

Islamic Resurgence and the Twenty-First Century: Redefining Old Agendas in a New Age

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The Image and Impact of Islamic Resurgence

The global phenomenon of Islamic resurgence (or Islamic revivalism), which has caught the attention of Muslims and non-Muslims, has impacted the world community in many different ways. Much of this reassertiveness of the Islamic ethos has been discussed and published.¹ Feeling somewhat threatened by the “rise of Islam” as it were, the general non-Muslim and western attitude has been one of suspicion and awe: such Muslim “fundamentalist” behavior and trends, it was argued, had to be checked or even thwarted, or else Muslims would make life difficult for others. There were some exceptions to such a negative attitude and response, but by and large such a wariness had permeated the thinking of many non-Muslims, including western powers and the non-Muslim world generally.

This mindset lingers until today as the world approaches the arrival of the twenty-first century—manifest, for instance, in the “clash of civilization” thesis postulated by the well-known Harvard professor, Samuel Huntington recently. Even more recent was the declaration by both the French Defense Minister and the NATO secretary-general that the world today is facing a new threat after the fall of communism, that of Islamic fundamentalism, and their call for the West to bolster support only to what he called moderate Muslim regimes.² The behavior and actions of fanatics and extremists, both Muslim and non-Muslim, the world over, have exacerbated the problem and, consequently, worsened the poor image that people have of Muslims and Islam.

Among Muslims, the reaction to this Islamic revivalist phenomenon has been varied. At the more popular or mass level, the response has oscillated from either one of two extremes: traditional religious militant rejectionism of the West to wholesale western-oriented adaptationism.³ On the one hand, the revivalism had somewhat heightened Muslims awareness of their own identity and the feeling that Muslim values and aspirations were being given due attention by the international commu-

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nity. At a time when the developed West was seen to be not only the main beneficiary of progress and modernity, but also charting world events and determining the fate of nations, such an awareness had been translated into greater outpourings of religiosity, manifest for instance in the nature of attire, food habits, and the greater number of youths attending religious classes.

Among Islamic elites and intelligentsia, in particular, the response has been mixed. From one perspective, the birth of Islamic groups and movements and the ability of Islam and Muslims to influence socioeconomic and political developments in some countries have engendered the good feeling that Islam is gaining recognition and that Muslims have tremendous potential to play an important role in the domestic settings of their own countries as well as on the world stage at large. From another perspective, however, some Islamic scholars and activists have become disillusioned and disenchanted with what they see as the resurgence's superficiality, rationalizing that such a global resurgence has not substantively changed the position and role of Muslims in their own countries or elsewhere. The more critical of such scholars have opined that the greater the so-called resurgence in Muslim lands, the greater the persecution of Muslims.⁴

Such has been the general global picture of Islamic resurgence thus far. And, it can be argued that very little will change for the better in the twenty-first century if Muslims themselves, particularly their leaders and elites, lack intellect and belief and have no new ideas and strategies to confront the impending global challenges now being unveiled. If they are not careful, they will find themselves marginalized and treated as tangential actors by such powerful countries as the United States, Russia, the European Community, China, Japan, and the newly industrializing economies in the Asia-Pacific region.

Two Scenarios

Reflecting on global developments in recent years, one can outline two extreme scenarios that may occur and, with them, the probable fate of Muslims. While we have been reminded constantly in the Qur'an and the Sunnah that God will not change our position for the better if we are reticent and do not take the initiative ourselves, the fact is that our future will be shaped not only by our actions, but by the world community, specifically by non-Muslim western powers. After all, such was the harsh reality under colonialism. Unprepared and ill-equipped to face the arrival of colonialists and imperialists, many Muslim countries had their political, economic, and religious life subsumed and submerged under colonial military might and policies.⁵

Today, not only do non-Muslim powers possess the means to direct the shape of things to come and face the possible emergence of new forms of neoimperialist designs, the world of the twenty-first century will shrink

further until it becomes a real global village. In such an eventuality, those with the capacity to set the direction and the pace will influence the values and lives of others.

First Scenario: In this scenario, the world becomes much safer, stable, and peaceful. This could happen if economics, rather than military or strategic political alignments, were to chart relations among states. With the end of the cold war and the downfall of communism, the threat to world peace is very reduced and states, convinced that economic development and prosperity will be the new priority, will direct their resources toward developing good and mutually beneficial relationships for themselves and the world at large. The major powers, the United States, Russia, China, Japan, Europe, and the developing economies of the vibrant Asia-Pacific region⁶ can then be expected to be fairer in their mutual dealings and more generous in their attitude and approach to the less-developed countries.

