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Publication Date
2011

Peer reviewed|Thesis/dissertation

Politicizing Islam: State, gender, class, and piety
in France and India

By

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A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Sociology

in the

Graduate Division

of the

University of California, Berkeley

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Fall 2011

Abstract

Politicizing Islam: State, gender, class, and piety
in France and India

by

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Doctor of Philosophy in Sociology

University of California, Berkeley

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This dissertation is a comparative ethnographic study of Islamic revival movements in Lyon, France, and Hyderabad, India. It introduces the importance of class and the state in shaping piety and its politicization. The project challenges the common conflation of piety and politics and thus, the tendency to homogenize "political Islam" even in the context of secular states. It shows how there have been convergent forms of piety and specifically gendered practices across the two cities—but divergent Muslim class relations and in turn, forms of politics. I present four types of movements. In Hyderabad, a Muslim middle-class *redistributive* politics directed at the state is based on patronizing and politicizing the subaltern masses. Paternalistic philanthropy has facilitated *community* politics in the slums that are building civil societies and Muslim women's participation. In Lyon, a middle-class *recognition* politics invites and opposes the state but is estranged from sectarian Muslims in the working-class urban peripheries. Salafist women, especially, have withdrawn into a form of *antipolitics*, as their religious practices have become further targeted by the state. These forms of politics (and antipolitics) are expressions of the historical institutionalization of Muslims as a social group as determined by state models of secularism and urban marginality. Only by accounting for the state, class, and gendered dynamics as well as clarifying specific conceptions of politics, can Islamic revival movements be fully understood.

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GLOSSARY

Commonly Used Terms in French, Urdu,
and French and Urdu transliterations of Arabic

Alhamdulillah. Expression for "praise to God" or "thank God."

Alim. Recognized scholar of Islam.

Ashurkhanas. Congregation sites or halls for Shia mourning rituals and commemorations especially during the Islamic month of Muharram.

Azaan. The call to prayer made approximately fifteen minutes before the prayer begins.

Baji. Urdu term for sister.

Banlieue. A town peripheral to an urban center and typically connotative of lower-class districts in France.

Basti. Hindi/Urdu equivalent for the concept of "slum." It refers generally to an unplanned, congested neighborhood with infrastructural deficits, absence of sanitation, and poor housing.

Beur. A slang term for the French-born children of North African immigrants.

Bida. Innovations to Islam that cause deviations from the original teachings and practices at the time of the Prophet.

Cités. Les cités in France refer to large estates of deteriorated public housing in areas of urban deprivation.

Converti(e). French term for convert.

Da'wa. Activities toward promoting Islamic piety and inviting others to Islam.

Dalits. Term for the "depressed classes" of India, traditionally known as "Untouchables." Dalit is used interchangeably with Scheduled Castes (SCs).

Dargah. A Sufi shrine constructed over the grave of a saint or religious figure. Dargahs often house religious activities and are sites for religious musical offerings.

Djelbab. Form of veiling that covers the body except the face and hands.

Duas. Prayers of supplication. Duas are separate from the five daily obligatory prayers.

Eid/Aïd. The celebratory feasts and prayer marking the end of Ramadan or commemorating Abraham's sacrifice.

Hadith. Traditions related to the teachings and practices of the Prophet as recounted by his closest followers in his lifetime.

Hafiz. An individual who has memorized the Quran.

Hakeem. Used in Urdu as a title for a traditional Islamic medical practitioner.

Halakah. An Islamic study circle with a teacher. Commonly used in France.

Halal. That which is permitted and lawful.

Haram. That which is forbidden and unlawful.

Hifz. Training in the memorization of the Quran.

Hijab. The headscarf, understood in both France and India as the veiling of the hair and neck.

Hindutva. Movements that promote Hindu nationalism. Hindutva ideology emerged in the early 20th century.

Iftar. The evening meal with which one breaks the daily fast during Ramadan.

Imam. In Sunni Islam, the prayer leader or leader of a community.

Insha Allah. Expression for "if God wills."

Intégriste. French term for "fundamentalist."

Izzat. Hindi/Urdu term for honor or respect.

Jahez. Traditional practice of gift-giving to a bride and groom among Indian Muslims.

Jahil. Ignorant or untaught.

Jinns. Inhabitants of the immaterial world. Some jinns are considered benevolent toward humans and others hostile.

Kafr. One who denies the existence of God.

Khul. A form of divorce in Islam based on mutual consent and the wife's renouncing of her *mehr*.

Laïque. Secular.

Maghrébin. An individual of immigrant or ethnic background from Algeria, Morocco, or Tunisia.

Madrasa. Centers of Islamic learning. In India the term refers to a range of settings from slum-based school houses to prestigious Islamic universities.

Masha'Allah. Common expression for "by the grace of God's will."

Masjid. Mosque.

Mehr. The gift or monetary amount given by a groom to a bride. The *mehr* remains property of the bride but it partially returned upon dissolution of a marriage prior to consummation or entirely returned upon her initiation of divorce.

Milad-i-Nabi. The birth date of the Prophet.

Mosquées des caves. Literally "basement mosques." Used in France, often pejoratively, to refer to spaces of informal religious gatherings in contrast to structured and more visible mosques.

Nikah namah. Islamic marriage contract.

Niqab. A veil that covers the face and is used typically with a *djelbab*.

Nizam. Title for Muslim rulers of princely Hyderabad.

Pardah. Used in India to refer to the covering or seclusion of women or the segregation of the sexes.

Qazi. A judge appointed on the basis of knowledge of Islamic law. In India *qazis* are commonly invoked for their performance of marriage rites.

Qhutba. The sermon given before the Friday congregational prayer.

Quartiers sensibles. Refers to vulnerable or "at-risk" neighborhoods in France. Commonly used in debates about urban crises.

Qurbani. Urdu term for ritual sacrifice and distribution of meat to the poor.

Riba. The giving or taking of interest on any loan. Riba is prohibited in Islam.

Roqaya. Incantations to ward off evil or harm. Commonly used in France to refer to the performance of prayers and incantations toward healing or exorcism of jinns.

Sabr. Patience and fortitude.

Saheba. The companions, or close followers of the Prophet during his lifetime. Another view defines the companions as those who had seen him in his lifetime.

Salafism. A movement originating 100-200 years ago that sought to modernize Islam. Salafism transformed eventually into a movement intended to restore the original teachings and practices of Islam. It is often discussed interchangeably with *Wahhabism*.

Sehri. The predawn meal with which one starts the daily fast during the Islamic month of Ramadan.

Shahadha. Affirmation of faith in one God and the Prophet Muhammed.

Sharia. Judicial practices and moral codes known as Islamic law. Sharia is elaborated differently according to schools of thought and has interacted historically with customary laws.

Sheikh. Title for someone with spiritual or doctrinal authority.

Sherwani. A traditional men's garment, a knee-length coat, traditionally associated with Indian Muslim aristocracy.

Sunnah. The examples, in speech and act, of the Prophet.

Tafsir. Explication of the Quran.

Tajwid. The science of Quranic recitation.

Talaq. A form of Islamic divorce based on verbal repudiation by the husband.

Tawba. Repentance.

Ulema. Recognized scholars or authorities on religious matters and Islamic law.

Unani. Tradition of Islamic medicine based on teachings from ancient Greece.

Wakf. Islamic trusts and endowments intended for pious and public works.

Wahhabism. A movement founded in Arabia in the early 19th century that technically shunned all traditional schools of Islamic law in favor of strict interpretations of the Prophet's teachings.

Zakat. Obligatory payment of a portion of one's wealth usually paid directly to the poor or toward charity.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

France

CCIF   Collectif Contre Islamophobie en France
(Collective against Islamophobia in France)

CMF   Collectif des Musulmans de France
(Collective of French Muslims)

CFCM   Le Conseil Français du Culte Musulman
(French Council of the Muslim Faith)

CRCM   Le Conseil Régional du Culte Musulman
(Regional Council of the Muslim Faith)

CTAM   Conseillers Techniques pour les Affaires Musulmans
(Technical Advisors for Muslim Affairs)

EMF   Étudiants Musulmans de France
(Muslim Students of France)

FN   Le Front National
(National Front)

FSQP   Forum Social des Quartiers Populaires
(Social Forum of 'Popular Neighborhoods')

HLM   Habitation à Loyer Modéré
(subsidized public housing)

IEHS   Institut Européen des Sciences Humaines
(European Institute of the Humanities)

JMF   Jeunes Musulmans de France
(Young Muslims of France)

PMF   Parti des Musulmans en France
(Party of Muslims in France)

UJM   Union des Jeunes Musulmans
(Union of Young Muslims)

UMP   Union pour un Mouvement Populaire
(Union for a Popular Movement)

UOIF   Union des Organisations Islamiques de France
(Union of Islamic Organizations of France)

ZUP   Zones à Urbaniser par Priorité
(Urban priority zones)

ZUS   Zones Urbains Sensibles
("Sensitive" urban zones)

India

AIMPLB	All India Muslim Personal Law Board
AMU	Aligarh Muslim University
AP	Andhra Pradesh state
BJP	Bharatiya Janata Party
BPL	Below Poverty Line
COVA	Confederation of Voluntary Associations
IACR	Islamic Academy of Comparative Religion
JIH	Jama'at-i-Islami Hind
MIM	Majlis-e-Muttahadil Muslimeen
MLA	Member of the Legislative Assembly
RSS	Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh
SIMI	Students Islamic Movements of India
SIO	Students Islamic Organization
TDP	Telugu Desam Party
UEF	United Economic Forum
UPA	United Progressive Alliance
VHP	Vishwa Hindu Parishad

PREFACE

For two years I had worked on New York City's Park Place, next to the old Burlington Coat Factory. I left in 2001, two weeks before the World Trade Center attack shattered windows of my old office some blocks away. I could never have guessed that ten years later 45 Park Place, the old Coat Factory, would be the epicenter of a national debate on the meaning of religious freedom—on the relationship between piety and politics. Cordoba House, which became derailed and severely criticized, was slated to be a multi-faith community center and site of worship at 45 Park Place. It was to be roughly the Islamic equivalent of a YMCA. The initiative was led by a prominent Sufi imam and took its inspiration from the image of the ninth century golden age of multi-ethnic, Spanish-Muslim Cordoba. As the plan came under increasing attack, some politicians passionately defended its construction in the name of the Bill of Rights. President Obama also invoked the principle of religious freedom but refused to comment on "the wisdom… of putting a mosque there." Imam Rauf finally withdrew from the project, regretting the pain he had caused to the nation.

When I arrived at Berkeley in 2001, September 11th cast a shadow over my graduate student cohort. Studying theory and methods proved difficult as we stood horrified by the new war that had been declared. Within weeks of our first class, Operation Enduring Freedom began, and our understanding of politics and the state would never be the same. In the following months images of burqa-clad women in the desert were being used to sell the war, and weekly images of seven-year old boys reciting their prayers in their local madrasas were meant to instill fear of another terrorist incident. Military war expanded to an emotional war, designed to get inside Islamic cultures and institutions in the promotion of freedom. In places as far and surprising as Hyderabad, India, and Lyon, France, the US sought to provide its diplomatic assistance and resources to madrasas and actively maintain friendly relations with France's third Islamic high school. Piety needed to be carefully watched and skillfully integrated, even in places where Muslims were small minorities and where they themselves were routinely victimized.

I decided I wanted to see what "political Islam" in the form of Islamic movements looked like in such two unique, secular contexts as Hyderabad and Lyon and what were Muslim women's relationships to it. The relevant literature on Islamic revival movements and on Islamism had not prepared me to see how elusive the politics of Islam would be. Whether it was earlier literature focused on parties seeking to Islamize the state or more recent literature insisting on the politically transformative nature of everyday piety, few questioned or complicated the relationship between piety and politics. In my field sites, "Islamizing the state" looked more like routine recognition politics in France, where freedom to practice religion was weak and people of Muslim background complained widely of racism. In India it looked more like a politics of economic redistribution accompanied by electoral machines and patronage. As for the "radical Islam" that was supposedly changing the landscape of both cities, I found communities simply struggling to survive in their poverty and taking great meaning in their religious practice. The sectarian, working-class women I knew outside of Lyon made no claims of the state, were withdrawn from public life and institutions, and cared more for their individual relationships to God than all else. This was not radical or political Islam but looked instead like the expulsion of politics altogether. On the other end, the "radical" sectarian communities I spent time with in Hyderabad were engaging in remarkably feminist discourses and participating in collective projects to better their lives and gain worldly skills. Each of these movements

developed in particular contexts that were determined by structural forces: the state, class and class relations, and gender relations (the relationship of women to the men in their lives and to the state). These three forces shaped forms of piety and forms of politics.

Secular states have politicized Islamic practice and identity over many decades but especially since 9/11. Islamic piety is pronounced political because it is of interest to the state as a threat to public life, gender equality, and national security. I argue in this dissertation that this is a state-centric perspective that ignores diverse everyday Muslim realities—but a perspective that has also permeated the literature on Islamic movements. The post-structural position, for example, reminds us that state authority and bureaucracy have so infiltrated all domains of life that nothing is without political consequence. What it neglects to acknowledge, however, is the simple idea that no two states have the exact same effects on its subjects. Pious practice and its relationship to politics are therefore contingent—in particular by state, class, and by gender.

If this dissertation in a sense *re*politicizes minority Islam, it does so, I believe, from the ethnographic view from below.[*] Islam may be mobilized and politicized by elites to challenge the state on discriminatory policies, or it may be politicized by the poor to promote women's college education. In another case still, it is made antipolitical in the struggle to defend and reconfigure a private sphere, or to protect the sacred from the profanity of politics. As I elaborate these different movements in Lyon and Hyderabad, I share the hope along with many critical and feminist ethnographers that the two-dimensional images used to justify the War on Terror can be reclaimed.

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[*]With few exceptions for publicly known institutes, proper names and places are changed to protect confidentiality.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

survived graduate school without his brilliance and our many misadventures in Berkeley. I also thank staff at Berkeley sociology who kindly saw me through different phases and episodes: Elsa Tranter, Carolyn Clark, Carmen Privat-Gilman, and Bill Gentry.

Finally, I dedicate the dissertation to my parents. My father, Dr. Zaheer Parvez, knowingly nicknamed me "professor" when I was in elementary school, gave me crucial contacts in Hyderabad, and had tremendous faith in me. I am honored to have received my training at Berkeley, the same university where he studied and the city that inspired him in so many ways. My mother, Kausar Parvez, seemed to know instinctively that I needed to do this research. Her own deep love for India remains dear to my heart. For whatever resilience or personality I had to take me through Berkeley and fieldwork, I owe my sister, Farah Parvez. My deepest gratitude goes to Brad Brummett for gifting me with his wonderful visits to the field and for so gracefully accepting my continual existential crises. His strength and wisdom are what sustained me for many years. My son, Arman, had no choice but to accompany me through some of the trials of fieldwork. I can only hope that the charm and convictions of France, where he learned to walk, and the hopes and ideals of India, where he learned to speak, will always remain part of his imagination. If this work one day gives him the slightest flutter of pride, it will all have been worth it.

