious knowledge (imams, the oldest members of families, influential families or other actors) and to whom?

The contemporary religious worship of the Tatars in Finland is seemingly of no interest in scientific discussions and publications. It is commonly assumed that the Tatars are a homogeneous group in view of their religion, i.e. Sunnites and secularized Muslims. Within this project my aim is also to analyse more carefully the far too general and loose characterization of the Islam practised by the Tatars in Finland as Euro-Islam and to use a more precise definition for the term Euro-Islam in this connection. ✦

Note

* The second country in Europe to officially acknowledge the rights of a Muslim community was Belgium in 1974.

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Project Presentation

CAROLINE PLÜSS

Hong Kong Muslim Identities

Muslims in Hong Kong are characterized by a high degree of ethnic and religious diversity. They came from China, India, Pakistan, Malaysia, Indonesia and from further places or origins, and belong to various religious traditions, such as the Sunni, Shi'a, or Bohra groups. This project examines how the involvement, or non-involvement, of different Muslim groups into common organizations explains how Hong Kong Muslims built up their identities. In addition, the policies of different Hong Kong Muslim organizations from the 19th century to today, and the changes in these policies, are investigated as indicators of how Muslims related to one another, to their Hong Kong surroundings, as well as to their societies of origins or of previous residences.

The principal organizations surveyed are: (1) the Trustees of the Islamic Community Fund, which is the oldest organization in charge of the administration of the mosques and cemeteries; (2) the Islamic Union, which is the second oldest organization of which also Chinese are members; and (3) the Chinese Muslim Cultural and Fraternal Organisation, which has become especially important since Chinese Muslims had become the largest Muslim group in Hong Kong, and since Hong Kong has returned to Chinese sovereignty.

Methodology and funding

This study started in 1998 and uses archive research, interviews and participant observation. It is part of Dr Plüss' umbrella project researching transnational communities in Hong Kong. The Muslim project has received funding from the CRCG (the Committee for Research and Conference Grants of the University of Hong Kong), the Freemason's Fund for East Asian Studies and the Hang Seng Golden Jubilee Education Fund. ✦

Caroline Plüss obtained a PhD in the Sociology of Religion from Oxford University in 1995. Since 1996, she has been working as a post-doctoral fellow at the Centre of Asian Studies, the University of Hong Kong. Her research includes the Jewish community in Hong Kong, the Hong Kong Indians, and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons) in Hong Kong.
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ADVERTISEMENT

Fieldwork

BRUCE KOEPKE

Researching Performing Arts in Badakhshan

Relatively few academic studies have commented on Badakhshan Province in northern Afghanistan. During the period of the political 'Great Game' between Tsarist Russian-Central Asia and British India in the 19th century, British and Russian adventure-style officers occasionally returned with reports. Last century, a number of German, Russian, Austrian, Swiss, as well as a few Danish, French, American and Afghan researchers discussed Badakhshan in terms of various academic fields ranging from history, anthropology, ethnomusicology, geography, and linguistics, to geology, botany, and mountaineering. All of these accounts refer to conditions prior to the Communist coup in April 1978. Recent fieldwork experiences in Badakhshan (1998 and 1999) have allowed an examination of the impact of Afghanistan's civil war upon cultural traditions, particularly those involving performance, notably music and dance.

PHOTO: BRUCE KOEPKE

***Buzkashi* tournament in Faizabad, Nowruz, 1998.**

Afghanistan's mountainous Badakhshan Province is inhabited predominantly by ethnic Tajiks who are speakers of Dari, a Persian language, but also by other, bilingual, ethnic groups such as Uzbeks, Kirghiz, and Pashtuns. Since the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 and the subsequent ongoing civil war, very few researchers have travelled to Badakhshan. Only a small number of foreigners working as international aid workers and occasionally photo journalists and adventure seekers have recently visited Badakhshan. The latter visitors tend to publish their experiences in the commercial category of 'the most dangerous places in the world.'

With a noticeable rise in orthodox Islam throughout Afghanistan following the defeat of the Soviet-backed Communist government in 1992, and particularly since the rise of the Taliban in 1994, performance traditions have been relegated to the fringes of society. The Taliban are a fundamentalist Islamic militia comprised of Pakistani and Afghan religious students originating from Pakistani *madrasa*s along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border as well as from disillusioned former *mujahideen* from predominantly Pashtun-inhabited regions in southern Afghanistan. Following the Taliban's interpretation of *shari*^{c}*a* law, all 'non-religious' forms of cultural expression that include human actions – and this definition includes entertainment music and dance – are regarded as un-Islamic and sinful. As a result, expressive arts have been banned in areas controlled by the Taliban and their strict policies are reinforced by the Department of Vice and Virtue. In contrast, in the non-Taliban northern regions an official decree against expressive traditions has not been issued. These areas, comprising almost 20% of Afghanistan's territory, are ruled by the former post-Communist government of President Burhanuddin Rabbani and loosely aligned commanders. At present, the provinces of Badakhshan, Takhar and most of the provinces of Kapisa, Parwan and Baghlan are under the control of the anti-Taliban alliance, as are several smaller districts in Kunar, Balkh, Samangan, Kunduz and Jowzjan.

Travel into Badakhshan

Considering Afghanistan's precarious political situation, the physical task of reaching Badakhshan was not only time-consuming, but, at times, quite challenging. The hospitality of the Badakhshi and Afghan people, however, more than compensated for these efforts. Other than the aeroplanes of the United Nations and International Red Cross, which irregularly enter Faizabad from Peshawar and Islamabad in northern Pakistan so as to transport international and Afghan aid workers as well as medical patients, there is currently no other air service available to Badakhshan. Issued with a visa valid for travel to Rabbani-governed territories, I arrived in 1998 at Faizabad's airport which consists of a Soviet-built runway composed of corrugated steel sheets. Although the air traffic control facilities were destroyed during the jihad against the Communist regime, this airport remains Badakhshan's only serviceable port for small aircraft.

Due to the unforeseen earthquake in the Shahr-e Bozurg region several months later, I was forced to abandon my fieldwork prematurely. After unsuccessfully attempting to re-enter Badakhshan by plane the following year, I eventually managed to return overland from Tajikistan. Whilst this route is primarily utilized to enable essential humanitarian aid to reach Afghanistan across the Amu Darya, it is not an official border-crossing and consequently requires many essential documents and permits which are obtainable only in Dushanbe.

First impressions

Within Badakhshan, hotels and guesthouses catering to international tourists or researchers no longer exist. The only remaining hotel in Faizabad, which once accommodated tourists in the 1960s and 1970s, has now become a residence for visiting commanders. Elsewhere, local teahouses, *chaykhana*s, and hostels, *serai*s, are still an option, but are frequented by many traders for overnight stay and are therefore inappropriate for longer lodging. Fortunately, I was generously allowed to rent accommodation in some of the compounds of international aid organizations.

The centre of any activity in Badakhshan, and for that matter anywhere in Afghanistan, is the bazaar, no matter how small and limited the range of available goods. Faizabad's bazaar is in the old part of town in Shahr-e Kohne, along the main street, Khiaban, and close to the Kokcha River. Many local hand-made items, such as traditional Badakhshi shoes, coats, caps, pottery, lapis lazuli jewellery, saddle goods, and urns are sold next to imported Pakistani and Iranian basic household wares.

In order to travel within Badakhshan and to pass frequent checkpoints, appropriate travel documents are essential and have to be issued by district governors or key commanders. Only limited motorized public transport is, however, available within the province. The few operative jeeps belong mainly to commanders and together with the only other irregular form of motorized public transport – travel on heavily laden trucks – reflect Badakhshan's poor economic state and fragile infrastructure. No roads are surfaced and are thus prone to frequent washouts and landslides. Closures can last for anything from five hours to two weeks. When the province's main trade arteries are impassable, especially the western road connecting Faizabad with neighbouring Takhar Province's capital Taloqan, the usually poorly stocked bazaars empty out quickly. I recall one occasion when wheat, an essential food item, was unavailable in Faizabad's bazaar and local bakers were forced to close their businesses for three days. These unpredictable conditions mean that walking with a loaded donkey or riding a horse remains the most reliable form of transport.

Agriculture, both as subsistence farming as well as for local export, provides the main form of economy. As a consequence of a lack of employment prospects and regular paid salaries, which are generally only available with aid organizations, bartering continues to be a common practice throughout the province. Traditionally, wheat, rice and millet were the main crops grown, but increasingly opium poppies, although labour intensive, have become the most common type of cash economy. As a result of Badakhshan's isolation, as well as the cost of limited and expensive imported fuel resources, deforestation has become rampant. This environmentally disastrous practice has led to Faizabad's once famed pistachio forests virtually having disappeared over the last two decades. Moreover, the Kokcha River's muddy brown water caused by eroding mountains and landslides is a direct attribute of uncontrolled deforestation.

Cultural life

Despite the economic hardship, Badakhshan has probably still one of the best education systems on offer in Afghanistan for both girls and boys. This is currently relatively well supported through the assistance of international aid organizations. Before the Taliban take-over of Mazar-e Sharif in northwestern Afghanistan in 1997, male and female secondary school students could, upon graduation, pursue tertiary education. But with all universities in Afghanistan now being controlled by the Taliban, and because of fears of reprisals against residents from opposition-held territories, students from Rabbani-governed territories are unable to enrol for higher education in Afghanistan. Moreover, women are barred from education in Taliban areas.

In spite of the serious economic and political instability, Badakhshi continue to revel in the few cultural events that are sanctioned by local authorities, such as, for example, the traditional and religious festivals of Nowruz, Jeshen, and Eid. Celebrations surrounding the Nowruz festival on 21 March 1998 were accompanied by a traditional *buzkashi* horse tournament and a fair. On another occasion, several weeks later, the Jeshen festival was also commemorated with a *buzkashi* tournament in Ishkashim in northeastern Badakhshan. Although Jeshen was once an independence day celebration in August, it is now held on April 28, the anniversary of the defeat of the former Soviet-backed government.

