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Muslim Civil Society in Urban Public Spaces: Globalization, Discursive Shifts, and Social Movements

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> Cities are processes, not products. The three Islamic elements that set in motion the processes that give rise to Islamic cities were: a distinction between the members of the Umma and the outsiders, which led to juridical and spatial distinction by neighborhoods; the segregation of the sexes which gave rise to a particular solution to the question of spatial organization; and a legal system which, rather than imposing general regulations over land uses of various types in various places, left to the litigation of the neighbors the detailed adjudication of mutual rights over space and use. (Janet Abu Lughod 1987: 173)

Framing: Muslim Movements in Urban Situations

We live in an intellectual moment when the complexity of the global Islamic revival renders it difficult to generalize about Muslim institutions, social movements, and discursive practices. While diversity and locality remain paramount features of Muslim cities, globalization has inadvertently nurtured transnational Muslim networks from the homeland of Islam and extended them into the web of interconnected world cities. Quite opportunistically, urban-based Muslim networks and insurrectionist movements now thrive in the interstitial spaces created by the new global communication and transportation infrastructures. What, then, are the long-term patterns for Muslims in cities?

Since the last millennium, as Janet Abu-Lughod reminds us, "the Islamic city" has been the primary site for: defining power relations between ruler and subject, specifying the rights and identities of spatial communities, and regulating urban social relations between genders. Today's Muslim city remains the epicenter of a burgeoning public sphere in which informed publics debate highly contested Islamic discourses regarding social justice,

Table 14.1 Population trends of major Muslim cities (population in millions)

	Algeria	*Egypt*	*Indonesia*	*Iran*	*Jordan*	*Malaysia*	*Morocco*	*Nigeria*	*Pakistan*	*Syria*
Country 1997	29.4	64.7	203.4	64.6	6.1	21.0	26.9	103.9	144.0	14.9
Largest city	Algiers	Cairo	Jakarta	Tehran	Amman	Kuala Lumpur	Casablanca	Lagos	Karachi	Damascus
Population 1995[a]	3.7	9.7	8.6	6.8	1.2	1.2	3.1	10.3	9.7	2.0
Trend. % urban										
1975	40.3	43.5	19.4	45.8	55.3	37.7	37.7	23.4	26.4	45.1
1980[b]	43.0	44.0	22.0	50.0	60.0	42.0	41.0	27.0	28.0	47.0
1997[b]	57.0	45.0	37.0	60.0	73.0	55.0	53.0	41.0	35.0	53.0
2015	67.5	53.5	52.4	68.8	79.8	66.2	64.3	55.4	46.7	62.1

[a] Source is the United Nations website.
[b] Source is the World Bank, Development Report 199912000.
Source Data from the United Nations, Human Development Rood 1999, unless otherwise noted.

urban public space, legitimate government, political action, and gender relations (Eickelman and Anderson 1999). Muslim urban civil society is dense, diverse, and ubiquitous, encompassing Muslim-inspired charitable organizations, professional groups, insurrectional activists, and cultural associations involving members of all social classes (Norton 1995; Sullivan and Abed Kotob 1999). The Muslim city, therefore, creates the ambience in which Muslim discourses and civil society groups coalesce to launch a diverse stream of urban social movements divided by tactic and strategy but united in their opposition to what they view as an illegitimate and failed postcolonial political order.

Just how urbanized Muslims are becoming is affirmed in table 14.1. By 2015, at least half and up to two-thirds of the populations of Muslim majority states will be living in cities with polarized income distributions and miserable living conditions (UNDP 1999). Although increasingly integrated into a Western-dominated urban network, these urban centers stretch across a contiguous, geographical cultural zone — Islamdom — in which most states have Muslim majorities or very large minorities (Hodgson 1974). This growing diamond-shaped zone, which Gellner calls the "Qur'an Belt," stretches from Morocco to Indonesia on the east-west axis and from Kazakhstan to Tanzania on the north-south axis. Herein live the overwhelming majority of the 1.2 billion estimated Muslims, the majority of whom reside in South and Southeast Asia, i.e., at least 650 million.

Urban Structural Processes, Discourses, and Movements

Our objective is to historicize and analyze the meaning and consequences of the unexpected shift from secular national to Islamic discourses, civil society groups, and social movements in Muslim-majority cities since the 1970s. We focus on *Islamism* and *Islamists* as distinguished from the broader and less politicized term, *Islamic*; Islamist refers to the modern, Western-educated, and highly urbanized groups rather than on traditional scholars, the ulama, or mystical brotherhoods, i.e., Sufi orders (tariqa). In brief, Islamism or political Islam is a modern, male-dominated political movement seeking to reinstitutionalize its conception of Islamic laws (Sharia), institutions (zakat or tithe), and other imagined practices of the first Muslim communities living under the authority of the Prophet and the four successor Caliphs (Esposito 1992; Guazzone 1995). Not unlike sixteenth-century Protestantism and like any other modernist, urban movement, Islamist strategies can be differentiated along a tactical spectrum: armed insurrection (Afghanistan, Algeria, Acheh, and Israel-Palestine), building a parallel civil society (everywhere), popular demonstrations (Nigeria, Morocco, and Iran), or the voting booth (Malaysia, Indonesia, Turkey, Egypt, and Jordan). Among insurrectionary Islamists, Osama bin Laden's network al-Qaida is noteworthy because it recruits from many nationalities, speaks to a universal Muslim nationalism, and innovates by using the infrastructures of global capitalism to launch its terrorist attacks.

Our central argument is that Islamism is a modern urban movement empowered by a profound discursive shift involving virtually all social classes, genders, and status groups. Ironically strongest in cities most integrated into the global system, the energy driving Islamism is concentrated among educated urban youth caught in the miasmic web of multiple postcolonial crises. Islamism is a palpable force manifested everywhere in urban space: cultural and media productions, daily consumption, urban civil society groups, educational institutions, and social movements. Viewed from the micro-level perspective of urban neighborhoods, Islamism creates a diverse network of civil society groups delivering goods and services, each sharing an appealing cultural narrative claiming "authenticity," yet one that corresponds to the meaningful everyday life discursive practices of Muslim urban communities (Denoeux. 1993; Lubeck 1998). As Burke (1998) shows, this change constitutes a truly global discursive shift in popular consciousness from a secular nationalist to an Islamic narrative. Islamism operates at multiple levels: it simultaneously envisions itself as a force for the revival of global Islamic unity, a movement to reform the territorially defined national state, a global insurrectionary movement, and a creator of a moral economy in urban neighborhoods.

At a moment when the postcolonial national state has lost innumerable sovereign powers to US-driven, neoliberal global restructuring, Islamism has seized the popular imagination by seizing from incumbent authorities the most important ideological resource possessed by the postcolonial state: that is, the power to define the meaning of anti-imperialist, populist nationalism for subjects living in most Muslim-majority states (Lubeck 2000). Due to the decline of rival alternative visions, Islamism has emerged as the most powerful anti-systemic political force opposing Western-led globalization especially since the collapse of the Soviet model (1989). Like its predecessor, "Third Worldist," anti-imperialist Marxism, Islamist movements practice open recruitment and universalist appeals to the excluded and oppressed, both Muslim and non-Muslim, whom they target as potential converts. Like Marxism, Islamism is divided tactically into violent insurrectionists and nonviolent gradualists. Many observers, appalled by the barbarity of the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the American embassies in East Africa, label the insurrectionist faction as "fascist." However, this is a misleading analogy from Western history for, unlike fascism, Islamist insurrectionists like al-Qaida do not base their appeal on exclusive nationalism, racial superiority, or the mystique of charismatic leaders. Rather, they appeal to all Muslims in the world who feel excluded from the benefits of the neoliberal world economy and oppressed by Western political hegemony. Indeed, while sharing authoritarianism, the insurrectionist Islamist call to arms is much more universalistic; for they practice open multiracial recruitment, advocate governance based upon their interpretation of Islamic law, and, most importantly,

declare themselves to be a *vanguard* representing the interests of a transnational Muslim nation (umma). Accordingly, because of their ideology of universalism and internationalism as well as their disciplined organizational structure, insurrectionist Islamists are actually much closer to extreme terrorist sects of the Leninist variety than to Western fascism.

