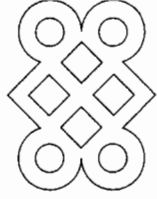


A HISTORY OF
ISLAMIC SOCIETIES

SECOND EDITION



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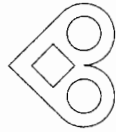
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9 The battle of the twelve heroes

INTRODUCTION: THE ISLAMIC WORLD AND THE RISE OF EUROPE



Between the seventh and the thirteenth centuries the historical institutions of Middle Eastern societies were recast in Islamic forms. New empires and states were organized under Islamic concepts of authority and symbols of legitimacy. Muslim religious elites including 'ulama' and Sufi holy men generated Islamic forms of worship, education, and legal administration. The majority of Middle Eastern peoples were converted to Islam; pastoral tribes, peasants, urban artisans and merchants, and state elites took on an Islamic identity. A new civilization, in part royal and artistic, in part urban and pietistic, came into being.

In subsequent eras, the Islamic system of institutions and its various cultures would continue to evolve in the already Islamized regions of the Middle East including Iran, Transoxania, and the Arab provinces. They would also serve as a paradigm for the establishment of Islamic societies in other parts of the world. From the seventh to the nineteenth centuries Islamic societies, based on the interaction of local institutions and cultures and Middle Eastern influences, were established in Anatolia and the Balkans, Inner Asia, South and Southeast Asia, and sub-Saharan Africa. The evolution of a world system of Islamic societies, however, was cut short in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries by the growing political and economic power of Europe. The consolidation of European colonial rule in most of the Muslim world marks the end of the premodern era and the beginning of the modern transformation of Muslim societies.

CONVERSION TO ISLAM

The Middle East and North Africa

From the seventh to the tenth centuries, Islam was carried by the Arab conquests to North Africa, Spain, Sicily, and the Mediterranean coasts of Europe. Arab warriors and merchants brought it to Saharan and Sudanic Africa. Other Islamic societies were born from the conversion of Inner Asian Turkish peoples to Islam and their migrations,

conquests, and empire building. From the tenth to the fourteenth centuries, Turkish peoples brought Islam westward into Anatolia, the Balkans, and southeastern Europe, eastward into Inner Asia and China, and southward into Afghanistan and the Indian subcontinent. They thus played a crucial historical role in the diffusion of Islam and in the founding of the Saljuq, Mongol, Timurid, Safavid, Ottoman, Uzbek, and Mughal empires. Finally, another cluster of Islamic societies originated from the expansion of Muslim merchants in the Indian Ocean. From Arabia Islam reached India and East Africa (tenth to twelfth centuries); from Arabia and India it reached the Malay peninsula and the Indonesian archipelago (thirteenth to fifteenth centuries); from the coastal zones it spread to the interior of the islands and continents.

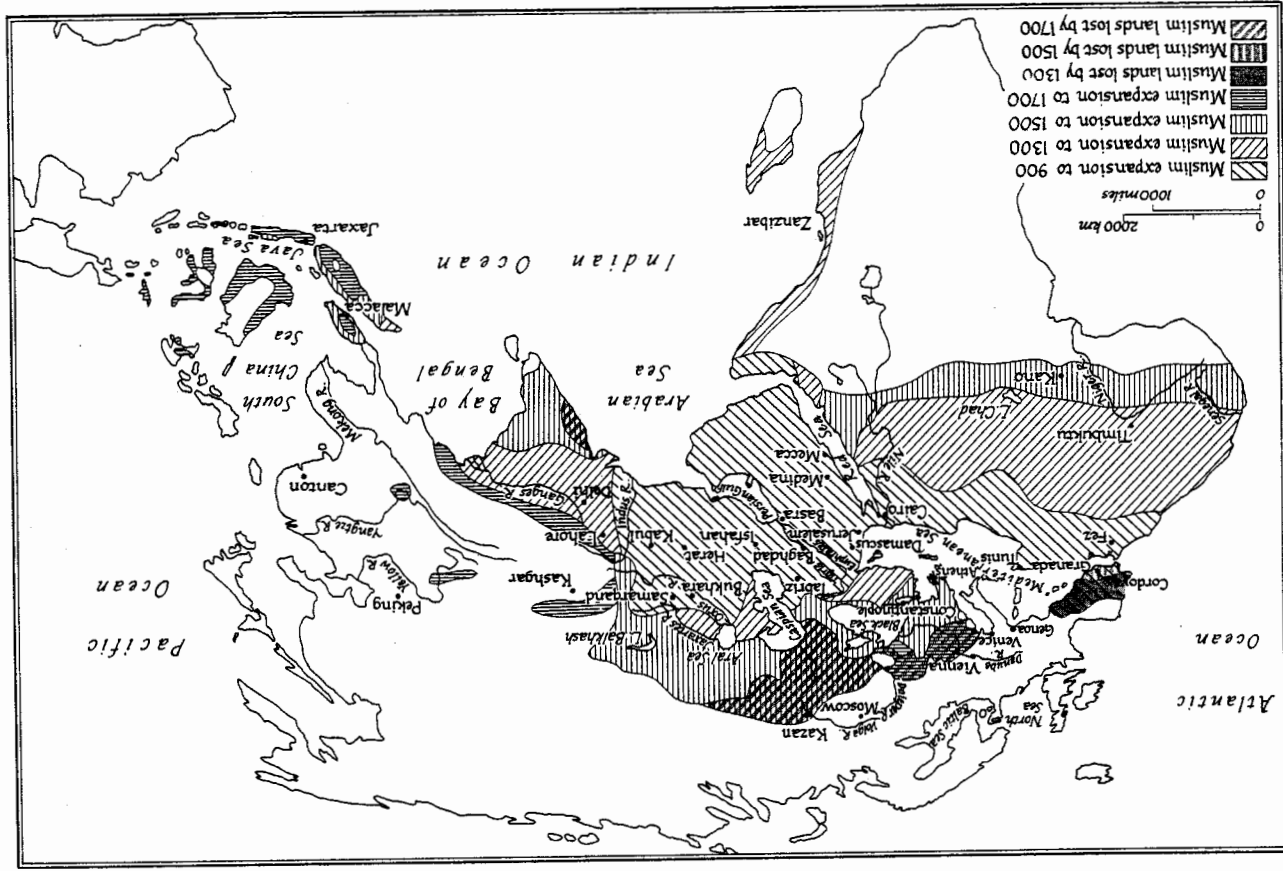
The expansion of Islam involved different forces. In North Africa, Anatolia, the Balkans, and India, it was carried by nomadic Arab or Turkish conquerors. In the Indian Ocean and West Africa it spread by peaceful contacts among merchants or through the preaching of missionaries. In some cases the diffusion of Islam depended upon its adoption by local ruling families; in others, it appealed to urban classes of the population or tribal communities. Its appeal was couched in interwoven terms of political and economic benefits and of a sophisticated culture and religion.

The question of why people convert to Islam has always generated intense feeling. Earlier generations of European scholars believed that conversions to Islam were made at the point of the sword, and that conquered peoples were given the choice of conversion or death. It is now apparent that conversion by force, while not unknown in Muslim countries, was, in fact, rare. Muslim conquerors ordinarily wished to dominate rather than convert, and most conversions to Islam were voluntary.