With the Taliban's continued attacks on opposition-held territories, a general trend towards conservative Islam is noticeable in Badakhshan among the local population and commanders alike. In direct response to this religious orthodoxy, expressive traditions, such as music performances, occur rarely and have been driven underground. Prior to the civil war, Badakhshan's leading musicians were able to travel freely throughout the main cities in Afghanistan. Some were even selected for appearances on Kabul television. Currently, entertainment, either private or public, occurs only if the local commander or community leader condones such non-religious performances. However, upon hearing of my research, local musicians in more remote regions of Badakshan would not infrequently arrive unannounced at my residence and proudly display their instruments, being delighted to perform if the situation allowed. With the strict interpretation of *shari*^{c}*a*, the profession of musician seems to have virtually disappeared. Every performer I interviewed is now primarily occupied as a subsistence farmer, working on either private or leased land.

Unfortunately, with the current situation of a politically non-unified nation, it seems unlikely that long-term academic research can be carried out in Afghanistan in the near future, especially in regions that are in relative proximity to current frontlines. Similarly, the survival of non-religious, performance traditions is questionable. Yet, if a popular government were to be soon formalized, and were to include a representation of Afghanistan's various ethnic groups and political factions, conditions could change quickly. The Badakhshi are certainly more than ready to embrace a peaceful period, to rebuild their economy and to consolidate fragile cultural traditions. ✦

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Programme Presentation

RAINER BRÖMER

DAVO Study Group on Arabic-Ottoman Sciences in the Modern Period

The development of scientific activity in the Ottoman Empire and other contemporary Muslim countries has so far attracted little if any attention from either disciplines of 'Oriental' or Science Studies, despite the long established fact that in the 'classical' age, Islamic civilization actively contributed to the elaboration of scientific traditions, which originated in different surrounding cultures (Hellenistic, Sassanid, Indian, etc.). At the Sixth Annual Congress of the German Middle East Studies Association (DAVO) in December 1999 in Hamburg, the study group on 'Arabic-Ottoman Sciences in the Modern Period' organized a panel in which five research projects covering the 17th through 19th centuries were presented.

Contrary to what Edward Said's notorious accusations of 'Orientalism' suggest, pupils of Sylvestre de Sacy, the archetype of Saidian orientalism, started as early as the mid-19th century to pinpoint the specific accomplishments of classical Islamic sciences in their proper historical context.[1]

However, even today, the assumption of a gradual decline of Islamic sciences between the 13th and 18th centuries is hardly contested – though the notion of 'decline' is hard to define.[2] The view is held that these sciences were only rediscovered after the clashes with European colonialism and imperialism in the course of the 19th century, when 'Western science' eventually supplanted the 'classical' sciences almost completely.[3] The fact is, however, that many disciplines flourished until the mid-20th century.

Decline of sciences?

A number of possible reasons have been suggested to account for this alleged decline. Ghazali's 'destruction of the philosophers', the Ottoman defeat in the naval battle at Lepanto (1571 AD) and subsequent persecution of 'humanist' scholars,[4] and the missing connection between scholars and artisans – a crucial factor in the rise of modern Western science[5] – are some examples.

Each of these factors, however, can arguably be called into question. A condemnation of the tenets of natural philosophy occurred in Paris 1270/77; the Inquisition threatened European scholars in the same period Schulze examines in the Ottoman Empire; and, on the other hand, the connection between learning and the trades is documented (e.g. in a relevant number of instances in al-Jabarti's famous chronicle of Egypt covering the years from 1694 to 1821); to name but a few.[6]

Remarkably, scholars in the colonized countries, very early on, confronted the challenge of Western technological superiority, reacting with bewilderment, as in the case of al-Jabarti, yet without questioning the superior moral and cultural values of Islam. Thus, the self-proclaimed moral and cultural superiority of Islam inaugurated a whole new thread of apologetic literature during the Arab Renaissance (*nahda*), projecting the ideal fulfilment of Islamic duties back to the times of the pious ancestors of early Islam (*as-salaf as-salih*, hence: *salafiyya*).[7] Though the structure of discourse is changing in the course of decolonization, there is considerable continuity between the thoughts of al-Afghani, ᶜAbduh, Rida, al-Banna, and Qutb and the present day teachings of the Muslim Brethren.[8]

Paradoxically, many 'oriental' thinkers today seem to subscribe to this traditional account which claims that there is a remarkable intellectual gap encompassing half the history of Islam.[9]

Continuities

More recent research in the history of science presents a different picture. Sonja Brentjes (Frankfurt am Main) who was unable to attend the panel had a paper read 'On the relation between the Ottoman Empire and the West European Republic of Letters (17th - 18th centuries)' in which she traced a continuous flow of scientific knowledge across the Mediterranean Sea which contradicts the 'iron curtain' concept promulgated by, for example, Edward Lewis.

At the same time, classical texts continued to be read and annotated throughout the 18th century which is documented by the reading and possession marks on Islamic manuscripts preserved in libraries around the world, as François Charette (Frankfurt am Main) pointed out in his contribution on the library of the Ottoman scholar Mustafa Sidqi (d. 1769). Likewise, modern commentaries on classical texts may well include an appreciation of the latest data from scientific observations. It therefore appears that, on the one hand, detailed studies are still urgently required in order to document the available sources of scientific activity to which little attention has been paid thus far[10] – a consequence of the self-fulfilling prophecy that little of interest was to be found in more recent documents. On the other hand, it seems necessary to take a broader look at the manifold institutional settings where different forms of scientific ventures might have been pursued.

Institutions of science and networks of learning

Though it is assumed that a specific set of institutions in the West supported the Scientific Revolution (such as universities, correspondence networks, learned societies, private presses, and scientific journals),[11] there is some evidence that in the Islamic cultures one might rather have to examine different spaces of research and communication (from mosques and Sufi brotherhoods[12] to observatories, hospitals, the hajj, private salons, military institutions, etc.). Stefan Reichmuth (Bochum) presented his work on the Indian-born scholar Murtada az-Zabidi (1732-1791), who created an intellectual network around his dwellings in Medina and Cairo, which extended throughout the Muslim world, from West Africa and Ethiopia to Anatolia and Central Asia.[13] Networks of teaching in the Muslim world from the 18th to 20th century are the subject of a Junior Scholars' Research Group based at the Ruhr University in Bochum, coordinated by Michael Kemper.

While in the second half of the 19th century, when Arab scholars discussed contemporary Western scientific theories, the discursive structures of the initial treatise and commentary literature (*rasa'il*, *shuruh*) still remained visibly rooted in traditional forms of scientific practice,[14] this did not prevent Arab scientists from participating in Western-based international scientific ventures like the global mapping of geomagnetism. Rainer Brömer (Jena/Göttingen) showed in his paper how the later director of the Egyptian observatory, Mahmoud Bey al-Falaki (1815-85), in the 1850s travelled through a number of European countries, publishing his geophysical data in different periodicals.[15]

Science and the public

The second half of the 19th century saw the massive spread of interest in scientific matters to a growing literate public, in the 'Western' world, but to a similar degree in the Arab speaking countries. Dagmar Glaß (Leipzig) characterized in her study the relationship between Arab journalists and their readership in the late 19th century as a 'pedagogical dialogue' in which the former actively sought to create a public understanding of science. In this process, only subsequently would the importance of religious aspects of science gain greater importance, which leads to a more fundamental question dominating much of the contemporary debate: Can science be Islamic?

From a completely different point of view, over the last three decades a number of projects has been initiated by Muslims throughout the Islamic world and in the diaspora which aims at creating an 'Islamic science' or the 'Islamization of scientific knowledge' (ISTAC in Kuala Lumpur, IIIT in Herndon/Virginia, etc.).[16] On closer inspection, many contributions to this contemporary debate rather a-critically subscribe to the assumptions of Western 'scientific fundamentalism' (Ziauddin Sardar) which is to be Islamized in form rather than in content.[17] In this respect, the 'Islamized disciplines' show less similarity to classical Arabic sciences than, perhaps, the writings of the 19th century Darwinism debate in which a considerable number of Arab Christian authors were involved. ✦

It is the intention of the study group on 'Arabic-Ottoman Sciences in the Modern Period' to create a platform for the discussion of ongoing research on these and related issues, as well as to create a wider awareness of the desiderata in the field, thus possibly attracting more scholars to Modern Islamic Science Studies and offering an interface of discussion between Western-based Science Studies and Islamic science projects, bridging the historical gap between the 'lingering' classical sciences (B. Lewis) and the present Islamic science debate. At the next DAVO congress in Mainz (12-14 October 2000), another panel on Arabic-Ottoman Sciences is planned.

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Notes

1. Charette, François (1995). *Orientalisme et histoire des sciences: l'historiographie européenne des sciences islamiques et hindoues, 1784-1900.* Université de Montréal: MA thesis in History.
2. A recent example is given by Rashed, Roshdi, ed. (1996). *Encyclopedia of the History of Arabic Science.* London: Routledge.
3. Lewis, Bernard (1982). *The Muslim Discovery of Europe*. New York, London: Norton, p. 238.
4. Schulze, Reinhard (1998). 'Die islamische Welt der Neuzeit'. In *Der islamische Orient - Grundzüge seiner Geschichte*, edited by Albrecht Noth and Jürgen Paul. Würzburg: Ergon, pp. 333-403, 351.
5. Wulff, Karl (1998). *Gibt es einen naturwissenschaftlichen Universalismus?* Cuxhaven, Dartford: Junghans, p. 63.
6. Philipp, Thomas, and Moshe Perlmann, eds. and trans. (1994). *ᶜAbd al-Rahman al-Jabarti's History of Egypt*. 4 vols. in 2 plus Guide. Stuttgart: Steiner.
7. Hasselblatt, Gunnar (1968). *Herkunft und Auswirkungen der Apologetik Muhammad ᶜAbduh's (1849-1905)*. Diss. Göttingen.
8. Abu-Rabi', Ibrahim M. (1996). *Intellectual Origins of Islamic Resurgence in the Modern Arab World*. Albany: SUNY.
9. Hanafi, Hasan (1991). *Muqaddima fi ᶜilm al-istighrab*. Cairo: ad-Dar al-fanniya, p. 703.
10. See the Islamic Science homepage at the University of Oklahoma at http://www.ou.edu/islamsci/
11. Although more recent research in Science Studies tends to privilege experimental practice over institutional form, Shapin, Steven (1996). *The Scientific Revolution*. Chicago, London: Chicago UP.
12. E.g. the case of Muhammad as-Sanusi, Vikør, Knut S. (1995). *Sufi and Scholar on the Desert Edge*. London: Hurst, p. 63.
13. Reichmuth, Stefan (2000). 'Murtada az-Zabidi (1732-91) - Netzwerk und Lebenswerk eines indo-arabischen Gelehrten des 18. Jahrhunderts'. In *Islamische Bildungsnetzwerke im lokalen und transnationalen Kontext* (18.-20. Jahrhundert), edited by Michael Kemper. Bochum: Sem. Orientalistik. See also Reichmuth (1999). Murtada az-Zabidi (d. 1791). In *Die Welt des Islams* (Biographical and Autobiographical Accounts. Glimpses of Islamic Scholarship in the 18th Century) 39 (1), pp. 64-102.
14. E.g. Shumayyil, Shibli (1884). *Sharh Buchnar ᶜala madhhab Darwin*. Cairo. Cf. Ziadeh, Susan Laila (1991). *A Radical in His Time: The Thought of Shibli Shumayyil and Arab Intellectual Discourse (1882-1917).* Diss. Univ. Michigan. Ann Arbor: UMI.
15. Mahmoud, M. (1854). 'Observations et recherches sur l'intensité magnétique et sur ses variations pendant une période de 25 ans, de 1829 à 1854'. *Bulletins de l'Académie royale de Belgique* 21 (9). Bruxelles: Hayez.
16. Stenberg, Leif (1996). 'The Islamization of Science. Four Muslim Positions Developing an Islamic Modernity'. *Lund Studies in History of Religions,* 6.
17. Ghamari-Tabrizi, Behrooz (1996). 'Is Islamic Science Possible?' *Social Epistemology* 10 (3-4), pp. 317-330. See also Lotfalian, Mazyar (1999). 'Understanding Muslim Technoscientific Identities'. *ISIM Newsletter* 4, p.8.

