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Many Voices, One *Umma*

Sociopolitical Debate in the Muslim Community

James A. Toronto

As a religion expands beyond its original setting, it encounters new historical, economic, social, and geopolitical forces. The resulting clash between sacred truth and secular reality creates ideological tensions within a religious community that lead its followers to engage in a process of dialogue, reform, and reconciliation. This process of dialectical exchange occurs both between members of the community and between the community and outside forces. Often it gives rise to traumatic, even violent, conflict and frequently leads to schisms and the establishment of breakaway religious movements. The history of religion provides abundant evidence that the ability of a nascent religious community to deal effectively with these dialectical tensions is a crucial factor in determining whether it will remain a tradition of limited influence or become one of lasting, worldwide significance.

The Prophet Joseph Smith addressed the issues of tension and change when he observed, "That which is wrong under one circumstance, may be, and often is, right under another. . . . This is the principle on which the government of heaven is conducted—by revelation adapted to the circumstances in which the children of the kingdom are placed."[1] Numerous examples of this principle from Latter-day Saint history include changes in organizational structure, political and economic philosophy, temple worship, the practice of plural marriage, and the policy on Blacks and the priesthood. Such examples illustrate how Church leaders have applied the principle of "adapted revelation" as they have confronted and adjusted to new circumstances. The worldwide expansion and vibrance of the Church are evidences of its capacity to identify those elements that can be modified to fit changing realities and those that cannot be altered without compromising its essential identity, integrity, and vitality.

Islam provides another instructive example of the historical pattern of growth, adaptation, and change. From its beginnings early in the seventh century C.E., the Muslim community, or *umma,* has passed through periods of rapid expansion, structural adjustment, and external and internal strife. Today, more than a millennium after its inception, the umma is one of the largest and fastest-growing religious communities in the world and is projected to surpass Christianity in total membership by the middle of the twenty-first century.

An assessment of the Islamic experience can provide understanding of the internal dynamics of one of the most prominent but misunderstood faith communities in the world. Such an examination can also yield insights on three vital issues in the broader arena of comparative religious studies: (1) the status of women, (2) religious extremism, and (3) the problem of maintaining unity in a changing world. This article examines these three key issues, which have occupied center stage in the Muslim community's historical evolution. Each issue reflects a dialectical tension that the umma has grappled with, whether as debate among Muslims themselves or as apologetic literature designed to explain and defend the Islamic experience to outsiders. In my analysis, I describe the origin and nature of each issue, assess the critical Muslim and non-Muslim arguments, and explore implications and related issues from the perspective of comparative religion.

The Status of Women in Islam

Islam has long occupied a prominent position in the wider debate on the role of women in religion.[2] Muslim practices are regularly condemned in feminist debate—by both Muslim and non-Muslim intellectuals—as anachronistic and mysogynistic. And Western mass media and scholarship have typically portrayed Muslim women as anonymous entities bereft of rights, identity, intelligence, personality, or a significant role to play in society.

These views of women's roles in Islam form the nub of one of the sharpest contentions between the Muslim East and the Christian West. Western criticism of Islamic family life and gender roles strikes Muslims as hypocritical. They point to the high rates of sexual promiscuity, divorce, drug abuse, crime, and teenage pregnancy in the largely Christian Western nations as proof that the avowed superiority of liberal Christian mores is a delusion and that such permissiveness erodes the family and social structure of the nation.

Yes, Muslims affirm, their religion does advocate a more traditional form of family life, in which men and women have complementary, equally important roles. Generally speaking, men are the breadwinners and protectors; women are the homemakers and nurturers. But the fundamental requirements and rewards of Allah are the same for both men and women. Islam seeks to build marriages and families that foster faith, kindness, hard work, cooperation, and prosperity. Islam does not condone abuse of wife and children, as suggested in literature and movies in the West.[3] On the contrary, the Qur'an and *Sunna* (the example of the Prophet Muhammad) admonish men, women, and children to be kind, gentle, and respectful in their family relations.

The Muslim view of gender roles and family life is based on the Qur'an and Sunna.[4] The Qur'an teaches that Allah created men and women to work harmoniously together and to be a source of happiness

and peace to one another: "And among His Signs is this, that He created for you mates from among yourselves, that ye may dwell in tranquillity with them, and He has put love and mercy between your (hearts)" (30:21); and "Never will I suffer to be lost the work of any of you, be he male or female: ye are members, one of another" (3:195; see also 2:187).

In contrast to the Christian tradition that appears to assign greater opprobrium to Eve than to Adam in their fall from grace, the Qur'an clearly indicates that both the man and the woman yielded to Satan's temptation and were therefore equally responsible for the expulsion from paradise (7:22–23). Allah does not distinguish between men and women in his expectations and rewards for believers: "If any do deeds of righteousness—be they male or female—and have faith, they will enter Heaven, and not the least injustice will be done to them" (4:124). Another verse is more explicit on this point:

> For Muslim men and women, for believing men and women, for devout men and women, for true men and women, for men and women who are patient and constant, for men and women who humble themselves, for men and women who give in charity, for men and women who fast, for men and women who guard their chastity, and for men and women who engage much in Allah's remembrance, for them has Allah prepared forgiveness and great reward. (33:35)

The *hadith* literature (sayings and actions of the early leaders) portrays Muhammad as a paragon of kindness, courtesy, and gentleness in his dealings with his wives and other women, as a man who championed women's rights, advocated mutual understanding and respect between the sexes, and encouraged husbands by his personal example to treat wives well and help them with household chores.[5]

However, the Qur'an does prescribe different social and familial roles for men and women, and because the Qur'an's meaning on these issues is at times general in nature, the interpretation and practice of these divergent roles have become the focus of debate among Muslims and of criticism from outside the umma. The Qur'an designates men as "the protectors and maintainers of women, because Allah has given the one more (strength) than the other, and because they support them from their means" (4:34). Even though both believing men and women "should lower their gaze and guard their modesty" (24:30–31), the Sunna and Qur'anic commentaries make it clear that a greater degree of privacy in dress is required for women.[6]

Muslim sources point out that Islam greatly elevated the status of women. The Qur'an condemns the practice of female infanticide, apparently quite common in pre-Islamic Arabian culture, and allots to women certain rights in marriage and inheritance that they did not enjoy before the

advent of Islam. But because men have responsibilities for supporting the family that are not required of women, a male's inheritance in Islamic law equals that of two females (4:11). In order to protect women's honor against slander or false allegations, four witnesses rather than the usual two are required to establish guilt in cases of adultery (4:15; 24:4 and notes).

One can say that the Qur'an permits polygyny but does not recommend it. It limits to four the number of wives that a man can legally marry (in pre-Islamic Arabia, the number was unlimited), and this permission is given in the context of verses dealing with orphaned women and widows. It adds the condition that if the husband cannot "deal justly (with them)," then only one wife is permissible (4:3). Modernists in Islam interpret these verses to mean that, since it is virtually impossible for a man to care equitably and justly for four wives, Allah's intent is that Muslims practice monogamy. Another widely held Muslim view is that taking more than one wife is acceptable (especially in cases where the first wife cannot bear children), but that it is generally not practical for economic reasons (too difficult to support two or more households). Though various interpretations exist, the reality is that only a small percentage of Muslims practice polygyny today.