Issues of global concern that transcend state boundaries, such as the environment, overpopulation,⁷ AIDS, poverty and malnutrition, plague,⁸ a fairer redistribution of the world's wealth, and the like, will be better and more equitably managed in order to benefit the world's citizens as a whole. State relationships will become more harmonious and more stable as liberal democratic values permeate the values and ideological bases of nations.⁹ The United Nations will become more representative and effective, and the entire world community will rally around it to bolster world growth, redress inequalities, and generally foster the development of a more secure and peaceful world for all. That is one probable future for humanity.

Second Scenario: The other scenario is less rosy, perhaps even grim. The end of the cold war means the emergence of other forms of war, instability, and disorder in many parts of the world. Ethno-religious conflicts will escalate as peoples held together by the totalitarian control of fascist and communist regimes unleash their historical antipathies and mistrusts, in a manner akin to the madness that has enveloped places such as Bosnia and Rwanda. The vacuum resulting from the end of global bipolarity will be filled by such economically strong regional powers as China, Japan, and Germany, which, joined by regional aspirants, will want to have a bigger share and stake in the ever-shrinking world.

The death of charismatic leaders may precipitate widespread domestic instability and strife in many states. One such case could be the passing of China's Deng Xiaoping, an event that, in the worst case scenario, would lead to warlordism throughout China and end its current 13 percent annual economic growth. Such repercussions would be felt worldwide. Russia, with a new ultranationalist leader, may become more adventurous with her neighbors, formerly grouped under the Soviet Union, as in

Chechnya. The Middle East peace process might bring peace in Israeli–Arab relations but also might challenge existing values and political–economic systems. New hotspots could emerge in the Korean peninsula, the South China sea, the Baltics, and other areas. States with little faith in western democracy, such as the Islamic and Confucian states, might exercise their civilizational independence vis-à-vis each other and decide to engage proxies in advancing their spheres of influence. In such a scenario, the United Nations would be helpless, if not useless, and unable to play a meaningful role in fostering world peace and stability. Thus, the world may become anarchical, chaotic, and generally unstable.

Of these two future scenarios, many observers and political leaders seem to be upbeat about the first, positive trend: of a world where harmonious relationships are the norm and the world is a better place in which to live. While Muslims are always encouraged to adopt a positive attitude in confronting the vicissitudes of life, perhaps, a safe and pragmatic approach is for them to prepare for the worst, or the second, scenario.

Islamic Resurgence: Redefining Old Agendas

There could be many ways of looking at the message that twentieth-century Islamic revivalists wanted to convey via such people as Ḥassan al-Bannā, Muḥammad Iqbāl, Abūl A'lā Mawdūdī, Muḥammad Natsir, Ḥassan al Turābī, 'Alī Shari'āfī, and Ayatollah Khomeini or in such movements as al Ikhwān al Muslimūn, Jamā'at-i Islāmī, and the Muḥammadīyah.¹⁰ Their message includes the need to return to the glorious Islamic past and to practice Islamic teachings, to cleanse the faith from corrupted and deviant accretions, to establish some form of Islamic state, and the like. Given their determination to insist on the return to Islamic “fundamentals,” their calls were negatively dubbed as “fundamentalism” by many western writers and leaders, although their message was nothing new. After all, not only were the predecessors of the revivalists in such movements as the Wahhābis (led by Muḥammad ibn al Wahhāb, 1703-92), the Wāli Allāhs (led by Shāh Wāli Allāh of Delhi, 1702-93), the Mahdīs (led by Muḥammad Aḥmad, 1848-85), Sanūsīs (led by Muḥammad 'Alī Sanūsī 1787-1859), and others espousing similar theses,¹¹ such was also, one can argue, the message from the first day of the Prophet's mission.

Muslims in the Twenty-First Century: Challenges

Obviously, there are severe limitations in gazing at a crystal ball, but certain future things are as clear as daylight: greater advances in technology and communications; a more interdependent and integrated world; increased knowledge due to new discoveries and inventions; more political and economic players wanting a share in shaping world agendas;

greater competition among ideological, cultural, ethnic, and religious strains; and, for Muslims, the intellectual shift from the Middle Eastern heartland of Islam to other places, such as the United States and Southeast Asia, is bound to accelerate with English, not Arabic, assuming the role as the lingua franca of the Muslim world.