Even voluntary conversions are suspect to European observers. Were they made out of true belief, or for opportunistic political or social reasons? Surely there are innumerable cases of conversion to Islam by the illumination of faith or by virtue of the perceived sanctity of Muslim scholars and holy men, as well as by calculation of political and economic advantage. In most cases worldly and spiritual motives for conversion blended together. Moreover, conversion to Islam did not necessarily imply a complete turning from an old to a totally new life. While it entailed the acceptance of new religious beliefs and membership in a new religious community, most converts retained a deep attachment to the cultures and communities from which they came. In the sections that follow, I will stress the historical circumstances that have induced large numbers of people to adhere to Islam rather than analyze the spiritual or material motives of individuals for becoming Muslims. This is not to diminish the centrality of belief and commitment in the subjective experience of individual converts, but to account on a historical basis for the responses of great numbers of human beings.

The first conversions to Islam occurred in the Middle East between the seventh and the thirteenth centuries. These took place in two phases, the first being the

Map 7 The expansion of Muslim states and populations: 900-1700



conversion of animists and polytheists belonging to the tribal societies of the Arabian desert and the periphery of the fertile crescent; the second was the conversion of the monotheistic populations of the Middle Eastern agrarian, urbanized, and imperial societies.

The conversion of Arabian populations was part of the process of transmitting the civilization of the sedentarized imperial societies to the nomadic periphery. Arabian peoples, standing on the margin of the agricultural and commercial zones of the Middle East, strongly influenced by Middle Eastern commerce and religious thought, found in Muhammad's teaching a way to formulate a kind of Middle Eastern monotheistic religion parallel to but distinct from the established Christian and Zoroastrian religions. The conversion of pagan Arabian peoples to Islam represented the response of a tribal, pastoral population to the need for a larger framework for political and economic integration, a more stable state, and a more imaginative and encompassing moral vision to cope with the problems of a tumultuous society. Conversion, then, was the process of integrating Arabians into a new cultural and political order defined in monotheistic religious terms.

The conversion of sedentary Middle Eastern peoples to Islam was a different process. In this case Islam was substituted for Byzantine or Sasanian political identity and for Jewish, Christian, or Zoroastrian religious affiliation. The transformation of identities among Middle Eastern peoples took place in two stages. In the first century of the Islamic imperium the Arab conquerors attempted to maintain themselves as an exclusive Muslim elite. They did not require the conversion as much as the subordination of non-Muslim peoples. At the outset, they were hostile to conversions because new Muslims diluted the economic and status advantages of the Arabs. Nonetheless, Muslim rule offered substantial incentives for conversion. It formed a protective umbrella over Muslim communities and conferred the prestige of the state on Muslim religious life. Political patronage allowed for the establishment of mosques, the organization of the pilgrimage, and the creation of Muslim judicial institutions. The establishment of an Arab empire made Islam attractive to elements of the former Byzantine and Sasanian aristocracies, including soldiers, officials, landlords, and others. Arab garrison cities attracted non-Arab migrants who found careers in the army and administration open to converts. Merchants, artisans, workers, and fugitive peasants seeking the patronage of the new elite were also tempted to accept Islam.

Despite these attractions, the mass of Middle Eastern peoples were not soon or easily converted. Only with the breakdown of the social and religious structures of non-Muslim communities in the tenth to the twelfth centuries did the weakening of churches, the awakening of Muslim hostility to non-Muslims, sporadic and localized persecution, and the destruction of the landed gentry of Iraq and Iran destroy the communal organization of non-Muslim peoples. Muslim teachers were then able to take the lead in the reconstruction of local communities on the basis of Islamic beliefs and identities. Large parts of Egypt and Iran were probably con-

verted in the tenth and eleventh centuries. In northern Syria, however, Christian majorities survived through the twelfth century, until — compromised by their sympathies with and assistance to the Crusaders — they were put under severe pressure. Most converted in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, but substantial Christian minorities remained. Similarly, most of the remaining Christian population of Egypt adopted Islam in the fourteenth century. To adherents of the monotheistic and communalist faiths, Islam offered the same variety of intellectual, legal, theological, and mystical appeals. While Islam had a specific religious orientation toward the inscrutable and untrammelled will of Allah and the necessity for submission of spirit and actions to the will of God, its basic religious positions were fundamentally similar to those of the other monotheistic religions.

The conversion of North Africa also began with the Arab conquests, but was a different process because it primarily involved the adoption of Islam, notably in sectarian form, by the chiefs of Berber societies as the basis of tribal coalitions and state formation. Khariji states in Algeria and Morocco adopted Islam to help regulate tribal relations and long-distance trade. The process of Islamization of the masses of Christians and Jews is not known, but it may be related to the spread of ribats (forts manned by warriors for the faith), trade, and Sufis. In any case it seems to have been rapid compared with conversion in the Middle East.

Turkish conquests and conversions in Anatolia, the Balkans, the Middle East, Inner Asia, and India

The diffusion of Islam to regions beyond the Middle East involved analogous processes. The spread of Islam in Inner Asia, Anatolia, the Balkans, and India was closely tied to the conversion of pastoral Turkish, rather than Arab, peoples. The conversion of Turkish Inner Asian peoples began in the tenth century. Inner Asian peoples came into contact with Muslims through caravan trade and contacts with merchants who operated on the steppes as brokers between nomadic and settled populations. Muslim missionaries and Sufis also moved out to proselytize among the Turks. Political ambition prompted the Qarakhanid and Saljuq elites to take up the new religion. Later Inner Asian regimes, including the Mongols of the Golden Horde and the Chaghatay Khanates, also adopted Islam and brought it to the northern steppes and eastern Turkestan. In Inner Asia Islamization was important for the establishment of nomadic regimes over sedentary populations, for the creation of politically cohesive ethnic identities among Tatars, Uzbeks, Kazakhs, and other peoples, and for the organization of long-distance trade.

The spread of Islam into Anatolia and the Balkans paralleled the historical process of the spread of Islam in the Middle East. The Saljuq and Ottoman conquests of the eleventh to the fourteenth centuries led to Muslim regimes that patronized the Sunni law schools, Islamic judicial administration, the construction of schools and colleges, and other religious and communal facilities. They gave protection to 'ulama' and Sufis who founded centers for teaching and social services in the conquered territories.

The migration of a substantial Turkish population under the leadership of Muslim holy men uprooted Anatolian agricultural communities and replaced them with Turkish Muslim peoples. Nomadic conquests and the hostility of the Saljuq government to the Byzantine empire and the Greek Orthodox Church also led in Anatolia to the progressive reduction of church lands, administrative capacities, and authority. The weakening of the church deprived the Christian population of leadership and organization. In Anatolia, as in Inner Asia, India, and Africa, jihad-minded Sufi warriors and activist missionaries helped to establish Islam among a newly conquered peasant population. The assimilation of Anatolian peoples was facilitated on the cultural as well as the social level by the familiarity of Islamic religious concepts, which were easily adapted to the religious beliefs of the Christians. In Anatolia, as in the rest of the Middle East, the conjunction of Muslim state power, the decline of organized Christian societies, and the social and cultural relevance of Islam facilitated mass conversions to the new religion.

In the Balkans the factors favoring Islamization and conversion of local peoples were similar to those in Anatolia: the establishment of a regime that favored Islam and the migration and settlement of a substantial Turkish population. Islamization under these pressures was especially pronounced in the towns. In the Balkans, however, the spread of Islam was limited by the vitality of the Christian churches. It came at a later stage of Turkish conquests, at a time when Ottoman policy favored Christian nobles and churches as vehicles of Ottoman administration and so maintained – and, indeed, reinforced – the social structure of Balkan communities. Most Balkan peoples, buttressed by the continuity of organized Christian community life, remained loyal to their faith.