Because men have the duty of protecting women and providing for families, the Qur'an encourages "righteous women" to be "devoutly obedient." In the case of wives who are persistently and flagrantly disobedient, the Qur'an counsels husbands to "admonish them (first); (next), refuse to share their beds; (and last) beat them (lightly)" (4:34). The commentaries emphasize that slight physical correction is a last resort, to be used only in extremely rare cases and in a way that inflicts no pain or injury.[7]

The symbol of the polemic between Muslims and non-Muslims is the veil that many Muslim women wear in public. To Westerners, the custom in most Muslim societies of women covering the head when men are not required to do so is tangible evidence that Islam discriminates against women and relegates them to secondary status. As always, however, the reality beneath the surface of sociocultural appearances is complex and defies facile conclusions.

Muslims themselves have divergent views on the issue of veiling. Opinions and practices have varied at different times and in different places, and social, cultural, and political conditions heavily influence veiling trends. In some extremely conservative countries, all women are required to cover their bodies from head to toe when in public. In more moderate nations like Jordan, Egypt, and Morocco, veiling is normally a matter of choice, and one sees many women in society who have opted not to veil. In Indonesia and Malaysia, the ratio of veiled to nonveiled women is lower than in Middle Eastern Islamic countries.

Some Muslims hold that the veil is not required at all in Islam. They argue that Muslim women during the time of Muhammad did not veil and that the practice became a part of Muslim culture only after non-Arab peoples who had a tradition of veiling entered Islam in large numbers. The more mainstream contemporary view is that veiling is required as a means of fostering modesty and morality in society.

The question of just what constitutes a proper veil is a matter of personal interpretation. A full-length robe, gloves, and a face mask *(niqab)* with small slits for vision are required of women in some countries and conservative families, but most Muslims consider this practice extreme. Some women wear local costumes with a token covering of the hair. For example, many Muslim women from the Indian subcontinent, like former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto of Pakistan, often wear a traditional gown and loose-fitting head scarf. Today the majority of women who veil wear a scarf *(hijab)* that covers their hair and neck but not the face and an ankle-length, long-sleeved robe with no gloves.[8]

Muslims generally agree that no one should be compelled to wear the veil; it must be a personal choice a woman makes when she is spiritually and psychologically ready. It is also true, however, that pressure from family and friends—sometimes subtle, sometimes intense—frequently has a bearing on decisions about veiling. During the past three decades, the Islamic community has witnessed a marked increase in the number of women donning the veil, a phenomenon related to the push for Islamization in many Muslim countries.

The diversity of interpretation among Muslims on the issue of gender roles and veiling is illustrated in the following quotes, each taken from an Islamic source and professing to be the correct Islamic view. In the first example, the difference of opinion concerns whether a woman should cover her whole body, including her face, or whether her face can be left uncovered:

> A Muslim woman may wear whatever she pleases in the presence of her husband and family or among women friends. But when she goes out or when men other than her husband or close family are present she is expected to wear a dress which will cover all parts of her body, and which should not reveal the figure. What a contrast with Western fashions which every year concentrate quite intentionally on exposing yet another erogenous zone to the public gaze! . . . The intention of Western dress is to reveal the figure, while the intention of Muslim dress is to conceal it, at least in public. . . . It is therefore required for a Muslim woman when she goes out to wear a dress that covers her from head to foot and does not reveal the figure. According to some scholars only the hands and face should be left uncovered, while according to some others the face should also be covered. . . . We must concede that on this issue there are two viewpoints and both are derived from careful reflection on the original sources. Everyone is free to prefer any one of these on the basis of arguments, but should also respect the other viewpoint.[9]

The second example reflects a much more liberal and generalized interpretation and avoids a precise definition of what constitutes "required modesty" in Islam:

> The social role of women requires mixing with men. Islam does not permit any discrimination between men and women, nor does it advocate a segregation between them. . . .
>
> Modesty is required *in the outdoor dress* of both Muslim women and men. However, there is no specific uniformed dress recommended for a Muslim woman. *Purda, chadoura, 'abaya, quftan* or *hayek* are local fashions preferred by women in different places and may be changed in any time according [to] the change of taste; these designs or fashions should not violate the basic and permanent requirements of an Islamic dress. . . .
>
> Islam allows any dress that fulfills the required modesty for a decent woman.[10]

The practice of veiling raises provocative questions about the functions and symbolism of clothing in confessional life. In Islamic society, veiling has several functions. It underscores the different roles of men and women, helps maintain proper relations between the sexes by promoting modesty of thought and conduct, expresses one's identity as a member of the Muslim community, and reinforces one's commitment to the faith and one's rejection of materialism (fig. 1).

Clothing serves similar purposes in non-Muslim communities as well. In a comparative context, it is worthwhile to consider corollary questions: What special attire is required in a given religious community, and what functions does it have? Which aspects of dress are specifically prescribed by religious dogma, and which are merely reflections of cultural norms? Are the mores and strictures governing dress exactly the same for both men and women? If not, why not? Modesty is valued in all religions, but how does the definition of modesty and its expression in personal attire change from culture to culture and from time to time within the same culture?

Most Latter-day Saints consider Church standards of dress to be a necessary, reasonable, and comfortable part of their religious lives, while outside observers describe these same standards as rigid and repressive. Most Muslims also feel that their requirements for dress, including veiling for women, are a necessary, reasonable, and comfortable norm for human society, even while outside observers denounce these norms as oppressive to women. An eminent American scholar who has spent years living among Muslim women gives several cautions against drawing conclusions based on superficial impressions:

> We [non-Muslims] tend to believe that those who look out (through the veil) suffer from the same exclusion as those of us who look at the veil and its hidden contents. However, we have no right to make such an assumption. Much depends on who makes the decision to veil—whether it is imposed or self-selected.

[Veiling is] "an outward sign of a complex reality."

[It] relates to the individual's sense of belonging to a group, and to the individual's sense of her own identity.

Women stress repeatedly . . . that the choice to wear Islamic dress is one they make themselves, and it must come "from inner religious conviction."

The majority of women . . . see themselves as making a statement or taking action that strengthens their own position within the society.[11]

One young Egyptian Muslim woman explains some of the social advantages of veiling: "My family trusts me implicitly, and now that I wear this [Islamic] dress, they are not worried if I stay out later than usual or mingle with friends they do not always approve of. In this dress, my reputation remains intact, for everyone knows that it is a respectable garment. People thus respect you if you wear it."[12]

The debate about religious clothing is one important dimension of the wider dialectic about gender roles and women's status in the Muslim community and, by extension, all religious communities. This is, in fact, one of the most pressing but neglected issues in the study of comparative religion. Gender role differentiation has been a feature of nearly every faith tradition in the world, and with the rise of the feminist movement during the past three decades, it has become an ever more controversial question at the forefront of religious discourse. The question, simply stated, is this: To what extent is religion a facilitating or a debilitating factor in women's historical struggle to achieve equal status, treatment, opportunities, and rights in society?