Organizationally in order to explain the discursive shift toward urban Islamism, we briefly review the significance of structural factors – the petroleum boom-bust cycle and the crisis of the postcolonial state – and then evaluate the "demonstration effect" exerted by the Iranian Revolution on urban popular consciousness. Then we dissect Islamism as discourse, civil society group, and social movement in the Egyptian case in comparative perspective. And finally, we conclude with an explanation of the contradictory positions expressed by women representing themselves in urban public space and the novel discursive practices of Muslim feminist groups.

Global Restructuring: Petrodollars and the Rise of Neoliberal Regulation

Because nine of fourteen original OPEC states were Muslim-majority states, the relative equilibrium associated with secular nationalism and state regulation of economy and society fractured considerably during the petroleum boom. Rather than reviving national economic autonomy, however, the petroleum boom of 1973-4 proved to be the last gasp of state-centered economic development and the midwife of greater regulation by global markets and multilateral institutions, i.e., the International Monetary Fund JMF) and the World Bank (Lipietz 1987).

Three major structural changes occurred as a result of the petroleum boom-bust cycle. First, the boom created an autonomous, corrupt, rentier state elite distributing contracts among clients without an accompanying disciplined social structure of accumulation. State elites invested in noncompetitive construction projects and state capitalist industries (refineries, steel, autos, agro-schemes), allowed inflation and inequality to destroy the preexisting urban moral economy, and, most importantly, disrupted the structure of rural food and labor markets, thus encouraging rural to urban migration in response to the urban construction boom (Richards 1987).

Second, the petro-boom shifted vast financial resources to the Saudi and Gulf states, thereby exposing immigrant labor to conservative and insurrectionist (Wahabbi-Hanabali) doctrines. In turn, the Gulf states funded a global network of Islamic associations, schools, charities, and mosques, all occurring at the expense of the more populated and poorer secular states. Al-Azmeh, speaking for Muslim modernists, asserts that "Petro-Islam...has broken the secularist and nationalist cultural, mediatic and, to a lesser extent, the educational monopoly of the modern Arab state" (1993: 32).

Third, with the collapse of oil prices from a high of $41 /barrel in 1981 to less than $8/barrel in 1986, the swollen cities of Islamdom, increasingly filled with new immigrants and recent graduates, descended into the austerity phase of the petro-bust (Lubeck 1998). Global neoliberalism forced states to implement structural adjustment policies, i.e., devaluation, privatization of industry, lowering deficits, eliminating subsidies for basic needs, and state withdrawal, all of which increased urban inequality and unemployment among graduates (UNDP 1999).

The Legitimacy Crisis of the Postcolonial Secular State

To be sure, the petro-boom–bust cycle and global restructuring undermined the legitimacy of the secular nationalist state even before the Iranian Revolution made Islamism a viable political option. Historically, ever since the rise of Ataturk's Turkey, Pahlavi's Iran, and Nasser's Egypt, the secular ethnonationalist project spread very shallow roots in Muslim civil society Indeed, secular nationalism never originated from below: it was almost always a top-down, authoritarian project articulated from above by national, mostly military, elites who assumed control over the authoritarian colonial state apparatus. For military, intellectual, and bureaucratic elites, therefore, the state was an instrument to transform society in the direction of a given Western model of modernity. Interestingly, Muslim royalist regimes (Gulf states, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Morocco) in addition to Pakistan are exceptions, oftentimes adjusting more readily to the Islamist discursive shift.

The combined effect of disasters like the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, the generalized stagnation of the development model, and state implementation of neoliberal structural adjustment programs (SAPs) destroyed the social contract between state elites and urban dwellers. Liberalization and austerity reduced state subsidies to the most vulnerable populations and diminished employment opportunities in state industries and bureaucracies for graduates. Not only do SAPs violate Muslim prohibitions against paying interest on debt as well as the obligation for Muslim states to distribute alms or subsidies to the poor (zakat); the transparently foreign management of the SAPs rapidly evaporated any residual fig leaf of legitimacy possessed by secular political elites.

All forces funneled social tension toward cities. The crisis severely impacted the students and graduates of state-sponsored, Western-origin universities, not the traditional Muslim *medersa* training traditional scholars for the ulama. Economic stagnation, widespread corruption, and bureaucratic incompetence dashed the mobility and security aspirations of secondary schools and universities. Hence they constitute a "lumpen intelligentsia" poised for recruitment (Roy 1994). Others paint a grim picture of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. MENA is second only to Africa in rates of population

growth; the region's population is expected to double in twenty-seven years, most are less than twenty years old; and Islam and fertility are positively correlated universally (Richards and Waterbury 1996: 80-5). Typically, state educational budgets are biased toward tertiary and secondary education geared to the state employment of males for jobs that no longer exist. These policies generate a steady stream of recruits – from the countryside, informal economy, and educational institutions – readily absorbed into a network of urban Islamist movements and civil society groups (Sullivan 1994; Wickham 1997).

Discursive Shift: The Iranian Revolution as "Demonstration Effect"

Despite their universality, structural factors alone fail to explain the tectonic discursive shift toward Islamism in the popular consciousness of Muslims living in cities. The pivotal event was the Iranian Revolution (1978-9) and its successful institutionalization as the Islamic Republic of Iran. Clearly, a classic urban insurrection directed against a corrupt, secular authoritarian regime the revolution depended upon a multi-class coalition of nationalist, Marxist, and Muslim groups led by the charismatic Khomeini, with Shi'ite clergy acting as a disciplined corporate group. Most importantly, advances in global (Western) communication media televised the revolution to millions of Muslims living outside of Iran. Later, as structural adjustment penetrated Muslim cities, the Iranian Revolution demonstrated to the excluded generations facing austerity and misery that the Islamist alternative was a rational, feasible, alternative political project. Not only did the revolution exert a "demonstration effect" on urban Muslim activists, it thoroughly transformed the global Muslim community's vision of what was politically possible to imagine, just as globalization and structural adjustment were emasculating postcolonial state. Zubaida captures its impact well: "For some...Islam in its political and progressive form is more accessible to the people springing as it does from their historical cultural roots...acquir[ing] many recruits, a respectability and viability...firmly established in the mainstream" (1989; 40). For urban activists who failed to apply Western models of social transformation, the revolution constituted a unique rupture with the past. For unlike other movements, revolutionary Iran survived the onslaughts of powerful antagonists: isolation and destabilization by the United States, Saudi-funded efforts to delegitimize the revolution as an Islamic discourse, and the Iraqi invasion.

We ignore for space reasons questions whether the role of "Twelver" Shi'ite doctrines, clerical institutions, and Khomeini's concept of "rule byjurists" are uniquely Iranian or partially applicable to Sunni urban contexts. To summarize what is applicable: the revolution mobilized formerly excluded groups such as women and recent urban migrants into a mass-based movement that organized demonstrations in cities like Tehran whose population increased from 3 to 9 million between 1970 and 1990 (Roy 1994: 53). Urban civil society and the public sphere mushroomed as new committees, foundations, civil associations, and publications extended into all aspects of urban life. Constitutional innovation created an Islamic Republic with universal suffrage for women who, once mobilized by the revolution, soon demanded equal access to education, work, political office, and gender rights such as a prenuptial contract excluding polygamy and even wages for housework when divorced (Hoodfar 1998). Indeed, Khomeini reinforced the Islamist demand for reinterpretation (*ijtihad*). His final statement (1988) asserted the principle of revolutionary necessity: "the Islamic state had absolute power...to adopt such measures as it deemed necessary for the interests of the Islamic state even when these might conflict with Islamic law or a fundamental religious obligation like the pilgrimage to Mecca" (Mayer 1993: 120). Many of these discursive innovations have diffused into Shi'ite communities like Lebanon and even into the Sunni mainstream.