Debate

DAVID SHANKLAND

Studying Secularism: Modern Turkey and the Alevis

Any researcher interested in modern Turkey can hardly escape the controversy that has surrounded religion in the last decade. The rise and fall of Erbakan and the Welfare Party, the National Security Council's secular 'recommendations' in February 1997, the partial closure of the İmam-Hatip (religiously-oriented) schools, and the formation of 'Western Working Groups' to investigate alleged infiltration into the civil service by religious activists, are just a few instances of how prominent these issues have been. How, as observers, are we to attempt to understand the significance of these and similar events in today's Republic?

There is no simple answer, but it seems possible to suggest, at least as a starting point for discussion, two simultaneous but contradictory trends. First, there appears to be a rapidly growing heterogeneity, particularly in the large urban centres such as Istanbul, Izmir and Ankara. The precise reasons for this are unclear, but certainly linked to Turkey's growing integration with the outside world, and encouraged by the highly successful (if uneven) economic transformation of recent decades.

At the same time, it seems that Turkey is tending to bifurcate sharply between pro- and anti-secular movements. On the anti-secular side, there are the popular Islamist political movements, the Islamic brotherhoods, the followers of Said-i Nursi, a constellation of Islamic business, media, charities and associations, and the extremely violent Hizbullah. On the secular side, there are the followers of the original Republican People's Party, moderate believers (such as those who might find themselves holding the central ground in the True Path Party), parts of the senior bureaucracy (particularly the judiciary), much of an increasingly consumerist oriented youth, the military (led by the army), and not least, almost the entirety of the unorthodox minority, the Alevis.[1]

It can be argued that this split is profound. Even taking into account the fact that people may change their perspective, that movements may sometimes blur into one another, and that there is a vast difference between rhetoric and action, the side that an individual takes in this ideological divide may lead them into quite different social contexts in their daily lives: the one likely to include a combination of religious rituals, mosque-going, *tarikat* membership, Koran courses, right-wing or religious political parties, Islamic discussion groups, Islamic foundations (both economic and pious), the Islamic media and a personal rejection of revelry, ostentation, and overt displays of emotion; the other leading to a less structured life, but likely to include broad acceptance of the republican state, its secular ceremony and ritual, alcoholic drink, dance, and if also politically committed – usually though certainly not exclusively – involvement in left-wing groups. Indeed, it is this tendency to 'bunch' along the two sides of the secular/-anti-secular split that explains much of this divide's volatility, and its potential to harm Turkey in the coming decades.

Studying secularism

We often remind each other, both at conferences and in our writings, that we should be as sensitive as possible to diversity within Islamic societies. In spite of this healthy discussion, it seems that the emergence of overtly secular movements in Turkey has not attracted the same attention as the more actively Islamist trends, whether that latter study be to stress the Islamist movements' rise or, conversely, their supposed decline. There is, for example, a persistent tendency to give more weight to the pronouncements of the Islamifying movements, such as the Nurcus and their related groups, and discount the more moderate voice of the Directorate of Religious Affairs, perhaps assuming that since it is government-led, the people with whom it is associated must in some way be less 'Islamic'. Yet, many of the thousands of people who work for the Directorate, along with those who worship in its mosques and participate in its wider activities, certainly regard themselves as genuine Muslims and accept the secular state.[2] Likewise, we have a far greater knowledge of the inner workings of the Süleymancıs than we do of the increasingly visible *jeunesse dorée* who spend great parts of their lives in clubs, restaurants, pop concerts and summer-houses. Yet these people are still capable of taking vows at a shrine outside Bosphorus University in an attempt to pass their university degrees, or of planting a rose bush at the time of Hıdırıllez in early May with a little wrapped image of their desired goal suspended from one of its branches. Many of these people would reject with anger any imputation that they are not 'Islamic', though they are not in the slightest interested in Islamist politics or in opposing the secular state.

'Culturalism'

It can be suggested that this imbalance is partly a question of the language that we use, and the categories that we employ to label Islamic societies. To give an immediate example, within the immense amount of journalistic (and therefore prominent if not in itself powerful) coverage that is attendant upon Turkey and the European Union, there is a core of writers, such as Hugh Pope of the *International Herald Tribune* or the sepulchral anonymous scribes for *The Economist*, who maintain that the secular state is in some way by definition illegitimate, that the correct course for Turkey would be to re-introduce some form of more overtly Islamic central state.[3] This, bluntly, is part of an expanding curse in sociological writings that might be deemed 'culturalism': an implication that just because people are from one particular group they have to behave in the presumed standard fashion for that community.

The Alevis

The Alevis, the heterodox minority that make up perhaps slightly less than 20% of the population, are a further case in point. In the dozen years that I have been studying and conducting fieldwork among them, there is not the slightest doubt that they have been undergoing a transformation: a process of codification of their previously oral tradition, one that has been rapid and interesting to witness, resulting in a large number of publications, an increasingly strong public profile, and above all, a large part of its population becoming profoundly secular.

This does not mean that Alevi people are all the same, far from it. Whilst it is necessary to make the caveat that the situation is extremely fluid, there are those who embrace secularism enthusiastically, so much so that they wish no longer to regard their culture as a religion at all, rather as a moral ethic to help guide their everyday existence within the Republic. These may regard 'Aleviness' as being henceforth unnecessary as a separate or distinct category. There are those who, whilst accepting the Republic, wish to maintain closer contact with their traditions within a sharply secular nation: these people are likely to be active members of the political left. It is perhaps the smallest distinct group that seeks more explicit recognition. For instance, Cem Vakfı, led by an Alevi religious figure, wishes to make the government teach 'Aleviness' explicitly, basing its argument on the political principle 'no taxation without representation'. These people are likely to regret the social change that has been forced on to their communities, and wish for something that they might refer to as 'traditional' Alevi values, though as their leaders have rarely spent much time in Alevi villages, they are unlikely to be so at all.[4]

Varying belief

As researchers, what sort of language should we use to discuss this diverse social change? To imply that social change among the Alevi is predominantly a religious reformulation is mistaken. This is not meant to imply that the Alevis have become 'unbelievers' – something which would distress and irritate many of their members. Nevertheless, the shift undergone by the majority appears rather akin to that which Christianity has undergone in Europe: most Alevis predominantly experience their music and dance as a cultural rather than a religious experience; roughly akin, for example, to attending a Mozart requiem or a Bach cantata in a cathedral, an event not primarily motivated by religion, regardless of the music's original social function.

In spite of this emergence of what appears to be a secular moral humanism, there is an increasing sense among those who study the Alevis that their 'predicament' should be linked with that of the Kurds in the east; casting them as a deprived minority that are being deprived of their religious rights within the Republic.[5] This is precisely the 'culturalism' against which I am attempting to warn in the study of Turkey. Precisely who is being 'deprived' of their rights? It is worth re-iterating that, first, within the anti-secular/secular divide, described above as being so important and so significant, yet overlooked, the Alevis have almost in their entirety come out in favour of the founding Kemalist reforms. They have conspicuously resisted open calls from the Welfare and now the Virtue Party to re-identify themselves primarily a religious minority. Secondly, when the immense and growing heterogeneity of the Alevi population is taken on board, it is only the minority who are seeking reaffirmation of their traditions through explicit acknowledgement from the state. Of course, they wish to be free to act as they wish: this goes for any population, but the majority have no desire whatsoever to be recast a millet either by their traditional religious figures or by well-wishing advisers in international academic and institutional politics. It would be a tragedy if, the Republic having escaped much of the bloody conflict between sectarian movements that was prevalent in the Ottoman Empire, we as researchers were to contribute to it now through misplaced wholesale attribution of characteristics where, in fact, no such unanimity exists. ✦

Notes

1. For a fuller discussion of the issues set out here, see my recent *Islam and Society in Turkey* (1999). Huntingdon: Eothen Press.
2. A notable exception is the research of Tapper N. and Tapper, R. (1987). 'Thank God We're Secular! Aspects of Fundamentalism in a Turkish Town'. In *Aspects of Religious Fundamentalism*, edited by L. Caplan. London.
3. E.g. *The Economist*, 17 April 1999: editorial, or *The Wall Street Journal*, 4 May 1999: article by Hugh Pope.
4. See my 'Anthropology and Ethnicity: The place of Ethnography in the New Alevi Movement'. In *Alevi Identity*, edited by T. Olsson, E. Ozdalga, and C. Raudvere. Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul, transactions, 8, pp. 15-23.
5. E.g. see Yavuz, M. (1999). 'Media Identities for Alevis and Kurds in Turkey'. In *New Media in the Muslim World: The Emerging Public Sphere*, edited by Dale F. Eickelman and Jon W. Anderson. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, pp.180-197.