The debate is rendered more complex by the fact that, within the
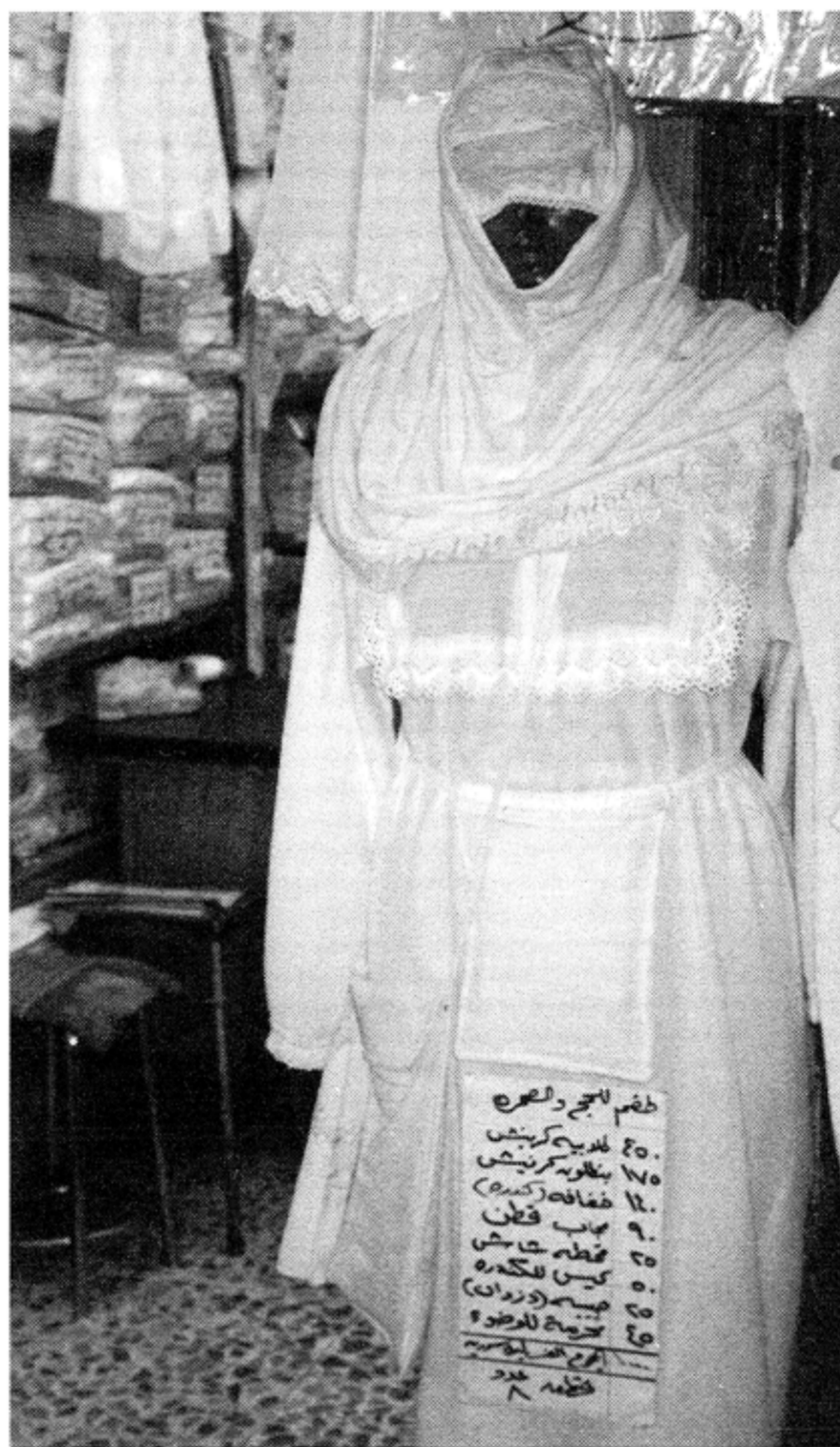
Courtesy James A. Toronto

FIG. 1. White clothing and accouterments for women going on the pilgrimage *(hajj)* to Mecca. The items include pants and blouse; a cotton *hijab*, or head covering; a purse; a pair of light shoes; a shoe bag (to hold shoes after removing them to enter a mosque); and a cloth for drying off after performing ablutions before prayer. Even though the hijab covers the mannequin's face, women are required **not** to veil their faces while performing the hajj. Men also wear standard white clothing in Mecca.

historical experience of every religious community, one can find scriptural passages, authoritative dicta, and anecdotal examples to support either side of the argument. In the Islamic context, apologetic literature focuses on Qur'anic statements, Muhammad's normative behavior, and contemporary testimonials and case studies that affirm an Islamic position of honor, respect, equality, freedom, and a different-but-equal role for women.

But critics use the same sources and methods to support a contrary view. They cite the Qur'an's apparent sanction of a husband's right to use physical force to discipline his wife; Muhammad's alleged lasciviousness in taking multiple wives, even exceeding the Qur'anic limit of four; the provisions in Islamic personal and family law that assign women a status that is half of men's in matters of inheritance and legal testimony; and data from some Islamic countries indicating that women have less access to education, political participation, economic benefits, employment opportunities, and legal protection.

Muslim apologists are generally articulate in presenting Islamic teachings on equality and complementary roles for men and women and persuasive in pointing out the inaccuracies, contradictions, and hypocrisy that often typify non-Muslim allegations of misogyny in Islam. On the other hand, Muslim apologists frequently adopt a superficial, contemptuous approach to criticism that ultimately weakens the Islamic position. They dismiss the comments of critics as baseless ("merely part of a Western conspiracy to destroy Islam") and thus ignore or gloss over crucial points of this criticism that are well attested in Islamic scripture, history, and contemporary experience.

Although specific issues and arguments vary somewhat, the same dialectical pattern characterizes the debate on women's status in all the major world religions, including Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism, and Confucianism. A survey of the doctrinal, historical, and sociological record of human religious experience leaves little doubt that religion receives mixed reviews for its role in shaping women's development. Religious dogma and values have been detrimental at times. In the name of religion, women have been physically abused and killed to preserve male superiority and family honor; denied opportunities for personal growth, education, employment, travel, and freedom of expression; compelled to commit suicide, keep silent, undergo genital mutilation, and wear restrictive clothing; and subjected to discrimination in society and humiliation at home.

But the record also shows that religion forms the core of existential understanding that sustains women's lives and affirms female gender. Countless women throughout history have found profound peace, joy, and fulfillment through their participation in personal and communal religious life (fig. 2), and it is generally the case that women exhibit higher levels of

commitment in living a religious lifestyle and advocating religious values than their male counterparts.