Islamic Reform: The Origins of Modern Islamist Urban Movements

Historians have traced Islamic reform (*islah*) to seventeenth-century reactions to imperialism and Hindu-Muslim syncretism. By the eighteenth century, Wahabbism, a radical, puritanical doctrine opposing rational reinterpretation of the Sharia as well as Sufi brotherhoods, unified Arabia under the Saudi family. In the twentieth century the latter used petroleum revenues, their control over pilgrimage sites (1924-5), and patronage of Muslim pilgrimscholars to spread a Wahabbi ulama vision of Islamic reform (Lapidus 1988). Alarmed by the technical and organizational power of the European colonial state, modernist urban intellectuals tried to theorize a modern Islamic state capable of reviving or replacing the Caliphate. Islamic modernists — Al-Afgani, Mohammed Abduh, and Rashid Rida — called for returning to "original" Islam (*salaf*), reviving *ijtihad*, and embracing Islam's historical expertise in science, technology, and reason, while denouncing the ulama's passive imitation of the Islamic canon, the corruption of Sufi magical practices, and the collaboration of Muslim rulers with colonialism. Intellectually and practically, however, they failed to realize their project. For, despite considerable influence among the urban intelligentsia, Islamic modernists remained intellectuals, never developing a modern organizational structure capable of mobilizing Muslim civil society toward an Islamist project.

The necessary discursive shift to a modern, civil society-based, urban organization occurred in 1928 when Hasan al-Banna, an Egyptian elementary schoolteacher, practicing Sufi, and devoted reader of Rashid Rida's newspaper, *al-Manar*, founded the Muslim Brotherhood. Beginning as an association for Islamic reform, serving workers in the British-controlled Suez Canal Zone, and

soon Cairo (1934), the Brotherhood emerged as the first modern organized, mass-based, multifunctional Islamist organization to speak to the needs of the new urban classes now sprouting in colonial cities. Al-Banna's program proposed: a "return" to purified, Islamic principles and practices, the rejection of the corrupting influence of Western culture, recognizing Islam as a comprehensive way of life for modern urbanites, and, for the first time, a strategy for seizing political power so as to establish a modern Islamic state as an alternative to the then dominant liberal, secular nationalist movement (Abu-Rabi' 1996).

What, then, explains the success of al-Banna's Muslim Brotherhood in Muslim cities? Most important was its modernity: innovative recruitment and membership registration strategies, disciplined organizational techniques, and comprehensive social services for new migrant workers flooding into Egyptian cities. Initially, however, al-Banna required Brotherhood members to follow ritual practices derived from Sufi orders (tariqa) such as swearing an oath, regular devotional exercises, and daily recitations from the Qur'an (Voll 1991). In global terms, while demanding an Islamic state, the Brotherhood vision is pan-Islamic and internationalist, currently claiming branches in over seventy countries (www.ummah.org/ikhwan). With branches in Syria, Sudan Jordan, and the Maghreb, the Brotherhood also benefited from funding from the Saudi and Gulf states during the petro-boom. Their objective is the Islamization of civil society: schools, mosques, clubs, associations, and social welfare services for those employed as laborers, clerks, and professionals ii the Western-oriented, modern urban sector. Ramadan summarizes the organizational shift of Islamic activism:

> The Brotherhood shifted the responsibility for establishing Islamic government from the religiously educated class to the Western incultured class, from the shaykhs to the lawyers, doctors, engineers, pharmacists and army and police officers...link[ing] pan-Islamic Egypt before World War I to nationalist Egypt after the war, just as it linked religion to modern science. (1993: 155)

Organizationally similar to communist and fascist mass movement 1930s, the Brotherhood instituted a modern, bureaucratically disciplined organizational apparatus into Muslim cities, one led by a Supreme Guide, with membership lists, specialized departments, secret units, modern media, and local branches. The original organization had four types of members: "assistant member, affiliated member, working member and *mujahid*, or combatant member" (Auda 1994: 381). At times quasi-military athletic training and a secret militia were used to pursue objectives. At the local level, cell structures consisted of five and later ten members, bound by personal ties and an elected chief who represented the cell at branch meetings (Mitchell 1969; Denoeux 1993). Mitchell estimated that the Egyptian Brotherhood had 500 branches and 500,000 members by 1949. Banned a year earlier for threatening the state and later for assassinating the Egyptian Prime Minister, the organization went underground yet it supported Nasser and the Free Officers' coup against the monarchy until it became disillusioned with his state socialist policies and his refusal to establish an Islamic state. The Brotherhood then split into radical and moderate factions. After surviving Nasser's suppression, the moderate branch eventually consolidated itself as a middle-class movement committed to gradualism and nonviolence.

Radical Islamist Discourses: Sayyid Qutb as Insurrectionary Theorist

Most Islamists pursue moderate, gradualist, and noninsurrectionary strategies. Sayyid Qutb (1906-66), however, became the theoretician of the radical, insurrectionist, zealous tendency in Islamism. Born in Assiut, southern Egypt, to a prosperous family and educated in Cairo, he worked as an inspector of education. In 1949, courtesy of American aid, he received a scholarship to study in Washington and California. Alienated by America's liberalism, alliance with Israel, and racism toward Arabs, upon his return to Egypt he joined the Brotherhood, acting as a publicist and militant activist. Imprisoned for conspiracy and tortured several times, Qutb was executed for treason in 1966, but not before making his case for an uncompromising Islamic state at his trial (Haddad 1983). Qutb was prolific. His writings include a thirty-volume commentary on the Qur'an, written in a clear, didactic style making it popular among Islamists, the Nation of Islam, and even the revolutionary Iranian students (Haddad 1983: 68). The canonical text of insurrectionary Islamism, *Milestones*, was written while he was being tortured prior to his execution.

Qutb's theoretical arguments mark a radical rupture with the Brotherhood's mainstream Islamist ideas. Because he inspires and justifies vanguardist, insurrectionist movements committed to overthrowing states ruled by practicing Muslims, Qutb is to Islamism what Lenin was for Marxism. To summarize: synthesizing ideas ranging from medievalist Ibn Taymiyya and the Pakistani Islamist Maududi, Qutb defined the contemporary situation as equivalent to the pre-Islamic condition of *jahiliyya*, a state of ignorance similar to Hobbes's "state of nature," the same social conditions that forced Mohammed to withdraw to Medina (Abu-Rabi' 1996). Therefore, merely observing the five pillars of Islam is insufficient if a Muslim cooperates with existing authorities; rather, only an uncompromising implementation of the absolute authority of God (*hakimiyya*) as defined in the Sharia allows one to be defined as an observant Muslim. Hence, true Muslims are obligated to practice holy flight (hijrah) by withdrawing with the "elect" from corrupted Muslims who do not heed the call (da'wa). Corrupted Muslims are branded as atheists or apostates (kafir), thus subject to suppression and holy war (jihad) and, most important for Qutb, "a vanguard must resolve to set it in motion" (Voll 1991: 371). According to Qutb:

> This religion is a universal declaration of human liberation on earth from the bondage to other men or to human desires.... To declare God's sovereignty means: the comprehensive revolution against human governance in all its perceptions, forms, systems and conditions.... Jihad works to realize the idea of universal revolution not aimed at rule, control or booty. (Haddad, quoting Qutb, 1983: 82-3)

Islam, moreover, is universal and global, not limited to the Arab man. "Its object is the world, the whole world.... Whenever there is oppression, Islam is commissioned to eradicate it, to combat it, whether this oppression is against Muslims, against protected peoples or others with whom Muslims have no treaties" (Haddad 1983: 82-3).