Chapter 1: Politics and Piety

In an April 2004 interview with the journal *Lyon Mag*, Abdelkader Bouziane, an imam of a mosque in Vénissieux, one of Lyon's drab working-class suburbs, unwittingly confessed his wish that the entire world would become Muslim. He said that people would be happier if they were closer to God. He also claimed that the Quran permitted a man to hit his wife in certain situations, especially adultery, and that men may also live polygamously. "But pay attention, it's four wives at most, and there are conditions!" Within weeks, Bouziane was arrested and deported to Algeria on charges of posing an urgent threat to public order and security. He had lived in France for 25 years. Then Interior Minister Dominique Villepin, who had been tracking the imam for months, said that France could not accept such an affront to human dignity. According to Villepin's lawyer, Bouziane preached hate and violence and was a principle proponent of Salafist ideology in the region (LDH-Toulon 2004). Local mosque-goers and neighborhood residents were stunned and scared. Other Muslim leaders in Lyon denounced the state's actions, while also calling Bouziane's remarks "stupid and unacceptable" (Paloulian 2004). Bouziane was one of several imams in France expelled in the last decade over vague accusations of threatening security and inciting hatred.

In May 2007, in Hyderabad, India, a pipe bomb exploded at Mecca Masjid, a centuries-old mosque in the heart of the Old City section. As worshippers frantically tried to rescue victims and transport them to the local hospital, the police suddenly started firing on the worshippers themselves. Nine Muslims were shot. Over the following days, dozens of young Muslims were questioned, harassed, and arrested for their alleged involvement in the explosion and collusion with Pakistani terrorist groups. This was the second such episode in the city that year in which a number of Muslim men were illegally detained. The Central Bureau of Intelligence later stated its post-investigation position that it was right-wing Hindu groups who planted the bomb at the mosque (Koppikar, Dasgupta, and Hasan 2010).

Both of these episodes, despite occurring in vastly different societies, are the more public examples of what has become routine surveillance of mosque communities and arbitrary investigations or arrests of people due to their association with Islam. Such surveillance rests on the assumption that Islamic piety itself has grave political consequences, the same assumption that conventional explanations of religious revivals have embraced. Yet it was not the intention of either the mosque-worshippers or Imam Bouziane to make a political statement. In both cases, it is the state that politicized Islam—in criminalizing religious opinions of gender inequality and monitoring the very act of gathering in a mosque. In the case of Bouziane, he was part of a religious community whose practices and discourses are very insular and that is isolated from the middle-class Islamic associations that do seek political engagement. But in the name of security and protection of women's rights, he was expelled from France. By 2010, the act of wearing a "burqa," as worn by many women of Bouziane's former mosque, would also be criminalized—viewed as none other than a symbol of radical separatism and attack on the principle of citizenship (French Assembly Hearings 2009). In the case of Hyderabad's dozens of Muslims who were arrested after the explosion, they were assumed to have terrorist affiliations by way of their mosque activities or simply by living in certain neighborhoods of the city.

Since September 11, a principle struggle of the global War on Terror has been the struggle to "win the hearts and minds" of Muslims and align their religious (gendered) practices with ruling liberal conceptions of the public sphere—to prevent the thinking and practices described above (Kundnani 2008). In this dissertation, instead of asking the dominant question

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of how can we win over or integrate pious Muslims and thus starve the roots of Islamic movements, I critique the conflation of piety and politics that permeates much of the literature defining and explaining political Islam. This conflation has historically and recently been a project of the state, and the literature on Islam has inadvertently or explicitly upheld it. In this dissertation, I seek to undo this conflation and show how the relationship between piety and politics is in fact contingent.

I ask a question that echoes that posed by Clifford Geertz forty years ago in *Islam Observed*, with regard to the comparative study of religion. He wrote, "The problem is not one of constructing definitions of religion. We have had quite enough of those; their very number is a symptom of our malaise. It is a matter of discovering just what sorts of beliefs and practices support what sorts of faith under what sorts of conditions" (1971: 1). Likewise, I ask: what sorts of beliefs and practices of religious mosque communities support what sorts of politics and under what conditions?

In answering this question, the dissertation makes four broad points: (1) the state is crucial to the politicization of Islam; (2) class and class relations shape Islamic movements and whether or not they become political; (3) women are at the center of these movements because the state has targeted them specifically; (4) piety must be considered separately from politics, as similar forms of piety can give rise to very different forms of political movements. Based on an ethnographic study of Islam in France and India, I argue that despite a class-based convergence in forms of piety, there are four different types of politics that have developed across the two cases. These differ across the two cities I studied and across class. Because it is the state that creates the conditions for Muslim class relations, ultimately, it is the character of the state that shapes minority piety movements and their politicization. Often, it also directly constitutes everyday practices as "political Islam" as the opening vignettes indicate.

PIETY AND POLITICS IN FRANCE AND INDIA

To explore the conditions under which mosque communities become political, I examined the Islamic revival in Lyon and Hyderabad, major cities in secular democracies where Islam is the second largest religion. Given that 40% of the world's Muslims in fact reside as minorities (Haass 2002), examining piety and the politics of Islam in the minority context is not insignificant. Minority political Islam is an important part of the phenomenon more broadly, but it is distinct—for it is constituted by the relationship between minority Muslims, the majority ethnic group, and the state. Moreover, compared to majority Muslim countries, the political potential of minority Muslim activists in secular democracies is limited to the domain of civil society and to certain types of policy demands as opposed to state takeover. This makes the relationship between politics and piety unique, perhaps less charged. But there is nonetheless a spectrum of movements where Muslims are minorities. There exist religious revivalist movements, those that are self-consciously engaging with the state in order to acquire legal rights, and fringe militant groups that violently target the state based on transnational connections and agendas (e.g. targeting France for its continued involvement in Algeria).

Why France and India?

A study of France and India on the topic of Islam appears at first an odd comparison: an advanced industrial European state and a member of the global South, ranked at 134 on the Human Development Index (UNDP 2009). (France ranks at 8.) France is predominantly

Catholic, while India is predominantly Hindu and far more religious according to survey research (World Values Survey 2005).[1] With incomparable histories (France's long history as a centralized monarchy and India's ancient history of territorial kingdoms and tribal chieftains), they also have inverse relationships to their colonial past. Today, France is a member of the G-8 and Security Council, while India struggles to attain a measure of international power. Yet despite these differences, both countries are simultaneously facing similar struggles with their Muslim communities, which comprise their largest minority populations. In both countries, most Muslims are amongst the poorest and most marginalized sections of society, suffering deep poverty and unemployment. There are approximately 4-6 million Muslims in France (5-10%) and 138 million (over 13%) in India, according to the latest Indian Census. They are the largest Muslim minority populations in Western Europe and Asia, respectively.

There is a growing concern within the French and Indian governments and civil society institutions of rising militancy among Muslims and support for transnational Islamism. Communal conflict and political Islamic activity has challenged the substance of national identity and has struck at each country's secular doctrine—a critical theme in both nation's histories. Impassioned debates over multiculturalism continue in the political and cultural spheres. In India, the status of Muslim Personal Law, Muslim family law based on sharia (Islamic law), has been precarious for many years and was under particular scrutiny under the Hindu nationalist, BJP administration (1998-2004). Additionally, there are debates over the teaching of the Urdu language in schools, the nature of the curricula in madrasas, women's veiling practices, and affirmative action policies for Muslims. In France, demands for specific religious rights such as halal food and Muslim cemeteries remain at the center of the conflict between French Muslims and the secular state. Mosque teachings and Islamic schools are scrutinized or obstructed by the government, and above all, the Islamic headscarf was banned in public schools in 2004. In 2010, the French lower house voted to ban the burqa in all public settings. Finally, like India, France has seen major urban riots, wrongly construed as religious conflicts.

Demand for recognition or respect for separate laws is taken as a threat to national unity. Muslims are often viewed as disloyal to the state—accused of supporting Pakistan or Algerian Islamists, respectively. The French government's strategy has focused on intervening in the growth of Muslim associations by creating councils to "coordinate" Muslim organizations (Pedersen 1999). This is to channel the heightened suspicion of the growing number of religious associations and of youth affiliation with Islam. A similar kind of fear is clearly seen in the Indian case, whereby "militant disaffection among the second-largest Muslim population in the world" (Mishra 2003) could have severe domestic and international consequences.[2]

Amidst the surveillance and controversy, there has been an Islamic revival in terms of everyday religiosity. The term "Islamic Revival" refers technically to both political activities and religious sensibilities that gained vibrancy in Muslim societies since the 1970s (Fernando 2010; Mahmood 2005: 3; Haddad et al. 1991). The term was explicitly employed by Muslim informants during my field research. No one I encountered denied that there has been an increase in Islamic piety over the last decade or more. This manifested as women's veiling, men's comportment, neighborhood mosques, Islamic schools, informal Islamic study circles, charity activities, and greater discourse about "Muslim identity."

Lyon and Hyderabad are considered among the top cities that have experienced an Islamic revival in the two countries. They remain under-researched vis-à-vis their larger and wealthier counterparts such as Mumbai and Paris. Both (including their suburbs) are

approximately 30% Muslim and have become known nationally for the growth of Saudi, Wahhabi influenced forms of Islam. In Lyon this is generally considered Salafist Islam, and in Hyderabad Muslims refer to the influence of the group, Ahl-e-Hadees. They are both somewhat segregated: Muslims are concentrated in the Old City section of Hyderabad and the outlying suburbs (*banlieues*) of Lyon. Because of the growth of sectarian forms of practice, the two cities are ideally suited to explore the relationship between piety and politics—since it is exactly these forms of practice that have become politicized. For example, French National Deputy André Gerin, who initiated the national proposal to debate the burqa, was the former mayor of Lyon's banlieue of Vénissieux. His zeal came about through his observations of Salafist Islam in and around Lyon.

Convergent forms of piety

Lyon and Hyderabad have converged around the class and gendered dimensions of religious activity. The donning of the burqa, sex segregation, full-time Islamic education, and salvation discourse was most prominent among the poor. And in both cases, middle-class Muslims had great disdain for these practices, citing them as regressive misinterpretations of Islam. They spoke instead of the importance of cultural and political "integration." Class-based conflict over Islam manifested in interviews, everyday conversations, arguments that took place in the main city mosques, and in Muslim schools (in the case of Hyderabad). This dynamic can be understood through the lens of distinction (Bourdieu 1984) in which Muslim middle-classes and elites exercise judgment, producing religious and aesthetic 'taste' that conceals class relations of symbolic violence. Few discuss the overlap of these divisions and conflict with class, which are instead popularly attributed to ideology or sect.

While the classes conflict mainly over practices of gender, women are nonetheless at the forefront of the Islamic revival in both cities, increasingly wearing and defending the headscarf or forms of the burqa, leading mosque classes and teaching circles, and mobilizing along the lines of their religious identity. But again, gendered practices in particular are concentrated among the poor. While sociologists of religion have long argued that women are more religious than men due to various factors ranging from biology, gender roles, and socialized risk-aversion (see Collette and Lizardo 2009), I instead prioritize the local contextual and political factors that have placed them at the center of Islamic movements.

In France and India the two subjects of veiling and family law have been the targets of the state—and women have little choice but to engage this discourse. Islam is targeted not only on the basis of security but also in the name of women's rights. This is most fraught in France, where veiling has several times become the subject of national debates, and as I will show, women in headscarves or burqas are severely marginalized. In India also, local controversies over the burqa have occurred. However, issues of marriage and divorce rights have been the main source of controversy involving Islam. Women's centrality has also developed in the context of Muslim men's social dislocation. In the city of Hyderabad, a significant percentage of poor Muslim men work as migrant laborers in Gulf countries. Their wives and female relatives are left behind to manage the home and play a role in local community efforts. In Lyon and its suburbs, discrimination and high rates of unemployment have altered gender relations such that religious Muslim women experience great anxiety over finding suitable marriage partners. Further, many are estranged from the world of education and employment because of their veiling. For this population of women, Islamic movements are an important alternative to worldly progress.

Divergent forms of politics

Although the two cases converge around gender and class variation in piety, the political movements that have developed in these communities are different and distinctive. I argue that there are four types of movements occurring across the two cities, among Muslims organized around their religious identity and piety. Among the middle-classes these are clearly political movements, because of their engagement with the state and articulation of policy demands. In Hyderabad, the Muslim middle-class and elite have created a *politics of redistribution* in which activists demand affirmative action policies (reservations) for Muslims and various welfare programs to increase health, literacy, and education. Philanthropic organizations, Muslim press outlets, and the city's Muslim political party, Majlis-e-Muttahadil Muslimeen (MIM), compete intensely on the terrain of redistribution to represent the mass of poor Muslims. With accusations of electoral fixing and mafia-style violence, this field might best be understood as a machine politics of redistribution dominated by the MIM.

In Lyon, the middle-class Muslim community is actively involved in a *politics of recognition*. Political and cultural organizations invite dialogue with the state, protest the state, and hold public events to raise awareness of Muslim identity and religious needs such as prayer halls and the defense of women facing discrimination due to the headscarf. Some of these organizations are in fact state creations. Their platforms are thus weak or limited to Islamic cultural activities. The field might best be understood as a state-controlled politics of recognition. The middle-class movements I describe are directed toward the state and are a form of politics in its most traditional sense (Weber 1946). In their articulation of demands for recognition and redistribution, they invoke Nancy Fraser's conception of politics as a practice of claims-making, articulated along these two axes of justice (1997). The case of Hyderabad, however, shows much less separation between the two axes than does the French case.

The third type of movement is the creation of *political community* among poor Muslim women especially, in the slums of Hyderabad. This idea is anchored in Hannah Arendt's approach to politics as a collective engagement, deliberation, and practice of freedom that only exists through community (1958). The movement only rarely engages the state or language of claims, but it is indeed building the capacity to do so. With the help of Muslim philanthropists, poor Muslims are building civil societies through their Islamic revival. They are forging a collective identity and constructing notions of community responsibility and 'proper' political engagement through their mosques, madrasas, women's Islamic study circles, and other institutions. Through their study circles, women in slum neighborhoods have a number of material, legal, and symbolic projects toward their betterment that take shape precisely through community.

The fourth movement, I argue, is a form of *antipolitics* in the banlieues of Lyon, organized primarily around poor women's mosque communities in Vénissieux. This is a firm rejection of politics and instead, a valorization of the private sphere, a moral community, and spiritual teachings that deal with very individual relationships to God. Although the movement shares some similarities with its counterpart in Hyderabad, the lack of social trust and social isolation distinguishes it from a political community. More generally, antipolitics has taken place alongside the retreat of civil societies in Lyon's banlieues, the closure and raiding of mosques, and collapse of associations. The concept of antipolitics, borrowed from the context of Eastern European dissidence (Konrád 1984; Havel 1985; Eyal 2000; Goven 2000; Renwick 2006), may be considered political from the perspective of formation of citizen-subjects. But it lacks key elements of political community and has little access to the state or civil society

institutions. In a sense, it is the least among the four movements I present to constitute a form of political Islam. This is ironic, given that this group of Salafist women in France is so heavily politicized by the state.

Certainly, these four movements represent ideal types. There are exceptions and nuances at the individual and institutional levels. There is indeed a politics of recognition that is joined to redistribution in Hyderabad. This is often led by the MIM, which stages demonstrations and other means to defend (or manipulate) Muslim identity. Likewise, redistributive concerns are not absent from Lyon's middle-class Muslim campaigns. Charity efforts, hospice visits, and free meals during Ramadan comprise part of the activities of middle-class mosques. Further, these groups are struggling precisely with the relationship between redistribution and recognition of Islam and over which domain they should expend their efforts. But in both cases these are secondary to the dominant form of politics. There are also elements of antipolitics in political communities, as poor Muslims in Hyderabad commonly reject the idea of politics. The inverse also holds true, as Salafist women in Vénissieux struggle to provide moral support for one another and nourish a collective identity. Again, however, these factors are minor compared to the dominant ethos in each case.