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IISMM
LUCETTE VALENSI

Institut d'Études de l'Islam et des Soci t s du Monde Musulman

The IISMM, a research centre of the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (EHESS), is devoted to the study of societies and cultures in the Muslim world. It is organized around a group of scholars representing all the social sciences of the regions where Islam is present: anthropology, history, anthropology and history of law, political science, linguistics, and sociology. Its goal is to simultaneously amplify and mobilize existing resources by providing support for research projects conceived by specialists of Islam and societies of the Muslim world.

The IISMM is not intended as a replacement for the already existing research groups in universities or in the Centre National de la Recherche (CNRS). It intends, rather, to provide assistance to specialists in completing projects under way and in preparing events (e.g., round tables, seminars, colloquia, etc.) that will highlight and disseminate this research. Mobilizing the resources in this field is done by lifting the routine-based barriers that have, on occasion, so rigidly compartmentalized research on the Muslim world.

The IISMM intends to organize seminars and encourage research focused on broader topics than those that have usually been studied, where specialists of a particular period or region can enrich their thinking through exposure to other approaches, developed in different areas of Muslim studies or through the analysis of other civilizations.

This call for an association of energies is imposed by the evolution of the research subject itself. Without breaking with the long tradition of oriental studies of which France may be justly proud, the IISMM seeks to free research from the tendency to confine Islam to a discourse so particularist as to make the object into a kind of irreducible reality, incommensurable, regardless of how it is approached, with any other reality.

The profound changes of the past century combined with the improved knowledge of the societies and cultures of the Muslim world have returned that world to its history, a history that is being both made and unmade. Former oppositions are fading away or being rearranged. Nevertheless, 'Islam' remains a fully valid topic of study. It constitutes the only common feature defining the domain that the IISMM intends to cover, extending from Senegal to Northwest China, from the Balkans to Indonesia. The weight of religious tradition and the search for renewal cannot obliterate the multiplicity of references – political, scientific, aesthetic or cultural – in the Islam of today or yesterday, that fall outside of a strict Koranic genealogy. Islam is not the sum of its commandments. Whether it has been so remains a question of paramount importance to the IISMM.

The role chosen by the IISMM is to coordinate research and specialized instruction, and to open a venue of training and information to a wide, non-specialized public. It proposes a programme of research and teaching activities.

Research training

Weekly or bimonthly seminars

These seminars are given within the context of specialized courses concerning Muslim societies at the EHESS. The courses lead to the DEA (postgraduate diploma), a doctorate or the EHESS Diploma. The programmes and admission requirements will be announced by the EHESS.

Summer schools

Every year, in a Muslim country and in collaboration with the higher educational establishments in that country, the IISMM will organize study cycles bringing together about 30 students preparing for doctorates in France and in the host country around a broad academic theme, allowing for exchanges and field visits. Applications should be addressed to the Institute, accompanied by a statement of purpose.

The first study-cycle will be held in Morocco, in collaboration with the Faculty of Arts and Human Sciences of Saïs-Fès, from 13-22 September 2000, around the theme 'Memory/Memories: Forms, Functions, and Customs'.

Postgraduate workshops

The Institute supports and initiates meetings intended to encourage contacts and discussion between postgraduate students working in the same cultural area and on the same period. These sessions, in which teaching staff also participates, will be led by the students.

Research and teaching skills

Parallel to the research programmes of external teams supported by the IISMM, the Institute is also developing its own academic programme of cross-disciplinary seminars linking different disciplines and cultural areas.

Research subjects

The following are the research topics designated for the academic year 2000 and 2001:

Islam in the Feminine; Faces of Islam; Internationalization of the Religious; Orientalism and Social Sciences; and Contemporary Artistic Creation in the Islamic Countries.

Occasional one-day seminars

These special events allow a wide public to benefit from the presence of scholars invited by the EHESS to discuss research in progress. The first of these seminars concerned 'The Figure of the Literati in Islam' (May 2000).

'One Book/One Event'

The series of meetings entitled 'One Book/One Event' are open to an invited public. The first of these focused on Nasr Abu Zaid, Egyptian professor in exile in the Netherlands and the author of A Critique of the Religious Discourse, which has been translated into French. The next meetings will feature French specialists on modern Iran.

Continuing education

Annual courses, summer schools, and intensive courses are organized on specific themes and disciplines for groups and institutions that request them. ✦

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COMMENT

WOLF D. AHMED ARIES

Muslims in Germany

The article entitled 'Is Islam soluble in Germany?' published in the last *ISIM Newsletter* (page 30) concentrated primarily on Muslims originating in Turkey, as if they are a unique phenomenon and not a lively part of the community as a whole. While it is true that Turkish Muslims account for almost 80% of the German Muslim population, there are also smaller groups whose members originate from other Islamic societies globally. The smallest segment of the German Muslim population is formed by Germans who are often characterized by terms such as 'converts' and thus overlooked. A few of these German Muslims have been engaged in issues concerning the Muslim community in Germany since the 1960s and have been engaged in social work as well as in discussion of fundamental questions relating to Muslims within German society. It is therefore appropriate to briefly describe the history of involvement of indigenous German Muslims.

In the early 1960s, a handful of German Muslims gathered around what later became the Islamic Archives of Germany. Through the efforts of this group, the first rules of a local Islamic association were written and registered under German law. At the same time, Germans met in Hamburg, Munich, Cologne and Aachen and began to organize facilities for daily worship.

During the 1970s, these individuals utilized their membership in different societal organizations – political parties, unions, and the like – to discuss the developing situation *vis-á-vis* Muslim communities in Germany. Discussions were initiated with the education ministry over the question of religious education in accordance with federal and land constitutions. Such discussions led to a series of seminars, encounters and unofficial meetings in which the partners attempted to find intersections between Muslim communities and the Christo-secular German system, which had been molded by the thousand-year relationship of the churches and different political forces. In other words, where were the crossroads of a church-molded legal system and a churchless Abrahamic community living in such a society? These public and semi-private encounters took place in a changing society that marginalized religious life and its public symbols and thus, such questions were at the heart of important debates within German society as a whole.

At the same time, official Turkish representatives often intervened in order to hinder access to greater freedom for their fellow countrymen and women. An example was the rent of a local hall for a meeting. A Turkish diplomat protested at the municipal hall against permission being granted for use of the hall. German Muslims followed and insisted on the proper application of German law. The meeting was held. In this way, Muslims originating in Turkey learned to enjoy the benefits of secular freedom.

The 1980s saw the birth of two umbrella organizations for Muslims in Germany. One, established in 1986, was called the Islamic Council for the Federal Republic of Germany. The other, established a year later, became the Central Council of Muslims in Germany. Through the years, a number of local Islamic associations have joined these coalitions, and today, the Islamic Council includes 38 member associations, while the Central Council has 28. Members of these coalitions include associations with diverse national, cultural, social and theological backgrounds.

Meanwhile, the Turkish side reacted by creating the so-called DITIB at Cologne. This is an association under German law, but the head and most of the personnel are Turkish civil servants who are, ostensibly, 'on leave' and normally stay up to six years in Germany without learning any German. Last year, some younger men who grew up in Germany became involved in DITIB as secretaries.

German Muslims have attempted to cooperate with DITIB but the contrast between Turko-French *laicité* and German secularism is so deep that one might say that each principle almost destroys the other. For example, German society expects that the churches and religious organizations comment publicly on political, ethical, social and educational developments. On the other hand, DITIB can rarely publish anything without approval from Ankara. Certainly, after its foundation, the board of the Islamic Council had to adapt to this German norm; while German Muslims had little difficulty in offering their opinion, those of other backgrounds had to adjust to this.

Today, the differences are not significant. The two councils mentioned above (The Central Council of Muslims and the Islamic Council) are committed to organizing the future of Muslim communities in Germany within the framework of German societal and legal contexts. An important step in this direction has been the foundation of a committee on religious education (founded last autumn). ✦

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IDMP
MUHAMMAD SYUKRI SALLEH

Islamic Development Management Project: Managing Development the Islamic Way

The Islamic Development Management Project (IDMP) was established in 1995 at the School of Social Sciences, University of Science Malaysia. As a research and education project, which gathers its members from various disciplines and schools within the University, IDMP aims at enhancing the field of Islamic development beyond the confines of development per se. It takes a multi-disciplinary approach to development, integrating social, economic and political tools of analysis to understand development in an integrative and holistic manner.

PHOTO: IDMP, UNIVERSITI SAINS MALAYSIA.

Professor Khurshid Ahmad delivering concluding remarks at the First International Conference on Islamic Development Management organized by the IDMP-IDB.

The IDMP goes beyond the study of Islamic economics, Islamic development and Islamic economic development to scrutinize and construct a conceptual and practical framework of the management of economics, development, and economic development in an Islamic perspective. As development is seen as an all-embracing aspect of life, from spiritual to material and physical, and from the level of the individual to that of society, state and beyond, IDMP intends to cover the whole range of horizons of human life, formulating and pioneering a new integrated discipline that IDMP terms 'Islamic Development Management'.

Activities

In realizing the above objectives, IDMP undertakes the task of strengthening its members with knowledge of Islam and related disciplines, as well as disseminating this knowledge through weekly Qur'anic studies, monthly in–house seminars, academic meetings, international conferences (every two years), research, publications and teaching. While Qur'anic studies, in-house seminars and academic meetings comprise regular gatherings for IDMP members and interested individuals to share and deepen their knowledge on subjects related to Islam and Islamic Development Management, the international conferences bring IDMP members and international learned persons together to present and exchange their ideas and research findings on a chosen theme.

The IDMP has, for nearly two years now, conducted its weekly Qur'anic studies classes, organized numerous in-house seminars, two academic meetings and three international conferences. The first academic meeting, a seminar on *An Islamic Approach to Development Management* was held in Kota Bharu, Kelantan in 1998; while the second, a book discussion on Napoleon and Islam was held at University Science Malaysia in 1999.[1] The first two international conferences, held in 1994 and 1996, dealt with Islamic political economy.[2] The third, held in 1998 and co-organized with the Islamic Research and Training Institute (IRTI) of the Islamic Development Bank, dealt with the *Management of Economic Development in Islamic Perspective*. Currently, IDMP is preparing for its fourth international conference to be held in the very near future. The emphasis of this conference will be placed on the conceptualization and realization of Islamic Development Management within the socio-economic and political realities of today.