It is easy to see how Qutb's torture, martyrdom, and call for global liberation provide the canonical discourse for urban insurrectionist sects defining themselves as revolutionary vanguards struggling against the inequality and misery engulfing the Muslim cities. A legion of secretive, insurrectionist groups, organized into cells like their Leninist counterparts, have drawn inspiration from Qutb's writings. Islamic Jihad assassinated Sadat; Al-juma'a al-Islamiyya wages war against tourists while its leader, al-Rahman, was convicted of the World Trade Center bombing. Other groups such as Takfir wa Hijra, Islamic Jihad, and the Armed Islamic Group wage insurrections in Egypt, Afghanistan, Algeria, and Israel-Palestine, respectively (Esposito 1992; Ramadan 1993; Sullivan and Abed-Kotob 1999). Bin Laden's global network draws upon the successors to Qutb. Operating from Afghanistan, insurrectionist groups are trained and funded for operations against Western interest such as the American embassies in Kenya and Tanzania and the destroyer *Cole*.

Clearly modernist in organization and strategy, both moderate and insurrectionary Islamist groups have adopted organizational forms and borrowed mobilizing concepts like vanguardism, human liberation, anti-imperialism and urban revolution from the Marxist playbook. Studies now confirm the Marxist background of many of the leading Islamists. For instance, a survey of Hamas activists in Gaza found that 60 percent acknowledge prior membership in Marxist organizations (Eickelman 1997: 34). Burgat and Dowell's study of Islamists in North Africa records their former memberships and dialogue with the left: "part of the secular intelligencia has already begun to reposition itself in a way that brings it much closer to the cultural preoccupations of the Islamist approach" (1993: 83). Willis notes Ben Bella's shift from a socialist ally of the Communist Party to an enthusiastic supporter of the Iranian Revolution and the Algerian Islamists (1996: 90). And finally, Roy is more explicit: Islamists "received their political education not in religious schools but on colleges and universities' campuses where they rubbed shoulders with militant Marxists whose concepts they borrowed...and injected with Quranic terminology" (1994: 3).

Urban Egypt: A Case Study of Islamism within Civil Society

Nowhere is the discursive shift from secular nationalism to one or another iteration of the Islamic narrative more complete or more ubiquitous than among the cities of Egypt. Ubiquity, however, comes at the cost of discursive coherence. Fragmentation of authority generates: a multitude of small, violent takfir sects, the "normalization" of the Muslim Brotherhood within the urban middle classes, a new alliance between the authoritarian state and the ulama-based Islamic establishment, and, of course, the efflorescence of informal Muslim associations, mosques, clubs, charities, study groups, and social services (Sullivan 1994). By the end of the 1990s, the discursive practices expressed in the urban public sphere were overwhelmingly Islamic, including those sponsored by state ministries and their clients from the traditional ulama. Parliamentary politics changed further in 2000. Despite persecution, intimidation, denial of legal status, and widespread vote fraud, the Muslim Brotherhood won seventeen seats as independent candidates, thus constituting the largest bloc of opposition members in parliament (Howeidy 2000).

Nasser's premature death in 1970 marked the apogee of Egypt's state-centered development, ended populist redistribution policies, and, effectively, terminated the secular, Arab nationalist developmental project. Sadat (1970-81) adjusted to global restructuring, economic stagnation, and declining popular legitimacy in contradictory ways: by repositioning Egypt as an ally of the United States, by negotiating a peace treaty with Israel, by cautiously liberalizing the economy (*infitah*), by suppressing the Nasserites and leftists, and, most importantly, by allying his regime with the conservative ulama at Al-Azhar University as well as the Saudis. Symbolized by the slogans "Science and Faith" and the "Believer President," he also released from prison the leadership of radical Islamist takfir groups and the Muslim Brotherhood. By the time of his assassination by a takfir group in 1981, Sadat was pressed to juggle contradictory foreign policies while balancing the conflicting demands of domestic groups.

Despite liberalization, structural adjustment, and an opening to new capitalist classes, the state remained bloated, inefficient, and authoritarian. "Public expenditure as a percentage of GNP climbed...from 34.4 percent in 1975 to 43 percent in 1984" (Richards 1991; Springborg 1992, cited in Zubaida 1997). Nor, sadly, did Sadat mitigate Egypt's egregious record of human rights abuses. Egypt under Sadat and Mubarak is an unreconstructed, authoritarian state ruled by emergency laws that permit the banning of any association, detention without trial, widespread torture, and "disappearances" of suspects without any accountability whatsoever (Human Rights Watch, http://www.hrw.org/press/2000/egypt). The 1994 torturing to death of Abdel Harith Madani, a lawyer for the Egyptian

Organization for Human Rights, by state security has been documented by Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and the US embassy (Weaver 1999: 150-2). Finally, rising income inequality, new forms of ostentatious consumption among the privileged, and a burgeoning foreign tourist industry fostered new social cleavages, increased cultural tension, and raised popular resentment toward the beneficiaries of liberalization (Weaver 1995).

Education Policy, Urban Networks, and Civil Society

Let us turn to explaining the structural source of Egypt's flourishing Muslim civil societies and urban social movements. According to Richards and Waterbury (1996), a principal cause is the oversupply of graduates – secondary, post-secondary, and university – relative to the demand for their skills. Between 1970 and 1991, secondary school enrollments more than doubled from 35 percent to 80 percent (1996: 124), averaging 14 percent annual increases between 1971 and 1984. Since the era of Nasser, graduates, usually as a last resort, expected to be absorbed into the poorly paid, stagnant state sector, i.e., between 1976 and 1986, 90 percent of new jobs came from either the government or from emigration abroad (1996: 119). The class and gender bias of educational expenditure also plays a role. In a society where roughly half of the population is illiterate, i.e., 60 percent of the women and 34 percent of the men (1997), Egypt's thirteen universities consumed 38 percent of the education budget in 1984-5. Thus university enrollments roughly doubled between 1971 and 1976 and increased another 50 percent by 1984 to over 660,000 students. Not surprisingly, pay, morale, and working conditions are very low in the educational sector, especially if compared to Saudi Arabia, where Egyptian teachers make ten times an Egyptian salary (1996: 121). Finally, decades of populist educational policy and austerity budgets diminished the standard of graduates so that few have skills demanded by the emerging private sector.

Public Education: Incubator of the Discursive Shift to Islamism

Ironically, a key factor explaining the discursive shift to Islamism originated in the state's tolerance for the Muslim Brotherhood and its Islamization of educational policy. Sadat and later Mubarak shifted toward supporting Al-Azhar and the Ministry of Religious Endowments, thus Islarnizing policies affecting women's rights, family law, education, and culture (Ramadan 1993; Auda 1994). Initially, in order to undermine the left and Nasserites, Sadat pursued a "divide and rule" policy by sponsoring Islamist groups in the universities and supporting the publications (i.e. *Al-Da'wa, Al-I'tisam*) of the Brotherhood. Note that the Egyptian constitution was amended to require religious education in schools as well as declaring that "Islam is the religion of the state" and that "Sharia was the main source of legislation" (Esposito 1992: 96). According to Starrett, new educational initiatives pumped resources into Al-Azhar's primary school network, increasing enrollment by 70 percent between 1976/7 and 1980/8 (1998: 80-1) and by 125 percent under Mubarak (1998: 105). When structural adjustment policies triggered a food riot in 1977 spearheaded by Islamist groups, Sadat not only retreated from cutting food subsidies but called for greater Islamic educational content and more authority for Al-Azhar and the Ministry of Religious Endowments.

Observe the discursive shift. By 1992 Mubarak's political party the National Democratic Party, feeling the heat from the Brotherhood's criticism of Egypt's support of the Americans in the Gulf war, declared that "Egypt was not a secular state but an Islamic one." According to Auda, by "[e]xploiting the Ikhwan's strategy, the state began to color its official state ideology with Islamic terminology and pose as the representative of the correct understanding of the Islamic religion" (1994: 394). Alarmed by the rising power of Islamist-controlled civil society located in a network of independent mosques, Muslim Brotherhood media and missionary societies, the Mubarak government created the Higher Committee for Islamic Da'wa under the grand shaykh of Al-Azhar. To counter the Islamist hold on da'wa, the Ministry of Religious Endowments launched "da'wa" caravans to dialogue with youths at local mosques. Seventy-two caravans were reported by the end of 1988 (Auda 1994: 390).