Final judgment on the issue of whether religion's promotion of gender role differentiation hinders or promotes women's spiritual, social, economic, and political development will rest with the individual observer. Categorizing a given condition or behavior as detrimental or beneficial, oppressive or liberating, is a highly subjective process. Ultimately, these judgments often hinge on the depth of one's commitment to the spiritual and epistemological underpinnings of a given religious community. Given the complexity of the debate and the personal nature of the issues, it is imperative to avoid hasty judgments and superficial conclusions about the spiritual lives of people whom we observe from afar through dim light and therefore know imperfectly.
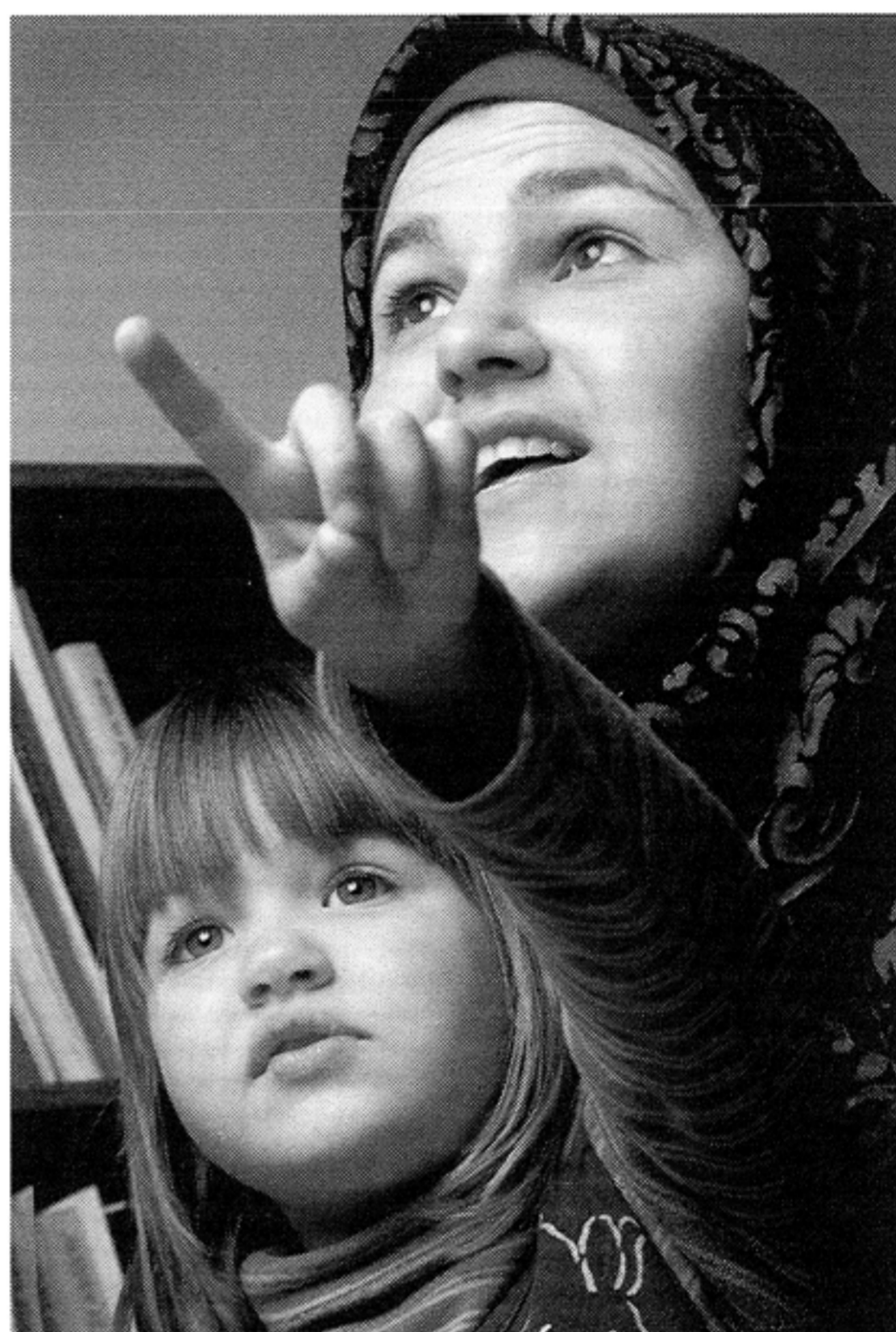
Courtesy William S. Dant

FIG. 2. Principal Maysa and Mariam at the Iqra' Academy, an Islamic school in Salt Lake City. *Iqra'* (recite, or read) was the first word uttered by the angel Gabriel at the inception of the Qur'anic revelation. Used here, iqra' reflects the Muslim commitment to lifelong learning.

The Question of Religious Extremism

In the minds of most Westerners, the term *Islamic Fundamentalism*, which appears almost daily in newspapers and television broadcasts, is synonymous with violence, terrorism, and fear. Muslim extremists, claiming to represent the interests and teachings of Islam, have engaged in hijackings, bombings, assassinations, attacks on Western tourists and businesses, and vitriolic denunciations of Western civilization. The high-profile activities of militant groups like Hizbullah in Lebanon, Islamic Jihad in Egypt, Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan, and Hamas in the West Bank and Gaza have undoubtedly done more than anything else to shape negative public opinion and stereotypes about Islam.

Since the latter half of the nineteenth century, Muslims have been engaged in an intense internal debate about the status of their religion and their community in the modern world. Colonization of nearly the entire Islamic world by Western powers and the political and economic subjugation that followed precipitated a crisis among Muslims similar to the spiritual,

psychological, and intellectual angst that has surfaced in other world religions that espouse a doctrine of "chosenness."

In Judaism, it was the Holocaust, and in Shinto, it was Japan's defeat and the emperor's humiliation in World War II that forced agonizing reflection on this question: "If we are God's chosen people, then why has this happened to us?" That is essentially the existential dilemma that has impelled Muslims to search for answers to two basic questions: What brought about the military, economic, and spiritual decline of the Islamic community following more than one thousand years of supremacy in the world? What should be done to bring about renewal and reform?

Only in the past two decades has the West become keenly aware of this dialectic among Muslims. As the ideological ferment and militant political activism of the Islamic movement have spread beyond the borders of the Islamic heartlands, the Western nations have been drawn into the struggle. Western media and scholars have become interested in Islam and in its economic, social, and political influences. The oil embargo of 1973; the Iranian revolution and seizure of the American Embassy in Tehran in 1979; the assassination of Egypt's President Sadat in 1981; wars in Afghanistan, Chechneya, and the Gulf; and suicide bombings in Israel during the last decade have all helped illustrate how vital and urgent this internal debate among Muslims has become in world affairs. These events attest to the fact that Islam has replaced nationalism as "the major ideology of dissent" throughout the Arab and Islamic world.[13]

Analysts, both Muslim and non-Muslim, have often differed in their use of terminology to describe this intensification of Islamic identity and activity. It has been referred to, *inter alia,* as the Islamic Revival, the Islamic Awakening, the Islamic Resurgence, Islamic Fundamentalism, Islamization, and the Islamist Movement. Participants in these activities are variously called Islamists, religious militants, fundamentalists, fanatics, and extremists.[14] Many contemporary scholars prefer the term "Islamist Movement" to refer to the renewed push by Muslims to reform their societies according to Islamic principles of equity and justice.

No consensus has emerged among scholars about why or when the Islamic Resurgence began.[15] But it is safe to assert that, for at least a century, intellectuals, politicians, and religious leaders have engaged in a dialogue to identify the roots of the Islamic malaise and to articulate a vision of how Islamic societies can regain ascendancy in a modern world. The issue for Muslims is not Islam's viability as a set of spiritual truths and religious practices; the core of the conflict is the extent to which Islamic ideals should be permitted to govern not only religious matters in society but political, economic, social, and educational domains of life as well.

The complexity and diversity of the Islamist Movement for reform defy easy explanation, as it comprises a multiplicity of groups, ideologies,

and activities that are often at cross-purposes with each other. Virtually all Islamist factions agree on the goals for solving the problem but disagree sharply on the means for achieving those goals.