What do all of the above trends mean to Muslims? Of the many challenges they can expect to face in the coming century, perhaps three can be highlighted here: a) economic: how to upgrade their knowledge and skills, that, while making them relevant to the new age while keeping them in line with the Islamic conception of knowledge; b) socio-cultural: how to deal with westernization and its attendant values of secularism, nationalism, and capitalism, and still maintain their Islamic identity; and c) political: domestically, what type of leadership should Muslims have and the quest for an Islamic state and, internationally, how the Islamic leadership can exercise leverage on the world community.

The Economic Challenge: This is closely related to the quest for knowledge and the need to upgrade technological competencies and skills. This factor of knowledge (*'ilm*) is not new. From time immemorial, there has been one valuable constant in human civilization: the better equipped and the more knowledgeable will prosper over others—as was true of the earlier Chinese, Hindu, Greek, Persian, and Egyptian civilizations. That was also the situation with pre-Islamic Arab civilization, for the region was so backward and pitiful that the superpowers of the time, Byzantium and Persia, simply ignored it as unworthy and undeserving of their attention. Contrast that with the superiority that Arabs, once Islamized and knowledgeable, attained over others and became the envy of many peoples.

Thus Muslims have been ordered to seek knowledge and to upgrade their skills so that they are relevant to the requirements of their age. It is no exaggeration to say that we need more scientists, engineers, business entrepreneurs¹² (particularly with a global outlook), networking among Muslim scholars and experts, consultants, and other expertise. The pursuit of knowledge and the upgrading of competence has no boundaries and must not be confined to Muslim lands, for the Prophet advised Muslims to go even to China, then a major center of learning and civilization. They are also well aware that there are many Qur'anic statements about the difference between those with knowledge and those without it (Qur'an 39:9) and how the knowledgeable are higher than others in the eyes of God (Qur'an 58:11).¹³ The Prophet also said that knowledge is like a lost treasure that Muslims must find and regain, and that the ulama (men of knowledge) are like a bright constellation of stars on a dark night.

This principle aside, there is another critical aspect of knowledge worthy of Muslim thought: Knowledge is related to belief (*īmān*). If knowledge is the only criteria for ranking people, then Iblis and Shayṭān

are higher than humans, for they are more knowledgeable. The key distinction here is that humans have, or (as Muslims) are expected to have, belief. With *'ilm*, *īmān*, and *iḥsān*, we go to Paradise and leave Hell for Shayṭān. There is a Qur'anic supplication commonly recited by Muslim after prayers: "O Allah, I seek from Thee knowledge and intellect and gather me in the company of the pious" (26:83). Nothing is said about being gathered in the company of the clever/knowledgeable only.

Knowledgeable Muslims also have read how earlier jurists, philosophers, scientists, and others were people of learning, experts and specialists of repute, and full of piety and faith. There is no need to stretch our memory far to find such examples as 'Alī ibn Abū Ṭālib, who was not only described by the Prophet as the gate of knowledge but who used his knowledge in the cause of Islam. As Muslims brace to face the economic challenge of the twenty-first century, this knowledge-belief twining in the Islamic conception of knowledge deserves some attention, particularly among Muslims professionals, youths, and educated people. Otherwise, they may waste effort and resources to produce many educated and knowledgeable Muslims who may bring Muslims no closer to success and salvation. In fact, the experience of many Muslim peoples and states have shown that knowledgeable and educated Muslims could actually tear asunder their societies and even sacrifice their religion.

The Sociocultural Challenge: Although this challenge contains many issues and concerns, we will limit it to two related matters: westernization and its impact on the preservation of Islamic identity.¹⁴ At this juncture, it is imperative to distinguish between westernization and modernization, for they are not synonymous. While the latter tends to be positive and desirable, the former can be prejudicial to Muslims if they copy everything that comes from the West as good.