During the second international conference held in 1996, the first IDMP book, consisting of papers presented at the first international conference[3] was launched. The third international conference held in 1998, saw the appearance of three other books written and edited by IDMP members.[4] IDMP is now editing the papers of this conference to be published in one volume, as well as simultaneously editing a book based on the seminar on development management held in Kelantan. At the official opening of the 1998 conference, a memorandum of understanding was signed with Utusan Publications & Distributors on the publication of an IDMP biannual *Journal of Islamic Development*.

The above activities run concurrently with research and consultancy works. To date, IDMP has completed two research projects, firstly on the 'Islamization of Development in Kelantan' and secondly on the 'Implementation of Islamic Development: A Comparative Analysis of Kelantan and Terengganu'. At the moment IDMP is carrying out two other research projects on the 'Commercialization of Agriculture' and 'Management of Islamic Revivalism in Malaysia'. It has also begun consultancy work for the Higher Education Department of the Malaysian Ministry of Education, investigating the 'Entrance of Religious Studies Students into the Public Higher Education Institutions in Malaysia'.

As IDMP has yet to have its own teaching programme, it utilizes the present structure of the university to teach undergraduate courses and supervise post-graduate students. Undergraduate courses on 'Islamic Economics' and 'Islamic Economics Analysis' are taught within the Economic Section of the School of Social Sciences and School of Distance Learning, respectively. Two other courses – 'Principles and Implementation of Islamic Development' and 'Islamic Development Institutions' – are taught within the Development Planning and Management Section of the School of Social Sciences. At the post-graduate level, a master's degree in Social Sciences and a PhD degree have been completed by two students from the School of Social Sciences. At present, three students are preparing their master's degrees and three for their PhD degrees.[5]

Plans for the future

At this time, the IDMP merely exists as a project under the School of Social Sciences. Although it receives basic office facilities and enjoys moral support from the School, the IDMP is actually a self-sponsored project, financially independent of both the School and the university. A formal status within the organizational structure of the university such as a centre or institute (and perhaps a school in the future) would help create a more encouraging and active future for the IDMP. It would bring IDMP members who come from various schools and fields together into one formal institution, researching, developing and disseminating the Islamic Development Management discipline through their respective fields, such as Islamic Economics, Islamic Development, Islamic Management, Islamic Politics, Islamic Political Economy and so on. All these could culminate in a practical, applied living Islam. As such, achieving a formal status for the IDMP within the organizational structure of the university is a main objective for the coming years.

The IDMP also aims at formulating academic packages to be offered to both undergraduate and post-graduate students. Specific academic programmes, such as a major and minor in Islamic Development Management for undergraduates, as well as a master's programme and PhD programme, are in the planning pipeline. As an initial step, a proposal has been made for the master's and minor programmes in Islamic Development Management, to be launched during the Eighth Malaysia Plan, 2001-2005. Offering such programmes would not only enrich the discipline of Islamic Development Management, but would also hopefully be able to expedite the implementation of Islamic development in various Muslim countries, through the training of their Islamic development managers at IDMP.

The way forward

The IDMP would not be able to accomplish its objectives without the cooperation, support and acknowledgement of the University Science Malaysia, as well as without that of established institutions worldwide. Being a project that depends, for its day-to-day operations, on research and consultancy grants, continual assistance in goods, services and monetary forms from established organizations and philanthropists would greatly help IDMP to advance at a greater pace.

To date, the IDMP has enjoyed cooperation with various institutions in organizing its in-house seminars, academic meetings, international conferences and publications. It hopes to continue such cooperation, taking it further to include the training of its members, and by being involved in coordinated efforts and activities both at the national and international levels. ✦

Notes

1. The 'Seminar on Development Management: An Islamic Approach' was co-organized with the Association of Kelantan Civil Servants while the 'Book Discussion: *Napoleon and Islam*' (by Christian Cherfils, Utusan Publications and Distributors, 1999) was co-organized with Utusan Publications and Distributors.
2. The first international conference on 'Islamic Political Economy in Capitalist Globalization: An Agenda for Change' was co-organized with the Institut Kajian Dasar (IKD, Kuala Lumpur) while the second, on 'Islamic Political Economy: Methodology and Practice from an Asian Perspective in Response to Globalization', was co-organized with the Secretariat for Islamic Philosophy and Science (Penang), Yayasan Nurul Yaqeen (Kuala Lumpur) and the Japan Asia Foundation (Tokyo).
3. The book, edited by M.A. Choudhury, Abdad M.Z. and Muhammad Syukri Salleh, is entitled *Islamic Political Economy in Capitalist Globalisation: An Agenda for Change*, and was published by Utusan Publications and Distributors, 1996.
4. The books, all published by Utusan Publications and Distributors, are *Political Economy of Development in Malaysia* (edited by B.N. Ghosh and Muhammad Syukri Salleh, 1999); *Foreign Workers in Malaysia: Issues and Challenges* (by A.H.M. Zehadul Karim, Moha Asri Abdullah and Md Isa Bakar, 1999); and *Pembangunan Industri Kecil dan Sederhana di Malaysia* (by Moha Asri Abdullah, 1999).
5. The two theses were entitled: 'Pondok Pesantren Cooperatives in Sumatera Utara' (PhD) and 'Administration of Waqf Land in Medan, Indonesia' (MA). The on-going research consists of the following themes: 'Agriculture Financing: A Comparative Study between Conventional and Islamic Systems'; 'The Link between Bay' Al-Salam as an Islamic Mode of Financing and Instruments of the Agricultural Investment Sector in the Light of Islamic Economics'; 'Development Perspective of Gerakan Muhammadiyah in Indonesia' (for MA degrees); 'Islamic Finance for Small and Medium Entrepreneurs in the East Coast of Peninsular Malaysia'; 'In Search of a Truly Interest-Free Financial System'; and 'Zakat Accounting: The Cases of Some Selected Islamic Institutions in Malaysia' (for PhD degrees).

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Art & Culture Agenda

THE NETHERLANDS

Exhibitions

De Nieuwe Kerk
Gravenstraat 17
1012 NL Amsterdam
Tel: +31 20 638 69 09
Fax: +31 20 622 66 49
E-mail: mail@nieuwekerk.nl

16 December 1999 – 24 April 2000
- *Earthly splendour, celestial art. Treasures from Islam. Persian carpets, Indian miniatures and jewellery are shown against a background of ponds, fountains, flowers and a aviary, recalling Paradise as it is described in the Qur'an. The exhibition is organized in co-operation with the State Hermitage, St. Petersburg.*

Zijdemuseum Grijpskerke
Kerkstraat 1
4364 AJ Grijpskerke
Tel/Fax: +31 118 593 305
E-mail: info@zijde.net

30 May - 15 July 2000
Oman: Textiles from the desert

Gemeentemuseum Den Haag
Stadhouderslaan 41
2517 HV The Hague
Tel: +31 70 338 1111

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

Wereldmuseum Rotterdam
Willemskade 25,
3016 DM Rotterdam
Tel: +31 10 270 71 72
Fax: +31 10 270 71 82
E-mail: mediatheek@wereldmuseum.rotterdam.nl

- *Due to renovations the Museum will be closed until 26 November 2000. It will reopen with a permanent exhibition of Islamic art from its own collection.*

Galerie A
Oldenzaalsestraat 256
7523 AG Enschede
Tel/Fax: +31 53 3413788

Continuing
- *Intercultural art*

AUSTRIA

Exhibitions

Museum für Völkerkunde
Neue Burg
A-1014 Vienna
Tel: +43 1 534 30 0
Fax: +43 1 535 53 20
E-mail: v*@ethno-museum.ac.at

13 April - 17 September 2000
- *Agatha Christie and the East: Criminology and Archaeology traces those two strands in the life of the 'Queen of Crime', displaying diaries, hitherto unpublished photographs of Christie and her husband, archaeologist Max Mallowan; more than 200 artifacts from his excavations in Iraq and Syria; and a compartment from the Orient Express.*

BELGIUM

Exhibitions

Paleis voor Schone Kunsten
Koningsstraat 10 /
Ravensteinstraat 23
Bruxelles
Tel: +32 2 507 84 66

25 February - 21 May 2000
- *Borderline: inimitable pieces of Berber textile art, created by Moroccan and Tunisian countrywomen.*

FRANCE

Exhibitions

Musée du Louvre,
75058 Paris
Tel: +33 1 40 20 50 50
Fax: +33 1 40 20 54 42
E-mail: info@louvre.fr Paris

17 March - 29 May 2000
- *Ottoman Calligraphy's Collections of the Sakip Sabanci Museum. The exhibition presents around 70 works belonging to the collection of the Sapik Sabanci University in Istanbul. They are all works by the most famous calligraphers of the period between the 15th and early 20th centuries.*

Musée Jacquemart-André
158, bd. Haussmann, 75008 Paris
Tel: +33 1 465 11 414
Fax: +33 1 465 11 412

1 April - 2 July 2000
- *Brilliance's of Ottoman ceramic works.*

GERMANY

Exhibitions

Vorderasiatisches Museum
Entrée Pergamonmuseum
Museuminsel
Am Kupfergraben
Berlin-Mitte
Tel: +49 30 2090 5401

15 May 2001 - 30 September 2001
- *Agatha Christie and the Orient*

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

Continuing
- *The 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.*

Ifa-Galerie Stuttgart
Charlottenplatz 17
70173 Stuttgart
Tel: +49 7 1122 25 173
Fax: +497 1122 25 194
URL: http://www.ifa.de

Continuing
- *Exhibitions and contemporary art from the Middle East.*

IRAN

Exhibitions

Islamic Period Museum
Tehran

Continuing
- *Continuing exhibition of Koranic manuscripts, ceramics, metalwork and textiles.*

KUWAIT

Exhibitions

Dar al-Athar al-Islamiyyah
Mahboula, Kuwait
Tel: +965 565 3006

Continuing
- *Al-Sabah Collection of Islamic art.*

The Tareq Rajab Museum
Hawelli 32036
Kuwait
Tel: +965 531 7358
Fax: +965 533 9063

Continuing
- *Arts of the Islamic world: Qur'ans, calligraphy, pottery, metalwork, glass, ivory and jade carvings, costumes, textiles, embroideries and jewellery. The exhibitions include also relevant objects from Tibet, Nepal and Bhutan.*

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 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.*

SINGAPORE

Exhibitions

Asian Civilisations Museum
39 Armenian Street
Singapore 179939

From November 1997
- *Calligraphy from the Tareq Rajab Museum Kuwait. The Qur'an was central to the development of the art of beautiful writing. In this exhibition is explored the various scripts that developed over the centuries and also calligraphy as a decorative motif on various media like ceramics and metalwork.*