In a crude effort to silence the independent voice of Muslim civil society, the Ministry attempted to license independent mosques by incorporating salaried imams (prayer leaders) and seeking to dictate the content of their Friday sermons. Besides abusing a longstanding Muslim urban spatial practice regarding community control of neighborhood mosques, the Ministry strategy violated a widely held norm of Muslim civil society that the imam of a neighborhood mosque remain sufficiently independent of the state so as to guide the moral life of the community. Wickham (1997) reports that this policy failed because of the uncanny ability of Islamist activists to obtain licenses for prayer rooms from municipal authorities, even receiving the cooperation of minor religious officials from the Ministry. The fiscal crisis of the state plays a role here, too, for the Ministry administered only 30,000 of Egypt's 170,000 mosques in 1993. Hence, the Ministry cannot afford to pay, or probably recruit, enough compliant religious officials. Indeed, the government already suffered from a shortage of 40,000 imams since Al-Azhar only graduated "5,000...in 1992 of whom only 3,000 showed up for work" (Wickham 1997: 125).

Starrett's invaluable study, *Putting Islam to Work* (1998), assiduously documents the impact the Islamists have had on educational institutions, textbooks, and, ultimately, on the spirit of popular Islamic culture transmitted through universal popular education. Ironically, as the modern state extends and deepens its bureaucratic reach, it simultaneously strengthens the discursive shift

to the Islamic narrative. Starrett points out that while enrollments in arts and humanities faculties of universities increased by 8.2 percent between 1981 and 1987, that of Al-Azhar increased by 70 percent. Meanwhile, the circulation of monthly public sector religious periodicals more than tripled from 181,000 to 558,000 between 1983 and 1986 (1998: 90-1). Electronic media programming also became increasingly Islamic. Elsewhere Weaver reports that the Minister of Education disclosed in an interview that "the Islamists had successfully infiltrated primary, preparatory and secondary schools all over Egypt" and then confided, "I could not believe how many fundamentalist teachers we had in the schools" (Weaver 1999: 154). Public schools therefore, have become discursive agents, contested sites where Islamists, the ulama, and the state struggle over lessons and textbooks, thus inscribing their interpretive narrative into the conscious and unconscious memory of the next generation of Muslim Egyptians.

Discounting the media attention devoted to the spectacular fringe takfir sects, Starrett stresses how the Islamist narrative is inscribed onto the deeper conscious and unconscious discursive practices regulating everyday life "Egypt's Islamic trend, far from being a...fringe movement,...is pervasive, persistent and normal, whose effects on individuals and society do no remain confined to...political movements and organizations." What is more important are the "changes it has created in the way Egyptians practice apprehend and represent their religious heritage" and a key institution is "compulsory popular schooling" because it "has encouraged rather than discouraged attachment to Islamic culture.... One of the results of mass religious instruction is thus to prepare students just enough to question the authorities of the keepers of the Muslim tradition, and to question their own exclusion from its manipulation" (1998: 187).

Globalization, liberalization, and modernity, moreover, have converged so as to create a decentralized and portable array of mass media products (audiocassettes, videotapes, satellite dishes) which are impossible for Egyptian state security (SSI) to monitor effectively, let alone control (Eickelman and Anderson 1999). In addition, the fragmentation of Islamic authority coupled with the diversity of sources have reduced the authoritative religious intermediaries leading to greater individual or sectarian interpretation of the Islamic discourse. Starrett captures the dilemma of a corrupt, authoritarian state chasing the discursive shift to Islam:

> it is not the paucity of Islamic culture that accounts for the growth of the oppositional tendencies of the Islamic Trend, but rather its bounty. Each new attempt to correct mistaken ideas by furthering the penetration of Islamic discourse in public space creates an intensification of the conflict between parties seeking to control the discourse. In becoming hegemonic, Islam ... is forced by necessity not only to provoke limited counterlanguages, but to become itself the language in which cultural and political battles are fought by the vast majority of interested parties. (1998: 219)

Urban Civil Society: Islamist Charities and Networks

The discursive shift to Islamism, of course, is not suspended above urban civil society; rather, it is deeply rooted in a diverse web of informal and formal Islamic organizations: private voluntary and charitable organizations, informal social networks, neighborhood mosques, and especially, the initiatives sponsored by the Muslim Brotherhood. Global neoliberalism abrogated the pact between the citizen and the state whereby citizens "relinquished their claims to basic human and civil rights in exchange for the state undertaking to provide them with education and healthcare, employment and subsidies for such necessities as staples, cooking gas and transportation" (Sivan 1998: 2). Accordingly, these changes allowed Muslim charitable and civil society groups to fill urban social spaces with a parallel social service sector. Rugh's observations illustrate how Islamic civil society operates in Cairo's neighborhoods:

> Many private mosques have expanded into services that compete directly with less efficient and lower quality public services. Services may include the provision of subsidized clothing and food, healthcare, regular educational programs (usually at the preprimary or primary level), after-school tutoring for children, religious instruction, subsidies for students, evening courses, social group activ ities ... In poor areas mosque representatives hand out free food, clothing, and money in exchange, as one women put it, "for wearing our Islamic dress." Money can also be borrowed through Islamic banks in the approved "profit sharing" way where a fixed interest is not required. (1993: 164)

Others emphasize the higher quality of Islamist social services for nominal fees where the customers are treated with respect. "Islamist medical clinics, well-staffed and outfitted with the latest medical equipment, contrast sharply with staterun hospitals with their low sanitation standards and long delays" (Sadowski 1987: 45). A 1997 newspaper report, quoting a statistical study by Amani Qandil, estimates that Islamic charity organizations provided 14 percent of Egypt's healthcare (Negus 1997: 2). And finally, when compared to government responses to the Cairo earthquake (1992) and floods (1994), observers noted the superior performance of the Islamic charities.

Of course, subsidies cost money and high-quality medical care requires committed professionals. New Islamic banks as well as contributions by Islamist businessmen paying their obligatory Islamic tithe (zakat) through Islamist charities supply the financial support for Islamist social services. Islamic banks, funded originally by Saudi and other Gulf states, have become significant players in the wider Muslim world (i.e., Malaysia, Pakistan, Indonesia). From a tiny number a quarter century ago, Islamic financial institutions have grown to 170 with assets exceeding US$150 billion, including Citibank, Dow Jones, and HSBC (*The Economist*, February 17, 2001, p. 76; *Islamic Index*: http://indexes.dowjones.com/djimi/imhome.html).

Professional Associations and the Muslim Brothers: A State within the State?

Seventy years of Brotherhood activity has clear patterns. One is a cycle of alliance and rupture with the established regime. A second is generational tension followed by renewal through generational succession. A third is the constant formation of splinter groups, typically more radical (i.e., Jama'a, Islamic Jihad, al-Samawiyya), but recently more pragmatic and pluralist such as al-Wasat, which recently received a license to establish an NGO called the Egypt Society for Culture and Dialogue (Cairo Times, April 13-19, 2000). A fourth is a gradual incorporation of global liberalism into its rhetoric and organizational forms, if not always in its practices (Esposito and Piscatori 1991; Esposito and Voll 1996; Sivan 1990, 1998).

Officially, of course, the banned Muslim Brotherhood does not exist in Egypt. Once the Sadat-Mubarak governments shifted toward the Islamic current to gain legitimacy, however, the regime has exhibited a cyclical policy toward the Brotherhood; one characterized by a cautious acknowledgment, followed by an effort to incorporate the Brotherhood's program into state institutions and then suppression, using arrests, murder, torture, and detention without trial. Yet the Brotherhood has only deepened and extended its associations and networks into urban civil society. Because of the sympathy it garnered from the public, it now represents the only credible civil opposition in spite of the regime's use of military courts to imprison the leadership in 1995, 1999, and 2000. Local human rights organizations, according to the State Department, "indicate that there are approximately 15,000-16,000 political detainees; it is not clear how many among them are charged and awaiting trial, convicted and serving sentences, or detained without charge" (http://wwwstate.gov/www/global/human_rights/1999_hrp_report/egypt/html).