The history of Islam in India most closely resembles that of the Balkans. Islam was brought into India by a conquering Afghan and Turkish military elite which established the Delhi Sultanate in the thirteenth century. Conversions were made as a result of the political attraction of the dominant regime to both non-Muslim elites and dependent peasants and workers. Also, as in the Middle East, the construction of new cities favored the conversion of mobile peoples attracted to the centers of Muslim administration and trade. In most of India, however, as in the Balkans, the appeal of Islam was relatively restricted. Only in the Northwest Frontier, the Punjab, Sind, and Bengal were the populations converted en masse. In these regions the transition from hunter-gatherer and pastoral activities to settled agriculture was the occasion for a total reconstruction of society under Muslim leadership and for the development of new Islamic identifications. Conversion to Islam on a mass scale was most likely among disorganized populations.

In general, however, the assimilative capacity of Islam in the subcontinent was limited by the relative thinness of the Muslim elite. While Muslim rule in India attracted numerous warriors, administrators, and religious teachers, the Muslim conquest was not accompanied by massive migrations as in the cases of the Arab conquest of the Middle East or the Turkish conquest of Anatolia. Furthermore, the

social structure of conquered peoples remained intact. Hindu Rajputs, for example, maintained their authority under Muslim suzerainty; nor were Brahmanic Hinduism and the caste system challenged by Muslim rule. Indeed, Hindu philosophy and popular religions were invigorated by Muslim competition. In the face of an ordered social and religious structure, conversions to Islam were inhibited.

When conversions did occur, Sufism played a considerable part. Following the scent of battle, Sufis streamed into India from Afghanistan, Iran, and Inner Asia. Many came as warriors to establish Muslim supremacy and convert the infidels. Some tied their fortunes to the state. Others fanned out in North India, establishing their influence by personal merit. Here too, the adaptability of Sufism to traditional religious cultures was important in the transition from Hindu and Buddhist identities to Islam. In India the boundary between Hindu and Muslim beliefs, ritual practices, and social loyalties was thin. As in the Middle East and the Ottoman empire, Islam was established under the auspices both of a political elite and of independent religious teachers.

Conversions in Southeast Asia and sub-Saharan Africa

The conversion of Malaya, Indonesia, and sub-Saharan Africa to Islam followed a different pattern. In these regions, Islam was not established by conquest, by the imposition of a single centralized state, or by the settlement of a substantial foreign Muslim population; nor was it associated with massive social change. It was, rather, due to the diffusion of Muslim merchants and missionaries who founded small communities, and sometimes induced (or forced) local elites interested in state formation, trade, and political legitimization to accept their religion. Islam spread as the result of commercial contacts, political and commercial rivalries, and by the progressive acceptance of new symbols of identity by ongoing societies.

Islam was first introduced into Indonesia at the end of the thirteenth century by merchants and Sufis from India, Arabia, and perhaps China. It appealed to the rulers of small coastal and riverine principalities who had close trading contacts with the Muslims and intense rivalries with Indonesian and Chinese traders. Acceptance of Islam by local merchant princes won them social and administrative support and an entrée into extensive trading networks. Portuguese and later Dutch intervention in the Indies further stimulated the acceptance of Islam. The struggle against the Portuguese and the Dutch made Islam desirable as a bond of solidarity in resistance to the efforts of Christian powers to establish trading monopolies. Local competition facilitated the further spread of Islam. The struggle of the coastal principalities with the interior states of Java led eventually to the establishment of Islam as the official religion of the whole of Java. As a result Indonesian state and elite culture was shaped, not by an aristocracy coming from the Middle East, but by a local elite which preserved its political and cultural continuity, and adopted Islam as an additional expression – or reinforcement – of its earlier legitimacy. Throughout Indonesia and Malaya, Islam was also integrated into popular culture.

Sufi missionaries and village teachers settled widely and made Islam part of folk culture and folk identity. In Southeast Asia, as opposed to India and the Balkans where it reached only a minority, Islam became the religion of great majorities of the population.

In most of Africa, Islam was established by processes more closely resembling those of Southeast Asia than the Middle East and India. Muslim merchants and missionary colonies, rather than conquest and empire, were central to Islamization. Arab and Berber traders and settlers in the Saharan and Sudanic regions, Arab and Persian settlers on the East African coasts, and Dyula communities in West Africa were the nuclei of Muslim influences. In Sudanic Africa, colonies of Muslim traders became allied with local political elites and induced the rulers of the states of Ghana, Mali, Kanem, Songhay, Hausaland, and Dogomba to accept Islam. It is possible that Muslims themselves seized kingships and created small states. Islam was adopted to consolidate political power, reinforce commercial contacts, recruit skilled personnel, and mobilize spiritual and magical powers in the interests of state elites. As in North Africa, acceptance of Islam provided an additional basis for legitimization of state regimes, coalition formation among disparate peoples, organization of trading networks, and the employment of skilled personnel. Under the auspices of Muslim states, a small scholarly elite of qadis, 'ulama', and imams was established, but no evidence for conversion of the lower classes is available. Islam was primarily the religion of the political and commercial elites.

In other parts of West Africa, the Islamic presence was established by Dyula traders, landowners, missionaries, and teachers scattered throughout the region, who created an Islamic presence without necessarily generating Islamic states and without attendant Islamization of the population. These family communities seem to have fitted into a highly stratified and subdivided society, whose internal divisions made it acceptable to have unassimilated communities, but were a barrier to the further diffusion of Islam.

Whereas in West Africa, Arab merchants inspired warrior elites to convert to Islam, in East Africa, Arab traders themselves took over the leadership of small states. In Somalia and Ethiopia, Arab merchants married into local lineages and assumed leadership of tribal coalitions which then adopted an Arab and Islamic identity. In the East African city-states, Arab settlers intermarried with local peoples and became the elites of the coastal Swahili society based on a new language and cultural style which symbolized the merger of populations. Muslim communities were consolidated by the integration of peoples and the formation of new cultural idioms. As the religion of the state and trading classes, Islam in Africa appeared in highly syncretic forms. Since African elites were not conquered and replaced, but converted and maintained in power, they brought with them a strong component of traditional, non-Islamic African practices.

In some cases, the formation of African-Muslim states was followed by the conversion of the masses. In Somalia, Mauritania, and other Saharan regions, the large

numbers of Arab migrants, the close identification of pastoral peoples with Arab nomads, and the utility of holy leadership for the regulation of relations among tribal communities help to explain why Islam was so widely accepted. In the Funj and Darfur Sultanates, state elites adopted Islam as a result of trading contacts, and opened the way for a large influx of Sufi missionaries. Muslim holy men, supported by state grants of land, converted the common people to Islam. In the Sudan, the spread of Arabic and contacts with Egypt and the Middle East helped establish Islam among the common people.

By the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, throughout West Africa, the spread of Muslim trading communities linked by lineage, trade, teaching, and Sufi affiliations had reached a critical mass which enabled Muslims to fight larger-scale political regimes. Motivated by a tradition of hostility to rulers among both trading and pastoral peoples, African-Muslim communities attempted to seize political power and to Islamize both state regimes and the masses of the African population. In Sudanic, savannah, and forest West Africa, the jihads were the equivalent of Islamic conquests in other parts of the world, and led indeed to the Islamization of northern Nigeria, Senegambia, and parts of the upper Guinea coast. However, even when colonial conquest put an end to Muslim jihads, Islam, without state support, served to express anti-colonialism and to unite uprooted peoples into new communal structures. In Africa the process of conversion was tied to a double mechanism of peaceful expansion of traders, settlers, and teachers, and to militant conquest. As in other parts of the world, the two could work either separately or in tandem.

If there is an underlying common factor in the worldwide diffusion of Islam it seems to be its capacity to generate religious fellowship, larger-order communities, and states among peoples otherwise living in highly factionalized or fragmented societies. Islam became the religion of tribal peoples and merchant groups seeking economic integration, and state elites seeking consolidated political power. In general, it seems to have been most effective when it gave a new social identity to peoples severed from traditional social structures.

