



IRANIAN STUDIES

Volume 30
Numbers 1-2
Winter/Spring 1997

imāmzādas become the focal points of Iranian cities. We also learn here that one aspect of the *maḥalla* system in traditional Iranian cities was the absence of social class segregation—the rich and the poor lived next to each other.

Chapter Five presents the author's summary and conclusions, identifying the geography of the Iranian plateau, ancient trade routes, and religious and political decisions as the main factors influencing both the location and the shape of Iranian cities. The cities that have survived throughout Iranian history are those that were built at the foothills of mountain chains or in inter-mountain basins; were located along or near ancient trade routes; had access to water; and had a relatively arable hinterland. What one can learn from the design of Iranian cities is that Iranian urban planners have always tried to work with, not against, the forces of nature.

The book also has three useful appendixes. Appendix A gives a succinct overview of the *qanāt* system in Iran. It discusses the construction of the *qanāt* and its effect on the pattern of village settlement. A successful irrigation system in Iran for thousands of years, the *qanāt* is now being replaced for economic reasons by deep wells. As Kheirabadi indicates, *qanāts* are in balance with nature, their discharge regulated by the groundwater table. Pumped wells, on the other hand, control the groundwater and may easily be subjected to shortsighted abuse. Appendix B looks at the structural elements of the bazaar. The author explains that the activities within the bazaar are of both economic and non-economic nature, although the two groups of activities are closely interrelated. Appendix C discusses the structural elements of the mosque, namely, the *shabistān*, the minaret, the pulpit (*minbar*), and the *mihrab*.

There are a few shortcomings in the book. For example, Kheirabadi is confused about the meaning of *imāmzāda*, a term he uses on at least one occasion to refer to the tomb of Imam Reza. The transliteration system adopted by the author is unusual—for example *dastih* instead of *dasta* or *dasteh*. Kheirabadi's book is nonetheless useful reading for both the general reader and the specialist. Readers interested in the general theme of cities in Western Asia and North Africa are advised to consult *Urban Development in the Muslim World*, edited by Hooshang Amirahmadi and Salah S. El-Shakhs.

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Faith and Freedom, ed. Mahnaz Afkhami, Syracuse: Syracuse Univ. Press, 1995.

With *Faith and Freedom*, Mahnaz Afkhami has provided us with an important collection of essays on women's rights in various Islamic contexts. Even as terms such as "women's rights" and "Islam" are used as the basis for analysis throughout, each article maintains the integrity of the specific case discussed. Although the volume is careful not to dilute individual contexts, it does draw attention to prevalent themes and interrelated phenomena that deserve our serious attention. Afkhami's articulate introduction helps to set the stage for the

articles, which focus on two major issues: the terms for women's rights within Islamic religious discourse and violence against Muslim women during times of conflict. Looking at the collected essays as a whole, it becomes clear that both issues are intrinsically linked to the struggle for social and political power. The first group of essays shows that the restrictive articulation of Islam vis-à-vis women's human rights is derivative of particular interpretations of religious discourse. Thus, women need to become more actively engaged in setting the terms of this discourse. These articles also show, however, that such activity can be ineffectual if it is not backed with support and resources (which can be provided by regional and international organizations) and by wider access to other venues of political participation which can sustain and propagate a more feminist interpretation of Islamic discourse. The second part of the book shows the sometimes shocking and painful consequences of silent and passive responses to the absence of basic women's human rights. Without clearly defined and ensured access to academic, political, legal, and social institutions, Muslim women too often become targets of violence in times of conflict. The cost of making women markers of cultural and national identities is painfully revealed by the authors of a fine selection of essays.

The first part of the book, "Women, Islam, and Patriarchy," begins with an article in which Deniz Kandiyoti argues that the articulation of gender roles in Islamic societies has been contingent on politics. Reviewing the impact of multiculturalism and identity politics in the West on the nature of the debate on women and Islam, Kandiyoti concludes that the terms of the debate should avoid both ethnocentrism and unprincipled relativism. The power differential between Muslim minorities in the West and Muslims living in non-democratic Islamic nations needs to be acknowledged and the different political implications for women's rights better understood.