Constant suppression and imprisonment of leaders has forced the Brotherhood to develop a multipronged political strategy. Though banned, the Brotherhood's first strategy seeks parliamentary representation via alliances with legal political parties, first with the Wakf, subsequently Socialist Labor. The latter alliance gave them control of a muckraking newspaper, *Al-Shaab*, and thirty-six seats in the 1987 parliamentary election. Parliamentary experience, moreover, has broadened the Brotherhood's understanding of the complexity of the modern state and the need for a legislative check on executive authority. Notwithstanding their commitment to the full implementation of the Sharia in an Islamic state and their support for persecution of intellectuals for apostasy, a capital offense under Sharia, the Brotherhood's parliamentary leaders like Ma'mun al-Hudaybi and Al-Tilmisani have advocated shura (consultation) as a legislative institution where legislators and public can debate applications of Sharia (Auda 1994: 386).

In the late 1980s, the Brotherhood pursued a new electoral strategy, that of contesting for leadership posts in modern educational and professional associations (syndicates), typically regarded as bastions of the educated middle class and urban civil society. The Brotherhood has always been strong in the educational sector. In the 1970s it established Islamic associations (*al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya*) for university students, soon controlling most university student associations. These associations dispensed valuable educational services to students, i.e., notes, photocopied textbooks, and transportation for female students "who felt their integrity endangered in packed, mixed-sex lecture halls" (Denoeux 1993: 151). To be sure, the subsequent move to control professional associations follows logically as the age cohort of the 1970s graduated from universities and entered professional life. Aided by small numbers of voters, the Brotherhood's control of leadership posts of professional associations was systematic and thorough: engineers, 1987; physicians, 1988; pharmacists, 1989; Commerce Graduates' Association, 1989; the Cairo University faculty club, 1990; and lawyers, 1992 (Wickham 1997; Starrett 1998).

Austerity and liberalization explain to some degree the Brotherhood's electoral victories. Wickham cites a 1994 government survey concluding that unemployed graduates numbered 1.4 million, of whom 200,000 held a university degree (1997: 122). Ismail's study of Cairo's informal sector describes university graduates in engineering and law working as day laborers and construction workers, i.e., painters, plasterers, and tile layers (2000: 377). In addition, under the Brotherhood's leadership, the professional associations "have begun to provide employment and income to young doctors, teachers and other professionals, thereby reducing the share of their earnings derived from the state" (Wickham 1997: 123).

Furthermore, the leadership of the medical and engineering associations "have initiated projects in the areas of housing, healthcare, and insurance, established training programs and pilot small business ventures for new graduates" (Wickham 1997: 123). Note the relationship to globalization. As the twin forces of structural adjustment and state withdrawal take their toll on urban living standards, the Islamists have seized the opportunity handed to them by global restructuring so as to employ graduates and professionals in their parallel social and economic social service sector. Quite paradoxically, neoliberalism's privatization policy has buttressed the role of Islamist networks as providers of urban social services and charity while, at the same time, sounding the alarm against the "Islamist threat."

Cairo: Islamism and Survival Strategies among the Popular Classes

To be sure, the quality of urban life for migrants and the poor in Cairo, now approaching 14 million, generates objective conditions encouraging radical

protest movements. Islamism, however, is the beneficiary. Richards and Waterbury cite a national housing deficit of over 2 million units. They describe vast districts of Cairo as "slums" where a half million live on rooftops and where "levels of lead in the air may cause brain damage and mental retardation in small children" (1996: 258). Bayat (1997) estimates that 6 million live in Cairo's illegal "spontaneous communities," often squatting in tent cities and shantytowns in cemeteries and other public lands. Liberalization and SAPs explain the widening gap: the income share of the top 10 percent of Egypt's urbanites increased from 26 percent in 1981 to 32.6 percent in 1991. Bayat then concludes that because more than half of Cairo and Giza are classified as "poor" or "ultra-poor" (i.e., ca. 7 million), the charity of religious NGOs fails to sustain a minimal living standard for the poor.

Ismail's (2000) excellent study of militant Islamist groups living in popular quarters of Cairo documents the diffusion of militant and radical Islamist support among the migrant poor, squatters, and the informal sector. For Ismail, "Islamism...is not a marginal religious or political movement" but rather "a form of contestation that finds ground in spaces where oppositional positioning develops" (2000: 379). Instead of assuming social pathology and marginality, Ismail portrays radical Islamists as regionally rooted actors who organize specific neighborhood spaces by provisioning parallel economic, political, and welfare services to their constituents. Nor is this phenomenon new to Cairo. By drawing upon historian Edmund Burke's seminal analysis of historic repertoires of urban collective action, Ismail brilliantly explains why the protest movements rooted in neighborhoods, local leadership, and dissatisfaction with the state's local representatives are deeply structural, not novel. Rather, they are continuous movements within a historically legitimated tradition of urban popular protest (Lubeck 1987; Burke 1989). Subverting essentializing explanations which assume social pathology, (i.e., anomie, moral breakdown, and marginality), Ismail documents how radical Islamists like Jihad, Juma'a, and Sarnawiyya negotiate with neighborhood residents in order to construct a social and spatial moral order for "in order to expand their popular support they [Islamists] must operate within the socio-spatial framework of the communities" (2000: 393).

Therefore, the need to solve rational and objective urban problems is what explains popular support for radical Islamist movements. These include: opposition to police corruption and brutality, the regulation of craft, trade, and labor activities, tensions arising from overcrowded housing where women must share common facilities with nonkin, the migrant need for morally acceptable marriage partners and attraction of Islamist educational and welfare services described above (Ismail 2000). A pragmatic ability to negotiate a meaningful moral and social order in impoverished, immigrant slums explains the triumph of Islamism as the dominant populist, anti-imperialist nationalist discourse in Muslim cities.

Comparative Perspectives: Islamism, Democracy and Urban Insurrection

The Egyptian Brothers' gradualist, pragmatic strategy, based upon mobilizing the cautious middle class, is widely replicated in the cities of Islamdom: the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan, PAS in Malaysia, Hamas in Algeria, Ghannoussi's MTI/Nahda movement in Tunisia, Virtue/Welfare in Turkey, and Wahid's NI in Indonesia (Kramer 1993, 1995; Salame 1994; Guazzone 1995; Hefner 2000). There is a crude correlation between the success of moderate Islamism and the national level of development and degree of urban social cohesion. Those committed to pragmatism, moderation, and shura (consultation) are dominant in more developed countries and with social groups that are older, better educated, and more secure economically, i.e., the urban middle classes. Conversely, countries experiencing economic and political collapse and/or social disintegration Algeria, Afghanistan, and Nigeria - are dominated by radical Islamist movements fueled by a vast reservoir of young, impoverished, and disillusioned recruits (Kramer 1995; Lubeck 1998). In urban situations like petro-busted Nigeria, where crime, ethnic conflict, and devastating poverty are normalized, Muslims disillusioned with Western models are rationally choosing a system that they know and hope will bring security, law, and order, i.e., Sharia.

Algiers, of course, is the prime example of an urban tinderbox in a petrostate whose policies secured the triumph of a radical Islamist movement. Here is an ideal-typical case where structural factors – global restructuring, the petro-bust, structural adjustment's austerity, high youth unemployment, brutal military repression, cautious liberalization, and a state legitimacy crisis – converged to generate a powerful social base that resulted in electoral victories for the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) in 1991. Consider Algiers under neoliberal restructuring, now the apotheosis of urban Islamist insurrection and civil war. A survey found that 75 percent of youth aged between sixteen and twenty-nine were seeking work while, at the same time, "the educational system produced 270,000 unemployed diploma holders. Some 80% of this age group continued to live with their families, often eight persons to a room" (Eickelman and Piscatori 1996: 116). The authoritarian petrostate introduced structural adjustment, followed by political liberalization, at a time of high unemployment when state revenues from oil and gas exports decreased by 40 percent in a year (1985-6), thereby raising the foreign debt from $14.8 billion to $24.6 billion (Willis 1996: 99-100).