SWITZERLAND

Exhibitions

Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich
Pelikanstrasse 40, 8001 Zürich
Tel: + 41 1 634 90 11
Fax: + 41 1 634 90 50

16 January - 3 September 2000
- *Embroidered prayers: prayer rugs from the Hazara of Afghanistan, an ethnic minority of Shiite Muslims who live in the hostile environment of the Sunni Taleban. The prayer rugs are an identification mark of the Hazara culture, which remained unknown outside their own environment until some years ago. A representative choice from a private collection of about 900 pieces.*

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 Russell Street
London WCIB 3DG
Tel: +44 171 412 71 11
Fax: +44 171 3238614/8480

Continuing
- *Continuing exhibition of the Oriental collection. Its Islamic pottery is considered the best outside the Islamic world.*

Leighton House Museum
12 Holland Park Road
London W14
Tel: + 44 20 7602 3316

15 April - 30 April 2000
- *Teliz. Woven paintings. An exhibition of post-modernist rugs selected by Rose Issa in collaboration with Bokhara Gallery, Iran.*

15 April - 30 April 2000
- *Aneh Mohammad Tatari. An exhibition of paintings by an Iranian-Turkoman artist.*

Victoria and Albert Museum
Cromwell Road, London SW7 2RL
Tel: +44 171 938 8500
URL: http://www.vam.ac.uk

Continuing
- *The collection includes a rich collection of Islamic metalwork.*

Tate's Duveen Galleries
London

24 March - 9 July 2000
- *Mona Hatoum is a Lebanese-born Palestinian British sculptor who focuses on confrontational themes such as violence and oppression and the vulnerability and resilience of the human body. For this first large solo show, she has created large-scale works that reflect her interest in everyday objects.*

Brunei Gallery
London
Tel: +44 20 7898 4020
URL: www.soas.ac.uk/Brunei/exhibitions.html

13 April - 17 June 2000 and 10 July - 16 September 2000
- *In the Shade of the Tree: Photographs by Peter Sanders, who has been photographing Islamic cultures around the world for more than three decades.*

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.eqeeart.com

Continuing
- *Contemporary and antique Middle Eastern Art.*

Sony Gallery
25 Connaught Street Marble Arch
London W2
Tel/fax: +31 171 262 9101
URL: www.sonigallery.com

Continuing
- *International contemporary art especially from the Indo-Pak subcontinent and the Arab World.*

UNITED STATES

Exhibitions

Harvard University Art Museums
Arthur M. Sackler Gallery
Cambridge, Massachusetts
Tel. +1 617 495 9400

8 June - 3 September 2000
- *A Decade of Collecting: Recent acquisitions of Islamic and later Indian Art.*
- *Beginning in March 2000, the Harvard University Art Museums will embark on a year-long, multi-gallery programme of exhibitions showcasing recent additions to the collections. On 8 June 2000, the Islamic and Indian Department's recent acquisitions exhibition will open.*

Continuing
- *Harvard's collection of Islamic and later Indian art is small but magnificent. It comprises a broad range of works, from Samanid pottery and Mamluk calligraphy to Qajar lacquers and Ottoman textiles. Its masterpieces include a group of miniatures from the extraordinary 14th-century Great Mongol ('Demotte') Shahnama, the Safavid master Mir Sayyid-'Ali's Nighttime in a Palace, and the miniatures of the 'pocket-size Divan of Anvari produced for the Mughal emperor Akbar. The department also has one of the most important representations of Rajasthani painting in the world.*

De Paul University Art Gallery
John T. Richardson Library
2350 North Kenmore Avenue
Chicago Il 60614
Tel: +1 773-325-7863
URL: www.depaul.edu/~islam

11 March - 15 July 2000
- *A kaleidoscopic 11-week programme illustrates the global significance of Islamic cultures. Exhibits cover themes such as the weaving culture of Morocco, incense, faces of Islam, mosque design in North America, Persian painting, Persian tiles and contemporary Arabic art. Exhibit items are on loan from e.g. Indianapolis Museum of Art, Minneapolis Institute of Arts, Belghazi Museum, Sale, Morocco, Oudaia Museum, Rabat, Morocco. Lectures and Forums are held on a wide variety of topics: cuisine, sociology, history, medicine, education and women. Performances include recitations from the Qur'an, music, dance and coffee and tea ceremonies.*

Los Angeles County Museum of Art
5905 Wilshire Boulevard
Los Angeles, CA 90036
Tel: +1 323 857 600

30 March - 31 July 2000
- *A Bold Aesthetic: Textile Arts of Central Asia features 60 outstanding examples of the dress, textiles and jewellery of the peoples of western Central Asia from the early 19th to the early 20th century. The exhibition presents extraordinary examples of what is perhaps the greatest artistic achievement of 19th-century Bukhara: intricately patterned silk and velvet textiles, fashioned into robes and hangings.*

2 July - 25 September 2000
- *Gold of the Nomads: Scythian Treasures from Ancient Ukraine. Approximately 165 works of art will comprise the finest Scythian gold objects from the Treasures of Ukraine Museum and the Archaeological Institute in Kiev. This exhibition will be the largest and most complete ever assembled from the Scythian material in Ukraine.*

Metropolitan Museum of Art
1000 Fifth Avenue
at 82nd Street
New York, New York 10028
Tel: +1 212 535 7710

26 April - 24 September 2000
- *Riding across Central Asia: Images of the Mongolian Horse in Islamic Art, examines the depiction of horses in Islamic art, especially during the Seljuq and the Ilkhanid periods (ca. 12th-14th century) in Iran. The Mongolian horse can also be viewed as a swift carrier of different cultures and traditions to the Islamic world. Uniting some 25 objects from the Museum's collection, this exhibition displays representations of the horse as seen in various media, including illustrated manuscripts, inlaid metalwork, ceramic tiles, stone, and textile.*

Brooklyn Museum of Art
200 Eastern Parkway
Brooklyn, NY 11238
Tel: +1 718 638 5000
Fax: + 1 718 638 3731

27 Oct. 2000 - 21 Jan. 2001
- *Gold of the Nomads: Scythian treasures from Ancient Ukraine. Although the Scythians are often portrayed as warring barbarians, they also left behind a wealth of gold pieces fashioned by Greek craftsmen in the Black Sea region. This exhibition consists of 170 Scythian treasures, most of which are gold, dating from the 7th century to the 2nd century, with a heavy concentration on the 5th through 3rd centuries.*

The Art Museum, Princeton University
Princeton, New Jersey 08544-1018
Tel: +1 609 258 3787/3788

Spring 2000
- *Islamic Art*

Spring 2000
- *Letters in Gold: Ottoman Calligraphy from the Sakip Sabanci Collection, Istanbul.*
- *Draws upon one of Turkey's leading private collections to display 70 exceptional examples of Ottoman-era calligraphy.*

The Arthur M. Sackler Gallery and Freer Gallery of Art
Smithsonian Institution,
Washington, D.C, 20560.
Tel: +1 202 357 2700 (voice), +1 202 357 1729

17 November 1999 - 7 May 2000
- *Imaging the Word: Selections of Calligraphy from the Islamic World presents some of the principal calligraphic styles that have evolved in the Islamic world from the 9th to the 20th century as they appear in different media, from silk to agate and parchment to steel. The selection includes a folio from a minute, 9th-century Koran, a 15th-century royal wine cup from Iran, and contemporary works exploring the power of Arabic letters.*

21 November 1999 - 28 May 2000
- *Antoin Sevruguin (late 1830s–1933) and the Persian Image includes fifty images of rulers, courtiers, and commoners, and scenes of daily life in Iran from the late 1870s to the 1930s.*

3 May 1998 - Indefinitely
- *Arts of the Islamic World. Some 60 works – Koran pages, metalwork, ceramics, glass, paintings, and calligraphy – from the 9th to 17th centuries 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 AD Ornaments, bowls, cups, bottles, jars, mirrors, ewers, and ritual objects in gold, silver or silver and gilt, earthenware and porcelain from Iran, China, Turkey, Syria, and Afghanistan are included in this exhibition.*

Textile Museum
Washington, D.C.

18 February- 30 July 2000
- *Flowers of Silk and Gold: Four Centuries of Ottoman Embroidery offers a unique window on urban Ottoman society, for embroideries played a role in most aspects of domestic and public life.*

Corcoran Gallery of Art
500 17th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20006
Tel: 1+ 202-639-1700

1 March - 15 June 2000
- *he Topkapi Palace: Jewels and Treasures of the Sultans features more than 200 artefacts and works of art from Topkapi Palace in Istanbul, for 400 years not only the residence of the rulers of the Ottoman Empire but also the centre of the empire's dynastic power, its military administration and its religious leadership.*

The Balch Institute for Ethnic Studies
18 S. 7th Street
Philadelphia, PA 191106
Tel: +1 215 925 8090
URL: http://www.balchinstitute.org

12 February - 12 August 2000
- *A Community between Two Worlds: Arab Americans in Greater Detroit.*

3 March – 30 August 2000
- *Ahlan wa-Sahlan! Welcome to our Home! Philadelphia's Arab Americans*

UNITED NATIONS

Magazines

Museum International
UNESCO, Paris
Blackwell Publishers
108 Cowley Road, Oxford, OX4 1JF
United Kingdom

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,
P.O. Box 361,
3000 AJ Rotterdam,
TheNetherlands
Fax: +31 10 270 71 82
E-mail: mediatheek@wereld museum.rotterdam.nl

Academic Meetings

Recent Conferences and Public Lectures

Arab World 2000: Transformations and Challenges
Date: 30-31 March 2000
Information: Ms. Anne Marie Chaaraoui, Center for Contemporary Arab Studies Georgetown University, Washington, D.C. 20057-5793 tel: +1 202 687 6215 or +1 202 687 5793 fax: +1 202 687 7001 ccasinfo@gunet.georgetown.edu

Islam and Constitutionalism
Date: 7-9 April 2000
Venue: Harvard Law School, Boston, Massachusetts USA
Information: Professor Sohail Hashmi, Mount Holyoke College (or) Professor Houchang Chehabi, Boston University fax: +1 617 353 9290