Fatima Mernissi's article begins with a related debate—the question of the compatibility of Islam and democracy. Mernissi illustrates the pitfalls of reproducing a rigid dichotomy between a rational, liberal West and an irrational, autocratic Islam. The characterization of Islamic authority as divine can muddle our understanding of the basis for the erosion of human and women's rights in some Islamic societies. Given the secular basis of the Muslim ruler's authority, Mernissi argues, he must rely on the support of the *umma*. Minorities and women can pose a challenge to this necessary uniformity and consensus within the *umma*, upon which the Muslim ruler's authority ultimately lies. Mernissi draws attention to the larger contexts, especially of the historical evolution of the Muslim state and Islamic law, within which discussions of women's rights and human rights in the Islamic world need to be conducted. Surprisingly, Mernissi's discussions of the gendered nature of the construction of temporal and legal authority in Islam is a bit brief given the topic of the book.

In some respects, the next two articles pick up where Mernissi's left off. Abdullahi An-Na'im draws attention to the dangers of arguing a strict dichotomy between religious and secular discourse. He points out that the overlaps and interactions are many and suggests that this particular convergence offers a fertile site for activism on behalf of women's human rights in the Islamic sphere. This can be done effectively, An-Na'im argues, if women's rights advocates operate within the socio-cultural paradigms of Islam. This is arguably a strategy with tremendous potential, which many Muslim women have already adapted.

As An-Na'im points out, the non-hierarchical nature of Islam lends itself to this sort of participation in the religio-cultural sphere.

Bouthaina Shaaban's article shows that since the very inception of the religion, women have indeed participated in the literary, religious, and political institutions of Islam. She focuses on the work of Nazira Zin al-Din who, in the 1920s, produced Islamic commentaries which accorded women agency and power. At the time, some clerics engaged in debates with Zin al-Din, and she was able to argue for women's rights effectively using Islamic texts. Shaaban wonders if Zin al-Din would be allowed to participate in religious dialogues today, or if she would be silenced. She also points out that academics have failed to discuss her work. This "double silencing" is not unusual when it comes to Middle Eastern women.

An-Na'im and Shaaban are quite right to direct attention to the power of discursive constructions of Islamic views on women and the need for women themselves to participate directly and proactively in that discourse. By disengaging from the realm of religious discourse, women may well leave the most conservative voices to shape the contours of religious life. There are some inherent problems with this strategy, however. In some countries, women and minorities are denied meaningful access to the mainstream political and economic institutions. Particularly in countries where the power and legitimacy of the state is directly linked to religion, it can be extremely difficult to propagate an alternative religious discourse. Such states have proven to be effective in silencing alternative interpretations of Islamic paradigms, even amongst the clergy. Participation on the discursive level without complete and free access to other relational institutions of power (publishing houses, booksellers, schools and universities, seminaries, the media) may produce only limited results.

Farida Shaheed's article discusses the impact of religious discourse on Pakistani women's lives, and examines the more complex web of power within which that discourse originates and operates. Shaheed identifies two levels which need to be addressed in order to create better circumstances for women in Islamic societies: the public discourse in national and international policies and women's everyday experiences. At the first level, Shaheed shows that the articulation of gender as a signifier for producing a national and an Islamic identity has served to disempower women. At the level of their everyday lives, women faced direct barriers to their mobility—but the main source of the barriers seemed to be the family and not religion. Shaheed concludes that Islam is not necessarily oppressive when experienced on the everyday level. She argues that informal and formal networks, which allow an exchange of information and resources, are essential to any movement seeking to provide women with greater access to familial, discursive, economic, or political power.

Ann Elizabeth Mayer extends the discussion of the discursive trajectories of gender and power into another important arena. She reveals the ways that rhetorical strategies are used to subvert women's rights by some of the same people who claim to be supporters of women's equality. This "new world hypocrisy" operates within the religious and political rhetoric of the United States, the Vatican, and Islam. By looking at all three cases and their negative response to international treaties on women's rights, Mayer shows that Islam is not unique in its malleability to patriarchal political concerns. As academic feminists have begun to question the universality of patriarchy as a monolithic form of women's op-

pression, studies like Mayer's have become too few. Her careful study of the use of rhetorical strategies to deny women equal legal and political status shows the merit of cross-cultural perspectives on women's issues.

The second part of the book contains articles on women and violence, the first of which is Eleanor Abdella Doumato's discussion of the *shari'a* in Saudi Arabia. Doumato shows the ways in which the embedded ambiguity of the *shari'a* presents opportunities for intervention on behalf of women's rights, even as it can be used to define women's roles in society in the most conservative terms possible. Doumato shows that in Saudi Arabia, debates about the nature of human relations must ultimately be articulated within the praxis of the *shari'a*. And yet, the very legitimacy of the current Saudi regime lies in its role as the arbiter of the *shari'a*. The government cannot afford to relinquish its mediating role, either to the ulama or to secular organizations pushing for women's rights. At some level, maintaining the ambiguity of the *shari'a* ensures the stability of the Saudi regime—a paradox that can both help and hurt women's rights.