Consider how nationalism, capitalism, and especially secularism can be quite inimical to our progress. Nationalism, the product of modern European history and closely linked with the origins of popular sovereignty, means attaching one's supreme loyalty to the nation-state. It asserts that this entity is the ideal and only form of political organization.¹⁵ Once it is established, its citizens have to defend it fully and surrender their complete loyalty to it. Carried to the extreme, nationalism stresses the nation's distinct character, race, and creed. Muslims, living in what is essentially a world of nation-states, are confronted with this stark reality and have to accept it and adjust their aspirations and actions accordingly.

While the idea of loving one's country (*waṭanīyah*) does not contradict the Islamic worldview, for the Prophet had said that love of one's abode (*ḥubb al waṭan*) is a sign of piety, an abiding and blind preoccupation with the state and its people-centered sovereignty may pose problems. Here again, while it is permissible to accept Ibn Khaldūn's concept of *'aṣabīyah*

(a sense of group or national consciousness and solidarity) as Islamically defensible, there are problems if it becomes *ta'āsub*, a parochial and blind love of something, manifest in the popular nationalist dictum, "my nation, right or wrong."¹⁶

Just consider one aspect of the western value system: secularism. In this ideology, religion is separated from politics in the affairs of the state, and material well-being is deemed to be most essential to human happiness. In this regard it is related to capitalism, which espouses the ideology of material prosperity in an open free market system and where ownership of wealth, resources, and venture capital, usually gained via private enterprise, determines an individual's or a state's progress. With its emphasis on achieving maximum efficiency, secularism rejects any form of theocracy, viewing religion as incompatible with development and modernity. Hence, secularism is the antithesis of Islam, for it rejects belief in God's supremacy, revelation, and the hereafter. So too with capitalism, if it leads to our obsession with material pursuits. Secularism creates further challenges for Islam: It encourages a different set of policies based on science and human-made laws rather than divine criteria, and consciously relegates religion to the realm of private preference and judgment.¹⁷

In the decades to come, despite evidence of a worldwide trend in revival of all major religions, nationalism and capitalism may lead to the consolidation of secular norms and practices everywhere. Hence, the challenge for Muslims is to see how such an emphasis on rationality and the irrelevance of faith in guiding people can be ventilated by a greater commitment to Islamic principles and ideals, upon which we can preserve our Islamic identity. This will not be easy for future generations, given the anticipated global domination of non-Muslim powers, the growing permeation of western values via extensive mass media exposure,¹⁸ and the kind of education and socialization processes through which Muslims pass. This challenge will, in all probability, escalate in the coming century, since the global economic and political system is tilting more and more toward such capitalistic, nationalistic, and secularistic ethos and inclinations.

If Muslims residing in Muslim-majority states, particularly affluent states, are already confronted with a gamut of secular influences, imagine the plight of Muslim minorities, more so in states that profess secularism as the national ideology. In such situations, they have to strive to retain their Islamic identity in a manner that will not lead to a greater clampdown from the majority populace. The case of French Muslims in France being harassed for wearing the *hijāb* is not an isolated incident, for Muslims in many countries face similar discrimination because of their "Islamness." The general non-Muslim individual's perception of Islam and Muslims presents many challenges to Muslims, who must handle them judiciously. Despite that, however, many Muslims ironically find it easier to practice their faith in secular states than in states claiming to be governed by the

Shari'ah and Islamic modes of behavior. In these so-called Islamic states, Islamic leaders and scholars are often persecuted, women find their rights abused based on misinterpreted Qur'anic texts,¹⁹ and many other Muslims suffer for a variety of reasons.

The Political Challenge: In this paper, we have limited the political challenge to three areas, namely, the leadership of the Muslim community, the quest for an Islamic state, and the issue of a global pan-Islamic leadership.

The importance of leadership in determining the success or failure of groups, organizations, communities, nations, and religions cannot be over-emphasized. Imagine the fate of Muslims and Islam today if the Prophet and the generation of those who alive when the Qur'an was revealed were lacking in leadership.

Rather than delving into the details of current Muslim leadership, we will first analyze some pertinent principles and aspects of the Islamic definition of leadership. According to the unanimous opinion of the ulama, two principles are paramount: meritocracy (qualification and capability) and religiosity (piety and adherence to Islam). The preferred order is piety and then capability. It is rare for Muslim communities to find leaders with both qualities, an unfortunate situation that can be attributed to the educational systems through which Muslims pass. As a result, many contemporary Muslim societies are led either by members of the traditional ulama class who are well-trained in Islamic disciplines and committed Muslims but who are somewhat unable to resolve contemporary problems, or by secular trained leaders who are also unable to solve such problems and who have no background in religious understanding, practice, or commitment.