Earlier, like Egypt, the regime tried incorporating the Islamist current by implementing a new family law, allowing Afghani-Arab and other radicals to operate openly, and pursuing an Arabization policy that strengthened the Islamists. In October 1988, however, security forces lit the match when they fired on demonstrators and rioters protesting austerity, killing hundreds in Algiers, ending any shred of legitimacy for the FLN. Led by a schoolteacher, Abassi Madani, and a mosque preacher, Ali Belhadj, the FIS mobilized a network of

over 900 mosques to become the voice for a generation of disillusioned and miserable urban protestors. Correctly fearing an Islamist electoral victory in 1991, the army bumbled into a brutal civil war when they seized power, canceled elections, and imprisoned the FIS leadership. By eliminating the electoral option for change, moreover, the military also eliminated even the possibility of a peaceful transition to a Muslim democratic order (Roberts 1994; Willis 1996). Hypocritical American prevarication and French support, of course, only increased Muslim disillusionment with the pretentious claims of global neoliberalism.

Kuala Lumpur, in contrast to Algiers, represents the opposite pattern. Malaysia is an exception. It redistributed income while reorienting its economy away from dependence on oil and other commodities and toward electronics-based, export-oriented industrialization since the 1980s (Lubeck 1992). In 1969 ethnic rioting between the Muslim Malays and the Chinese forced the ruling coalition to implement a New Economic Policy (NEP). The NEP attempted to: abolish absolute poverty, create an indigenous Malay business and professional class, eliminate the ethnic division of labor, and redistribute corporate equity among all ethnic groups. Most of these goals were achieved by the end of the 1990s: poverty among Muslim Malays declined from 65 percent (1970) to around 13 percent, and a diverse Muslim middle class flowered in cities.

Until recently, when Prime Minister Mahathir moved against his younger rival and designated heir, Anwar Ibrahim, Malaysia was touted as a case where the ethrionationalist party, UMNO, had successfully incorporated the youthful Islamist challenge represented by Anwar Ibrahim and the Islamist student movement ABIM. Table 14.2 presents some evidence for the positive effect exerted by the NEP and electronics-based, export-oriented industrialization on the opportunity structure for young Muslims in Malaysia. By 1998 Anwar's supporters were leading demonstrations protesting Mahathir's abuse of their leader at the Friday mosque in Kuala Lumpur. Influenced by Muslim social movements in Indonesia, Islamists formed coalitions with non-Muslims for political reform (*reformasi*). The election of 1999 confirmed that many Malays had deserted Mahathir and UMNO in favor of Anwar's justice Party and the ulama-led Islamist party, PAS. The latter emerged as the leading opposition party in a wider democratic alliance with broad multiethnic urban support (*Aliran Monthly*, various). The Kuala Lumpur example illustrates just how income redistribution and export-oriented industrialization policies support civil Islam rather than authoritarian Islamism as the dominant discourse.

Table 14.2 Gender, education, and labor force participation

	Algeria	*Egypt*	*Indonesia*	*Iran*	*Jordan*	*Malaysia*	*Morocco*	*Nigeria*	*Pakistan*	*Syria*
Adult literacy (% 1997)										
Female	47.7	40.5	79.5	65.8	81.8	81.0	32.7	50.8	25.4	56.5
Male	72.7	64.7	90.6	80.7	92.2	90.2	59.3	68.5	55.2	86.5
Education										
Female Primary enrollment[a] (1997)	92.6	90.6	98.6	89.2	N/A	99.9	67.2	N/A	N/A	90.6
Female Secondary enrollment[a] (1997)	64.0	70.1	53.4	75.8	N/A	68.5	31.9	N/A	N/A	39.4
Laborforce										
Female % labor force[b]										
1980	21.0	27.0	35.0	20.0	15.0	34.0	34.0	36.0	23.0	24.0
1998	26.0	30.0	40.0	26.0	23.0	37.0	35.0	36.0	28.0	26.0
Female % professional and Technical	2 7.6[c]	28.4	40.8[c]	32.6[c]	28.7 [d]	43.2	31.3'	N/A	21.0	37.0

N/A: not available.
[a]Ratio as % of relative age group.
[b] As percent of total; source is the World Bank, Development Report 199912000.
[c]Calculated on the basis of data from UN 1994 and ILO, *Yearbook of Labor Statistics*, 1993 and 1994.
[d] Calculated on the basis of data from UN 1995 and ILO, *Yeearbook of Labor Statistics*, 1997. '
[e]Calculated on the basis of data from UN 1994 and ILO, *Yearbook of Labor Statistics*, 1994 and 1995.
Source: Data assembled from the United Nations, *Human Development Report* 1999, unless otherwise noted.

Muslim Women in Cities: Gender Relations and New Islamic Dress

Thus far we have argued that "rupturing" events like the Iranian Revolution, the rise of political Islam, and the infusion of pragmatic Islamist institutions into civil

society constitute a repositioning of Islamic discourses in the moral imagination of urban Muslims. Yet no issue is more significant than the impact of Islamism on gender relations in the public and domestic spheres. Regardless of Islamism's discursive fragmentation and obvious borrowing from Western-modernist narratives, no issue has aroused more controversy than the bodily representation of women wearing Islamic dress (hijab) in urban public space.

Of course, wearing hijab is structurally rooted in the spatial relocation of increasing proportions of Muslim women from rural to urban situations: that is, from patriarchal, rural households, policed by extended families, into crowded, impoverished urban neighborhoods, impersonal modern educational institutions, and the enumerated labor force. Tables 14.1 and 14.2 summarize some of these structural changes of location and activity. By 2015 half to two-thirds of Muslim women will live in cities. Rising rates of migration and urbanization have profound consequences for Muslim women: more rural-born women are living in single rooms in densely packed buildings inhabited by unrelated males; more risk being shamed and groped in crowded public transport; more must compete for access to urban education and work; and, in general, more must adjust to a barrage of global-origin commodities and consumption styles. At the same time, rising literacy and primary school attendance are exposing Muslim women to Islamist discourses and even to a new Islamist genre of popular literature (novels, romances, biographies, and pamphlets) (Eickelman and Anderson 1999; Huq 1999). Even more significant is the rise of female secondary school enrollments, reaching 75 percent in Iran, 70 percent in Egypt, and 68 percent in Malaysia. Furthermore, as a consequence of rising secondary and post-secondary education, the female share of professional and technical workers has increased in rough proportion to their participation in the enumerated labor force.

In a superb ethnographic article on "downveiling," that is, the modern styling and relaxation of veiling standards among Cairene women, Herrera describes hijab well "as a form of both resistance and submission to patriarchy, an assertion of cultural authenticity, a reaction against Western imperialism and local secular regimes, a genuine desire by women to live more piously and a practice borne out of economic necessity" (2000: 1). While no one denies involuntary veiling due to the coercive power of Islamist men, and even violence (i.e., Algeria, Afghanistan) against women refusing to wear Islamic dress, a number of more nuanced studies show that veiling represents women's initiative that differs from passive conformity to Islamist patriarchy. A core motivation is political: the search for "authenticity" expressed as a dress performance oftentimes signifying resistance to oppressive secular regimes and/or disillusionment with Westernized global culture. Practically, wearing hijab generates greater respectability, economically affordable dignity, and greater freedom to circulate unmolested in dense urban centers like Cairo. However counter-intuitive to Westerners, hijab actually facilitates the freedom of women, permitting entry into urban employment and educational situations, which, unlike the home or the village, involve same-sex mixing (MacLeod 1991; Hoffman 1995; Gole 1996).

From the perspective of Muslim cultural nationalism, veiling reverses the hegemonic Western discourse: it affirms as authentic and socially powerful that which Western imperialists defined as evidence of Muslim backwardness. Others see it as generational resistance to parental authority and Westernization among the daughters of middle-class families; still others argue veiling indicates class resentment toward elite privilege by working women economically excluded from globalized consumption styles (Taraki 1992).