Divergent class relations

If piety varies by class position, I argue that the politics of Islam vary by Muslim class *relations*. In Hyderabad the relationship between elite and middle-class philanthropists and the subaltern, low-income communities is highly paternalistic, whereby welfare is distributed while particular forms of Islam are encouraged and others are discouraged. Ultimately, elites encourage political participation and making claims of the state (while simultaneously promoting independent Muslim civil societies). Their material support and overall paternalistic protection of the poor has facilitated political communities. Moreover, their own political competition leads to dynamic debates about Islam, its gendered practices, and relationship to cultural rituals. In Lyon Islamic (as well as some secular) associations that were once active in the banlieues have retreated from working-class neighborhoods, largely due to the state's successful attempts to defeat them. While class relations in the past were more similar to the case of Hyderabad, they were always somewhat weak. Today there are few cross-class alliances, even as activists regret their growing distance from Muslims in the housing projects. This bifurcation maintains the political isolation of Muslims in working-class suburbs and little cross-class dialogue about Islamic practice. As a result, subaltern Muslims have retreated into antipolitics.

To argue that class fundamentally shapes the Islamic revival and its politicization begs the question of the historical-structural factors in which these forms of piety and class relations are situated. I focus on two major factors within the realms of state and economy: models of secularism and urban marginality. The recent history of Muslims in France and India is a story of urban marginality and more clearly in the Indian case, of economic decline. The loss of factory jobs and decline of labor unions in Lyon's banlieues eliminated the primary vehicle of stability and citizenship for many immigrant Muslims. Unemployment in the neighborhood of Les Minguettes, where I did my ethnography, is 40% among residents under 25 years (Voisin 2005). In Hyderabad many Muslims were expelled from military and administrative positions in the post-Independence period (Leonard 2003) and now work in informal economies and live in slum neighborhoods. Urban Muslim women nation-wide suffer an illiteracy rate of 47% (Government of India Sachar Report 2006). In sum, discrimination, unemployment, weak education, and poor housing define their conditions. I argue that this cannot be fully separated

from their religious teachings and forms of piety. The devaluing of material and secular life in favor of salvation, patience, and serenity as well as a strict system of gendered boundaries take shape in this context of entrenched marginality.

Perhaps the most salient divergence between France and India with regard to Islam is their model of secularism. One is a fundamentally pluralist model and the other assimilationist. Indian secularism, or "composite nationalism," seems to embody fundamental contradictions because of its acceptance of religious laws in matters of family, finances, and property, and the principal of non-interference in the affairs of religious communities (Hasan 1997; Hasan 1998; Sunder Rajan 2000). The state in other words built religious recognition into its constitution. Composite nationalism allowed Muslims to mobilize around religious identity (regardless of their religiosity or lack thereof) and build cross-class alliances as an ethnic group. Such use of identity was relatively free of stigma as well as legal barriers.[3]

In stark contrast, the French model of *laïcité*, rooted in the Jacobin tradition, is based on political and cultural assimilation and opposes recognition of religious or ethnic minorities (Bowen 2009). Unlike the Indian case, French secularism was designed to keep religiosity *out* of the public sphere and to uphold national values of *liberté, egalité, et fraternité*. Islamic associations had to restrict their use of identity in order to receive state recognition and obtain public funding as well as compete with secular associations that also tried to represent immigrant minorities (Leveau 1992). Early (pre-1980s) barriers to organizing as well as the strong incompatibility of ethno-religious identity (negatively marked as "communautarisme") and French conceptions of citizenship would have rendered a class politics based on a unified Muslim category highly unlikely. These opposite models of secularism also in and of themselves account for the different movements in the two cases. The repression of religion in the public sphere in France has led to a politics of recognition and not surprisingly, to an *antipolitical* stance among poor Salafist Muslims whose practices are considered a gross violation of laïcité. In India the politics of Islam almost always invoke distribution and not religious rights, which tend to be safeguarded. The argument of this dissertation is summarized in Table 1 below:

Table 1
Politics across state and class

		STATE	
		Pluralist Hyderabad	Assimilationist Lyon
	Middle-class	**Redistribution**	**Recognition**
CLASS	(relations)	(paternalism)	(opposition)
	Subaltern	**Community**	**Antipolitics**

Outline of dissertation

The dissertation is organized in two parts that together elaborate the table above. In the first part I provide a historical analysis of the state and economic structures that laid the foundations for the kind of Islamic revivals that have taken place in each country and the class

formations among those of Muslim origin that would in part determine the forms of politics I observed. In sum, it presents the two dimensions of the above table to show how it is that the secular state itself has produced and politicized religious revival. In Chapter 2, "Secularisms and the politics of Islamic revival," I argue that the Indian pluralist model reifies the notion of community as the protector against majoritarianism and against the state, whereas French laïcité reifies the state as the protector of individuals against the community. As a result, Indian secularism was a pragmatic commitment to preserving religious and ethnic *communities* while managing the legacies of colonial administration, which had strategically built and deployed religious identity differences. The decades following Independence saw the failure of the secularist promise, as Hindu right-wing ideology gained momentum and horrific violence against Muslims took place. Islamic associations were galvanized to engage the world of politics, and religiosity became moral and political shelter in defense of secularism as accommodation of minorities. But despite the failure of Indian secularism, the state has remained committed to religious community rights—even legal plurality—such that middle-class Muslim politics are geared mostly toward economic redistribution rather than religious recognition. In contrast, French laïcité was a universalist philosophy borne out of the Revolutionary imperative to disestablish the Church and take away the enormous powers and properties it had possessed. Religion more broadly was relegated to cultural domains and viewed with suspicion. The headscarf and "burqa" came to symbolize not only major violations of state secularism but also the supposed dangers of community. Middle-class Islamic movements are thus largely about recognition politics, where religion and Islam, especially, are profoundly stigmatized.

Chapter 3, "Urban marginality and the shaping of class relations," presents the stories of how Muslims came to occupy the lowest class positions in society. I also discuss how paternalistic class relations developed in the case of Hyderabad whereas class bifurcation occurred in the case of Lyon. The colonial and postcolonial state, in tandem with the local and global economy, laid the path for these class formations and relations amidst an explosion of unemployment that disproportionately impacted Muslims. In an important sense, the state conflated piety and politics in its earlier shaping of class and later impact on class relations. However, the existence of an Indian Muslim intelligentsia and landed elite allowed for a legitimate identity-based politics that lacks a clear counterpart in France. These different class relations, I argue, have led to the different politics I will present in Part II.

The second part of the dissertation goes into the ethnography of religious spaces of the city slums, working-class housing projects, and middle-class associational life in Hyderabad and Lyon. I begin with a chapter on politics among the poor in Hyderabad, "Political community in the slums of Hyderabad." I begin with this because the subaltern, Muslim populations in both cases are the most targeted and politicized and in the Indian case, subject to major civil liberties violations. But, as I hope to clearly show, these groups in Hyderabad are merely exercising their citizenship and are practicing a politics in a broadly democratic, communitarian sense. This case shows just how problematic it is to assume their piety threatens the secular state, especially as they refrain from actually making very many claims of the state. I argue that their political communities are founded on a set of material, legal, and symbolic projects in which the creation of community and trust is an end in itself rather than only instrumental. These political communities are supported by middle-class Islamic and philanthropic organizations, which I profile in Chapter 5, "Politics of Redistribution." These middle-class and elite organizations and individuals challenge the state for reservations and educational opportunities for the city's low-income Muslims. I show how extreme political competition among Muslim elites for legitimacy

and electoral gain draws the city's slum residents into the political field and facilitates major charity projects. The relationship of elites and middle-class Muslims to their poor brethren rests firmly on paternalism, whereby distribution affectionately occurs alongside severe judgment and critique of sectarian and gendered Islamic practices. But the result nonetheless is a dynamic debate about Islam and a certain amount of protection for the politicized and targeted subaltern classes.

Chapter 6, "Antipolitics in the banlieues of Lyon," shows again the problem of conflating piety and politics. I present a community of women, whose lives are shaped largely by their unemployment and precarity, retreating into a private sphere rather than building civil societies or engaging the state. They live in neighborhoods where Islamic organizations were effectively defeated by the state. Further, the French state's insistence that their Salafist religious practices are politically threatening culminated in a ban on the burqa and have led them to a movement of antipolitics. I define this by the reconfiguration of the private sphere, retreat into moral community, and the struggle to achieve serenity in a life they believe is defined by suffering. Instead of the outward and worldly community politics of Hyderabad, the ethos of their movement is inward and isolated. This isolation is clinched, I argue, by their social separation from the mainstream, middle-class associations. In Chapter 7, "Politics of Recognition," I present several mainstream Islamic associations that in stark contrast to those in the working-class banlieues, invite, accommodate, and protest the state on the basis of recognition claims. Although there is not the political competition as in Hyderabad, the field is divided across ideological factors and approaches to state engagement. I discuss the disillusion that many activists faced as they became increasingly disconnected from residents in the working-class *quartiers* and under pressure from state surveillance. Their regret at having 'abandoned' the *quartiers* (in favor of middle-class recognition politics) coexists with the same type of judgment and dislike of the subaltern, sectarian Islam that I found in Hyderabad.

THEORETICAL APPROACHES TO ISLAMIC PIETY AND POLITICS

The phenomena I outlined above cannot be adequately explained by existing literature. To start, much of the literature on political Islam has remained relatively abstract in the attempt to define and explain Islamic movements, partly because ethnographic studies of Islam and politics were generally rare until recent years. But further, the major camps of literature on politics and Islam has not interrogated the relationship between piety and politics but instead, conflated the two sets of practices. This is more obviously the case for cultural approaches focused on Islamic 'civilizational' conflict with Western powers, but it is also the case for structural perspectives focused on the effects of globalization.

Cultural, orientalist approaches collapsed piety and politics together by essentializing Islamic doctrine, treating it as inherently political and potentially violent (Lewis 1990, 2002; Huntington 1996). These approaches would reduce the complex levels of variation between secularisms like those of France and India to geopolitics and civilizations, and they would have little to say about the serious class differences within Muslim societies whether minority or majority. The sectarian forms of Islam I saw in the two cities would be described as no more than radical ideology en route to terrorism. That they might exist as a form of redistributive community politics or a silent antipolitics is generally lost on culturally informed literature.

A number of scholars depart from a cultural approach per se and have made distinctions within political Islamic movements, drawing them along a continuum of political means. [4] For example, on one end of the continuum are "moderates", characterized by their belief that Islamic

change comes about through long-term education, ideological advocacy, and electoral participation. On the opposite end of the continuum are "radical" Islamists, who believe that violence is a legitimate means to achieve their goals of resisting a corrupt state (Burgat 2003: 20; Hamzawy in Karam 2004: 136).[5] "Moderates" and "radicals" also differ in their attitudes toward democracy (Karam 2004: 10; Kramer in Beinin and Stork, eds. 1997; Choueiri in Sidahmed and Ehteshami, eds. 1996: 20; Esposito and Voll 1996).[6] Although this literature draws distinctions, it still assumes that religious movements all seek the same goal of Islamizing state and society. This is indeed the popular and state view of Islamic movements across the globe and it again, ignores cross-country and cross-class variation. Thus, a politics that is fundamentally about material redistribution or ethno-religious recognition, as are the middle-class politics in Hyderabad and Lyon, cannot be understood using this framework.

Variations across country and class in theory exist in structuralist literature that looks at the influence of political economy on Islamic movements. These scholars have commonly cited four overlapping, macroeconomic and historical forces: the failure of modernization; the 1970s recession and ensuing debt crisis (Toth 2003); neo-liberal globalization; and foreign domination.[7] The distinctions between these trends, however, are often unclear, if not ignored. The general narrative is that the class inequalities that resulted from globalization and the failed post-colonial state created social frustrations, which people have channeled through Islamist activity (whether supporting Islamist political parties or participating in religious associations that are often considered threatening to the state) (Kepel 2002; Akbarzadeh and Saeed 2003; Toth 2003; Turner 2003; Karam 2004). Some have emphasized the role of mosques and often, madrasas (Muslim theological schools), in providing jobs, shelter, and welfare in the context of retrenchment (Zubaida 1989; Riesebrodt 1993: 194; Vergès in Beinin and Stork 1997: 295; Turner 2003: 144; Toth 2003: 557-8).

Others have focused on Islam as filling an ideological void left by the collapse of the modernization project (Benhabib 2002: 41-42). Specifically, as nationalism, socialism, and secularism no longer serve as tenable ideologies in Muslim societies, a return to religious morality as a platform for politics and social life has gained increased momentum. Some, however, analyze Islamic traditionalism as a response to the *success* of modernization as opposed to its failure.[8] For example, rapid urbanization and expansion of bureaucracy has devalued "traditional values and life conduct ideals" (Riesebrodt 1993: 191), which are marked by "personalistic, patriarchal notions of order and social relations" (Ibid. 9).[9]

Scholars also insist that Islam is used to provide meaning and identity amidst a context of confusion created by globalization (Tibi 2002[1998]; Mohammed 2002). For example, family structure, gender codes, and the role of religion have all been challenged by globalizing economies. This has been put forth most prominently by Olivier Roy (2004, 2006) who has argued that minority Muslims in particular are struggling to carve out a religious space within the confines of a secular state. Moreover, he argues that younger generations of Muslims are alienated from both the dominant culture and their parents' (immigrant) culture. Their turn to particularly Salafist forms of Islam reflects an erasure of any cultural belonging at all. Roy's work thus sits within a broader framework that sees the mobilization of Islam as born of crises of identity brought on ultimately by globalization.

The Islam and globalization literature, which I have described as broadly structuralist, acknowledges class by considering the effects of unemployment and neoliberal globalization. But it would be unable to explain how, nonetheless, such different types of movements emerge across countries even with similar forms of marginalization and dislocation. In this dissertation I

look at the historical processes and meanings of secularism and the active role of the state instead of the effects of global economic changes, which the literature has treated as isolated and inevitable factors. Again, the literature treats Islam as a domain that is spontaneously and willfully made political in response to global shifts. Piety and politics are still bound up together.

Defining politics

As the review above might reveal, political Islam and Islamic movements are difficult to explain because they are notoriously difficult to define—largely, I argue, because of the conflation of piety and politics. The broad consensus about political Islam seems to be: movements, whether self-identified as "Islamist" or "political Islam" or not, that have an agenda of making government and society more Islamic. What blurs the distinction between political Islam and Islamic Revival is the issue of whether or not the religious activities of the latter in fact challenge the state. To what degree is the transformation of civil society in effect a transformation of the state? The literature has generally presumed that piety movements either explicitly seek state transformation or *do* intrinsically transform the state. They are always, therefore, political.

Even literature strongly critical of state perspectives and cultural approaches to Islam carefully points out the intrinsically political nature of piety movements. Cihan Tuğal (2009b), for example, argues that the state is intrinsically part of the formation of subjects and their identities and moreover, that the state is transformed and challenged even in the absence of traditional forms of political protest. The division between state and civil society is hence analytically deceptive. The Islamization of society, through religious debates, sermons, organization of time and space in alignment with daily prayers and sex segregation, ultimately creates subjects who desire political change in favor of Islam and pious leaders. The state is forced to react to these deep changes in civil society. In Saba Mahmood's ethnography of Egyptian women's participation in the Islamic revival, participants do not seek institution of Islamic law or direct engagement with the state (2005: 37). They in fact accuse Islamists of corrupting Islam by trying to include it under the domain of the state (Ibid: 52, 119). This is also the case with Tablighi Jama'at, the largest transnational Islamic movement (founded in India), which deliberately shuns politics (Metcalf 2001). In these cases, from their own perspective, participants are not part of political Islam. But, Mahmood and others argue, piety movements necessarily have political consequences, because so many aspects of life are under the domain of the nation-state (Hirschkind 2006). Moreover, everyday practices in the public sphere are crucial to "the consolidation of a secular-liberal polity" (Mahmood 2005: 73-74), presumably through subject-formation.