A major challenge for contemporary and future Muslims is to resolve this dichotomous form of leadership. One way is to ensure that their children and students go to schools, colleges, and universities that can equip them with both secular and religious training and exposure, although such a distinction, doctrinally speaking, does not exist.²⁰ If this challenge continues to be problematic, particularly for Muslim minorities living in secular states, the alternative is to provide a supplementary Islamic education in the home or in community programs. At the community or state level, a short-term measure, a system of leadership that can join the talents of religious-trained and secular-trained individuals in one consultative body and then make use of their collective wisdom, must be found. In the meantime, however, secular-trained Muslims in leadership positions must begin to learn the basic Islamic beliefs and understandings and to observe Islamic tenets. If they do not, Muslims will find themselves bogged down in what is allowed (*ḥalāl*) and what is prohibited (*ḥarām*), as has happened many times in the past. The end result will be their factionalization and eventual disintegration.

Finally, many verses in the Qur'an and the *sirah* prohibit any type of dictatorial rule, for they command Muslims to conduct their affairs in a

consultative and consensual manner (*shūrā baynahum*). However, such a "democratic" element in Islamic leadership does not necessarily imply that the leader has to follow the wishes of the majority, as is the practice of western democracies. There are instances in Islamic history that prove this assertion. For example, when the Prophet was once faced with having to decide between the opinions of Abū Bakr and that of the majority, he sided with Abū Bakr.

The second political challenge is the establishment of an Islamic state. While there is no clear consensus among the ulama as to whether Muslims may establish an Islamic state wherever they are, it is generally agreed that Muslims can only lead an Islamic life, in the fullest meaning of the term, in a state governed by the Shari'ah. However, it is important for thinking Muslims to consider this issue rationally and not to be driven by their emotions and innate desire to establish such a state.

Several factors need to be realized in this context. First, while Muslim-majority states can begin to consider such an option, what about Muslim-minority states or those governed by secular non-Islamic values and policies? Second, the process of establishing an Islamic state is necessarily evolutionary and gradual, for the state's societal foundations and culture must exist before an Islamic state can be established. If this is not the case, the attempt to establish rapidly an Islamic state may lead to chaos and disunity as well as to the ultimate detriment of the Muslims themselves. Third, the very concept of an Islamic state must be truly understood by the leaders and the people in order to prevent the state, once established, from being torn asunder by quarrels among the leadership, in the name of Islam, about the state's form and policies. Fourth, although the model of a fully governable and successful Islamic state has existed before, particularly during the Prophet's generation and that of his four political successors, some thirteen centuries have now passed.

We come now to the other aspect of the political challenge, which is really an extension of the above discussion. The expected continuation of the Islamic resurgence in the coming decades may lead to the probable tendency, if not desire, to further consolidate the Muslim world under a unified and single leadership structure, a kind of institutionalized pan-Islamism. Although it may be possible to see, in the next century, the establishment of Islamic states pushing for a form of representative global body to safeguard their interests, the stark realities of the emerging twenty-first century world-system have to be noted: the salience of the idea of the nation-state (and nationalism), even among Muslim countries; the eagerness of other powers (e.g., the United States and China) to defend and promote their ideologies and values worldwide; the relative economic and military weakness of Muslim countries vis-à-vis others; and the improbability, if not fallacy, of reintroducing a unified pan-Islamic caliphate system located in a certain state, as was courageously attempted by Rashīd Riḍā upon the fall of the Ottoman Empire and the

caliphate in Turkey. Any such visionary ideals must first address the above givens and imperatives of a new world order.