Throughout the old world the diffusion of Islam led to the formation of new communities and states or to the redefinition of existing communities and empires in Islamic terms. In many parts of Africa and Inner Asia the introduction of Islam was the basis for conversions from animistic to monotheistic religions and for the construction of states in hitherto stateless societies. In most places, however, the advent of Islam inspired the reconstruction of societies that already had "higher" religions and state institutions.

In all these cases, the Middle Eastern experience served as a paradigm for the formation of the new societies. The Middle Eastern Islamic societies were built around three different types of collectivities: parochial groups, religious associations, and states. Parochial groups were based upon family, clan, lineage, tribal, clientele, and neighborhood ties. At the level of religious associations 'ulama' and Sufi elites were organized around schools of law, Sufi fraternities, and shrines. States were

characterized by such institutions as nomadic or ethnic elite armies, slave or mercenary military forces, a combination of bureaucratic and quasi-feudal forms of administration, and a Muslim terminology for taxation. These components of the Middle Eastern societies involved a combination of Islamic and non-Islamic institutions and concepts. While religious associations and certain aspects of taxation were specifically Islamic, state bureaucratic, administrative, and feudal-like systems of taxation were not. Furthermore, the prevailing concepts of legitimacy were formulated in patrimonial, ethnic, historical, or cosmopolitan cultural terms as well as in Muslim symbols. Similarly, the social systems and cultural expressions of parochial communities owed little to Islam. Thus our template for "Islamic societies" by definition includes non-Islamic institutions and cultures.

In the diffusion of Islamic institutions and identities, Middle Eastern precedents were sometimes transmitted as a whole system, sometimes in parts, depending upon who were the bearers of Islam and what were the conditions of its diffusion and reception in different societies. For example, conquest by nomadic peoples as opposed to contact among small groups of merchants made a significant difference in the way in which Middle Eastern Islamic influences were transmitted and received. In all instances, however, the diffusion of Islam released tremendous artistic and cultural forces as each new Islamic state and society attempted to work out its own synthesis of Middle Eastern Islamic institutions and local traditions. The history of Islamic societies illustrates the originality of Muslim regimes the world over and yet reveals them to be variations upon an underlying pattern shaped by indigenous conditions in each part of the Muslim world.

MUSLIM ELITES AND ISLAMIC COMMUNITIES

In every Islamic society 'ulama' and Sufis were the teachers, exemplars, and leaders of Muslim communities. The 'ulama' were the scholars knowledgeable about Muslim hadith, law, and theology. Their primary function was instruction and judicial administration. In West Africa we find 'ulama' under the local names of *mallam* or *karamoko* teaching in villages and town quarters. In Indonesia they were the teachers in *pesantren*, sometimes called *kijayi*. In Iran, Inner Asia, and the Ottoman empire they were the *mullahs*, who taught in Quran schools and higher-level madrasas. Despite important distinctions of knowledge, lineage, and wealth between higher- and lower-ranking 'ulama', there were rarely formal distinctions among them. Only in Bukhara and West Africa were 'ulama' graded by rank.

'Ulama' were commonly organized into schools of law, which were associations of scholars, teachers, and students adhering to the codes of law developed by discussion and debate among legal scholars in the eighth and ninth centuries. The principal Sunni schools were the Hanafi, Shafi'i, Maliki, and Hanbali, though the Shi'i 'ulama' of Iran were organized in an analogous fashion. Through the law schools, the scholars organized higher education and trained teachers and judicial

administrators. From the law schools came *muftis*, or legal consultants, notaries, and judges.

These activities generated a popular or mass following for the scholars and their schools. The students usually considered themselves the personal disciples and loyal clients of their masters. In Africa and Indonesia they worked in their masters' employ to pay their tuition. They commonly married into their masters' families. As an organized following they could have a considerable local political importance. The students of Istanbul and Bukhara were ready to take to the streets to defend their collective interests. Patrons and supporters came from the merchant and artisan classes. In eastern Iran and Transoxania, under Mongol and Timurid suzerainty, and in West African Dyula settlements, the 'ulama' were political leaders as well.

The religious authority of the 'ulama', their expertise in law, and their social leadership made it important for states to control them. The Ottoman, the Safavid, and the Mughal empires, and the states of Tunisia and Bukhara provide, in differing degrees, examples of the bureaucratic organization of 'ulama'. In other North and Sudanic African states the 'ulama' were not bureaucratically organized but were still courtiers and clients of the political elites. By contrast, Hanbalis in Egypt and Syria, Malikis in North and West Africa, and Naqshbandis in India not only maintained their autonomy, but were the active opponents of state elites in the name of Islamic principles.

The 'ulama' performed different political roles, depending upon their class level and the type of political system in which they were embedded. Higher-ranking 'ulama' were commonly state functionaries, while lower-level teachers were often spiritual counselors for the common people. In the Ottoman empire, 'ulama' bureaucrats belonged to the state elites, and lower-ranking students and teachers to the opposition. In Iran, the Shi'i 'ulama' evolved from a position of subordination to the state to autonomy and leadership of the common people.

The most striking socio-religious development of post-thirteenth-century Islamic societies was the emergence of Sufism in innumerable variations as the principal expression of Islamic beliefs and communal identities. Personified in scholars, mystics, ardent reformers, ecstatic preachers, and miracle-working holy men, Sufism became the almost universal sign of the Muslim presence. It is difficult to characterize Sufism briefly, since the word was used to apply to extremely varied religious and social practices. In general, Sufism is Muslim mysticism, or the spiritual quest that leads to direct experience of the reality of God's being. With variations, the term covers two basic constellations of religious ideas. One kind of Sufism is a religious and ethical discipline built upon adherence to the teachings of the Quran, the hadith, and the law, supplemented by spiritual practices designed to cultivate an outward conformity to Muslim norms and an inner insight into the ultimate spiritual realities. Muslim holy men of this type cultivate religious knowledge, ethical discipline, and spiritual insight, and are commonly integrated with the 'ulama'. The ordinary Sufi of this type is at once a scholar and a spiritual master.

A second kind of Sufism emphasizes faith in Sufi saints, and seems to arise out of preexisting belief in the world of spirits and the magical powers of holy men. To many ordinary Muslims, a Sufi is a person who has attained a quality of inner consciousness that makes him close to God. The saint is directly connected to the cosmos because he participates in the essential forces of rational or spiritual power. The Sufi is considered by his followers to be a spiritual teacher, a miracle worker, a dispenser of blessings, and a mediator between men and God. This type of Sufism led to veneration of the person of the holy man, and the heirs of his *baraka* (power of blessing), in the form of his tomb or shrine, or his disciples and descendants. It led to a religious life of offerings, sacrifices, and communal festivals around the shrines of saints. Shrine-Sufism, then, is a religion of magical acquisition of divine powers rather than of ethical or emotional self-cultivation. Though both types of Sufism are called Islam, they represent profoundly contrasting concepts of the religious life.

In either case, the social organization of Sufism followed from the authority of the Sufi masters. The ultimate social unit was the individual Sufi surrounded by his disciples. The individual holy man and his disciples could also win lay followers among the people of his village, quarter, or camp. Such small communities might in turn be linked together in lineages or brotherhoods, sharing a common religious identity.