In assessing the origin of their decline in the world, Muslims typically cite both internal and external factors, as follows: First, they say, we Muslims must accept some blame for our demise because we have abandoned the faith; we have failed to live our religion as our forefathers did when Islam ruled the world. Second, colonial powers from the Christian West have taken advantage of our weakness and backwardness to conquer our countries, subjugate our peoples, exploit our economies, and impose alien, secular values that have corrupted our way of life. The goals for solving these two problems of internal decay and external domination are then obvious and almost unanimously agreed upon: First, we must cleanse our societies from within and return to Islam. Second, we must root out Western secular influences and resist further neocolonial attempts to weaken and humiliate us. The slogan "Islam is the solution" has become ubiquitous in the Islamic world, whether in literature, Friday sermons, daily conversations, or graffiti spray-painted on public buildings. A publication of the influential Muslim Brotherhood states, "There is no cure for the widespread disease of poverty, ignorance, sickness, and moral and national corruption except a return to the laws of Islam."[16] The ultimate goal of most Islamists is the establishment of an Islamic state that applies Islamic laws and principles in every phase of public and private life, including economics, politics, education, and family relations.

The various groups in the Islamist movement are deeply divided, however, on what methods should be adopted to achieve these goals. The vast majority of Muslims advocate a peaceful, moderate approach that emphasizes social and political activism to bring about reform: participating in the political process and election campaigns; establishing mosques, institutes, and newspapers to educate the masses and shape public opinion; and providing jobs and social services (like health care, adult literacy programs, and day-care centers) for the poor. In the ideology of moderate groups, a distinction is made between "modernism" and "secularism"; that is, Islam has no objection to the modern advances in science and technology that promote a healthier, more prosperous life, but it rejects the materialistic, secular values that seem to accompany those advancements in Western society.

On the other hand, a small percentage of Muslims have concluded that peaceful, gradual agitation for change is doomed to failure because the Muslim politicians, military officers, businessmen, and intellectuals who control their countries are corrupt, anti-Islamic puppets of Christian and Jewish neocolonial powers. Militant groups assert, therefore, that violent means are justified to throw off the oppressive yoke and to obtain the freedom and prosperity that a true Islamic state would provide.

These fringe groups view themselves as soldiers in a desperate war for survival against apostates and infidels, the outcome of which will determine the fate of the Islamic community. From the perspective of militant Islam, violence is justified by the Qur'anic principles of jihad because the fighters are defending innocent Muslims against hostilities, aggression, and suffering. Assassinating corrupt leaders, shooting intellectuals and newspaper editors, struggling violently to overthrow an oppressive regime, and bombing Western-sponsored institutions are activities viewed as religious duties, the performance of which reaps Allah's rewards (even an automatic place in paradise if one dies while carrying out this duty and thus becomes a martyr).

Mainstream Muslims denounce this kind of radical ideology as a gross misinterpretation of Islamic principles and as antithetical to Islam's historical advocacy of tolerance and peace. An American Muslim explains:

> Islam is against compulsion in religion, as Allah says in *The Qur'an:* "There is no compulsion in religion." . . .
>
> As to the relationship between Muslims and non-Muslims, Allah ordained a peaceful co-existence and a mutual understanding, as He said in *The Qur'an:* "Say: O People of the Scripture [Jews and Christians]! Come to an agreement between us and you. . . .
>
> . . . And argue not with the People of the Scripture, except in the best way."[17]

A Pakistani student at BYU expressed the attitude of most Muslims toward religious extremism in an insightful editorial following the 1993 attack by Muslim militants against the World Trade Center:

> The Muslim students at BYU join the rest of the nation in condemning the recent terrorist attack on the World Trade Center in New York City. We also condemn the possible involvement of Muslims in this heinous crime. We regret the loss of innocent lives in this incident and hope the real culprits are subjected to exemplary punishment.
>
> These senseless acts have nothing to do with Islam and are against the spirit of the religion that emphasizes the concept of peace more than anything else. . . .
>
> The incident in New York City is not any more representative of Islam than the people in Waco, Texas [the cult of extremists led by David Koresh] are representative of mainstream Christianity. Cody Judy [who briefly held President Hunter hostage] does not represent Mormonism any better than do the Palestinian suspects of the New York bombing represent Islam. Acts of a handful of derelicts are not true representatives of the faith they adhere to.[18]

The Islamist Movement, in both its moderate and extreme manifestations, will continue to influence economic, social, and political developments throughout the world. Even though Islamist rhetoric couches the problems of Muslims in religious terms, there is little doubt that factors

other than spiritual delinquency must be addressed in order to bring about necessary reforms. Since the events of September 11, moderate but influential voices in the Islamic world have called for Muslims to study and remedy the problems that foster religious extremism and acts of violence.[19] The seedbed of religious extremism is prolonged suffering, humiliation, and despair arising from extreme sociopolitical conditions: poverty, hunger, unemployment, illiteracy, and political disenfranchisement. When exposed long enough to desperate circumstances, even moral, intelligent people sometimes resort to desperate measures and often invoke religion to acquire support and legitimacy.

Religious militancy is not a uniquely Islamic phenomenon that reflects, as some Westerners seem to suppose, a theological flaw in Islam or some sort of inherent Muslim predisposition toward fanaticism. In an article discussing the official policy of the United States toward Islam, Edward P. Djererian, former U.S. ambassador to Syria and Israel, advocates an enlightened and balanced approach to this issue. He cautions against Islamophobia, calls for understanding of the underlying causes of religious extremism, and suggests that religion can act as a positive catalyst in solving conflicts:

> The United States Government does not view Islam as the next "ism" confronting the West or threatening world peace. That is a simplistic response to a complex reality. . . . In the final analysis . . . it is social injustice—the lack of economic, social, educational, and political opportunity—that provides the extremists a constituency. . . . We differ with those who, whatever their religion, practice terrorism, resort to violence, reject the peaceful resolution of conflicts, oppress minorities, preach intolerance, disdain political pluralism, or who violate internationally accepted standards regarding human rights. . . . While there is a common perception that religious differences have been and remain a cause or pretext for conflict and wars, there is the other side of the coin where the work and actions of religious groups and individuals can help foster the peaceful settlement of conflicts.[20]

Extremists who rationalize violence in the name of God can be found in the history of every religious tradition, including Mormonism. The point here is not to justify violent acts of religious extremists but to encourage analysis and understanding of the conditions that create one of the great paradoxes in world religions: the growth of hatred, bigotry, and violence in the same spiritual soil that produces love, tolerance, and peace.

Islam's Search for Unity of Vision and Voice

As the twenty-first century progresses, the Muslim community must grapple with some thorny issues and daunting challenges. Foremost among these is the urgent need for a coherent vision of Islam's place in

modern society and a unified voice to articulate that vision persuasively. The issue of how to reconcile the traditional religious values, teachings, and practices of Islam with the requirements of an international socio-economic order based on concepts of secularism, rationalism, and democracy is a focus of intense debate within the umma. In a nutshell, the problem is how to adopt the beneficial aspects of Western technology without being harmed spiritually by the corrosive effects of Western culture.