The definition of politics that I employ here is a Weberian definition, of striving to influence the state or the distribution of official power (1946). I chose this definition because it affords an important analytical distinction—and, I argue, a normative distinction—between a private and public (political) sphere. This is a distinction that is at best minimized in the scholarly attention paid to subject-formation. If everyday practice itself is made political, either willfully or by the force of the state, there is no private domain of which we can speak or defend. Thus, there are important normative stakes involved in defining politics. And any conception of politics is "essentially contestable" (Connolly 1983[1974]), because all are inherently about normative stakes (Warren 1999).

With this understanding of politics, the middle-class movements I present are clearly political activities, both inviting and challenging the state. In contrast, the antipolitics I present in France shun any state engagement and further, are not building institutions of civil society from where any claims of the state or reconfiguration of power may be attempted. The case of community politics in Hyderabad occupies a more ambiguous space that encourages us to consider the possibility of politics as both an instrumental and non-instrumental endeavor. I label these practices in Hyderabad community *politics* because they are building civil societies, based on norms of reciprocity and trust. They participate in claims-making rarely and with the help of elites, but they are also developing the capacity to make redistributive demands of the state on their own. Politics is practiced in order to achieve some purpose vis-à-vis the state. But significantly, the creation of community and bonds of reciprocity is an end in itself. For Hannah Arendt, who theorized this reciprocity as a notion of politics, the creation of community (and transcendence of individual selves) is a far superior achievement than securing material or legal concessions from the state. While I argue there is an important Arendtian moment to what I observed among Hyderabad's subaltern Muslims, it is ultimately the capacity to challenge the state that leads me to categorize this as a form of politics.

Clarifying how and to what extent piety movements have any relationship to the state allows for an understanding of the variability in the relationship between piety and politics. The risk otherwise is to accept the ubiquitous collapsing of these two domains and the consequences this implies for already marginalized and harassed Muslim populations.

PART I

EXPLAINING ISLAMIC REVIVAL THROUGH STATE AND ECONOMY

Chapter 2: Secularisms and the politics of Islamic revival

It is not that secularism is an inappropriate, failed, distorted, or not-yet-realized project, or one in need of redefinition. Rather, the ambiguity is precisely because the promise of freedom and its betrayal are contained within the category itself (Shabnum Tejani 2008: 17).

With their very opposite models of secularism, the French and Indian states were central to the constitution of the politics of Islamic movements and to the Islamic revival itself. Their histories show how piety movements were not a spontaneous response to globalization, nor a cultural propensity, but were determined largely by the secularist project. This is a crucial point that sociologists of religion have not fully recognized. While rejecting the secularization thesis, which had predicted the decline of religion with increased development, scholars have stood perplexed by the flourishing of religions in recent decades nearly everywhere (Hadden 1995; Marty and Appleby, eds. 1991, 1993, 1994, 1995; Berger in *Christian Century* 1997; Stark and Finke 2000).[10] There was little acknowledgment that the secular model itself contained the seeds for religious revival and politics. Indeed, the secularist process and its failure—or, the promise of freedom and its betrayal—set the path for the politics of Islamic revival.

In this chapter I will present France and India's opposite models of state secularism, *laïcité* and *composite nationalism*, in order to explain how they influenced religious movements and their relationship to politics. Laïcité, the French model, emphasizes state neutrality and the elimination of religion from all public institutions in favor of civic culture. It is fundamentally assimilationist. Composite nationalism, in contrast, is based on legal pluralism and is about the preservation of community rights and equal facilitation of religious practice in public and private. It is fundamentally about pluralist accommodation. Although their approaches to religion are vastly different, there have been vibrant Islamic revivals in both countries. There have also been profoundly contentious debates about Muslims and physical and symbolic violence against religious minorities—such that in the final analysis, it is difficult to clearly evaluate the merits of either ideal type. But I will argue in Chapters 4 and 5 that Indian secularism has allowed for greater dynamism and democratic potential for subaltern Muslim communities.

The following discussions will present four things: how and why ethno-religious categories were mobilized and politicized in India, while religion in France was mistrusted and politicized as a threat to the state; the development of Islamic revival movements partly as a response to the failures of the secular state to protect minority Muslims; and how the Indian model of composite nationalism represents a reification of the community, while the French model of laïcité reifies the state as the protector of individuals. In this latter discussion, I will show how both forms of secularism are challenged most profoundly when it comes to questions of gender. Secularism is therefore a fundamentally gendered relationship and process, which brings gender to the core of the relationship between piety and politics. Finally, I will explain how these two histories of secularism determined the types of Islamic movements in Hyderabad and Lyon. In doing so, I will use the framework of the redistribution-recognition dilemma put forth by Nancy Fraser.

Secularism as a historical process

As many have argued (Taylor 1998), there is no single, coherent, or correct model of secularism. Rather, secularism and laïcité represent *processes* of the continually unfolding and changing relationship between religion and the state. A monolithic and precise conception of secularism is further unsupported because, as the above quote describes, secularism is at its core about many things: freedom, equality, the relationship between individuals and community, and the very substance of national identity. In this process of secularism, both the state and religion are transformed. Through legislation and court rulings, the secular state has effectively defined the contours of religion, thus reinforcing Islam (and Hinduism, in India) as discursive traditions (Asad 1993). Neither religion nor secularism has firm definitions. Nonetheless, the French and Indian constitutions embody the broad principle of state neutrality and some commitment to equality for the main minority religious traditions.

To understand the current Islamic revivals, how they converge and diverge, it is necessary to examine the historical context in which secularism emerged. In both cases secularism emerged at the birth of the modern nation-state during critical moments of philosophical and pragmatic debate. However, in India secularism was primarily about the pragmatics of managing community relations and preventing majoritarianism, whereas in France it was a philosophical stance against religious establishment and to an extent, religion itself. Consequently, there emerged in India a passive form of secularism and in France, an assertive form (see Kuru 2009). In my analysis of these two cases, I agree with the argument of Ahmet Kuru (2009) that the political conditions at the moment of nation-building led countries down a path of either a more flexible "passive" secularism or a militant "assertive" secularism. More specifically, Kuru argues that the presence or absence of an *ancien régime* based on the marriage of a monarchy and dominant religion determined the type of secularism states pursued. One result of such ancien régimes were strong anti-clerical and anti-religious movements that eventually led to the militant type of secularism seen in France, for example. Religion was inseparable from the political power of the Catholic Church. The conditions of India's national independence were of course very different. There was already in place a multitude of colonial legacies and politicized religious identities. There was not such an ancien régime or parallel to a structure like the Catholic Church, notwithstanding the existence of a Hindu, religious upper-caste.[11] Secularism here was less about institutionalized religion and everything about the status of minorities, as had been defined by the colonial state. The Indian case directly speaks to Edward Said's assertion that the antithesis of secularism was not religion but rather, majoritarianism (Ahmad 2009).[12]

In stark contrast to the French case, secularism in India was not a comprehensive philosophy but rather, a political arrangement that guaranteed minorities the right to be equal citizens and practice their faith in public and private (Ahmad 2009: 14). Composite nationalism was intended to guard against majoritarianism. It dates back to Gandhi and Prime Minister Nehru's determination to protect the rights of Muslims in the post-Partition independent state. The primary concern of Indian secularism was the "Muslim question," which had developed in the late nineteenth century under colonial influence and remained unresolved even with the creation of Pakistan (Ibid. 14). With Indian independence and the creation of Pakistan, Hindu nationalists began vehemently campaigning for a Hindu state. The Constituent Assembly debates at this time were taking place amidst epic communal violence, forced evacuation of Indian Muslims, and suspicion of even those Muslims who rejected the idea of Pakistan. In response, Nehru's belief in secularism became even more resolute (Ibid. 17-18).

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Given the degree of contention and communal violence, early efforts to precisely define secularism were rejected (Rao 2006: 61). The principle of state neutrality was purposively left ambiguous. Several Constitutional articles can be interpreted as either indicating state neutrality *or* state promotion of all religions (Alam 2007b: 45). It was not until 1976 during the Emergency period that the 42nd Amendment incorporated the term "secularism" (and "socialist") merely into the preamble.[13] Despite this ambiguity, the separation of religion from state has been upheld in numerous court cases, and the Indian system supports religious institutions through numerous mechanisms. Most prominent, the doctrine of legal pluralism allows every religious community to abide by religious laws in personal matters like marriage, divorce, adoption, and inheritance. In addition to Personal Law, religious minority recognition occurs through state funding of certain religious activities such as subsidies for Muslim pilgrims, affirmative action policies for Muslims (that were recommended in 1979 but have only been partially implemented), and holidays. India has one of the highest numbers of public holidays in the world thanks to minority religious recognition (Alam 2007b: 48; Rao 2006: 59).

From one perspective, the Constitution reflected classical liberalism, with its prohibition of discrimination based on ascriptive identities. However, at the same time the policies above show how the Constitution sought to preserve *community* rights. This unique blend of individual and community rights is the fundamental tension of Indian secularism, according to some scholars (Parekh 1995; Madan 1993).[14] The fraught issue of personal law and Muslim women best exemplify this tension, as I will discuss later (Ahmad 2009: 19).

Despite the many religious rights that Muslims enjoy in the public sphere, Nehru's secular promise is often deemed a failure for a variety of reasons (Bilgrami 1994). From the Left perspective, the Hindu right eroded secular democracy in tandem with the state, which came to play an active role in Hindu-Muslim riots and actually supported right-wing networks in some instances (Ahmad 2009: 232). The state's acquiescence in the 1992 destruction of the Babri Masjid at Ayodhya and the 2002 pogrom of Muslims in Gujarat symbolize this failure. For Bilgrami (1994), it was not the incompatibility of secularism and Indian society that was at fault (as many argue) but Nehru's refusal to allow secularism to take substantive form through active communal negotiations. He argues that Indian secularism could therefore only have been a "holding process."

Like the Indian case, French secularism was born of revolutionary crisis and unfolded amidst controversy and violence. As in India, the law establishing secularism was not a contained political moment but encompassed numerous contentious debates from the role of colonized Muslims to the status of Alsace-Moselle.[15] Where in India, the focus on *community* ensured that ethno-religious categories were always mobilized and politicized, in French religious identity was mistrusted as part of the battle between the state and Church. The state needed to be freed from the Church and so, religion more broadly.

The principles of laïcité were put into law in 1905, though laïcité was officially incorporated into the Constitution in 1946. The main principles were: freedom of conscience, separation of church and state, and the free exercise of religion (Weil 2007: 16). Although the main concern was eliminating the power of the Church, laïcité also emerged out of great discrimination and violence against Protestants and Jews and was thus also driven by concern for equality. The Dreyfus Affair in the years leading to the passage of the 1905 law was one of the main events that heightened liberal motivation to secularize the state.

The state's separation from religion had been evolving since the Revolution, its Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen and the sudden stripping of powers of the

Catholic Church. Early secularization was about institutional fragmentation and limiting the jurisdiction of the Church and privileges of the clergy (Baubérot 1990). The amount of power and wealth the Church had wielded was immense. For example, in 1788, 130,000 clergymen held a full one-third of the country's wealth (Weil 2007: 10). In overturning this power, religious congregations were suppressed, as Republican ideological fervor stirred a strong anti-clerical and anti-religious culture. French elites and important writers like Voltaire and Rousseau asserted the incompatibility between modernity and religion (Kuru 2009: 138). Laïcité and Catholic ideology were polarized this way over two centuries. (After the Revolution, there were two major periods of regression vis-à-vis laïcité, the early nineteenth century Restoration and the Vichy regime.)

This background clearly differs from the story of Indian secularism in that there was not only the political economy of the country at stake but also philosophical and ideological principles. The connection between laïcité and ideology and national values has continued throughout modern French history. Through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries anti-secularists worried over the substance of French values and moral education of children in the absence of the Church's public influence. Hence the central role of the public school in debates over laïcité. To the degree that laïcité eventually became an issue of pragmatics, this has occurred with recent controversies over Islam. Integrating Islam into a *laïque* state is today increasingly about specific legal cases and mundane municipal negotiations than the future morality of the French nation (Roy 2007), despite popular rhetoric.

Although secularists and defenders of public Catholicism continued to clash until the post-WWII period, there eventually developed a peaceful agreement and acceptance of laïcité on the part of the Church. Demands for public funds for church restoration, for example, have lost their controversy and are now justified on cultural and historical grounds. Symbolically, this is very different from the situation of mosques (Perrin 2007: 551), which are obstructed, delayed, and surrounded by controversy at the municipal level. Since the late 1980s the debate over laïcité re-entered the political field and became more impassioned with demands for integrating Islam and supporting Islamic institutions (Baubérot 1990: 130). It has thus shifted dramatically from the focus on disempowering the Church to limiting the public visibility of Islam. In the language of "integration," Muslims are being pushed into creating an integrated French Islam under entirely different conditions as their minority predecessors. For example, as Jewish integration is said to have solidified in the 1970s, this occurred before state and society were completely *laïque*. For Muslims, however, their institutionalization must occur only within a now narrow vision of Republicanism that has been established through decades of political debate (Cohen 2007: 580).

Nonetheless, the behind-the-scenes contradictions of laïcité are ubiquitous. The state continues to intervene, control, and fund religious institutions through legal loopholes. Islam is now no exception to this (Bowen 2009). As Baubérot argues, such contradictions show that French secularism is not monolithic but is instead a dynamic process that is transforming with changing social realities (1990: 117). Its continuing difficulty, however, is navigating between the promotion of Republican morality and maintenance of state neutrality (Ibid. 113). It is in these complex crevices where the controversies over Islam have fallen.

In the next section, I will present the development of India's unique model of secularism based on legal pluralism, its emergence at the time of Partition, and the significance of caste to the trajectory of composite nationalism. I will also briefly describe the rise of Hindutva and India's "crisis of secularism", and how this has influenced Islamic movements. While it is clear

that secularism failed in the 1980s and 90s, I argue that despite its flaws, it allowed a set of politics to occur.

Colonial legacies, caste, and "the Muslim Question"

India's Muslim population was constructed as a special minority group and as a unique threat to secularism in the midst of nationalist politics. Piety was made monolithic and simultaneously politicized straight from the embers of colonial rule. The path toward composite nationalism and legal pluralism in India was paved less by the religiosity of Hindus and Muslims and more by colonial manipulation of religious identity as well as the history of state patronage.

Because neither Hinduism nor Islam had a centralized authoritative body, the role of the state in managing religion had historically been deemed essential. The relationship between religion (e.g. temples) and the state was one based on patronage in exchange for legitimacy (Rao 2006: 49-51). The British continued this system, practiced by the Mughals, but eventually abandoned it in favor of broad neutrality. But the long history of patronage was such that even atheistic political parties participated in this exchange between religious institutions and the state. There was not, therefore, the type of stigma against religious figures that became an important factor in France. Again, this has to do with the structure of the relationship between religion and the state: the general dependency of decentralized religious spaces and individuals on the state versus the centralized hierarchical authority of the Catholic Church.

Religion was also famously important in the Indian case because of the use of religious imagery in the nationalist struggle. Gandhi's appeal to Hindu identity and morality in the anti-colonial cause allowed for great symbolic resources (Ibid. 51). His reverence for religion in general and insistence on the principle of *sava dharma samabhava* (the equality and truth of all religions) provided a moral foundation to Indian nationalism, even if such reverence wasn't shared by many of his contemporaries. In this context, Indian secularism was not a fight against religion or religious authority but again, a pragmatic issue of "minority-majority" relations.