Holy lineages derived from a concept of Sufi authority built on a combination of knowledge of the Quran, mystical achievements, and inherited powers transmitted by spiritual and/or genealogical descent from an earlier saint or from the Prophet himself. In many respects this concept is parallel to that of the Shi'i imams. Just as the silsila, or chain of religious transmission, went back to the companions of the Prophet, the genealogies of Sufis were commonly traced back to the Caliphs and the Prophet. Such was the case for the *miris*, *khawajas*, and *sayyids* of Transoxania and the *sharifs* of Morocco. The fusion of spiritual and genealogical descent was easy to make, for the Sufi was indeed a child of the Prophet; one who imitated his ways, recreated his life, and concentrated within himself the noble qualities, or the sura – the image of the Prophet. Given the widespread Muslim veneration for the holiness of ancestors, it was natural to identify present holiness with descent from superior beings.

In turn, the personal authority of the master was transmitted by silsilas, baraka, and genealogical descent to his descendants, to his disciples, and to his tomb. The descendants of a famous saint constituted a holy community based on inheritance of his spiritual qualities and lineage ties. Descent from the Prophet became particularly important in many regions in the fourteenth century and later. Certain lineages in Egypt, the *khawajas* of Bukhara and Kashgar, the *sharifs* of Morocco, Jakhanka lineages in West Africa, *evliadi* groups among Turkmens, and Berber *zawaya* lineages in Mauritania were identified as holy communities, every male member of which was a descendant of a saint and heir to his spiritual qualities.

More common was the organization of a tariqa, or Sufi brotherhood. A tariqa was formed when several Sufi masters considered themselves the disciples of an

earlier common teacher, perpetuating a common spiritual discipline. Although the tariqa cells were independent of each other, they recognized the same higher authority, and became units of a larger-order association. Some of these associations were regional in scale. In India the introduction of the tariqa was the basis of a region-wide Islamic society. In West Africa the consolidation of such brotherhoods in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was in part the basis of the effort to create Muslim states. Some of these brotherhoods, such as the Naqshbandi, the Qadiri, and others, became worldwide.

Veneration of shrines also led to special forms of communal or political organization. As the tombs of saints became centers for worship, administered by their descendants, the tomb complexes became the focus of communities composed of all the people who believed that the saints could perform miracles. Shrines were endowed with agricultural estates to provide funds for their upkeep and for charitable activities. In such cases a Sufi order included not only the descendants of the saint and the active disciples, but all of the people who believed in the saint and worshiped at his tomb. This fellowship of believers, however, remained highly diffuse, segmented, and barely capable of organized group activity. Still, from the thirteenth to the end of the eighteenth centuries, the veneration of shrines and holy places became the most widespread form of Islamic religious life. The Sufis and shrines provided ritual and spiritual counsel, medical cures, and mediation among different groups and strata of the population. Sufis helped to integrate corporate bodies such as guilds and to form political organizations among diverse lineage groups.

Sufism embodied a great variety of religious and social practices. The individual Sufi may have subscribed to any of a wide variety of religious or theosophical beliefs, may have come from any walk of life, may have had multiple affiliations (including simultaneous membership in different schools of law and Sufi brotherhoods), and may have coupled his mystical insights and practices with any of a number of worldly vocations, combining the roles of Sufi and scholar, merchant, artisan, or political chieftain. Similarly, the disciples and followers, while united by their adherence to the master and to the religious practices of their order, represented every conceivable social milieu. Given all this variation, Sufism cannot generally be defined, but may only be described case by case. The underlying common factor is the exercise of religious insight, discipline, or authority in worldly affairs and a reputation for sanctity.

By the nineteenth century, Islamic societies the world over had acquired similar types of Muslim elites, beliefs, religious practices, and social organizations. In each Muslim region we find not one but several variant types of Islam. There were the 'ulama', who represented formal scholastic learning, organized education, and judicial administration, affiliated through schools of law. There were also the 'ulama'-cum-Sufis, who combined legal learning with mystical discipline and contemplation, in an effort to live their lives in imitation of the Prophet. Such religious teachers perpetuated a tradition of learning which combined law, theology, and

Table 9. *The social organization of Sufism*

The Sufi master	
<i>shaykh</i>	teacher
<i>murshid, pir, ishan</i>	guide
<i>wali</i>	friend of God, saint
<i>arif</i>	gnostic
<i>khalifa</i>	deputy, head of branch of Sufi order with authority to initiate new members
Sufi lineages	
<i>ashraf, shurafa, zauaya, insilimen, evliad</i>	descendants of the Prophet, of companions of the Prophet and of saints
Sufi brotherhoods	
<i>murshid – khalifa – murid</i>	hierarchy of members
<i>silila</i>	chain of transmission of blessing from the Prophet to a present master
<i>kbrirqa</i>	the patched cloak of the master transmitted to the disciple as a sign of initiation
<i>khanafa, zauiya, tekke, dargah</i>	residences and facilities of an order
<i>waqf</i>	endowed financial support
Tombs and shrines	
<i>baraka</i>	blessing, God's power communicated through the saints
<i>kanamat</i>	miracles of saints
<i>ziyara</i>	visit to venerate a saint's tomb and seek his intercession before God
<i>urs</i>	celebration of the anniversary of the death of a saint, his marriage to God

Sufi wisdom representing Sunni-Shari'a-Sufi Islam. There were ecstatic visionary Sufis in the tradition of Ibn al-'Arabi and the gnostic forms of Islamic mysticism, as well as the popular forms of Sufi Islam expressed in veneration of saints, faith in their charismatic powers, and belief in the magic of their shrines. Throughout the Muslim world, Sufism in all its forms became the most widespread and popular form of Islam.

The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries witnessed the rise of a reformist (*tajdid*) movement opposed to the rigidities of the schools of law and the cultic aspects of shrine-Sufism – a reaction to the consolidation of the various types of 'ulama' and forms of Sufi Islam. In principle, the reformist mentality goes back to the early Hanbali movement which emphasized commitment to the hadith of the Prophet, rather than law or cultic worship, and to social activism to improve the quality of Muslim political and communal life. By the seventeenth century this position had new adherents outside Hanbali circles. Muslim scholars in the Ottoman empire and North Africa were again emphasizing the primacy of hadith. The Naqshbandi and Khalwati orders combined hadith and law with Sufi asceticism and meditation in opposition to shrine worship and festivals. Social reformers were active in India. The reformers stressed a combination of hadith and Sufism because their religious goal was not union with God but identification with the spirit and active life of the Prophet.

The various proto-reformist tendencies came together in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Mecca and Medina, where scholars representing the new trends in Morocco, Iraq, India, and elsewhere combined hadith scholarship with neo-Sufi social action. They worked on the earliest possible texts of hadith rather than the later standard collections, and sought to eliminate religious practices that were not found in the Quran and in the teachings of the Prophet. They celebrated al-Ghazzali as the premier teacher of Sufism, and set the foundation for religious orders that would propagate the new devotional seriousness. The reformist position spread rapidly via informal contacts. Naqshbandi teachers brought the order from Yemen to Egypt, and from India to Syria. In Cairo al-Azhar emerged as an important center of the new tendency, communicating hadith scholarship and the teachings of al-Ghazzali while repudiating the tradition of Ibn al-'Arabi, and visiting North African scholars taught their doctrine of imitation of and union with the spirit of the Prophet rather than pantheistic union with God.

The first political expression of the reformist tendency was the Wahhabi movement in Arabia. The religious goal of Wahhabi teaching was the purification of the heart from vices and sin, and acknowledgment of the unity and transcendence of God. The Wahhabis rejected Sufism, the veneration of any human being, and any authority except the Prophet himself. Wahhabism thus set an example of militant moral and social reform.