Anwar Ibrahim, former deputy prime minister of Malaysia, referred to the "tormenting predicament" among Muslims of

> whether to remain loyal to one's traditions or to depart for a way of life perceived as superior. . . . [Muslims] generally fall into two distinct categories. There were those who foreswore everything from the West because of their passionate and tenacious hold on everything from their own traditions. And then there were those who, overwhelmed by the dazzling light of Western civilization, became renegades to condemn their own.[21]

Fazlur Rahman, one of the most gifted Muslim intellectuals of the twentieth century, asserts that Muslims, in dealing with this predicament, must take a fresh look at their history and forge a revitalized Islamic worldview:

> The heart of the problem which a Muslim must face and resolve if he wishes to reconstruct an Islamic future on an Islamic past [is] how . . . this past [shall] guide him and which elements of his history he may modify, emphasize or deflate. . . .
>
> . . . [It] lies in the actual, positive formulation of Islam, of exactly spelling out what Islam has to say to the modern individual and society.[22]

Two major obstacles stand in the way of the umma's efforts to deal with this predicament, each of which represents a paradox in the life of the modern Muslim community. First, since 1924 when Ataturk abolished the caliphate in Turkey, Islam has lacked any semblance of a centralized leadership that can speak authoritatively for all Muslims. (Some historians have argued that such a central authority ceased to exist with the death of 'Ali, the last of the four "Rightly-Guided Caliphs.") This historical development has influenced in both positive and negative ways the evolution of the Muslim community worldwide. On the plus side, the lack of a central organization has been a key factor in Islam's continuous growth and expansion, as it has allowed a significant degree of flexibility in adapting to widely divergent cultures.

On the minus side, the absence of a unified central voice has created ambiguities, dissonance, and even hostilities in areas not affected by the binding power of the Five Pillars. The great Arab Muslim philosopher Ibn Rushd (1126–1198), known as Averroës in the West, discussed the problem of tensions and schisms in early Islam.[23] These difficulties are most evident in the communal effort to define and implement an Islamic model for the

social, economic, and political dimensions of life in a modern world. On these kinds of issues, one encounters a degree of sociopolitical diversity in the umma that in its depth and passion is as remarkable as the ritual uniformity one also observes.

The reality is—and it is a reality that causes as much distress to thoughtful Muslims as it does confusion to non-Muslims—that the various Islamist reformers and movements have been unable to agree on just what an acceptable, distinctive, and viable "Islamic solution" is to intractable problems such as poverty, disease, hunger, unemployment, illiteracy, and national governance. Fazlur Rahman echoes a common refrain in Muslim literature when he laments that "the greatest weakness of neorevivalism . . . [is] its substitution of cliche mongering for serious intellectual endeavor."[24]

Viewed from this vantage point, Muslim talk of pan-Islamic economic cooperation and political integration sounds overly optimistic. With a multiplicity of sects, ideologies, legal codes, schools of Islamic law, and politico-economic systems across the Islamic world and with no universally accepted authority to define issues, render binding interpretations, and rally support, the Islamic world faces daunting challenges in its divinely mandated duty to establish "the Islamic alternative" in both spiritual and temporal affairs throughout the world.

In recent years, when Islamist groups have managed to gain political power and implement Islamic states with the full weight of Islamic shari'a law (as in the case of Iran and Afghanistan), we see that the Islamist solution to complex socioeconomic problems so far has consisted of simplistic measures. Women have been forced to veil and to give up their jobs outside the home; cinemas, bars, and casinos have been closed down; schools have been segregated so that boys and girls cannot mingle; and people have been forced to observe prayer times. Neither Iran nor Saudi Arabia, who compete with each other for the self-ascribed title of the world's only true Islamic government, has succeeded in creating an inspiring model of modern Muslim governance that can bring leadership, vision, prosperity, and unity to a fractured umma.

The second obstacle concerns the role of Islamic law, shari'a, in governing a modern nation-state. Muslims view shari'a as a comprehensive code of law that governs essentially every aspect of private and public life: individual and group devotions, diet and eating habits, personal hygiene, marital relations, politics, commerce and banking, and education. It includes criminal as well as personal and family law. Shari'a is based on the Qur'an and Sunna but also incorporates the legal opinions of the great Muslim jurists throughout Islamic history. It would be tantamount to creating a system of law and daily life derived from the LDS standard works

and 1,400 years' accumulation of interpretation and commentary reflected in the published writings of general authorities.

It is axiomatic for most Islamists that shari'a must form the foundation of any truly Islamic polity because "God's law" provides the only lasting remedies to the social, political, and economic ills that beset humanity; that these remedies are as relevant and effective today as they were during Islam's golden era centuries ago; and that therefore Muslims must avoid a piecemeal approach and adopt the corpus of shari'a law in its entirety. The logic is that what was good for Muslims then will be good for Muslims now and what made Islam preeminent once will make Islam preeminent again today. Islam, as fleshed out in meticulous detail in shari'a law, is valid "in every time and in every place" (as Muslims like to say). Implementation of shari'a, then, is the sine qua non of any Islamist reform effort, the key ingredient that will ensure successful realization of an Islamic sociopolitical order in the world.

But careful observation of Islamic experience reveals the following dilemma: while many Muslim reformers extol the virtues of shari'a and regard it as the sure means of their salvation, other Muslim and non-Muslim voices question the efficacy of shari'a in a modern setting and view it instead as a primary cause of the Muslims' "tormenting predicament." Those who see shari'a as a hindrance to reform and progress argue that changing times require adapting religious traditions and principles to fit new realities. They point out that shari'a legal rulings reflect solutions that were worked out in response to specific historical situations from the seventh to the ninth centuries and that these answers cannot be transplanted effectively to meet the needs of a modern, pluralistic, technology-based society. The way out of the contemporary Muslim predicament, they believe, is not to adopt the solutions worked out and codified as law by earlier Muslims in Medina or Damascus or Baghdad. Rather, it is to emulate the hermeneutical *methods* and spiritual *energy* of the earlier generations who developed creative solutions to the problems of their times based on independent inquiry and original analysis of the Qur'an. Freed from overdependence on historical and legal precedents, contemporary Muslims can formulate their own dynamic responses that both reflect the Divine Will as contained in the Qur'an and address the ever changing realities of modern life.

Two contemporary examples illustrate the doctrinal dissonance created in the absence of a unified central organization in Islam and the complexity of the polemic surrounding the shari'a's proper role in a religiously pluralistic society. The first example involves the issue of women's rights. While Muslims counter criticism that Islam demeans and subjugates women with assertions that it has, in fact, been a liberating force with

regard to women's rights, the signals from traditional Muslim authorities are frequently ambiguous and confusing.

Muslim apologetic literature vehemently denies that Islam condones female circumcision, a practice that predates Islam and is essentially unknown to most Muslims but is widely carried out in the Nile Valley (Egypt and Sudan) and some other African areas. The practice has been condemned by various international organizations as a brutal violation of a woman's human rights. And yet, as recently as 1996, lawmakers in Egypt, acting in accordance with shariʻa guidelines, passed a law to forbid the adoption of children but refused to include a clause banning female circumcision. Egyptian newspapers quoted the head of Al-Azhar University, the oldest and arguably the most influential religious institution in Sunni Islam, as saying that circumcising girls is "as much a duty for Muslims as prayer." However, the new rector of the university, who is also a leading shariʻa expert, is quoted as opposing female circumcision and stating that "it is not a religious duty but merely a tradition and therefore subject to the opinion of doctors, not clerics."[25] The picture became even more blurred when the new rector, less than a week later, reversed his position and opined that a "moderate circumcision" can be "useful" for girls: "By keeping this moderation in circumcision we avoid the ill effects that some people have called to be banned. . . . The truth is that circumcision is balanced, is a cleanliness useful for women and men."[26] This example, as well as other recent cases dealing with abortion, surrogate parenting, and honor killings,[27] highlights the ambiguity that often characterizes Islamic discourse on sociopolitical issues and begs answers to these questions: How does one decipher Islam's position on a given issue? Who truly has authority to speak in behalf of the Muslim community?