However, the conceptions of minority and majority only developed through colonial administration and elite manipulation, which I will discuss also in Chapter 3. Religious identity had become key to nationalist mobilization and communal conflict at the time of independence, but this had been underway since the nineteenth century. One of the decisive moments in fixing the salience of religious identity and the future of secularism was the first Indian census in 1871. The British initiation of census operations heightened awareness of both caste and religious identity and energized an incipient Hindu nationalism. The counting of castes made clear to upper caste Hindus that their numbers were relatively small and their power in a future Indian state would be precarious. Their campaign toward a pan-Hindu identity that would absorb lower castes was clearly motivated by the desire to maintain hegemony. Around the same time, the Muslim League also started lobbying for its own interests (Rao 2006). According to Appadurai (1993), the British used quantification in India in a way that was unique relative to other colonies. Even when they stopped enumerating castes in 1931, the effects were imprinted—politics would henceforth be seen as a competition between numerical communities.

While there was an understanding in the nationalist cause that minorities would require state protection, the questions at the time of Independence (and to a large extent, today) were who constituted a minority and what was the scope of protection (Tejani 2008: 244). What clinched the definition of secularism and minority-majority relations in India was the official separation of caste from religious considerations that occurred with the 1946-50 Constituent Assembly debates (Ibid. 235-36). In the process of this separation, Muslims became defined as a

"minority" and have carried the weight and stigma of this category since Independence (Hasan 2004).

Initially, "the Muslim question," as it was called, was tied to debates about the Dalits ("Depressed Classes"). It was argued that if Muslims were to constitute a separate electorate or deserve special protections, this should also apply to Dalits. But if Dalits and Muslims were both separated from Hindus, this would effectively make upper-caste Hindus a minority. The creation of an electorate for Dalits was defeated precisely because nationalists did not wish to divide the Hindu electorate. They instead absorbed Dalits into a pan-Hindu identity and prevented a Muslim-Dalit axis (Tejani 2008: 14-15). After Partition, the needs of Dalits became a question of "backwardness" and were no longer connected to those of Muslims. As a result of these debates around caste, class, and religion, Muslims became minorities—and secularism became defined in terms of Hindu-Muslim relations (Ibid. 253-57).

One of the major consequences of this was that reservations were created only for "backward" classes, and religious "minorities" were excluded, even though most Muslims were poor and victims of discrimination. Reservations for them were considered a violation of secularism. The process of correcting this exclusion of Muslims began only in 1979 with the Mandal Commission, a commission established by the Left government in power to re-investigate what constituted backwardness and increase quotas for those who met the indicators. The Commission in fact declared 80 Muslim groups (based on occupational groups and lineage) as backward, or half the Muslim population. It sanctioned reservations for these groups but left the quota percentages to the states, many of which have not properly implemented the Commission's recommendations (Hasan 2007: 23-24). Thus, affirmative action policies for Muslims were stalled and delayed, but they were eventually legitimated.

The other consequence of these Constitutional decisions was the association of "communalism" with Muslims. Communalism was discursively constructed over the early twentieth century. Most generally it refers to political organizing by religious communities for their own purposes, "usually in hostile way" (Tejani 2008: 116). In its earliest usage, the term indicated an irrational attachment to ascriptive ties that went against modern national identity. Communalism was thus a threat to nationalism, but by Independence it became associated specifically with Muslims and the threat to *secularism*. According to Tejani (2008), nationalism was characterized by the Hindu majority, and demands made by religious minorities were simply communal questions (Ibid. 234). In sum, the construction of minority Muslims had great repercussions in the discursive and policy domains, even as it also supported a flexible form of secularism that sought minority protection and legal plurality.

Hindutva, surveillance, and Islamic revival

Communalism has thus been central to the history of Indian secularism and its "failures," marked by communal violence that became particularly grim in the 1980s and 90s, culminating in the 2002 pogrom of Muslims in Gujarat. Anti-Muslim violence has grown alongside the strength of the Hindutva movement. The seed for the contemporary movement was Hindu revivalism, which dates back to the nineteenth century and was incorporated into Congress party politics long before Independence (Ahmad 2009: 57). It was related partly to anti-colonial struggle. As by the 1920s there were major setbacks to Hindu-Muslim unity in the nationalist movement, the "communal question" began to overtake common interests (Tejani 2008).[16]

Today, Hindu nationalists use a variety of arguments about secularism, all with the objective of undermining Muslims. Some have tried to create hostility toward the concept of

composite nationalism, arguing that Hinduism is itself fundamentally tolerant, and a Hindu nation has no need for the Western concept of secularism (Varshney 2002; Rao 2006). The BJP, for example, notoriously argues that secularism is only about pandering to Muslims and has prevented their assimilation, which would otherwise occur in a Hindu nation true to its ideals. Other members of Hindutva defend secularism and accuse supporters of Muslim protection as "pseudo-secularists" (Chatterjee 1994: 347). Pure secularism, in other words, would not allow special consideration for minorities. As Chatterjee (1994) points out, the Hindu right is not really against secularism—rather, its interest lies simply in using the power of the state to oppress Muslims, using whatever logic.

Indeed, Muslims have more often been victims rather than perpetrators, of communal violence (Ahmad 2009; Brass 2002, 2003). According to Engineer (2010), communal riots in India broke in 1969, again in 1977, and then continued throughout the 1980s. They climaxed in the riots of Mumbai in 1992-93 and Gujarat in 2002. Since Gujarat, the communal situation has remained tense and unpredictable. The shift from the BJP-led government to the center-left UPA coalition in 2004 has not improved the situation. At the popular level, there has been serious 'communalization' among educated, middle-class Hindus that is unprecedented (Engineer 2007: 17).

There were two events that marked watershed moments in communalization and led to the ultimate successes of the Hindutva movement in manipulating the state. One of these was also directly gendered and affected the status of Muslim women. Both occurred in 1986. The first was the Congress government's passage of the Muslim Women's Bill, which followed the 1986 controversy over the Shah Bano verdict. Through this legal controversy, Islamic law came under attack, as debates ensued over Muslim women's rights. The case culminated in Muslim women's exclusion from post-divorce maintenance rights (Muslim Women's Bill), a major concession to conservative Muslim leaders in an odd array of legal events. It was also a serious setback for the women's movement, which would not fully recover from the communalization of politics that was reflected in this event. After 1986, Indian feminists could no longer separate gender justice from communal politics, and the ensuing polarization between those who supported legal pluralism and those who advocated a Uniform Civil Code (promoted by the Hindu Right) left little room for more nuanced debates about Muslim women and Islamic laws (Agnes 1999).

The second event, also that year, was the Congress party's complicity in allowing Hindutva forces to campaign toward the destruction of the Babri Masjid at Ayodhya, which activists claimed had been built 400 years previously atop the birthplace of Lord Ram. On December 6, 1992, Hindutva forces dismantled the mosque in a span of several hours, sparking the worst communal riots since Partition. The state not only failed to protect the mosque but in fact supported Hindutva activists (Ahmad 2009: 232). A decade later, over 2,000 Muslims would be killed and hundreds of Muslim women sexually assaulted and tortured in Gujarat with the active complicity of the state.

Aside from these two major events, another continued threat to Indian secularism is the accusation against Muslims of disloyalty to the Indian nation, in favor of Pakistan or Kashmiri separatism. As a result, Muslims have been viewed as inadequate citizens. Communalization and these already present threats to secularism provided a foundation for post-9/11 surveillance of Muslims. In the post-9/11 years there were plans to modernize madrasas, monitor their funding, and bring them all under Ministry of Human Resources jurisdiction. In 2002 the Prevention of Terrorism Act (POTA) accepted self-confession as proof of guilt and allowed

detention for 180 days without specific charges (Singh 2007). It was eventually repealed, but the Sangh Parivar campaigned for its reinstatement (Engineer 2010: 117; Alam 2007a). POTA, like its predecessors, was used distinctively to target minority communities (Singh 2007). With or without anti-terror legislation, following nearly every suspected terrorist incident, the police conduct sweep arrests of lower-middle class Muslim men, obtain confessions through torture, and hold arrestees without granting bail (Engineer 2010). Table 2 below summarizes India's major counter-terrorism measures. Since the repeal of POTA, due to its widespread abuse, the state is seeking a more centralized model of counter-terror especially in reaction to the 2008 bombings in Mumbai.

Table 2

Major legal measures in Indian counter-terrorism

Year	Action
1967	Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA)
	• Declared associations that promote communal conflict as unlawful
	• Was used to justify the 2001 banning of SIMI
1985-1995	Terrorist and Disruptive Activities (Prevention) Act (TADA)
	• Allowed confession to police officers as legal evidence
	• Broadly expanded definition of terrorist activities
	• Facilitated long-term detention of suspects without charges
2002-2004	Prevention of Terrorist Activities Act (POTA)
	• Declared membership in unlawful association as a terrorist act
	• Expanded definitions of terrorist support
	• Curtailed right to bail
	• Allowed intercepted communication as evidence of guilt
	• Provided some greater safeguards for the accused than TADA
2008 -	Beginning centralization of counter-terrorism modeled on the US and other countries

Sources: The State, Democracy and Anti-Terror Laws in India by Ujjwal Kumar Singh (2007).

This is the context that has shaped the emergence of the contemporary Islamic revival. The growth of Islamic organizations and activities cannot be removed from this context of secularist failures and new security regimes. At the same time, political Islam and Islamic reformist movements of various kinds have a long history in India, and so it is important to be careful in historicizing today's "fundamentalist" movements (Osella and Osella 2008). There have been several shifts in the platforms of the major Islamic organizations from supporting Indian democracy to rejecting all politics outside of sharia, to resignation to Hindutva domination. Here, I will mention a few of the major Islamic organization and discuss how they diverged in their strategies in dealing with the Indian state and communalization.

Some of these began as advocating total separation from the state but later changed their positions in response to the need to politically defend the status of Muslims and composite nationalism. Some Islamic organizations, like Jamiatul Ulema-e-Hind, in fact played a role in

writing the Indian Constitution and enjoyed broad legitimacy. Its leaders were graduates of Darul Uloom Deoband, a madrasa founded in 1867. Deoband's leaders had advocated Hindu-Muslim unity in the anti-colonial struggle and a separation of the realm of religion from state (Ahmad 2009: 19-21). The other major Islamic groups, also considered "fundamentalist," include Jama'at-i-Islami Hind (JIH), Tablighi Jama'at, Students Islamic Movement of India (SIMI), Darul Uloom Nadwatul Ulema Lucknow, and the All India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIMPLB) (Alam 2007b: 33). JIH in particular, with its hundreds of thousands of sympathizers, underwent a major transformation since its founding in 1941. JIH's founding Constitution called for an Islamic state. Its leader, Syed Abul Ala Maududi, declared secularism *haram* (sinful) and promoted a boycott of all secular, government institutions. Over time JIH had to change its position, as it was not only out of sync with the vast majority of Muslims but also with the growing political organizing of the Hindutva movement. When the RSS began promoting the idea of a Hindu state, JIH switched its position and began passionately defending secularism. It was no longer concerned with an Islamic state but rather, inter-communal coalition to fight Hindutva campaigns (Ahmad 2009). The ultimate symbol of such transformations was Deoband's recent fatwa urging Muslims to vote as part of religious obligation (Engineer 2010: 84).

While some organizations have sought mainstream political participation, others turned against the state in response to the growth of Hindutva. SIMI is the main example of a group that began calling for jihad, arguing that secularism was a fraud if the state could not protect Muslim lives (Ahmad 2009). Its radicalization was a direct response to the Babri Masjid campaign. SIMI was banned by the Indian government in 2002. Its banning occurred during the advent of heightened surveillance of Muslims and Islamic institutions, arbitrary arrests, and police raids.

In response to and in spite of Hindutva and state surveillance, Islamic revival movements—the proliferation of madrasas (which educate anywhere from 4-30% of Muslim children) and associations and interest in greater piety—have flourished. There has been greater religiosity across all Muslim classes in recent years, but it is most visible among the lower and middle classes. According to Anwar Alam (2007a: 140-1), and as I saw in my fieldwork, there is also a growing sense of surrender to a communalized government and a focus instead on Muslim community economic activity and autonomy. The "failure" of Nehru's secularism has reinvigorated Islamic movements and shifted an element of politics away from the state.

Laïcité, disestablishment, and its contradictions

Unlike the Indian case, where the relationship between religion and the state had been based on a decentralized system of patronage, the French case represents an ancien régime. As a result, religion would eventually be marginalized in the revolutionary imperative to free the state from the Church. At the same time Catholic "culture" would be sufficiently preserved and protected.

In the ancien régime the monarch ruled by "divine right," the backing and legitimacy of the Catholic Church. Given an incoherent administrative structure, the Church was not dependent on the state but in fact controlled its own fiefdoms and possessed numerous legal and political powers. Of course, it also was the sole dispenser of salvation. The revolutionary zeal of the late eighteenth century was thus driven in part by the need to wrest the state apparatus from the Catholic Church. France's civil code was established from 1800-1804, instituting a dramatic break with the Church. Disestablishment continued to occur, in starts and stops, throughout the

nineteenth century and sometimes took violent turns. When the 1905 law forced the Church to hand all its properties to "cultural associations" of laypeople, there were large demonstrations of religious clergy and activists and violent protests in several regions. In the conflicts surrounding the legislation, religious congregations lost the right to free association and religious institutions were shut down and prevented from teaching (Baubérot 1990: 115).

One of the products of the Revolution was a strong anti-religious sentiment among certain classes. In nearly every province this sentiment clashed with the conservatism of faithful Catholics (Bowen 2007: 23). Moreover, Enlightenment philosophy viewed religion as a contradiction to reason and science. As Diderot famously wrote, "Men will never be free until the last king is strangled with the entrails of the last priest." This approach to the Church has continued throughout the twentieth century though in milder forms. Recent examples of conflict include controversies over contraception in the 1980s (Baubérot: 121).

With this history of hostility toward religious establishment, the state has actively excluded religion from the public sphere and approached religious demands with suspicion, sometimes at the cost of religious freedom (Kuru 2009). As one example, in the 1990s it declared 173 sects as potentially dangerous including Jehovah's Witness and the Church of Scientology (which operate freely in the US) (Ibid. 109). In managing the public needs of religious communities, it has sought to maintain as much control as possible.

Laïcité thus encompasses a suspicion of state support for religion and of religion itself. Religion, therefore, was to be eliminated from public institutions by a series of decrees in the nineteenth century. Supporters of laïcité also targeted the cultural realm. This was most widespread in Lyon, where the mayor encouraged numerous associations fighting for laïcité. Hundreds of activities were aimed at fostering Republican values of free thought and liberty. These included festivals and celebrations, especially among youth. Education, sports, and the arts were all promoted as part of the campaign to support laïcité and shape citizenship (Dessertine 2007).

At the institutional level of laicization, the most controversial episodes involved the public schools. In 1882, primary school education became compulsory and *laïque*, or free of all signs of religion. The idea of civic education replaced religious education (Baubérot 1990: 109). But this was not without serious opposition from the Church and ambiguity on the part of the state. The public school was, and still is, the site where the politics of laïcité tends to be played, because the school is considered the primary institution where the molding of French citizens takes place (Ibid. 2006). State funding for Catholic schools was prohibited in 1905, but with the start of the Cold War the emphasis on strengthening schools drew attention once again to Catholic schools. As private schools suffered major financial crises and insufficient private donations, the Catholic Church took advantage of the political moment to demand state subsidies (Frajerman 2007). In 1959 the Debré Law resolved the longstanding conflict between Catholic schools and supporters of strict laïcité by in fact allowing state finance of private schools, as long as they were open to all faiths and met a number of curricular requirements.