Shahla Haeri's article on power and rape in Pakistan follows. Through a discussion of rapes that occurred in 1991 following Benazir Bhutto's ouster, Haeri examines the political use of rape in contemporary Pakistan. At that time three women who were personal and/or political supporters of Bhutto were raped. "In its modern context, political rape has the tacit, and at times explicit, legitimation of the state, just as honor rape has continued to have cultural support and collective sanction" (p. 162). By feeding into the tradition of dis/honor and the sanctity/violation of the female body, political opponents of Bhutto were in essence able to rape her honor by raping three of her female supporters. Haeri's study can be read alongside ongoing research by some Indian scholars on the use of rape as a nationalist weapon at the time of Pakistan's birth as a nation-state. Women's bodies were violated as a way of assigning Muslim-ness or Hindu-ness to them. Political rape stands out as one of the most violent ways in which women's bodies can become sites of contested power.

Sima Wali begins her article on Afghan refugee women by arguing that during times of conflict, normative behavior becomes suspended, and women become vulnerable to the worst kind of violence. The refugee women Wali describes are often caught between several systems of power—the political conflict which they flee, the politics of the host country to which they flee, and the politics of international refugee-aid organizations. Wali writes that 80 per cent of the world's refugees are women and 80 per cent are Muslim—yet neither academics nor activists have fully acknowledged these facts. As a result, little protection or meaningful support has been offered Afghan women, who are subject to sexual violence, experience a decline in status, and have little access to resources. As religio-political issues have dominated the debate over Afghan refugees, sufficient support for war widows and orphans has been severely lacking.

Karima Bennoune's article on violence against Algerian women follows. Estimates of the number of people killed in Algeria from 1992 until 1995 range from 4,000 to 30,000, and many of the victims have been women. As Bennoune points out, studying this phenomenon is crucial to our understanding of the use of political violence against women in national struggles. Women played an important symbolic and real part in the Algerian struggle for independence, yet their status as equal citizens in the Algerian nation-state was never legally or

politically guaranteed. This fact plays no small role in their vulnerability to political violence under present circumstances. It is critical, as Bennoune concludes, that in resolving the current conflict, women's rights are not sacrificed once again in the name of national stability.

Lest the reader of this fine volume be left with a feeling of hopelessness, the final article by Nancy Gallagher addresses the triumph of Toujan al-Faisal. As women's issues became a part of the Jordanian government's attempts at modernization, the state created institutions for political participation by women. The creation of grassroots movements, which al-Faisal was able to access in her legal and political struggles, ensued. In 1993, she won a seat in Jordan's parliament. Accordingly, the participation of women in the religious discourse and the political sphere can serve to improve women's status in Islamic states in meaningful ways.

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Mongolia: The Legacy of Chinggis Khan, Patricia Berger and Terese Tse Bartholomew, New York: Thames and Hudson, 1995, 340 pp., 310 illustrations, 237 in color, \$60.00.

Mongol Jewelry, Martha Boyer, Carlsberg Foundation's Nomad Research Project, New York: Thames and Hudson, 1995, 278 pp., 200 illustrations, 90 in color, \$50.00.

The Mongols are back. These two glossy books, both published by Thames and Hudson in 1995 but with different themes and audiences, show that the Mongols are a hot topic. The first, *Mongolia: The Legacy of Chinggis Khan*, was written to accompany the traveling exhibition of the same name organized by the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco in association with the national museums and state library of Mongolia. The exhibition was a sequel to one on Tibetan Buddhism organized by the Asian Art Museum in 1991, and the follow-up was designed to show the profound impact that Tibetan Buddhism had on the nomadic Mongols.

The Mongols were converted to Tibetan-style Buddhism twice, first in the 13th century by Qubilay, Chinghiz's grandson and unifier of Mongolia and China, and then again in the 16th century when Altan Khan took Buddhist vows and bestowed the title Dalai Lama on Sonam Gyatsho, leader of the Tibetan Buddhist Gelug order. The finest works of religious and secular art remaining in Mongolia belong to the period after the second conversion, the so-called Mongol renaissance. The heartland of this renaissance was Outer Mongolia (Aru Mongolia) or Khalkha, a sovereign nation that until recently was under the sway of the former Soviet Union. The exhibition was the first to be held in the United States with objects from newly democratic (Outer) Mongolia, which is to be distinguished from Inner Mongolia (Obur Mongolia), now an autonomous region of the People's Republic of China largely settled by ethnic Chinese.