Mediation and Minority Cultures
Date: 15 April 2000
Venue: Harvard Law School, Boston, Massachusetts, USA
Information: Peri Bearman at: pbearman@law.harvard.edu (or) Asifa Quraishi at: aquraish@law.harvard.edu

L'individu et ses rapports au pouvoir dans les sociétés musulmanes de la région Méditerranéenne
Date: 3 May 2000
Venue: Hammamet, Tunisia
Sponsored by: Université de Tunis, Faculté des Sciences Humaines et Sociales and European Science Foundation

Al-Andalus and Europe: Between Orient and Occident
Date: 3-7 May 2000
Venue: Bonn, Germany
Information: Secretary, Seminar für Orientalische Kunstgeschichte Regina-Pacis-Weg, 53113 Bonn, Germany

Perception According to Mulla Sarda and Western Schools of Philosophy
Date: 12-13 May 2000
Venue: The School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London, UK.
Sponsored by: The Institute of Islamic studies, the Department of Study of Religions at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) at London University and Sadra Islamic Philosophy Research Institute.
Information: S. Safavi, Director of the Institute of Islamic Studies, PO Box 8148, London, NW6 7ZS England, UK tel: +44 20 8459 1000 / fax: +44 20 8830 4013. iis@islamic-studies.org
URL: www.islamic-studies.org

Workshop on Islamic Thought in Africa
Date: 12-14 May 2000
Venue: Northwestern University, Illinois, USA
Information: John Hunwick, Department of History, Northwestern University, Evanston, IL, 60208 USA tel: +1 847 491-7412 / fax: +1 847 467-1393

Women and Society in the Middle East
Date: 15-16 May 2000
Venue: Emek Yezreel College, Israel.
Information: The Organizing Committee, WSME Conference, Emek Yezreel College, Emek Yezreel, 19300 Israel. tel: +972 6 6423456 / fax: +972-6-6423457 Michal Palgi at: palgi@research.haifa.ac.il (or) Khawla Abu Bakr at: hishamm@cs.technion.ac.il (or) Ruth Barzilai-Lumbroso at: luzi@netvision.net.il

Respect and Tolerance between Islam and Christianity in the Texts of History and Literature
Date: 15-18 May 2000
Venue: Canakkale, Turkey
Information: Professor Zeki Cemil Arda, Canakkale Onsekiz Mart University, Terziglu Kampusu, Canakkale, Turkey tel: +90 286 213 02 05 or +90 213 01 55 fax: +90 286 212 2030 zekicemilarda@hotmail.com

Ethnic and Religious Conflict in Cross-Cultural Perspective
Date: 18-19 May 2000
Venue: Ohio University, Athens, Ohio, USA
Information: Polly Sandenburgh, Interethnic and Religious Conflict Conference, Ohio University, Center for International Studies, Burson House, Athens, OH, 45701

Twenty-five years of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies in the Netherlands
Date: 19 May 2000
Venue: Theological University, Kampen, The Netherlands
Information: Ruud Strijp, Dr. Jan Berendsstraat 132-A, 6512 HE, Nijmegen, The Netherlands tel: +31 24 360 5852 Steen.strijp@inter.NL.net

Muslim Identities in North America
Date: 20-21 May 2000
Venue: University of California, Irvine
Information: Prof. Karen B. Leonard kbleonar@uci.edu

The Third Biennial Conference on Iranian Studies
Date: 25-28 May 2000
Venue: Bethesda, Maryland
Sponsored by: The American Institute of Iranian Studies (AIIrS) and The Society for Iranian Studies (SIS)
Information: Kambriz Eslami SIS Executive Secretary keslami@phoenix.princeton.edu
URL: www.iranian-studies.org

Annual RIMO Conference: Dutch Association for the Study of the Law of Islam and the Middle East
Date: 27 May 2000
Venue: Leiden, The Netherlands
Sponsored by: ISIM and RIMO

Upcoming Conferences, Lecture Series and Public Events.

Afghanistan: Country without a State
Date: 15-18 June 2000
Venue: Museum of Anthropology, Munich, Germany
Information: Conrad Schetter, Coordinator, Scientific Program, Center of Development Research, Walter-Flex-Str. 3, 53113, Bonn, Germany tel: +49 228 263144 c.schetten@uni-bonn.de
URL: http://www.rzuser.uni-heidelberg.de/~iv0/aga

Islamic Origins: National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) Summer Institute 2000
Date: 19 June - 21 July 2000
Venue: University of Chicago, Illinois, USA
Information: http://humanities.uchicago.edu/islamic-origins/

Muslim Europe: The Changing Cultural Contours of the West (An Institute for Educators)
Date: 19 June - 14 July 2000
Information: Hazel Sara Greenberg, The American Forum for Global Education, 120 Wall Street, Suite 2600, New York, NY, 10005 USA tel: +1 212 624 1300 / fax: +1 212 624 1412

Time & Space in Islam
Date: 1-3 July 2000
Venue: The Islamic Foundation, Villa Park, Illinois
Sponsored by: The Iqbal Society, The American Islamic Heritage, and the Ameer Khusro Society of America
Information: Dr Habibuddin Ahmed, Coordinator tel: +1 630 739 9028 hahmed@unistarinc.com

BRISMES 2000 Centre for Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies: Annual Conference
Date: 2-5 July 2000
Venue: University of Cambridge, UK
Information: Faculty of Oriental Studies, Sidgwick Avenue, Cambridge, CB3 9DA UK tel/fax: +44 1223 335103 oriental-mes-admin@lists.cam.ac.uk

The Second International Conference on Jordanian Social History
Date: 3-5 July 2000
Venue: Amman, Jordan
Information: Hani Hourani, Director General, Al-Urdun Al-Jadid Research Center, P O Box 940631, Amman 11194, Jordan tel: +962 6 553 3113/4 / fax: + 962 6 551 1118 ujrc@go.com.jo

East Timor, Indonesia and the Region: Perceptions of History and Prospects for the Future
Date: 3-8 July 2000
Venue: Lisbon, Portugal
Information: José Esteves Pereira Magalhães, Vice-Rector, Symposium and of the Universidade Nova de Lisboa Universidade Nova de Lisboa, Praça Príncipe Real, 26, 1250-184 Lisbon, Portugal (or) António Barbedo, Coordinator of the Institute for Studies and Cooperation with East Timor, Alameda da Guia, 139-3º Esqº 2750-370 Cascais, Portugal. tel: +351 969 033 618 / fax: +351 222 003 599

The Mediterranean in the 21st Century: Enduring Differences and Prospects for Co-operation
Date: 3-14 July 2000
Venue: European University Institute, Florence, Italy
Information: Ann-C. Svantesson, Mediterranean Programme Secretary tel: +39 55 468 5785 / fax: +39 55 468 5770 svantess@iue.it

Australiasian Middle East Studies Association 2000 Conference
Date: 5-6 July 2000
Venue: Melbourne, Australia
Information: Dr. Shahram Akbarzadeh, Politics, La Trobe University, Vic. 3083,Australia. fax: + 61 3 9479 1997 S.Akbarzadeh@latrobe.edu.au.
URL: http://www.arabic.univelb.edu/au/events/amesa/amesa3.htm

Navigation and Trade in the Mediterranean from the 7th to the 19th centuries: 8th International Congress on Graeco-Oriental and African Studies
Date: 5-9 July 2000
Venue: Oinousses, Greece
Sponsored by: the Institute for Graeco-Oriental Studies, Athens, and the Department of History, Cairo University
Information: Professor V. Christides, Institute for Graeco-Oriental and African Studies, Solomou 39, Kryoneri Attikis, 14568 Greece fax: +30 1 816-1037

Borders, Orders and Identities of the Muslim World
Date: 12-14 July 2000
Information: Michelle Speak, External Relations Officer, International Boundaries Research Unit, Suite 3P, Mountjoy Research Centre, University of Durham, DH1 3UR, UK tel: +44 191 374 7705 fax: +44 191 374 7702 michelle.speak@Durham.ac.uk (or) Ali Ansari, Centre for Middle Eastern & Islamic Studies, South End House, South Road, Durham, DH1 3TG, UK tel: +44 191 374-2822 fax: +44 191 374-2830 ali.ansari@durham.ac.uk
URL: www.1bru.dur.ac.uk/conf/islam/intor/htm

Literature and Nationalism in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA)
Date: 10-13 July 2000
Sponsored by: The Edinburgh Institute for the Advanced Study of Islam and the Middle East
Information: Secretary, Edinburgh Institute for the Advanced Study of Islam and the Middle East, University of Edinburgh, 7-8 Buccleuch Place, Edinburgh EH8 9LW, Scotland fax: +44 131 650 6804 EIASIME@ed.ac.uk
URL: http://www.arts.ed.ac.uk/eiasime/events/litnat-conf.html

Conference on Oman
Date: 17-19 July 2000
Venue: British Museum, London UK
Information: Julian Reade jreade@british-museum.ac.uk

Media, Religion and Culture: 22nd General Assembly and Scientific Conference of the International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR)
Date: 17-20 July 2000, *Venue*: Singapore
URL: http://www.iamcr2000.org

The 19th International Congress of Historical Sciences
Date: 6-14 August 2000
Venue: Oslo, Norway
Information: Congress-Conference AS, PO Box 2694 Solli, 0204 Oslo, Norway tel: +47 22 56 19 30 / fax: +47 22 56 05 41
URL: www.oslo2000.uio.no

History of Religions: Origins and Visions
Date: August 5-12 2000
Venue: University of Durban-Westville, South Africa
Sponsored by: The International Association for the History of Religions (IAHR) and hosted by the Department of Science and Religion at the University of Durban-Westville, South Africa
Information: Prof. P. Kumar, Dept. of Science and Religion, University of Durban-Westville, Private Bag X54001, Durban 4000, South Afric tel: +27 31 204 4539 / fax: 027-31-204-4160 kumar@pixie.udw.ac.za
URL: http://www.udw.ac.za.iahr

36th International Congress of Asian and North African Studies (ICANAS 2000)
Date: 27 August - 1 September 2000
Venue: Montreal, Canada
Information: ICANAS 2000 Secretariat, Bureau des congrès, Université de Montréal, P.O. Box 6128, Station Downtown Montréal, Québec H3C 3J7, Canada tel: +1 514 343 6492 / fax: +1 514 343 6544 congres@bcoc.umontreal.ca
URL: http://www.bcoc.umontreal.ca.