State financing of private schools is among the main examples of how the state in fact violates the principles of laïcité on the ground in its everyday management of religion. Catholic institutions have benefited the most from these contradictions, largely because the vast majority of its properties became state-owned and could then benefit from public funds (Bowen 2007: 27). Legal exceptions allow for church restorations and municipal support of "cultural" (formerly religious) structures (Perrin 2007). The state also pays the salaries of chaplains (and now imams) in prisons, hospitals, and the army (Weil 2007: 16). In some exceptional cases it

toyed with the boundaries of private and public in order to allow, for example, a Muslim section of a cemetery. The strictness of laïcité must therefore be qualified by these contradictions. With Islam in particular, municipal governments manage local demands case by case. While the trend seems to be toward greater approval of Islamic institutions, this is usually marked by delay tactics and local-level controversy.

Communautarisme, veiling, and Islamic revival

The ambivalence around laïcité is most evident in the questions of integrating Islam. From the perspective of religious organizations, a tension exists between on one hand benefiting from state funding and on the other hand having to cede control to state administrators. This tension dates back to the colonial era. Today many Islamic leaders and activists view the controversies around Islam as replays of colonial tactics and attitudes. When laïcité was instituted in France, it was decided to not apply the law in Algeria out of concerns about undermining imperial legitimacy (Weil 2007: 3). Although laïcité was desired as part of the civilizing mission abroad, it was applied differentially across the empire because of political considerations. Islam was historically viewed as a regressive force that kept Muslims chained to religious dogma (Achi 2007: 243), but if the state was unable to reduce its importance it tried its best to control it rather than remove it from the political realm. Amidst polemics about whether or not the 1905 law was compatible with Islam, the colonial state declared the two incompatible. In fact, Algerians had demanded state secularism, but their activism around this issue coincided with opposition to colonial rule. Nervous about the possibility of empowering anti-colonial organizations, the state opted to maintain its control of Algerian Islam, funding and intervening in religious property and institutions (Ibid.). The autonomy of religion has thus always been seen as a threat to the French state. In a sense, binding piety to politics was critical to the empire.

Religious demands are now labeled derogatorily as *communautarisme*.[17] The fear of communautarisme stems from a larger discomfort with identity politics, seen as an unfortunate import from the United States (Bouvet 2007), which threatens to undermine national unity. Most generally, the French conception of 'communitarianism' refers to ethnic or religious sectarianism and submission of individual will to community authority (Salvatore 2007). For example, the headscarf (*hijab*) in public school was deemed a symbol of young women's allegiance to their religious community (in addition to patriarchal oppression) above the authority of the state. As one example, in the city of Lille, when local Muslims in 2003 requested separate swimming pool hours for men and women, the UMP party denounced the request as "communautariste." In fact such petitions had been granted in the past to Jewish associations without any denunciation or media uproar. But in 2003, around the time of the headscarf debates, commentators expressed horror at separate hours for "Arabs" (Bowen 2007: 109-110). According to John Bowen (2007), the media and public intellectuals successfully managed to connect the headscarf to fears about communautarisme, Islamism, and sexism. Without a headscarf law, France would turn into "a mosaic of ghettos" (Bowen 2007: 125).[18] In 2004 the headcarf was officially banned in public schools.

The banning of the headscarf in public schools was precisely a move by the state to assert its authority against the supposed tide of communal pressure among Muslims, in an institution designed for the molding of French citizens and protection of laïcité (Baubérot 2006). While the law was designed to protect laïcité in schools, teachers, and schoolgirls, it also clinched the larger public discomfort with the headscarf as a sign of religion in public space and symbol of

women's oppression. When the law was passed, 91% of teachers in France had never even encountered a headscarf-wearing girl in their school (cited in *Le Monde*, Bowen 2007: 121). Yet the headscarf became a convenient target for teachers and politicians, especially during three particular moments: 1989, 1993-1994, and 2003-2004 (Bowen 2007). Each of these was marked by popularity gains by the right-wing Le Front National.

The first "headscarf affairs" (*les affaires du foulard*), in which schoolgirls refused to remove their hijabs, occurred in Creil in 1989. During the second period of politicization, there was an explosion of media coverage that merged headscarf controversies with foreign conflicts, especially the war in Algeria—such that the hijab, Islam, and terrorism became linked in the public perception.[19] Under a 1994 directive of the education minister to remove "ostentatious" signs from schools, between 100-150 girls were expelled each year in the late 1990s and onwards. The State Council (Conseil d'Etat) in fact typically ruled in favor of the girls in the majority of legal disputes during this period, unless they were shown to be too frequently absent or proselytizing. But this would soon change with the third period of politicization, in the immediate post-9/11 years. In 2002 a number of highly publicized incidents occurred specifically in Lyon. In particular the refusal of a 16-year old girl to remove her hijab led to 80% of the high school's teachers to go on strike. The next year, President Chirac appointed what became called the Stasi Commission (after its president, Bernard Stasi) to debate the general principles of laïcité. Although the debate was intended to be comprehensive, it was entirely about Muslims, drawing dubious connections between Islam, school delinquency, and gender violence. As a public wave of support for an anti-headscarf law gained momentum, the Commission's recommendations led to the 2004 banning (Bowen 2007: 87-116).

Throughout this process, the rivalry between Chirac and then Ministre des Cultes, Sarkozy, turned the headscarf into a crucial political game. Sarkozy, who had opposed the 2004 ban, eventually changed his position, culminating in his later drive to ban "the burqa" in all public space. President Sarkozy has in fact argued widely for greater public recognition of Islam that coincided with his conception of laïcité. His seemingly contradictory approach to laïcité is most clearly reflected in his maverick desire to amend the 1905 law in order to allow state funding of Islamic institutions. No one doubts that this is motivated by his wish to more easily control mosques and Islamic schools. One of Sarkozy's crown achievements in this regard was the 2003 creation of the Conseil Francais du Culte Musulman (CFCM) and its regional councils (CRCM). This was considered a great achievement because the French state had attempted to create a representative body for Muslims since the 1980s to no avail. The exact significance of CFCM has never been clear, because it is widely considered to not be representative of France's Muslim population. Moreover, the government itself hesitated to promote the idea of a Muslim "community" due to the already prevalent specter of communautarisme. But CFCM is now the primary body that negotiates with the state on policies toward Muslims, though for many, its structure of appointed ministers and leaders is again reminiscent of colonial rule (Ibid. 59-60). Indeed, CFCM has frequently touted the positions of the state, including the 2009 endorsement of a national commission to debate the burqa (niqab). CFCM eventually stopped short of endorsing the legislation outlawing the practice in public space that the National Assembly passed in 2010. But it held its position that the niqab is not a true Islamic practice.

The targeting of the burqa and the initiation of a larger debate on national identity represents the most recent phase of the politicization of Islam. The burqa (niqab) carries the discomfort with Islam in the public sphere much further than other practices. In 2008, a Moroccan woman married to a French citizen was denied French citizenship on the grounds of

her wearing the niqab and thus "failing to assimilate" and rejecting the values of the Republic. It was the first time religious practice was used to refuse nationality. The gender oppression and communautarisme that the burqa represented outweighed the pragmatic reality that less than 2000 women even wear it. As Assembly member Bérengère Poletti asserted, "even if only five or six women were concerned, it would be a matter of principle" (Assembly hearings, September 9, 2009).

Despite hostility toward Islam and the forceful attempts to control it, there has been a dramatic growth in Islamic associations, mosques and prayer spaces, fundraising activities for Islamic schools and classes, and veiling practices. Again, I provide here a brief overview of some of the trends and major organizations. Survey research shows low rates of prayer and mosque attendance among French Muslims but also reveals an increased tendency to identify as Muslim and claim belief (Laurence and Vaisse 2006). While systematic demands for prayer spaces were made since the 1970s, the number of spaces increased from roughly 500 to 1,600 between 1985 and 2003 (Bowen 2009: 31). (These are not formal mosques but informal spaces of congregation.)

L'UOIF (*Union des organisations islamiques de France*) is one of the main organizations that have been at the forefront of this growth. Formed in 1983, l'UOIF is an umbrella organization that enjoys broad legitimacy, despite its connection to CFCM. It hosts the annual Islamic gathering outside of Paris that draws approximately 150,000 attendees. Although l'UOIF is frequently depicted as "fundamentalist," it has a quite mainstream orientation and has taken a lead in creating a "French Islam." This is very different from the sectarian, Salafist movement, for example. Salafism, increasingly prominent in poor neighborhoods in France, refers mostly to a set of strict practices as opposed to a set of organizations. The desire and attempt to emulate the Prophet Muhammed and follow the teachings of the earliest generations of Muslims is at the heart of the larger movement.[20] The Salafist movement is one end of a spectrum that is comprised mostly of "French Islam."

While Islamic practice among younger generations can hide a variety of motivations from rebellion to genuine faith, it seems there is a tendency toward rejecting parental traditions of religious practice that are now deemed overly mired in Maghribi culture and thus not rigorous (Bowen 2007: 71). This is most true of the Salafist movement. Nonetheless, increasingly, according to Bowen (2009), French Muslims are carving out niches and institutions in their Islamic revival that use specifically Republican language and tools—creating a uniquely French Islam. Like the Islamic revival in India, the growth of French Islam cannot be viewed separately from the targeted pressures on the Muslim population or more broadly, the failures of national secularisms.

State, community, and gender

The historical processes of French and Indian secularisms clearly point to the reasons why the secularization thesis was rejected. In neither case did industrial development lead to the diminished importance of religion, however measured. The exception to this may be French Catholicism, although Catholicism permeates everyday life and institutions as important "cultural" forms. But the two histories also reveal the paradox of how the secular state itself set the path for Islamic revival movements—through the construction and management of Muslim identity and policies toward religion which have reached points of crises.

Both secular systems have been tried through minority oppression and continued religious community demands and practices in the public sphere. In neither case have state-

Muslim relations been free of violence and problems of Muslim representation. Bilgrami (1994) argued that the problem with Indian secularism was that it lacked substance. Legal pluralism and confusion took the place of a civil code that could have been developed through substantive communal negotiations. French laïcité, in contrast, has much specific substance and has evolved through ostensibly representative debate. However, national commissions and Islamic organizations are controlled and appointed by the state, making a near mockery of the idea of an Islamic representative body. The Indian government has never demanded the creation of a representative association, however, self-appointed leaders like AIMPLB have in turn influenced personal law. These leaders are no more representative of Indian Muslims than CFCM is of French Muslims.

As I argued, composite nationalism and laïcité emerged at moments of nation-building and followed paths that were largely determined by the existence or absence of an ancien regime. Among the consequences of these paths was that laïcité in France was grounded in a universalist philosophy that promoted disestablishment as well as the diminution of religious faith. In India secularism was not about the overthrow of a religious order and its philosophy but about preserving rights and harmony among faith communities and preventing majoritarianism. Each case represents a different kind of reification. Indian composite nationalism reifies the community such that religious law and institutions take precedence over individual rights. The community is the protector of individuals against the majority and against the state. French laïcité reifies the protective Republican state. The state is the grand protector of individual rights against the pressures and violence of community.

This ultimate centrality of the state in the French case is further evident in the conception of communautarisme versus Indian communalism. Both labels criticize the obsessive attachment to community based on ascriptive ties, but there are nuanced differences between the two usages. Indian communalism seems to imply the notion of exploiting community identity for political gain as well as a willingness to commit violence in the name of these identities. French communautarisme entails specifically a weakened allegiance to the state. It is less about political gaming or corruption and more about a deeper sense of the centrality of the state to national identity and citizenship.

Both schemes, regarding the state and community, break down when it comes to gender. Perhaps no other issue more refracts this complexity between the individual and community that secularism embodies. In both countries women's opinions have fallen along the spectrum with regard to the politics of secularism. Secularism, in other words, has both undermined and improved women's well-being. But in France the adoption of laïcité in the early twentieth century spurred major anti-secular mobilization among conservative Catholic women. One women's league claimed over 300,000 members campaigning against the 1905 law (Sudda 2007: 124). In the late nineteenth century, France's education minister argued that the Church maintained its legitimacy only because of women. He declared, "Women must belong to Science and not to the Roman Catholic Church" (Baubérot 1990: 108). Today, the overlap of laïcité and gender is even more extreme. The headscarf and burqa legislations are based almost entirely on the belief that the state must protect Muslim women from the patriarchal traditions of their communities. In the name of gender equality, the women's own faith in their religious practices and the moral communities they attempt to create are dismissed.

The Indian case demonstrates the opposite dynamic, whereby Muslim women's belonging to their "minority community" is an assumption the secular state must leave untouched. In the name of community rights, reform of Muslim personal law remains

impossible (even where the laws do not accurately embody sharia). Muslim women's access to divorce and economic rights are severely limited. Thus, to the extent that secularism is also about the relationship between the individual and community, it is a fundamentally gendered political relationship. Gender is deeply written into the secularist process and therefore, it is not surprising that it remains significant to religious revivals and their politicization.

Types of politics under "postsocialist" conditions and divergent secularisms

From these two forms of state secularisms, the stage was set for the types of politics (and antipolitics) of Islamic piety movements. The extent to which Muslim identity could be used for political mobilization, and to what end, emerged out of these histories. Another way to think about this, I propose, is through Nancy Fraser's analysis of the redistribution-recognition dilemma: the histories of state secularism helped determine the relationship between redistribution and recognition in minority struggles for social justice. Fraser's analysis of the redistribution-recognition dilemma is specifically in reference to American politics. But its global applicability is clear for many nations, including India and France that have embraced neoliberalism. I argue that it is more aptly diagnostic of French social politics where there has been a real rupture between recognition and redistribution, however, and is more complicated when it comes to the case of Hyderabad. This difference is directly related to the different models of secularism (a distinction that is not made in Fraser's framework).

Fraser's diagnosis of the postsocialist condition is the absence of a credible progressive alternative to the current order, the exhaustion of utopian energies, and political claims-making in favor of recognizing group difference.[21] Such claims effectively eclipse claims for social equality and further marginalize a class-based political imaginary. Justice under postsocialist conditions is measured by recognition. The postsocialist task therefore is to challenge the decoupling of culture and economy and analyze how they operate together to produce injustice.

In light of postsocialist conditions, Fraser proposes a theory of justice that calls for three different foci of politics: economic, cultural, and political. In her original formulation (1997), she argued that neither economic redistribution nor cultural recognition alone will remedy injustice, and she advocated a transformative project of both socialism and deconstruction in the cultural realm. She has since then added a politics of representation, as essential to creating "participatory parity" in public life. This is valued not only in and of itself but also because resolving questions of distribution and recognition require equal-access democratic deliberation. Although Fraser treats these three politics as ideological orientations within social movements (which become distorted when operating alone), they are at the same time rooted in a theory of justice: that egalitarian distribution, cultural recognition, and participatory parity are simultaneously essential to a just democratic society. She writes, "Radical democrats will never succeed in untying the gordian knots of identity and difference until we leave the terrain of identity politics. This means resituating cultural politics in relation to social politics and linking demands for recognition with demands for redistribution" (1997: 174).