In India, which was in continuous interaction with Arabia through the travels of merchants, the movements of scholars, and the journeys of pilgrims, reform movements took root in Delhi, the Northwest Frontier, and Bengal. Reformism inspired the Padri movement in Minangkabau in Sumatra. It would also become extremely important in Africa, where it inspired the Sanusiya, the Tijaniya, the jihad of al-Hajj 'Umar, and Sufi tariqat in the Sudan. The political breakdown of Muslim countries and the rise of European imperialism would give reformed Sufism a new role in the mobilization of Muslim peoples for defense against European domination.

THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE OF ISLAM

The various types of Muslim elites, beliefs, and associations gave Muslim societies a complex structure. On one level, Islam may be considered an international religion in which all Muslims were linked by a shared tradition of learning and belief, by travel and pilgrimage to common centers of learning and worship, and by membership in international schools of law and religious brotherhoods. For example, Istanbul was the religious capital, not only of the Ottoman empire and of many of the Arab provinces, but also of Inner Asia. Cairo drew students to al-Azhar from as far away as Indonesia and West Africa. Schools of law found their affiliates over broad regions. The Malikis were predominant in North and West Africa, the Hanafis in the Ottoman empire, Inner Asia, and India, and the Shafi'is in India, Southeast Asia, and East Africa. Similarly, the Sufi brotherhoods generated regional

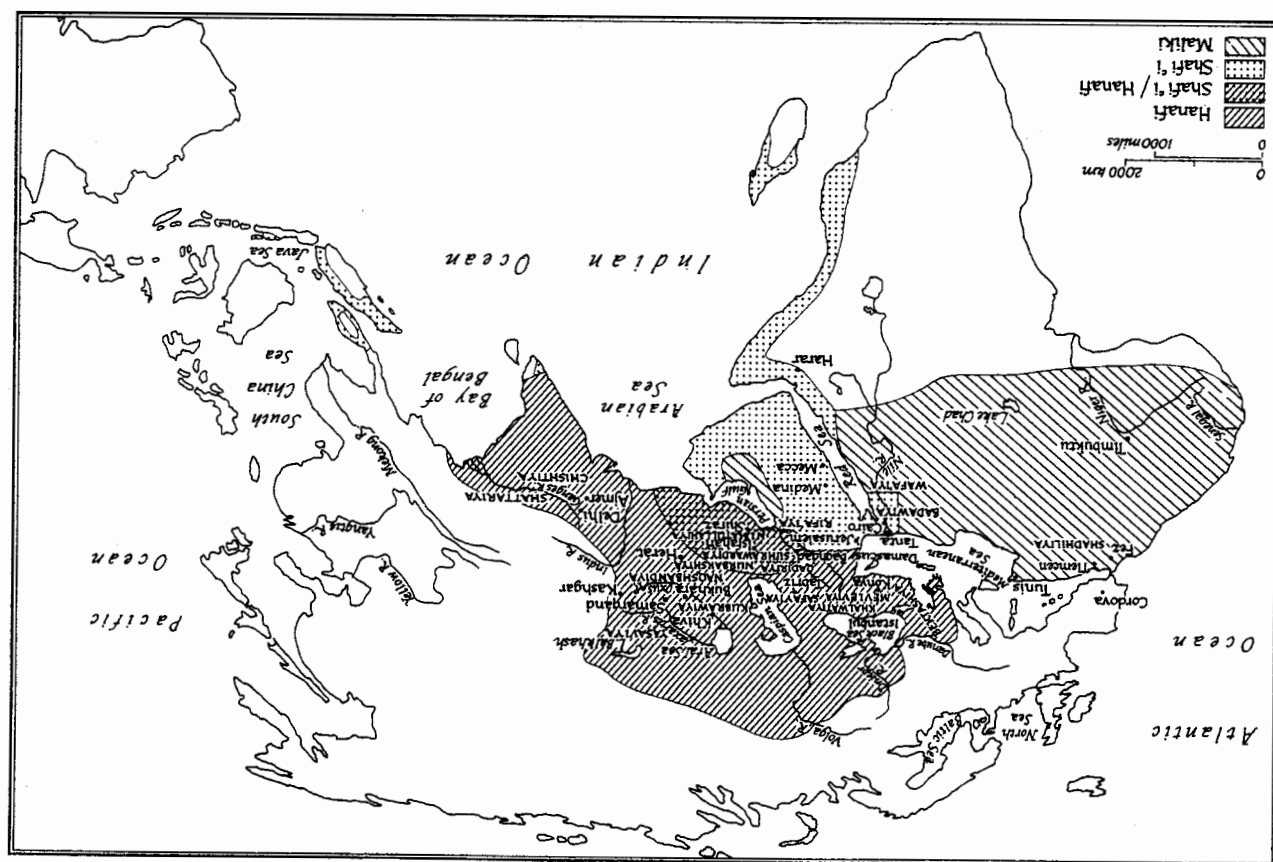
and international loyalties. The Naqshbandis spread throughout India, Inner Asia, China, the Caucasus, and the Middle East. The Tijaniya in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries became a North and West Africa-wide brotherhood with important branches in the Arab Middle East. The reform movement was centered upon Mecca and Medina, but radiated its influence to India, West Africa, Inner Asia, and China. This international Muslim community enables us to speak of "the Muslim world." Still, on another level, Islam remained intensely local, in that scholars and Sufis were embedded in particular communities and represented concepts and practices that were a fusion of the universal forms of Islam with local customs, beliefs, and lifestyles. Islam, then, has to be understood both as a universal religion and in its numerous particular contexts.

Islamic religious leadership and beliefs had a profound effect upon the social organization of Muslim peoples. In urban societies, which were commonly divided into strong family, clan, clientele, and residential groups, Islam could be the basis for the organization of neighborhood communities around a mosque, khanaqa, or college. Within the urban fabric there were schools of law, Sufi brotherhoods, or Shi'i sects identified with particular neighborhoods, occupations, or ethnic minorities. For example, in eleventh- and twelfth-century Iranian cities, neighborhood communities were closely identified with schools of law. In India and East Africa, merchant groups sometimes had a sectarian Isma'ili identity. Isma'ilis formed *jamatbandis*, or collective associations, which provided political leadership, and organized worship and instruction for a self-contained small community. Similarly, Dyula or Hausa merchant groups formed close-knit communities in West Africa. In these cases, the special trust and cohesion required for commercial activities came from religiously reinforced familial and ethnic loyalties.

Towns and cities, however, also provided a setting for social and political integration. This took place through markets, direct political negotiations among town notables, and the activities of 'ulama' and Sufis. Schools of law and Sufi tariqat drew diverse elements of the population into common religious bodies, and Islamic col- lectivities formed a superordinate community. Their integrative function was expressed in terms of allegiance to Shari'a. Through urban communities Islam also played an important role in creating regional and international trading networks, administrative organizations, and states.

In many village societies, Muslim identity was often superimposed upon pre-existing village identity. In Minangkabau in Sumatra, peasant villages had a double social structure, in which family and property were treated on patriarchal lines while trade and politics were symbolized in patriarchal Muslim terms. In other cases, the merger of Islamic and non-Islamic cultural identity was expressed through shrine worship, festivals, belief in spirits, and shamanistic or magical curing practices which blended faith in the miraculous powers of Islamic holy men with pre-Islamic beliefs. Religious conviction was expressed through worship at shrines and holy places in an annual cycle of religious festivals, magical activities, and other

Map 8 Muslim schools of law and Sufi brotherhoods: c. 1500



rituals which incorporated non- or pre-Islamic concepts and ceremonies. Islamic belief, then, did not necessarily lead to the formation of an organized body of believers, but could serve as a shared identity among diverse peoples who preserved their own kinship, territorial, linguistic, ethnic, and other bases of non-Islamic culture in group organization and social relations.