Religion and Society in Qajar Iran
Date: 4-6 September 2000
Sponsored by: The British Institute of Persian Studies and the Iran Heritage Foundation.
Information: Robert Gleave (Conference Coordinator), Department of Theology and Religious Studies, University of Bristol, Bristol, BS8 1TB UK tel: +44 117 928 8168 / fax: +44 117 929 7850 r.m.gleave@bristol.ac.uk

Seminar for Arabian Studies
Date: 4-6 September 2000
Venue: The Institute of Archaeology, University College London.
Information: Nanina Shaw Reade, Secretary, Seminar for Arabian Studies, Institute of Archaeology (UCL), 31-34 Gordon Square, London WC1H 0PY fax/answerphone: +44 1367 850 130 arab-seem-@dircon.co.uk

Immigrant Religious Communities: Ideas and Identities
Date: 8-10 September 2000
Venue: San Diego State University, California, USA
Sponsored by: The Institute of Druze Studies in collaboration with the Department of Religious Studies, San Diego State University (SDSU), The Society for the Academic Study of Religions (SDSU) and the G.E. von Grunebaum Center at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA)
Information: Institute of Druze Studies, San Diego State University P.O. Box 22828, San Diego, CA 92192 idsi@druzestudies.org with copy to Samy s. Swayd sswayd@mail.sdsu.edu

Muslims of Europe in the New Millennium: Multiculturalism, Identity and Citizenship
Date: 9-10 September 2000
Venue: Islamic Cultural Centre of Ireland, Dublin
Information: The Steering Committee, Association of Muslim Social Scientists (UK), P.O. Box 126, Richmond, Surrey, TW9 2UD, UK tel: +44 208 948 9511 or +44 208 948 9512 fax: +44 208 940 4014 amss@dial.pipex.com

International Conference on Middle Eastern Popular Culture
Date: 17-21 September 2000
Sponsored by: University of Oxford
Information: Professor Clive Holes (clive.holes@oriinst.ox.ac.uk) or the NESP Administrator at Near Eastern Studies Programme, University of Oxford (neareast@orinst.ox.ac.uk)
URL: users.ox.ac.uk/~neareast/middle.htm

Central Asia: Past, Present and Future (7th European Conference on Central Asian Studies)
Date: 25-29 September 2000
Venue: University of Vienna, Austria
Information: Dr Gabriele Rasuly-Paleczek, Institute for Social and Cultural Anthropology, University of Vienna, A-1010 Vienna, Universitatsstr. 7/IV, Austria tel: +43 1 4277 4806 / fax: +43 1 4277 9485 gabriele.rasuly@univie.ac.at

History and Historiography: New Approaches and Perspectives: International Summer Academy
Date: September 2000
Venue: Germany
Sponsored by: the Modernity and Islam Working Group of Berlin Universities and extra-university institutions
Information: Arbeitskreis Moderne und Islam, Geschäftsstelle: Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin
Georges Khalil Wallotstraße 19, D - 14193 Berlin Germany tel: +49 30 89 00 1258 / fax: +49 30 89 00 1200 Khalil@wiko-berlin.de

Congress of the International Association of Middle East Studies (IAMES)
Date: 5-7 October 2000
Venue: Berlin, Germany
Information: Prof. Dr. Friedemann Büttner, Freie Universität Berlin, Arbeitsstelle Politik des Vorderen Orients, Ihnestr. 31, D-14195 Berlin, Germany tel: +49 30 838 6640 / fax: +49 30 838 6637 fbue@zedat.fu-berlin.de

7th Annual Congress of the German Middle East Studies Association (DAVO)
Date: 12-14 October 2000
Venue: Centre for Research on the Arab World (CERAW), University of Mainz, Germany
Deadline for papers: 12 September 2000
Information: DAVO-Congress Organization, Professor Dr. Anton Escher, Center for Research on the Arab World (CERAW), Institute of Geography, University of Mainz, D-55099, Mainz, Germany tel: +49 6131 39 25654 fax: +49 06131 39 24736 davo-congress@geo.uni-mainz.de
URL: http://www.geo.uni-mainz.de/davo

Islam and Society in the 21st Century: 29th Annual Association of Muslim Social Scientists (AMSS)
Date: 13-15 October 2000
Venue: Georgetown University, Washington, D.C.
Sponsored by: The Association of Muslim Social Scientists (AMSS) in collaboration with The Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding at Georgetown University.
Information: The International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT), Attention: AMSS Conference 2000, P.O. Box 669, Herndon, VA, 20170, USA, (or) Deonna Kelli tel: +1 703 471-1133, ext. 116 fax: +1 703 471-3922 Dkelli@iiit.org
URL: http://www.iiit.org/callpapers.htm

29th Annual Conference on South Asia
Date: 13-15 October 2000
Venue: University of Wisconsin-Madison, USA
Information: Center for South Asia, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 203 Ingraham Hall, 1155 Observatory Drive, Madison WI 53706, USA tel: +1 608 262 4884 / fax: +1 608 265 3062 conference@southasia.wisc.edu

The Third World in the 21st Century: 18th Annual Meeting of the Association of Third World Studies
Date: 19-21 October 2000
Venue: Denver, Colorado
Deadline for registration: September 1, 2000
Information: Professor Norman W. Provizer, Director, Golda Meir Center for Political Leadership, Metropolitan State College of Denver, P.O. Box 173362, Campus Box 43, Denver, CO, 80217-3362 USA tel: +1 303 556 3157 / fax: +1 303 556 2716 provizen@mscd.edu

God, Life and Cosmos: Theistic Perspectives
Date: 6-9 November 2000
Venue: Islamabad, Pakistan
Sponsored by: The Center for Theology and the Natural Sciences (CNTS), the Islamic Research Institute of the International Islamic University and the International Institute of Islamic Thought
Information: Muzaffar Iqbal tel: +1 780 922 0927 / fax: +1 780 922-0926 mwsrp@icrossroads.com

The US and the Middle East after the Gulf War
Date: 9-10 November 2000
Venue: La Plata University, Argentina
Further information: Dr Virginia Petronis tel/fax: +221 423 0628 iri@isis.unlp.edu.ar (or) Chairperson, Middle East Department, Lic. Pedro Brieger pbrieger@wamani.apc.org

Contesting and Constructing Islamic Identities in the Periphery: A Panel at the American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting
Date: 15-19 November 2000
Venue: San Francisco, California, USA
Information: Dr Ron Lukens-Bull, Assistant Professor of Anthropology, University of North Florida, Jacksonville, FL, 32224-2650 USA tel: +1 904 620 2850 rlukens@unf.edu

Contesting and Constructing Islamic Masculinities: A panel to be presented at the American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting
Date: 15-19 November 2000
Venue: San Francisco, California, USA
Information: Dr Ron Lukens-Bull, Assistant Professor of Anthropology, University of North Florida, Jacksonville, FL 32224-2650 USA tel: + 1 904 620-2850 rlukens@unf.edu

Middle East Studies Association (MESA) Annual Meeting
Date: 16-19 November 2000
Venue: Orlando, Florida
Information: MESA of North America, University of Arizona, 1643 E. Helen Street, Tucson, Arizona, 85721 USA tel: +1 520 621 5850 fax: +1 520 6269095 mesana@u.arizona.edu
URL: http://w3fp.arizona.edu/mesassoc/Annualmeetings/AnnualMeetings/htm

People and Power in 21st Century Africa: 43rd Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association
Date: 16-19 November 2000
Venue: Convention Center, Nashville, Tennessee, USA
Information: Loree D. Jones, Executive Director, African Studies Association, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, Douglass Campus, 132 George Street, New Brunswick, NJ, 08901-1400 USA tel: +1 732 9328173 fax: +1 732 932 3394 callas@rci.rutgers.edu

1st Graduate Student Conference on Ibn Sina
Date: March 2001 (tentative)
Venue: Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut, USA
Information: David C. Reisman or Ahmed al-Rahim, NELC, Yale University, P0 Box 208236, New Haven CT 06520-8236 USA tel: +1 203 432 2944 fax: +1 203 4322946 david.reisman@yale.edu (or) ahmed.al-rahim@yale.edu

Medical Ethics and Law in Islam
Date: 19-21 March 2001
Venue: Haifa, Israel
Sponsored by: The Department of Arabic Language and Literature and the Center for Health, Law and Ethics at the Law School, both of the University of Haifa, Israel.
Information: Dr. Vardit Rispler-Chaim, Department of Arabic, University of Haifa, Haifa, Israel 31905 tel: + 972 4 8249789 fax: +972 4 8249710 rhla103@uvm.haifa.ac.il

Islam in America: Series of seminars
A Seminar or a series of seminars are planned to develop a comprehensive research program on the theme 'Islam in America.' A working paper is to be developed shortly which will contain a series of research questions. The seminar will be based on these questions and, subsequently, a special issue of the American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences will be published.
Information: Dr Abdul Hameed Abusulayman, President, International Institute of Islamic Thought, P.O. Box 669, Herndon, VA 20172 USA tel: +1 703 471 1133 fax: +1 703 471 3922 iiit@iiit.org (or) Dr Ilyas Bayunus, Professor of Sociology, SUNY Cortland, 4339 Alexandria Drive, Cortland, NY 13045 USA tel: +1 607 753 2475 fax: + 1 607 753 5987

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The International Institute for the Study of the Modern World (ISIM) promotes and conducts interdisciplinary research on contemporary social and intellectual trends and movements in Muslim societies and communities. The ISIM's research approaches are expressly interdisciplinary and comparative, covering a large geographic range which includes North Africa and the Middle East, Sub-Saharan Africa, Central Asia, South and Southeast Asia, and (Muslim communities in) the West. Broad in its scope, the ISIM brings together all areas of expertise.

ISIM Events

Journalists Day
Date: 5 June 2000
Venue: Utrecht
Sponsored by: ISIM and the Scherpenzeel Media Foundation

ISIM PhD Workshop
Date: 14 June 2000
Venue: Leiden

Vingt ans après:
Islamist movements in the last quarter of the 20th century
Date: 21-24 June 2000
Venue: Paris, France
Sponsored by: ISIM and CERI

Muslim Family Law Workshop
Date: 30 June - 1 July 2000
Venue: Berlin, Germany
Sponsored by: ISIM and Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin

Religion and Economy in Muslim Societies
Date: 14–15 August 2000
Venue: Jakarta, Indonesia

For information on these and other ISIM Events:
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