Because of India's composite nationalism, politics related to Islam and Muslim communities in Hyderabad actually do link, or equate, recognition with redistribution. I do not argue that it is a deeply transformative politics (although it encompasses some notions of financial and social restructuring), but the value it places on political and cultural recognition is inseparable from material, anti-poverty measures. In the presence of fairly robust religious freedoms that I described earlier, activists focus their claims of the state mostly on economic redistribution—which is how I describe the middle-class field. This contradicts common views

of Islam and politics in India, where Muslims are described as communal and always engaged in a politics of identity. Thus, the case of Hyderabad thus stands out for *not* reflecting the decoupling of culture and economy as predicted of the neoliberal era. This could be unique to the post-colonial global South but is more likely, unique to a country in which recognition was built into the constitution and was central to the values that ultimately defined the nation. The case further stands out because it *does* reflect how religious identity can be considered dissolvable, or "bivalent," in Fraser's terms—distinct because of both the political-economic and "cultural-valuational" structures (1997: 19), and requires economic and cultural transformation in order to eventually 'dissolve.' Typically, religious identity is not a source of difference that is to disappear. However, scholars have vigorously argued that in India, Muslim identity only took a very particular form because of the colonial experience. Indian Islam in other words was not a unified set of practices or even beliefs prior to the early-mid 20th century but rather, was uniquely eclectic. Indeed, the Muslim elites I knew revived Islamic identity primarily for the sake of redistribution and had a sense that the complexity and diversity of its beliefs and practices would severely reduce its importance as an axis of difference or mobilization—if there was genuine economic equality. Again, this may only be the case because of India's peculiar model of secularism.

While culture and economy have not been decoupled, the field of middle-class politics is geared directly at redistributive claims. Muslims freely practice Islam in the public sphere and may abide by Islamic family law, so recognition politics are not about freedom of religion or upholding identity. They are instead limited to sporadic demonstrations such as remembrance of December 6 (when the Babri Masjid was destroyed) and other supports for identity. Indian politics are scarred by communalization and episodes of violence against Muslims, but Muslim rights to identity and religious practice are relatively secure.

In India politics became a competition between numerical communities beginning in the late colonial period. In an underdeveloped post-colonial state, competition for jobs and resources were inseparable from majority-minority relations. Issues of economic distribution and reservations for scarce government posts and university slots are the focal points of politics within Muslim communities. Campaigns for reservations and struggles to change the occupational caste system define middle-class politics. These are intertwined with religious revival and Islamic rhetoric.

Redistribution also dominates the community politics among low-income communities. This occurs because again, their rights to religious recognition are generally already secure. Their material deprivation, on the other hand, is stark. Further, Indian secularism upheld the notion of a Muslim community—which took on even greater salience in the city of Hyderabad as I will discuss in Chapter 3. Not only are low-income religious communities drawn into a redistributive politics through cross-class identity bonds, but their own emphasis on community as an end in itself could take root in a secularism founded on the principle of preserving minority communities.

Redistribution and recognition are not severed from each other in Hyderabad due to particular historical reasons. In contrast, in France the issue of recognition (or "nonrecognition" and "disrespect," Fraser 1997) takes center-stage when it comes to the politics of Islam. A middle-class politics of religious recognition is the outcome of an "assertive secularism" (Kuru 2007) that denies free practice in the public sphere and delays and obstructs Islamic institutions. Islam came late to a social structure that had been laïcized during the course of a century and half. Islamic associations therefore focus on establishing their mosques and schools, promoting

Islamic practice among younger generations, and struggling for rights in the public sphere. As the hijab and burqa became the politicized symbols of the country's social problems, the Islamic field has been further pushed into recognition politics. At the same time I found that Muslim organizations had trouble balancing economic and cultural-religious concerns, and it was precisely this dilemma that split much of the middle-class mosque and associational communities. They walk a fine line in navigating "affirmation" versus "transformation" of their identities, as they desire religious recognition and respect for difference but claim their right to a French identity that does not categorize and stigmatize them. Economic redistribution has moved to the sidelines in this navigation—because of the state's tight control over Islam and the obstacles posed by laïcité. It remains to be seen whether laïcité can eventually accommodate Islam and achieve a balance that would perhaps allow middle-class politics to shift the balance in the relationship between recognition and redistribution.

Among Lyon's subaltern Muslim population, it is *antipolitics* that has resulted from the harsh severing of material and cultural politics. To the extent that laïcité and the reification of the French state have marginalized a class-based political imaginary, religious Muslims in the working-class banlieues have had no platform from which to address their poverty and extreme unemployment. The experiences some had with leftist political parties, on the other hand, left them disappointed because of the "nonrecognition" and hostility they faced within these parties. In isolation from each other, recognition and redistribution, have not posed a viable politics—leaving antipolitics as a logical alternative.

I now look specifically at the historical economic decline of Muslims in both cities, tying together both state and economy to further explain why such different types of movements emerged amidst the growing top-down politicization of Islam.

Chapter 3: Urban marginality and the shaping of class relations

If Islamic piety was hyper-politicized in the continually evolving relationship between religion and the state, it was also politicized by the very material interests of colonial powers and bureaucrats and postcolonial elites. This chapter presents the histories of how minority Muslims were constructed as a monolithic group and the political-economic transformations by which they eventually came to occupy the lowest class positions in society. Both stories of economic decline reveal the role of the state and elites in securing their interests as well as of critical historical moments: the Partition of India and the 1973 oil crisis.

I will also present the historical context that led to divergent Muslim class relations in the two cases. I will discuss how the role of elites and their abilities, or lack thereof, to exploit religious identity in mobilizing across class differed because of state-created structures of opportunity. Despite these divergent class relations, the middle-class Muslims and elites I knew in both cities shared a strong critical judgment about the growth of sectarian forms of Islam among the poorer classes. I argue here that this judgment is essentially the pursuit of class distinction, as theorized by Bourdieu, and part of a symbolic struggle over legitimate Islam— where legitimacy is granted by recognition from the state.

On the surface, comparing the histories of Muslim minorities in these two countries appears problematic because one involves a relatively recent immigrant population and the other, a population that arrived (and even ruled) over several centuries. But this fact alone does not account for the similar forms of discrimination, the recent phenomena of Islamic revival movements, nor the class dynamics that shape them. Much of the literature, especially on Islam in Europe, focuses almost singularly on the role of migration and the ensuing "crises of identity" that led to the appeal of Islam. There is an implicit notion that the social problems of Muslim minorities are rooted in their inability to reconcile different cultures. By shifting the explanations for the relationship between piety and politics onto the state and class relations, I am attributing less to the importance of cultural integration and thus, the immigrant experience. I do argue, however, that the Algerian immigrant history in France is important because of the immigrants' recruitment as industrial workers—the consequences of which have now spanned three generations. Additionally, the much longer and particular history of Muslims in India meant that there were wealthy Indian Muslim families and an intelligentsia with some capital that remained, even after the upheavals of Partition.

The narratives that follow lend measured support to arguments about political Islam as a response to the decline of the secular left and the "failed" post-colonial or socialist state. However, such arguments are only meaningful after accounting for the specific shocks that impacted both cases as well as the rise of the right-wing. Mobilization around identity and Islam has taken place partly in response to right-wing attacks in both India and France, which I consider part of the secularist failures I mentioned in the last chapter. Moreover, Indian Partition and the oil crisis are specific moments of crisis that set the stage for right-wing forces and disappointment with the left. Meanwhile the secular state paradoxically infused religion into politics, politicizing Islam and its marginalized adherents, rather than restructuring the economy toward greater egalitarianism.

Colonial constructions and the legacies of Partition and Police Action

Until the end of the 19th century, "neither to its own adherents nor to non-Muslims did Islam [in South Asia] seem monolithic, monochrome or indeed mono-anything" (Hasan 1997:

236). Yet within a short period of time, the British colonial state and self-appointed Muslim leaders managed to construct the notion of a distinct Indian Muslim *community*—thereby dismissing immense differences across region, everyday religious practice, sect, and language. The 1906 creation of the Muslim League, which would later campaign for Pakistan, changed the terrain of the Indian independence movement by emphasizing the distinctiveness of the Muslim population in order to extract concessions from the state. Its leaders appealed to Muslim landed and professional classes who were nervous about their future status and thus found it in their interest to politically organize. The British supported the separate organization of Muslims in their own attempts to create social divisions and obstruct the nationalist movement (Ibid. 237). Facilitated by orientalist images of Muslims as a coherent and (potentially threatening) monolithic group, the colonial state perpetuated this myth of Muslim homogeneity to maintain its ideological legitimacy and support its imperial motivations in the sub-Continent (as well as in the Balkans) (Ibid. 31-32).

In 1909 with the Morley-Minto Reforms, the colonial government created separate Muslim electorates and reservations, officially constructing Muslims as a political entity that was segregated from Hindus. Moreover, the placement of Muslims into an administrative category solidified the identity as an axis of mobilization in a political field defined by patronage: any individual seeking patronage had to do so in the name of a bureaucratically recognized category. According to Mushirul Hasan, the Morley-Minto Reforms constructed the Muslim minority while "ingeniously" undermining a secular, pan-Indian identity (Ibid. 35).

Again, self-appointed Muslim leaders claimed to represent the community and competed for political posts and privileges. By the time of Indian independence, the Muslim intelligentsia actively manipulated religious identity to avoid the real, material concerns of most Muslims. Although Muslim industrialists and elites were generally not religious, their fieldworkers used religious propaganda among Muslims in the years leading to Partition (Ibid. 87). Such "communalization" of Indian nationalism was thus foremost about the employment and other patronage prospects of the educated classes (Ibid. 47-49).

With independence and Partition in 1947, India lost much of its Muslim industrial and professional class in the exodus to Pakistan. The majority of the remaining Muslim population continued among the rural poor and urban proletariat (Ibid. 8). Among the several areas most affected by the exodus to Pakistan was the princely state of Hyderabad (Ibid. 7). Hyderabad state, which had been ruled by a succession of Muslim princes (Nizams) rather than directly by the colonial state, experienced the upheavals of not only Partition but also the 1948 occupation by the Indian army (that was dismissively labeled "Police Action"). Police Action, which enforced the dissolution of the princely state, took place when the Nizam refused to meet the conditions of surrender to the new Indian government.

Prior to the independence movement, Hyderabad had been a stable feudal order that functioned almost entirely on the basis of the Nizam's patronage. The Nizam's government, known for its courtly culture and decadence, recruited immigrants of all classes and skill levels from the north of India and Iran, central Asia, Arabia, and sub-Saharan Africa (Khalidi, O. 1988: xi). Hyderabad welcomed a steady stream of immigrants from North India after the 1857 uprising against British rule and an influx of hundreds of thousands of migrants at the time of Partition. This migration abruptly ended and reversed itself when Police Action occurred the following year in 1948. Urdu-speaking elites from the North as well as a great portion of the Muslim professional class fled to Pakistan (Hasan 1997: 176-177). Many others left for the UK or US.

The Nizam's government had held 50% of capital in the state's main enterprises. An entire half of the state's population, including Muslim artisans and peasants, depended on some form of state patronage. Further, the upper ranks of government and army officers were predominantly Muslim, while lawyers, businessmen, and other professionals were mostly Hindu (Smith 1950: 3). With the state's dissolution, Muslim administrators and military men were expelled and unemployed. Even for educated Muslims who remained in Hyderabad, the overhaul of the formerly Urdu educational system and legal apparatus left them with no options. The results of these upheavals were massive unemployment and destitution. A 1962 survey revealed that nearly a third of city rickshaw drivers were former employees of the state, and 48% of street beggars in 1956 were Muslims (Khan 1971: 151). Although former Hyderabadi elites were not all reduced to pauperism, they were nonetheless unable to navigate the new competition and political rule. They spent many years thereafter "wallowing in grief and nostalgic for the bygone era" (Hasan 1997: 182-83).

In terms of agricultural areas, the 1949 abolition of the feudal *jagirdari* system of land management affected more than 11% of Muslims (Hasan 1997: 183). Smaller landowners also faced downward mobility with the fall in agricultural prices and had to sell their lands and homes. A 1954-55 study concluded: "The jagirdar class being ill-educated, untrained, orthodox, feudal in its outlook and inadaptable, has failed to obtain its due share in employment opportunities. … Frustration at present and dark prospects of the future have made them bitter and have created psychological and other problems" (Khusro 1958: 175).

The history of the violence of Police Action as well as the political reconfigurations in Hyderabad during this period has been largely suppressed. Some estimates reveal that as many as 200,000 people died, and 1,000 women committed suicide during Police Action (Khalidi 1988: x; Sundarlal and Abdulghaffar 1948: 114).[22] Approximately 10-20% of Muslim men in Hyderabad were killed (Smith 1950: 21). An unofficial government report acknowledged afterwards that Muslims comprised the majority of victims. Much of the violence was in districts surrounding Hyderabad city and was related to the suppression of a Communist uprising (in the *Telengana* region) that had been building alongside Independence. Although Muslims tended to lean toward supporting the Nizam, in fact many were aligned with the Communist movement. On the eve of Police Action, the Communists claimed they had liberated 2,000 surrounding villages, canceled debts, and redistributed land. With the arrival of the Indian army, the movement was eventually crushed (Ibid. 14-15), but after nearly six years of armed struggle (Luther 2006: 311-317).

The resulting political configuration consisted of a victory for the Congress Party (representing the Indian state) and defeat of the Nizam's supporters led by the Majlis-e-Ittihad ul Muslimeen (MIM), a political party that had formed years earlier to defend princely rule. According to Theodore Wright, evidence shows that the Congress and the communal-based MIM colluded to suppress the growing Communist movement among both Hindus and Muslims (1963: 132-136). In sum, the previous feudal order as well as its populist resistance was replaced within a year by a new administration and increasingly communalized polity.

Secularist failures and the rebuilding of politics

The generally impoverished status of Indian Muslims is often attributed to the failure of the Congress Party and its promises of secular democracy. Congress is often blamed for its own role in exploiting communal divisions and ceding the political agenda to Hindu right-wing forces, whose powers have resulted in profound violence against Muslims, as discussed in

Chapter 2. The gradual decline of the Congress left political vacuums that were filled by communal parties. In Hyderabad, the MIM took on the role of protectorate of the Muslim minority (Hasan 1997: 273, 295), promoting religious identity and helping to define the city's political terrain. The question of communalization in the case of Hyderabad is somewhat controversial. Some argue that the state was always communalized because of an upper caste of Muslims who controlled the princely state, while others argue that Hindus in fact controlled private wealth and business and that the two communities had lived harmoniously (see Kooiman 2002).

Nonetheless, the notion of Muslim protection became salient in the context of gross communal violence and economic misery. Nearly half of the Muslim urban population lives below the poverty line, compared to approximately one-third of Hindus. Muslims have low access to government welfare projects and nearly no representation in major industrial enterprises. They work primarily in unorganized sectors, are under-represented in the police force, and have achieved only about 5% representation in Parliament (Engineer 2007: 16, 241-250; Hasan 1997: 281-283). Table 3 provides a few salient social indicators vis-à-vis the Hindu population. Although rates of poverty, illiteracy, and child labor among Hindus are also dismal, Muslims fare significantly worse on most social indicators.

Table 3

Comparison of social indicators between Muslims and Hindus

Social indicators	Religion	
	Muslim	Hindu
Illiteracy rate	40%	35%
Work force participation	31%	40%
Percent of workers aged 5-19	11%	8%
Children, aged 6-14, who dropped out of school or never enrolled	18%	5%
Below poverty line (urban only)	44%	27%

Sources: Government of India Census 2001 and Sachar Committee Report, Government of India (2006).

Note: Although AP performs better than other states, Hyderabad district tends to reflect national trends.