After the thirteenth century Sufism became central to lineage societies. In lineage societies Muslim holy men appeared as individual charismatic teachers – sometimes the custodians of local shrines, sometimes affiliated with brotherhoods. They also appeared as members of holy lineages, as one lineage among others. Sufi lineages in Algeria, Morocco, southern Somalia, Mauritania, and Turkmenistan are among the many examples of groups tracing their descent to the Prophet or the early Caliphs, who were organized as separate communities within the framework of the surrounding tribal society. Similarly, African Dyula communities were made up of lineages or specialized occupational castes operating as components of complex, usually non-Muslim, segmented societies. The authority of these lineages was based in part on descent and in part upon Sufi qualities. Whether as individuals or lineages, Sufis served to facilitate the selection of chiefs, mediate disputes, and organize long-distance trade or other economic ventures.

Sufi leadership could also unite clans, lineages, and tribes into larger movements, tribal conquests, and the formation of states. In such cases, religious leadership and loyalties created a double structure of society in which religious elites represented the larger movement and secular tribal or group chieftains represented the smaller units. In these cases, the larger religious identity did not efface other aspects of ethnic, tribal, or clan loyalties, but rather was superimposed upon them. Movements created in this way were likely to fragment into their component parts.

The unification of pastoral or tribal peoples under Islamic religious leadership was a recurring phenomenon. The prime example is the original integration of Arabian bedouins into a conquering movement by the preaching of Islam. Later, in Oman, Arab tribesmen were united and governed by the Ibadi (Khariji) imams. In North Africa from the seventh to the thirteenth centuries, Berber peoples were united under Kharijism, Shi'ism, Sunni reformism, and Sufism to form the Fatimid, Almoravid, Almohad, and other movements. After the twelfth century, Sufism played a particularly important role in tribal unification. Rural populations throughout North Africa came to be organized in Sufi-led communities. In Morocco, the Sa'dian and the 'Alawi dynasties were based on Sufi-led coalitions of pastoral and mountain peasant peoples. The Safavids united individuals, clienteles, and clans to conquer and govern Iran. The conquerors of Anatolia and the Balkans, while under overall dynastic direction, were at the local level led by Sufis. In Inner Asia, the khwajas created coalitions of pastoral peoples. The tribes that occupied Somalia were united by allegiance to Sufis. The West African Fulani jihads of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were built on reform preaching.

Table 10. *Muslim religious officials*

Caliph	head of Sunni Muslim <i>umma</i>
Mosques	
imam	leader of prayer
<i>khatib</i>	preacher of official sermon
muezzin	crier of calls to prayer
Schools	
<i>faqih</i> or <i>alim</i> (pl. <i>ulama</i>)	scholar of law
<i>mudarris</i>	professor of <i>madrasa</i>
Legal administrators	
<i>qadi</i>	judge
<i>mufti</i>	jurisconsult
<i>shaykh al-Islam</i>	chief <i>mufti</i> and head of judicial establishment
<i>mubtasib</i>	market inspector and enforcer of morals
Sufi brotherhoods	
<i>shaykh</i> (<i>mursbid</i> , etc.)	master and guide
<i>khulifa</i>	deputy
<i>muqqadam</i>	local headman in brotherhood
<i>shaykh al-shuyukh</i>	chief of Sufi shaykhs (Egypt)
<i>sajjada nishin</i>	successor, chief of shrine
Descendants of Prophet	
<i>sayyid</i> , <i>sharif</i> (pl. <i>ashraf</i> , <i>shurafa</i>)	syndic of the descendants of the Prophet
<i>naqib al-ashraf</i>	scholar of law qualified to give independent legal judgment
Ithna ashari Shi'a	
<i>mujtahid</i>	proof of God: higher-ranking <i>mujtahid</i>
<i>hujjatollah</i>	sign of God: highest-ranking <i>mujtahid</i>
<i>ayatollah</i>	religious teacher to whom obedience is due
<i>marja' i-taqlid</i>	
Isma'ilis	
<i>da'i</i>	missionary
<i>hujja</i>	proof-representative of imam
imams	successors to the Prophet and leaders of the Muslims

Thus many of the great "tribal" movements that led to the formation of Islamic states were built upon Muslim religious leadership or the integration of Muslim religious and secular chieftainship. In tribal societies Muslim leadership inspired millenarian revolts and radical opposition to established regimes. Before the modern era this was the principal expression of the Islamic impulse to transform the world and fashion a new human order.

MUSLIM STATES

Most Muslim societies were ruled by states, which operated in tandem with their 'ulama' and Sufi leadership. These states were often based upon similar concepts, institutions, and vocabularies. Generally, a Muslim ruler was the symbol of a legitimate regime, the guarantor that Muslim laws would be enforced, and the representative of the historical continuity of Muslim communities. Muslim states and

empires were expected to maintain worship, education, and law. In times of war, they were to defend against infidel enemies; in times of peace, they patronized scholars and saints. The existence of a Muslim state assured its people that the civilized order of the world was being upheld.

Muslim states differed greatly as to the nature of their religious legitimization. In many cases, this legitimization was attached to the person of the ruler. The Umayyads of Damascus, 'Abbasids, Fatimids, Almoravids, Almohads, Umayyads in Spain, and the leaders of West African jihads in the nineteenth century all considered themselves hierocratic rulers. They were the heirs to the authority of the Prophet; they were at once teachers and rulers. Similarly, the khwajas of Kashgar, the Sufi masters of small Moroccan states, and the Safavids of Iran regarded themselves as the repository of religious as well as temporal authority. In Morocco, the legitimacy of the ruler depended upon his sharifian descent and Sufi qualities. The reform movements of the nineteenth century would bring a resurgence of the aspiration to unite religious and political leadership.

In other Muslim societies, legitimacy was attached directly to the state institutions. The Ottoman empire was legitimized by its reputation as a warrior regime that expanded the frontiers of Islam and defended Muslim peoples against the infidels. Even in the nineteenth century, when the Ottoman state was in decline and overwhelmed by European powers, its importance to Muslim security remained unquestioned.

Legitimization, more generally, depended upon a combination of Muslim and non-Muslim patrimonial, cosmopolitan, or cosmological symbols. The 'Abbasid regime and its Mamluk, Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal successors appealed to genealogical descent from earlier Arab, Persian, or Turkish nobility to justify their rule. Each regime also patronized a cosmopolitan culture to define its political identity: the 'Abbasids and Ottomans, architecture; the Mughals, painting and music. Through their patronage of philosophy and science, Muslim regimes appealed to universal symbols as the basis of the political order. Muslim statecraft was also conceived of as being regulated by rules derived entirely from secular monarchical traditions. The state elites distanced themselves from Islamic commitments by cultivating artistic, literary, and scientific achievements that had little to do with Islam but were part of the historical political culture of the various Muslim regions. The multiple levels of legitimization responded to the need to win political support or acquiescence from the multi-ethnic, multi-religious populations who were commonly subjected to Muslim rule.

Furthermore, each regime showed originality in the selection of cultural and artistic styles, and in the degree of emphasis placed upon Islamic, cosmopolitan, cosmological, and patrimonial symbols. Thus the Arab regimes tended to be strongly Islamic, without noteworthy cosmopolitan symbols; the Indian Mughal empire was highly syncretic. Indonesian and Malayan regimes perpetuated a non-Islamic culture of imperium with little more than Islamic titles. By contrast, the nineteenth-century African jihads were dedicated to an Islamic utopia.