Conclusion: The Twenty-First Century and the Hijratic Paradigm

How can the above challenges be placed in perspective, perhaps even mitigated? There are many ways of looking at the issue. For want of a better term, we have termed our proposal the *hijratic paradigm*, as it is inspired by the Prophet's hijrah, which signalled the beginning of a new era for Muslims. Its broad guidelines and principles are as follows: a) Muslims must not act or behave in a manner that contradicts or comes into conflict with Islamic tenets and principles; b) the word *hijrah* is no longer defined as a "migratory" process or approach, which is a common misunderstanding of the Prophet's hijrah from Makkah to Madinah. To be on hijrah is not to run away from problems or to be on the defensive about Islam; c) adopting a hijratic attitude or mindset means to improve and upgrade one's life continuously. After all, change is the only permanent thing in life; d) all ideas, knowledge, and skills, regardless of geographical or religious source, must be studied to see whether their adoption will be beneficial; e) a greater tolerance and accommodation among Muslims in their practice of Islam²¹ for the sake of Muslim unity and solidarity and so that Muslims can disentangle themselves from the intra-Muslim conflicts that characterize them today; and e) such elements as dynamism, rationality, prioritization, proactiveness, and a certain balance and judiciousness of approach are core features. For instance, many Muslim societies lack a sense of prioritization. A case in point is the neglect of the institution of the family, which has resulted in such long-term social ills as drug addiction, high divorce rates, single parenthood, high crime rates, underachievement in education, and a highly secularized outlook on life. Another example is the undue and wasteful energies spent in the Shi'ah-Sunni controversy, both of which could be used more productively if they were rechanneled toward developing unity and solidarity among Muslims of different cultural and ethnic backgrounds and experiences.

Endnotes

1. For an alphabetical selection of some of the general works published since the 1980s, see: Akbar Ahmad, *Discovering Islam: Making Sense of Muslim History and Society* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, Ltd., 1988); Syed M. Naquib al-Attas, *Islam, Secularism and the Philosophy of the Future* (New York: Mansell, 1985); Kenneth Cragg and R. Marston Speight, eds., *Islam from Within: Anthology of a Religion* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1980); John H. Donohue and John L. Esposito, eds., *Islam in Transition: Muslim Perspectives* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982); John L. Esposito (ed.), *Islam in Asia: Religion, Politics, and Society* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987); Yvonne Y. Haddad, Byron Haines, and Ellison Findly, eds., *The Islamic Impact* (Syracuse,

NY: Syracuse University Press, 1984); Dilip Hiro, *Islamic Fundamentalism* (London: Paladin Grafton Books, 1988); Shireen Hunter, *The Politics of Islamic Revivalism: Diversity and Unity* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1988); Hussin Mutalib and Taj ul-Islam Hashmi, *Islam, Muslims and the Modern State: Case Studies of Muslims in Thirteen Countries* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994); William H. McNeil and Marilyn R. Waldman, eds., *The Islamic World* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983); Barbara F. Stowasser, ed., *The Islamic Impulse* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University, CCAS, 1987); John O. Voll, *Islam: Continuity and Change in the Modern World* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1982).

2. BBC World News, 30 September 1994.

3. Such reactions have been documented in many books about Islamic revivalism, even by western writers. For example, see John L. Esposito, *Islam and Politics* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1984); Daniel Pipes, *In the Path of God: Islam and Political Power* (New York: Basic Books, 1982); G. H. Jansen, *Militant Islam* (London: Pan Books, 1979); Voll, *Islam*; Stowasser, *Islamic Impulse*; and Donohue and Esposito, *Islam in Transition*.

4. A symptom of this persecution is the migration of many talented Muslim scholars to the western hemisphere where, ironically, their expertise is allowed to flourish in many western universities.

5. In Muslim Southeast Asia, for instance, colonial powers (Portuguese, Dutch, Spanish, British, American) managed to disempower Muslims by the deliberate tactic of shifting and repositioning their traditional political and economic centers from coastal areas to inland and, later, urban areas. Caught unprepared, the Muslims' centuries-old sea-based technological skills were made redundant, and the role of the once-influential leaders and ulama displaced and uprooted as new, secular Muslims were recruited and sponsored to take over the leadership of the community.

6. In Asia alone, the Asian Development Bank estimated that Asian countries will chart a high 7.2 percent annual economic growth for the next few years, if compared to a dismally low 1.8 percent in other regions of the world, and that by the year 2010, of the six "most competitive" countries, four will be in Asia: China, Japan, Korea, and Singapore. Similarly, by the year 2000, trade and investment flows across the Pacific will be double the transatlantic volume.

7. The UN Conference on World Population, held recently in Cairo, estimated that the world population, if left unchecked, will reach 12.5 billion by the year 2050 (the current population is 7.5 billion). See *The Economist* (10-16 September 1994), 26 and *Asiaweek* 24 (August 1994), 22.

8. Consider the existing case of India's pneumonic plague, which has baffled world experts, since the last recorded instance of plague was the infamous bubonic plague ("Black Death") that struck Europe in 1666 and killed 70,000 people in London alone.