Another example reveals the inevitable clash between the modern principle of religious pluralism and the shariʻa law governing religious minorities. Islam has historically treated non-Muslim minorities with an admirable degree of tolerance. But while such tolerance represented a progressive policy for its time, the emergence of post-Enlightenment social and political ideologies in the West and the increasing interdependency of nations demand a new standard: religious pluralism. This implies not just tolerating the beliefs of religious minorities and allowing them to worship, while granting them secondary status in society, but a full acceptance of their right to practice and propagate their faiths freely, to express their religious views openly, and to enjoy equal rights of citizenship. Muslim apologists are quick to point out that Islam advocates the full range of human rights, including religious liberty, and in recent years, several individuals and organizations have issued publications outlining their Islamic vision of human rights.

But this literature uniformly avoids the difficult issue of shariʿa provisions that accord religious minorities respected but secondary status and that stipulate harsh penalties—including the death penalty—for Muslims who leave the faith or are declared apostates.[28] Islamic laws permitting conversion to Islam but forbidding Muslim conversion to other religions are incompatible with internationally recognized norms of religious liberty and present a major stumbling block in the umma's efforts to promote modernization and progress among Muslims. A recent study of human rights and religious freedom in Islam concluded:

> The Islamic human rights schemes . . . are mostly evasive on the question of protections for freedom of religion. . . . [This] indicates a lack of support for the idea that people should be free to follow the religion of their choice. . . . The failure of a single one of these Islamic human rights schemes to take a position against the application of the *shariʿa* death penalty for apostasy means that the authors of these schemes have neglected to confront and resolve the main issues involved in harmonizing international human rights and *shariʿa* standards.
>
> The lack of support for the principle of freedom of religion in the Islamic human rights schemes is one of the factors that most sharply distinguishes them from the International Bill of Human Rights, which treats freedom of religion as an unqualified right. The authors' unwillingness to repudiate the rule that a person should be executed over a question of religious belief reveals the enormous gap that exists between their mentalities and the modern philosophy of human rights.[29]

The literature on contemporary Islam treats many other examples that illustrate the difficulty of harmonizing shariʿa law with modern standards and practices and the challenge of carrying out shariʿa-based sociopolitical development, educational reform, and economic integration with the world community.

Is the shariʿa an engine or a brake in national development? Does it promote or hinder the Islamic world's progress? These questions lie at the heart of Muslim efforts to define their direction as a community, maintain unity, and regain their preeminent position on the world stage. The debate is intensely emotional and divisive because shariʿa has traditionally formed the heart of Muslim identity and the bedrock of Islamic orthodoxy. The dilemma of whether to accept a diminished role for shariʿa in society or to face the prospect of continued underdevelopment and alienation in the international arena is a painful one for Muslims.

So far, three general approaches to the role of shariʿa have emerged in the umma. First, liberal reformers like Mahmud Muhammad Taha of Sudan and Fazlur Rahman of Pakistan have advocated an approach that would forge a modern Islamic vision based on original reinterpretation of the Qurʾan rather than dependency on the historical legacy of shariʿa. But the idea of discounting the shariʿa tradition is unthinkable to most orthodox

Muslims; hence, the proposals of these liberal reformers have generally been branded as apostate blasphemies.

Second, a particularistic but pragmatic approach is evident in the legal codes of many Islamic countries. While the constitutions of most Muslim governments proclaim the nation an "Islamic state," the shari'a is only partially applied in the legal system, normally in matters of personal and family law (such as marriage, divorce, inheritance, and religious choice). While visiting the Islamic University in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, I was startled to hear Muslim religion professors dismiss the application of the whole of shari'a as a legal option in their ethnically pluralistic but Islamic nation. "It creates too much contention and disruption," they explained. The fact that so many Muslim governments employ shari'a piecemeal is telling evidence and a tacit acknowledgment that it is inadequate, as now constituted, to meet the broad and complex range of legal needs in modern governance.

Third, hard-line Islamist groups remain adamant in their insistence that implementation of shari'a in its entirety is mandatory in a true Islamic state and that it is the only way to achieve "Islamic progress"—modernization without Westernization. Many reject the argument that shari'a is incompatible with prevailing international norms, while others defiantly welcome the prospect of the international opprobrium and isolation that might result from the full application of shari'a.

The ability or inability of Muslims to deal effectively with these two issues—defining a more unified voice and vision and achieving some form of consensus on shari'a's role—will profoundly shape their spiritual course and vibrancy in the twenty-first century and beyond. Present rivalries and deep-rooted disagreements within the contemporary Muslim community on political, social, and economic issues do not bode well for a successful resolution of these tensions.

An important characteristic of Islam's inner structure, however, compensates for the lack of unified leadership and maintains the essential identity and solidarity of the umma. Without a central hierarchy to provide direction or an authoritative voice to determine orthodoxy, one might expect to find widespread differences not only on sociopolitical issues but in belief and practice among the diverse Muslim populations. Instead, one encounters a distinctive social ethos and extraordinary theological and liturgical uniformity among Muslims everywhere. This paradox is a testament to the power and efficacy of ritual in a religious community. For more than a thousand years, the Five Pillars and related religious observances have provided the spiritual mortar that holds the House of Islam together and engenders communal identity and purpose (fig. 3).

The Islamic experience presents a fascinating case study of the processes of ferment and evolution that all religions undergo as times and circumstances change. The daunting task for every religious community is

Courtesy Chad Emmett

Fɪɢ. 3. Palestinian Muslim men relaxing and chatting after prayer in front of al-Aqsa Mosque on Jerusalem's Haram al-Sharif. The egalitarian, communal aspects of Muslim life have been important factors in the expansion of Islam worldwide.

to find creative responses to newly emerging realities and challenges without destroying its spiritual moorings, energy, identity, and unity. This effort requires that all religions engage in self-examination and dialectical discourse in order to determine what is the essential, immutable core of the faith and what is peripheral and transitory; to ascertain those aspects of religion that can be, as Fazlur Rahman said, "modif[ied], emphasize[d], or deflate[d]" to suit new conditions; and to recognize when something is, as the Prophet Joseph Smith observed, "wrong under one circumstance . . . [but] right under another." This process of identifying and resolving dialectical tensions is distressing, but vital, in the life of all religious communities. And its outcome is crucial in determining the direction, vitality, and longevity of every religion that seeks to exert its spiritual influence across boundaries of time, space, culture, and language—in short, to become a world religion.

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1. Joseph Fielding Smith, comp., *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1972), 256.

2. Two excellent sources on the role of women in Islam from the perspective of Western scholarship are Leila Ahmed, *Women and Gender in Islam* (New Haven: Yale

University Press, 1992); and Donna Lee Bowen and Evelyn A. Early, eds., "Gender Relations," in *Everyday Life in the Muslim Middle East,* 2d ed. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001).