Taraki's superb study of Jordanian women deftly shows how structural factors – rising rates of urbanization, postsecondary education, and nondornestic labor force participation – are correlated with a rising number of educated women, many with post-secondary degrees, mostly working in the public sector. She points out that 65 percent of working women are employed there, constituting nearly a third of the sector, and that women with more than twelve years of education constituted 74.1 percent of all women employed there in 1987 (Taraki 1992). Hence, because these newly educated women are also new entrants to the urban labor force, often struggling with the dilemmas surrounding new morality and consumption styles, they are attracted to the moral order provided by Islamist discourses and civil society groups. Similarly, Hammani (1997), writing on the use of the hijab by Palestinians during the intifada (uprising), argues that wearing the hijab was redefined as a nationalist symbol of resistance, conveying female nationalist solidarity and respect for the martyrs, while protecting women from assaults from soldiers.

More poststructuralist studies emphasize the blurring of categorical boundaries between modern-traditional, veiled-unveiled. In Turkey, Gole focuses on the "agency of women," arguing that Muslim women's embrace of the hijab and Islamist discourses disrupts conventional distinctions between tradition and modernity by "carving out new public spaces, affirming new public visibilities, and inventing new Muslim lifestyles and subjectivities.... In a paradoxical way, radical Islamism instigates democratization of religious knowledge…Islamic politics enables Muslim women to participate in public life...[and] provides ideological legitimacy for women's newly acquired public roles" (Gole 2000: 94-9).

Leila Ahmed, viewing the hijab as a form of accommodation to modern, urban lifestyles, cites a survey by Radwan comparing attitudes of veiled and unveiled students attending Cairo University. Not surprisingly, veiled women respond more conservatively than unveiled on modern gender issues: on the importance of education for women, 88 to 93 percent; on a women's right to pursue education to the highest levels, 92 to 98 percent; or acceptability of women working outside the home, 88 to 95 percent veiled to unveiled, respectively (Ahmed 1992: 226-7). What is remarkable, however, is how high the percentages - are, and how small the differences are between veiled and unveiled

women. Modern urban living attenuates differences, according to Lila Abu-Lughod: "most of the women who have taken on the veil are in fact working or expect to work. Most families aspiring to achieve or maintain middle-class status cannot do so without a second income" (1998: 252), Veiling, like Islamism in general, thrives in the urban, modern, and globalized situation.

Discursive Struggle: The Emergence of Muslim Feminists

Despite the deep patriarchy of many Islamist discourses, structural transformations – literacy, education, media, participation in urban public space – have stimulated new gender discourses and new civil society groups. The discursive shift, together with the participation of Muslim women in urban public life (i.e., demonstrations in Iran), have, unintentionally to be sure, disrupted the male monopoly over interpreting the Islamist discourse. Leila Ahmed stresses how Muslim women hear a different voice, one moving away from the legalistic to the "ethical, egalitarian voice of Islam ... because Muslim women hear this egalitarian voice ... they often declare (to the astonishment of non-Muslims) that Islam is nonsexist" (1992: 238). Middle-class, educated Muslim feminist activists have entered the discursive struggle over the meaning of Islam for gender relations. Their mantra is that the Qur'an guarantees them equality or, at the very least, separate but equal rights to marriage contracts, child support, marital sexual fulfillment, and even wages for housework after divorce (Hoodfar 1998). Surprisingly, by cultivating the educated women's self-capacity to read and interpret the Qur'an, the Islamist movement has created spaces for discursive contestation by urbanized, Muslim feminist intellectuals. In summary, Muslim feminists promote the egalitarian message (i.e., equality before God, one law, individual interpretation), while eloquently arguing that the ulamas' patriarchal interpretations of women's status, derived from *Hadith* (i.e., sayings of the Prophet Mohammed), were institutionalized in Sharia due to the premodern (tribal) historical context, the influence of non-Muslims (Christians and Persians), and the exigencies of ruling Islamic empires.

In Iran the revolutionary legacy and high female educational standards have created a powerful voting bloc. Women's overwhelming electoral support for Khatami's vision for civil society reinforced gender consciousness and sharpened the debate in the public sphere. Mir-Hosseini's (1999) ethnography on Muslim intellectuals documents the diversity of public positions asserted on gender questions, the increasing number of female public officials (parliamentary deputies, judges, jurist-scholars, police, educators, and bureaucrats), and increasing discursive convergence between Muslim feminists and Western-oriented feminists. In addition, she documents the growing respect for Muslim feminism by feminist intellectuals like Mernissi and Afshar, who now are prepared "to listen to them, to take them seriously, to borrow something of their arguments and approaches" (1999: 6). Nor are the clerics monolithic. She represents Hojjat ol-Eslam Sa'idzadeh as a modernist interpreter of Islam, one clearly influenced by hermeneutical reasoning and social constructionism, who "sees gender inequality in the shari'a not as a manifestation of divine justice, but as a mistaken construction by male jurists" (1999: 272).

Diverse arrays of Muslim female voices now speak on gender issues in educational institutions, the media, and civil society. In Iran, five seminaries have been founded to train women to become mujtahids (interpreter-jurists) and, in 1996, 16 percent (9,995) of enrollment in Iran's religious seminaries were women (Kian-Thiebaut 2000). The oldest and most prestigious, al-Zahra, has all-female instructors, attracting students from all over the Shi'ite world (Mir-Hosseini 1999: 6). While all factions on the discursive spectrum publish journals, the women editors of *Zanan* openly embrace feminism, as does the newspaper *Zan*. Elsewhere in the Sunni tradition Amina Wadud-Muhsin has written a hermeneutical and linguistic reinterpretation of the representation of women in the Qur'an, and Riffat Hasan describes herself as a Muslim feminist theologian who writes on women's rights and Islam. In the realm of civil society the global network, *Women Living under Muslim Laws*, like *Sisters in Islam* in Malaysia, are advocates for justice for Muslim women, Both publish information on issues affecting women (violence, divorce, rights, personal status), lobby governments and multilateral agencies, and organize conferences in order to promote human rights for Muslim women (Othman 1999).

Concluding Reprise

What, then, does the future portend for Muslims in cities? Islamism will remain ubiquitous in everyday urban life because globalization, state withdrawal, and rising urban inequality create a social milieu ideally suited for the efflorescence of both moderate Islamist civil society groups and violent insurrectionary groups using terrorist tactics. Does irony not turn into the theater of the absurd when President "W" Bush advocates "faith-based" initiatives as a solution to state withdrawal from urban social services? Islamism could hardly ask for a better midwife than the policy of global neoliberalism. Far more flexible and pragmatic than imagined, Islamism became normalized by its success in meeting the moral and material needs of urban Muslims.

Nevertheless, given the record of Iran, Sudan, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and other Islamist experiments, what remains problematic is the practice of Islamist democracy upon assuming power. Will Islamists tolerate difference, acknowledge the human rights of women and non-Muslims, accept pragmatic compromises, and relinquish power through fair elections? If one searches for innovative responses to this question, then An-Naim's (1990) seminal work defines one view of the reform agenda for democratic, civil Islam. The brutality

of the Algerian civil war constitutes the price of simplistic exclusion of Islamists from the democratic process. Recognizing the popular base of urban Islamists, civil society theorist Richard Norton draws on the democratic behavior of Turkish Islamists to argue for a policy of inclusion: "a policy of exclusion that attempts to keep people outside of the game is a destructive policy by definition. And a policy of inclusion, structured with intelligence, is a way to stabilize and consolidate a political system" (Mahoney 1998: 32). Urban theorists and policy-makers, therefore, must become far more realistic about the complex, contradictory tendencies contained within Muslim discourses. In practice, this means distinguishing the violent insurrectionists like bin Laden's al-Qaida from the moderate and then entering into a dialogue with modern, civil society-based Islamist movements, The latter must be included in policy and planning agendas. For, like it or not, Islamism will constitute a powerful social force shaping Muslim-majority cities in the twenty-first century.

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