9. This is the Hegelian vision which was recently articulated by Francis Fukuyama in his much-discussed *The End of History and the Last Man* (London: Penguin, 1992).

10. Much has been written about their thoughts and panacea to resolve the Muslim plight. See, for example, Leonard Binder, *Islamic Liberalism: A Critique of Development Ideologies* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988); Ernest Gellner, ed., *Islamic Dilemmas: Reformers, Nationalists and Industrialization* (New York: Mouton, 1985); Donohue and Esposito, *Islam in Transition*; Hamid Enayat, *Modern Islamic Political Thought* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1982); Esposito, *Islam and Politics*; Tareq Y. Ismael and Jacqueline S. Ismael, *Government and Politics in Islam* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1985).

11. It is agreed that these different movements, arising from different geographical and contextual settings, cannot all be lumped together as if they were similar in all aspects, such as their leadership, orientation, and emphases. The point which I am arguing here is that, despite their differences, their message, at the principle and broad level, can be said to be similar and remained consistent throughout the centuries.

12. Centuries ago, Prophet Muhammad stated that 90 percent of wealth and richness can be obtained through business and trade.

13. Concerning knowledge, the Qur'an also says: "O Allah, increase me in knowledge" (20:114).

14. For a recent treatment of this issue of identity, see *Islam, Muslims and the Modern State*, which analyzes the attitudes and reactions of Muslims, both as majorities and as minorities, in thirteen countries and two regions.

15. See, for instance, the writings of Hans Kohn, *Nationalism: Its Meaning and History* (New York: D. Van Nostrand, 1965); Erwin I. Rosenthal, *Islam in the Modern Nation State* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1965); David L. Sills, ed., *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* (London: Macmillan and the Free Press, 1968).

16. See some responses of Islamic scholars to nationalism: Abū A'lā Mawdūdī, "The Political Theory of Islam," in Donohue and Esposito, eds., *Islam in Transition*; Ozzay Mehmet, *Islamic Identity and Development: Studies of the Islamic Periphery* (New York: Routledge, 1990); M. Ghayasuddin, ed., *The Impact of Nationalism and the Muslim World* (London: Open Press, 1987); Arsalan Amir, *Our Decline and Its Causes* (Lahore: Mohd. Ashraf, 1962).

17. For some of the criticism levelled against secularism, see Ozzay Mehmet, *Islamic Identity*; Mehran Tamadonfar, *The Islamic Polity and Political Leadership* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1989); Abū A'lā Mawdūdī and Sayyid Quṭb, in John L. Esposito, ed., *Voices of Resurgent Islam* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983); Naguib al-Attas, *Islam and Secularism* (Kuala Lumpur: ABIM, 1978); Altaf Gauthar, "Islam and Secularism," in *The Challenge of Islam* (London: Islamic Council of Europe, 1978); and Obaid ul Haq, "Islamic Resurgence: The Challenge of Change," in Taufik Abdullah and S. Siddique, eds., *Islam and Society in Southeast Asia* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1986).

18. One is reminded of the Prophet's forecasting that in the centuries after him Muslims would be increasingly faced with *ma'siyāt* (evil things/actions), so much so that *ma'siyāt* would be found even within their homes. One way of understanding this permeation is the pervasive presence in television programs that expose our children (and us) to a daily diet of sex, violence, and questionable liberalizing values. If uncontrolled, such programs will socialize and sow the seeds of un-Islamic values in Muslim children.

19. For some writings about the position and plight of Muslim women, see Lois Grant Beck and Nikkie Keddie, eds., *Women in the Muslim World* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1973); John L. Esposito, *Women in Muslim Family Law* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1982); Reuben Levy, *The Social Structure of Islam* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1957); Naila Minai, *Women in Islam* (New York: Seaview Books, 1981); Muhammad Abdul Rauf, *The Islamic View of Women and the Family* (New York: Robert Speller, 1977).

20. A better way of grouping these two interrelated aspects or distinctions is perhaps the *fard kifāyah* and *fard 'ayn*.

21. One way of appreciating the importance of culture and traditions in the Islamic practice of Muslims in different places is to study the birth of the different legal schools of thought (jurisprudence or *fiqh*) in Islamic history, which adopt slightly different rituals in the performance of Islamic duties.