3. One widely viewed film, "Not without My Daughter," portrays Islamic family life as oppressive to women and Muslim men as brutal wife beaters. Muslims who have seen the film are outraged that the story, a true account of an American woman's experience in Iran, implies that violence against women is sanctioned in Islam and that Muslim husbands and fathers are tyrannical. They point out that one can find examples of spouse abuse in every religion and that it is inappropriate to judge the lives of an entire religious community based on the wrongdoings of a few misguided individuals.

4. All Qur'anic citations in this article are from Abdullah Yusuf 'Ali, ed. and trans., *The Holy Qur'an: English Translation of the Meanings and Commentary* (Medina, Saudi Arabia: The Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Fahd Complex for the Printing of the Holy Qur'an, 1413 hijri [1992/93 C.E.]).

5. See, for example, Muhammad Iqbal, *The Rights of Women in Islam,* trans. Aftab Ahmad (Montreal: Editions Islamiques d'Amerique, 1988), 21–52. Among the hadith concerning family life cited in this source are: "Treat [your wives] well and be kind to them for they are your partners and committed helpers" (26); "The best of you are those who are best to their wives" (27); "Helping wives (in their domestic work) earns (men) the reward of charity" (30). Other hadith imply that husbands and wives who are honorable and faithful to God and to each other will be together in paradise (32, 47).

6. "The need for modesty is the same in both men and women. But on account of the differentiation of the sexes in nature, temperaments, and social life, a greater amount of privacy is required for women than for men, especially in the matter of dress and the uncovering of the bosom." ('Ali, *Holy Qur'an: English Translation,* 1012 n. 2984.) Al-Jaza'iri cites a hadith that alludes to items proscribed for men but allowed for women: "The wearing of silk and gold are forbidden on the males of my nation, and they are lawful to their women." Cited by Abu Bakr Jaber Ben al-Jaza'iri, "In the Good Manners of the Dressing," in *Methodology of the Muslim,* trans. F. Amira Zrein Matraji (Medina: Adel Abu el Seoud al Haidan, [1996]; rev. by Mahmoud Matraji, n.d.), 175–78.

7. See, for example, Yusuf 'Ali's comments in *Holy Qur'an: English Translation,* 220 n. 547; Al-Jaza'iri's exegesis in *Methodology of the Muslim,* 127; and Maulana Abul A'ala Maudoodi, *The Laws of Marriage and Divorce in Islam,* 2d ed., trans. Fazl Ahmed (Safat, Kuwait: Islamic Book Publishers, 1993), 24–27.

8. The most commonly cited source for this position is a hadith that reports Muhammad's telling women to cover their bodies completely in public except for their faces and hands.

9. B. Aisha Lemu and Fatima Heeren, *Woman in Islam* (Aligarh, India: New Crescent Publishing, 1977), 23–24, 46.

10. Fathi Osman, *Muslim Women in the Family and the Society* (Los Angeles: Minaret Publications, Islamic Center of Southern California, n.d.), 37–38.

11. Elizabeth W. Fernea, "The Veiled Revolution," in *Everyday Life,* ed. Bowen and Early, selected statements from pages 119–22.

12. Fernea, "Veiled Revolution," 121.

13. Ali E. Hillal Dessouki, "The Islamic Resurgence: Sources, Dynamics, and Implications," in Ali E. Hillal Dessouki, ed., *Islamic Resurgence in the Arab World* (New York: Praeger, 1982), 3.

14. The term *Islamic Fundamentalism* is generally shunned by scholars of Islam because it is too imprecise and laden with negative connotations to describe adequately the complexity of Muslim reform movements. The more acceptable phrase, at least for the time being, is *Islamist Movement,* and those Muslims actively involved in the

movement are Islamists. See Bruce B. Lawrence, "Muslim Fundamentalist Movements: Reflections toward a New Approach," in Barbara Freyer Stowasser, ed., *The Islamic Impulse* (London: Croom Helm, 1987), 15–36.

15. For example, Richard P. Mitchell, "The Islamic Movement: Its Current Condition and Future Prospects," in Stowasser, *Islamic Impulse,* 75–86, argues against Fouad Ajami's and Daniel Pipes's assertion that the Islamic Resurgence is a product of the 1973 oil embargo and Saudi Arabia's rise to world prominence. See also Nemat Guenena, *The "Jihad": An "Islamic Alternative" in Egypt* (Cairo: American University Press, 1986), 17–24.

16. Statement by the founding committee of the Muslim Brethren, one of the most influential groups in the Islamist Movement. Quoted in their official newspaper, *Al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun,* May 7, 1946.

17. Qur'an 2:256; 3:64; and 29:46. Quoted in Assad Nimer Busool, *Islamic Fundamentalism?* (Chicago: American Islamic Educational Foundation, 1993), 4, 18.

18. S. Waqar Ahmad, "Terrorist Bombing Contradicts Islam," *Daily Universe,* March 16, 1993, 4.

19. See Khalil Hanwave and K. S. Ramkumar, "Call for Dialogue at Jeddah Forum," *Arab News,* January 20, 2002, http://www.arabnews.com/Article.asp?ID=12151. See also "Dean of Shari'a and Law at Qatar University in Support of the U.S., the War on Terror, and Curricular Reform," dispatches 337, 338, The Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI), Washington, D.C. (memri@memri.org).

20. Edward P. Djererian, "United States Policy toward Islam and the Arc of Crisis," *Baker Institute Study,* no. 1 (Houston: James A. Baker III Institute for Public Policy at Rice University, 1995), 2, 4.

21. Anwar Ibrahim, "The Need for Civilizational Dialogue," Occasional Paper Series (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding, 1995).

22. Fazlur Rahman, *Islam,* 2d ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), 237, 249.

23. Averroës, *Decisive Treatise and Epistle Dedicatory*, trans. Charles Butterworth (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 2001), 29–32, "On the emergence of factions within Islam."

24. Fazlur Rahman, *Islam and Modernity: Transformation of an Intellectual Tradition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 137.

25. The two sheikhs of Al-Azhar cited here are, respectively, Gad Al-Haq Ali Gad Al-Haq and his replacement, Muhammad Sayed Tantawi. See "Egypt Bans Adoption but Not Female Circumcision," *Jordan Times,* April 4–5, 1996.

26. "Partial Circumcision Can Be 'Useful'—Tantawi," *Jordan Times,* April 10, 1996, 7.

27. For further examples and exploration of these issues, see "Al-Azhar Scholars Deny Desperate Couple Chance to Start Family," *Egyptian Mail,* April 21, 2001, 9; Abul Fadl Mohsin Ebrahim, *Abortion, Birth Control, and Surrogate Parenting: An Islamic Perspective* ([Indianapolis]: American Trust Publications, 1991); Donna Lee Bowen, "Abortion, Islam, and the 1994 Cairo Population Conference," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 29 (May 1997): 161–84; Yotam Feldner, "'Honor' Murders—Why the Perps Get off Easy," *Middle East Quarterly* 7 (December 2000): 41–50.

28. The hadith are the main source of this shari'a doctrine: "The blood of a Muslim may not be legally spilt other than in one of three [instances]: the married person who commits adultery; a life for a life; and one who forsakes his religion and abandons the community." *Al-Arba'in al-Nawawiyya* (Nawawi's forty hadith), 4th ed. (Beirut: The Holy Koran Publishing House, 1979), 58.

29. Ann Elizabeth Mayer, *Islam and Human Rights: Tradition and Politics,* 2d ed. (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1995), 160.