Muslim states tended to adopt similar political practices and to redefine local political precedents in Islamic terms. The militias of tribal-founded Muslim empires were commonly transformed into slave or client forces. This was especially important in the Middle East, where slave troops were recruited to supplement or to displace tribal levies, as in the cases of the 'Abbasid, Ghaznavid, Saljuq, Mamluk, Ottoman, and Safavid empires. Slaves were also used in North and West Africa. Slaves were generally recruited in Inner Asia and the Caucasus, but were also taken from non-Muslim populations in the Balkans, Georgia, and sub-Saharan Africa. Slaves commonly retained an ethnic and cultural identity based on their non-Muslim past.

In administration Muslim states also shared similar practices. The 'Abbasids inherited Byzantine and Sasanian practices in granting tax revenues for military services, and the Saljuqs molded the *iqta'* of late 'Abbasid times into a system of financial administration which, under various names, was later adapted by the Mongol, Timurid, Ottoman, Safavid, Uzbek, and Mughal empires. The *iqta'*, *timar*, *tuyul*, and *jagir* (all names for grants of tax revenues) represent a similar principle of decentralized financial support for the state military elite. Other examples of administrative uniformities among Muslim states are taxation on a *kharaj-jizya* or land- and poll-tax basis, and the endowment of waqfs for religious purposes. In many cases, as in Inner Asia and North Africa, these uniformities were due to the direct transfer of Middle Eastern institutions, but in many others, they were due to the inheritance of similar institutions from earlier non-Muslim regimes, and to the adoption of a common Muslim terminology for separate precedents.

Alongside Islamic practices and symbols, Islamic states were defined by their relationship to the 'ulama' and the Sufis. The Ottoman, Safavid, and Bukhara monarchies were strongly supported by an organized 'ulama' bureaucracy which looked upon the state as indispensable to Islam. These states suppressed antagonistic Sufi brotherhoods, and appropriated the political functions of Sufis by endowing government officials with extensive powers to dispense justice, regulate economic matters, protect trade, and sponsor education. In these cases, 'ulama' commonly held the view that even a corrupt and evil state had to be accepted and obeyed, for any regime was better than none. In their view, the alternative to state control was anarchy and factional violence. In some African kingdoms, the 'ulama', while not highly organized by the state, were still the source of political legitimization – even from non-Muslim subjects, who accepted the superior magic of literate Muslim courtiers. In India the Mughals drew limited support and much criticism from the 'ulama'. In Indonesia, by contrast, Muslim elites had little or no role in the legitimization of regimes and were, if anything, the leaders of peasant resistance.

While the relations between states and 'ulama' tended toward interdependence, those between states and Sufis tended toward opposition. Some Sufi orders co-operated with central governments and transmitted governmental authority to the common people, as did the Suhrawardis of India and the Mevlevis of the Ottoman empire, but Sufism was usually apolitical, as in the case of the Chishtis in India. Many

Sufi orders opposed governments, as in eighteenth-century Algeria and Morocco. In general, highly organized states regarded the 'ulama' as politically compatible, but considered the Sufis as political competitors to be suppressed or coopted.

Even in cases where Sufis were independent, there was an intimate connection between Sufis and the state authorities. Rulers patronized the Sufi masters in order to acquire some of the blessing attributed to the saints, and to transfer the legitimacy of the Sufis to the princes. In India the same rituals and ceremonies were observed in both the courts of the Sufis and the court of the ruler. Both courts were called by the same name – *dargah*. Conversely, the authority of Sufi masters was built around worldly success, power, and efficacy in daily affairs.

The Muslim aspects of these states were accompanied by shared non-Muslim factors. One of these was the incorporation of non-Muslim elites. "Muslim" state elites were often warriors for whom tribal identity was more salient than Muslim identity. Moreover, such tribal military forces were frequently supplemented or replaced by non-Muslim levies. The Mughal regime, for example, absorbed Hindu lords; North African regimes depended upon Catalan or Aragonese forces. The subordinate vassal principalities of large Muslim empires included non-Muslim tribal chiefs, feudal lords, and other local notables. These subordinate regimes were ordinarily legitimized in patriarchal or patrimonial terms and not by recourse to Islamic symbols or ideology.

Thus, Muslim regimes and empires were usually composite formations that embodied Islamic institutions in the matrix of a broader political culture. They carried an inherent ambiguity of identity. On one level, they were Muslim; on another, they were cosmopolitan patrons of a style of monarchical culture which, despite variations, gave a similar *gestalt* to Ottoman, Safavid, Mughal, and other Muslim state cultures. The production of illuminated manuscripts, the diffusion of Persian literary forms into Turkish and Urdu, the construction of domed architectural monuments, and many other features identify an imperial variant of Islamic civilization. On another level, the culture of Muslim regimes was also regional and derived from the pre-Islamic and non-Islamic substrates of the societies they ruled. Local languages, poetic traditions, literary forms, architectural motifs, musical motifs, and cultic practices made each Muslim regime an expression of a particular locality. The several interacting levels of universal Islamic, cosmopolitan imperial, and local cultural styles afforded each regime a distinctive identity.

CONFRONTATION WITH EUROPE

By the eighteenth century the worldwide system of Islamic societies had reached its apogee and begun its political decline. The Safavid state had been defeated by Afghan invaders and, deserted by its tribal vassals, disintegrated completely. The Ottoman empire went through a period of decentralization, though the concept of an imperial state was unimpaired. The Mughal empire disintegrated into numerous competing provincial and feudal regimes. In Southeast Asia, a centralized regime

had never been established over the Indonesian archipelago or the Malay peninsula, and the largest Indonesian state, the Mataram empire of Java, came under direct Dutch economic and indirect Dutch political control. In North Africa, Muslim states were being subverted by their declining commercial position in the Mediterranean, and provincial, tribal, and Sufi resistance was on the increase. The Sudanic states had long passed the peak of their commercial prosperity, though Muslim communities were growing in influence in other parts of Africa. By this period much of the northern steppes of Inner Asia had come under Russian control and eastern Turkestan under Chinese rule.

Pluralistic European societies

The crucial common factor in the decline of Muslim regimes was the rising power of Europe. On the far western fringe of the Eurasian land mass European peoples were making a revolution in world history. From the late Middle Ages to modern times, European societies were developing the capacities to generate technological inventions, economic wealth, and military power. These developments would profoundly change the conditions of life not only for Muslims, but for all the world's peoples.

European world power had its origins in a set of intertwined socio-economic and cultural conditions that led to the formation of highly pluralistic societies. Unlike Middle Eastern societies, European societies were not organized upon the threefold template of kinship, religious community, and empire. Medieval European family structure, with some exceptions among the feudal nobility, did not tend to the formation of closed lineage groups, but rather to the formation of open and interlocking social networks based on bilateral connections of both husband and wife. With the fall of Rome and the failure of the Carolingian and Holy Roman empires, European states no longer had the all-embracing political and mythic importance they had held in the Middle East. In place of empires, feudal governments based on personal and contractual loyalties, governments by oath association, and communes or popular assemblies based on Roman or Germanic notions of popular sovereignty were accepted as legitimate.

Most important was the tendency toward separation of state and church. While in the Middle East Muslim symbols were becoming pervasive, European society was becoming secularized. The potentiality for secularization was implicit in the Christian church. The fact that the church was a highly organized, corporate institution governed under laws and norms appropriate to itself but not to lay society made it possible to define a profane realm – "the world" – outside the church, a world governed by non-church or non-canonical laws. At the same time, European society had independent sources of secular civic and cultural values. Greek and Roman political and legal ideas, and German communal and feudal concepts, defined a realm of legal authority and secular values which, though not Christian, were held to be legitimate. Not only were church and state separate institutions, but Christian and secular societies had separate foundations.