Despite the bleakness of these realities, Muslims did eventually form new political coalitions and dealt with the consequences of their losses following Partition. Notwithstanding the many forms of discrimination against them, India's democratic framework allowed them to claim a share in the country's political structures (Hasan 1997: 188, 219). Although Muslims lost their wealth after Partition, some built on family and political connections and again became prosperous (Ibid. 8). More recently, a new Muslim middle-class has emerged primarily among artisans (Engineer 2007: 105). In Hyderabad many middle-class Muslims who remained sought to hide their religious identity while working to become civil servants and even executives (Ahmed 1985: 181). Some young men who had earned wealth and started businesses in Pakistan began returning to the city in the 1960s. There were also a significant number of descendants of feudal landlords who were able to build upon some family wealth (Khalidi, U. 1988: 193-194).

Perhaps most significantly, labor remittances to Hyderabad have transformed predominantly Muslim neighborhoods, saved hundreds of thousands of poor families, and created forms of consumer affluence (Ali 2007). Andhra Pradesh in fact receives the highest amount of labor remittances to India (Hindu Business Line 2006). (The country overall is the number one recipient of remittances, with the US and Persian Gulf as the top two remitting regions to India.) Hyderabad itself is second only to the state of Kerala in sending migrant labor to Gulf states. The majority of remittance money goes to family maintenance, but a small but significant percentage goes to charity.

Remittances have played a major role in the expansion of philanthropy among Hyderabad's Muslims, a phenomenon I argue has become central to local politics and Islamic movements. Charity and philanthropy in fact were major functions in the Nizam's state. The last Nizam in particular was known for his financial backing of numerous educational and charitable institutions (Minault 1998). Elites from North India that had worked in the state also supported women's charity work and schooling (Khalidi, U. 1988: 188-189). A small but wealthy Muslim elite has thus continued this tradition of philanthropy in the Old City and slums of Hyderabad, using private money as well as shrewd management of Islamic trusts (*wakf*) to fund schools and assist poor families (Kozlowski 1998: 294-295). With a keen sense of nostalgia for the courtly culture of the Nizams and the "splendors" of the Old City (Ahmed 1985: 185; Luther 2006), Muslim elites incorporate philanthropy as major activities. Even middle-class associations and families with more modest earnings often contribute to low-income schools.

All of this occurs, however, in the context of patronage politics and local dominance by the MIM party. The MIM, in its early history of fighting Indian takeover, managed to solidify and politicize a Muslim identity, across a population that was deeply internally divided by sect, caste, and language (Kooiman 2002: 167). Since then it has represented the city's Muslims and competed with local philanthropists for legitimacy. In this dynamic political framework, the MIM and other Muslim elites have campaigned a number of years for Muslim reservations in education and employment. Following decades of administrative complications and court cases—some of which were backed by the Hindu Right—the state of Andhra Pradesh passed a 4% reservations act for thirteen "backward social groups" of Muslims (Krishnan 2010: 55). Thus, Muslims have met some important successes in claiming stakes in local institutions and public education, through a combination of several factors from labor remittances, philanthropy, and political competition.

Immigration, colonial continuity, and the rise of xenophobia

The trajectory of France's stigmatized Muslim population has developed out of three sets of related histories: colonial and post-colonial immigration, housing segregation, and unemployment. I focus here on emigration from Algeria, because Algerian-born residents continue to represent the greatest numbers of immigrants in France (Borrel 2006). Moreover, in relation to Islam in France, the specific history of colonial Algeria was raised frequently throughout my research (see Silverstein 2004). But it is important to note that many French Muslims come from various parts of North and sub-Saharan Africa as well as Turkey and parts of East Asia.

Emigration from Algeria was the result of both the brutal ruptures to the economy and proletarianisation of society due to colonial rule and the specific and changing French labor needs, which dramatically increased after the Second World War (Sayad 1984). The first phase

of emigration was based on temporary labor recruitment of single men, who lived in dormitory style housing (*SONACOTRA foyers*) constructed in the 1950s specifically for North African workers (de Barros 2005: 29).[23] This shifted gradually to a second phase based on filling jobs rejected by French workers, family emigration and reunification, and the diminishing viability of returning to Algeria. In the 1960s, controlled by a series of post-Independence Accords, the Algerian population in France increased two and a half times (Sayad 1984: 86).

In the immediate post-colonial period, colonial-style ethnicization and control of *Français musulmans d'Algérie*, the official designation of Algerian immigrants, continued through the primary tool of housing policy (Dikeç 2007; de Barros 2005; Noiriel 1996[1988]: 145, 186-87). The segregation that would come to plague France's post-colonial Muslim population originated in the importation of colonial administrative categories to the metropole as well as in the demands of industry that dictated the conditions of all immigrant workers including Portuguese, Italian, and Spanish. From the late 19th century to the 1970s, immigrants were organized around heavy industry and the model of factory towns. This led to widespread segregation of immigrant zones of work from commercial and intellectual centers (Noiriel 1996[1988]: 130). In certain cases, employers grouped immigrants into precise zones according to ethnic criteria—despite official government discourse that objected to ethnic categorization. For example, in 1975 only 17 out of 300 immigrant foyers were multi-ethnic (Diop 1988: 78).

Among all immigrant groups, Algerian families were the most segregated in low-income (*HLM*) housing. Their specific management, as "musulmans" (and eventually, "Maghrébin"), was driven by the administrative continuity from the colonial period. The *Conseillers Techniques pour les Affaires Musulmans* (CTAM) were a cadre of "experts" on Muslim affairs under colonial rule, attached to the Ministry of Interior. They bore the double preoccupation of separating Algerians from Europeans and at the same time controlling them and promoting French mores. In the post-Independence period, this same administrative corps, struggling to preserve its legitimacy, converted its role toward the management of housing for all foreigners (de Barros 2005, 2006). The CTAM existed until 1966 and were a powerful force in the ethnicisation of Algerian Muslims, leaving their legacy on housing policy and the broader structures of immigration into the 1970s (Ibid. 28-31). More broadly, the task of welcoming Algerian workers and providing housing and social assistance was given directly to police services (Interior Ministry), thus following the logic of colonial order. Government committees to assist Algerian workers into the 1940s were charged with not only securing spatial order but also with curbing Algerian tendencies toward "cabaret" and other immoral activities. In sum, Algerians at the time, more than any other group, were consistently treated and classified as foreigners despite their long history and knowledge of France (Hargreaves 2007[1995]: 192-193; Sayad 1991a: 141-143). Although there were numerous government reports aimed at promoting ethnic integration (*mixité sociale*) in HLM housing in the 1960s, such goals remained elusive (Ibid.; Sayad 1984: 187).

Many Algerians and other Maghrebi immigrants took their residence in the peri-urban *grands ensembles* (ensembles of buildings with at least 500 apartment units). *Les grands ensembles* were constructed in the 1960s as a cheap and fast solution to housing needs during the country's post-War economic expansion. Constructed in designated peripheries (*ZUPs, Zones à Urbaniser par Priorité*), they were a major improvement to earlier immigrant shantytowns (*bidonvilles*) but were nonetheless poorly equipped and far from commercial centers. While they were initially considered desirable, they became dominated by working-class families and stigmatized in the 1980s (Wacquant 2008).

Today, the majority of Maghrebi immigrants and their descendants do not live in precarious neighborhoods or *les grands ensembles.* However, they suffer poverty and poor housing conditions at disproportionate rates compared to native-born French citizens and other immigrant groups. Table 4 below summarizes some of the salient features of the living conditions and poverty rate among Maghrebi immigrants, using figures for European immigrants as comparison.

Table 4

Comparison of living conditions between Maghrebi and European immigrants

	Region of origin	
Living conditions	Maghreb	Europe
Residing in "sensitive urban zones"	25%	6%
Residing in public housing with many immigrants*	19%	5%
Residing in "uncomfortable lodging"[†]	42%	17%
Renting "dilapidated housing"*	26%	10%
Below poverty line	43%[‡]	24%

Sources: Observatoire national des zones urbaines sensibles, Rapport (2011); INSEE, Jauneau and Vanovermeir (2008); INSEE, Lombardo and Pujol (2007); and Simon (1998).

Notes: Figures for Turkish and sub-Saharan African immigrants are generally higher than for those of Maghrebi immigrants. None of these figures include the descendants of Maghrebi immigrants, though they appear to live in ZUS at roughly the same percentage.

[*]Includes only Algerian, Moroccan, Portuguese and Spanish immigrants.

[†]Uncomfortable housing was defined either by overpopulation or by a number of indicators from plumbing and heating conditions to square footage.

[‡]The 43% figure includes all African immigrants. The estimated probabilities of being poor for Maghrebis versus Black Africans are the same (Lombardo and Pujol 2007: 42-44).

Apart from the history of categorization and segregation of Muslim-origin residents in former factory towns, one of the defining features of their social and political trajectory was the explosion of unemployment in the 1970s. The economic crisis, begun in 1973 with the Gulf oil embargo, "traumatized" the French immigrant population, subjecting it to new forms of precariousness and racism (Courtois and Kepel 1988: 34). In 1970, there were 8,000 unemployed Algerians compared to 80,000 in 1984, or 25% of French Algerians and 2.5 times greater than the national average (Sayad 1984: 129, 145). Near Lyon, in Vénissieux alone seven companies shut down between 1975 and 1982 (Belbarhi 1984: 108, fn. 3). Unemployment exacerbated major tensions within immigrant families, including loss of paternal authority and regret over the decision to emigrate. Since the crisis, many Algerian families have suffered great precariousness, periods of return to Algeria, insufficient schooling, and underground work (Zehraoui 1999: 280-287). In the words of Abdelmalek Sayad, "when work disappears the result is the immigrant's 'death,' his negation, or 'non-existence'" (1991b).

During the 1970s, many Maghrebi immigrants had to face the choice of whether to stay in France or return to their home countries. In 1973, the French government temporarily suspended all immigration because of the crisis, while the Algerian government had stopped emigration to France in response to episodes of xenophobic violence against Algerian workers. The late 1970s and early 80s saw heightened anti-immigrant violence. In Marseille, for example, 15 members of the Algerian community were killed in the summer of 1977 (Noiriel 1996[1988]: 200). This period thus marked the development of xenophobic activism and the rise of the French right-wing.

Although unemployment and ensuing discrimination in the labor market devastated the Maghrebi immigrant trajectory, it is important to also point out that these have in fact coexisted with great strides among the second generation and with the production of a middle-class. Algerians, for example, assimilated into French society after family reunification, with relatively high intermarriage rates and school success in the 1980s and 1990s (Tribalat 1995). By then Maghrebis had fully entered into public space, housing, schools, and social service. Arguably, their growing presence in social and physical space made them a target of nationalist, right-wing mobilization.

Spurred by the economic crisis that had begun in the 1970s, the right-wing Front National (FN) managed to manipulate public opinion toward seeing immigration as a threat to national identity (Noiriel 1996[1988]: xv; Berezin 2009). The successes of the FN coincided with the fragmentation of the working-class and decomposition of working-class territories (Wacquant 2008). These were amplified by changes in the political/electoral field that shifted the overall terrain to the right. At the same time the decline of the left-wing media and parties allowed for new media tactics that encouraged French nationalism. According to Noiriel (2007), the media created links in the public perception between such disparate phenomena of wars in the Middle East, Islamist terrorism, and juvenile "delinquency" in the French banlieues. Young French Maghrebins became equated with Islam, violence, and a number of social ills. By the 1990s there was a virtual Right-Left consensus that elections could not be won without denouncing *Islamisme* and *communautarisme* (communitarianism) (Tissot 2006). The national obsession with the headscarf, continuing for two decades, demonstrates this most clearly (Noiriel 2007: 64-65).

Urban repression and the rise and fall of immigrant activism

Partly in response to FN popularity, immigrant-rights activism in the 1980s flourished (Dikeç 2007: 58-59). With the election of the socialist government in 1981, legislation allowed foreigners to form associations, and this contributed to what became known as the "beur movement." (The word "beur" is a slang term for the French-born children of North African immigrants. It was intended to reflect their simultaneous belonging and alienation from French and Arab cultures but was actually created by journalists and political players.) While immigrant activism in the 1970s was generally limited to labor struggles, this second phase of activism focused on anti-racism and discrimination. It was dominated by second-generation immigrant activists, working closely with mainstream and media-savvy associations like SOS-Racisme and France Plus. A culminating event of the movement was the 1983 "marche des beurs," France's first and largest national demonstration for immigrant and racial justice. It was initiated in Les Minguettes, outside of Lyon, following a series of riots in the neighborhood that erupted when a local teenager was injured by a policeman.

Despite the prolific cultural productions and vibrancy of the beur movement, its lack of structure and tenuous bonds with mainstream associations contributed to its decline. Disappointment with SOS-Racisme's assimilationist ideology and attitudes toward Middle East politics led to rifts between associations. Further, less educated activists in the poorer banlieues felt that the major beur and other organizations were not representative of their needs (Baillet 2001: 165-167, 199, 282). Indeed, the social distance between Maghrebi elite leaders and most working-class residents in the housing projects is wide. Only 10% of children of Algerian immigrants who arrived in France prior to 1975 achieved middle-class jobs (*professions intermédiares*). The few who had access to higher education generally had parents who spoke French and arrived in France from urban or property-owning backgrounds. They also managed to avoid public schools and most importantly, their parents had enough capital to leave HLM apartments to buy a house in residential areas (Geisser 1997: 79-81). Although such elites were supportive of Maghrebi activists in the banlieues, at least superficially, they remained disconnected especially from Islamic practice and religious community leaders. The latter have tended to view such elites as "Arabes de service" who are co-opted by political parties and work to legitimize the notion of an Islamist threat in the banlieues (Ibid.: 151-163).[24]

Today's second and third younger generation is perhaps even more distanced from Maghrebi elites as civic activism has declined. In contrast to their predecessors from the 1980s, they are more removed from earlier leftist struggles, more likely to be facing longer-term unemployment, and more engaged in Islamic practice (Baillet 2001: 176-177, 287-290; Zehraoui 1999: 302). They live in the aftermath of the so-called "failure" of the beur movement and its demands for integration.

These trends coincided with the Gulf War, the war in Algeria, and other events that FN supporters seized upon to politicize any religiosity of youth in the working-class banlieues (Baillet 2001: 74-77). Those of North African descent came to be perceived through the lens of Islam whether or not they wanted it (Béatrix 1988: 90). The banlieues around Lyon again were crucial to this development. The association of banlieues with Islamist terrorism, as mentioned above, was clinched by the 1995 Paris metro bombings by a resident of Vaulx-en-Velin, one of Lyon's roughest banlieues. Vaulx-en-Velin, once proudly touted as an example of successful urban planning, had also erupted in major riots in 1990 after the police killing of a young man of Arab background. This episode instigated the metamorphosis of "the banlieue" from an administrative concept to a "journalistic category" based on numerous misconceptions (Dilkeç 2007: 7-8, 72-79; see Wacquant 2008). The "banlieue" now stood for the violence of young Maghrebi men *and* the problem of Islam's incompatibility with republican values.

Government policy reports throughout the 1990s in fact acknowledged that the primary concern in areas like Vaulx-en-Velin were not religious but simply, the desire for jobs and better schools. However, new plans for creating jobs were based mainly on tax concessions to businesses and were unsuccessful (Dilkeç 2007: 104-105). Further, new laws for the expansion of low-income housing met local resistance from neighborhoods that preferred to pay fines rather than provide housing for immigrant communities. Meanwhile, unemployment continued to increase (Ibid.: 112-116).

As job creation in the urban peripheries has been unsuccessful, the question of urban violence meanwhile fell under the purview of the Intelligence Service (*Renseignements Généraux*) and Ministry of the Interior in the early 1990s. The categories of urban violence and 'sensitive neighborhoods' (*les quartiers sensibles*) breathed new life and legitimacy into the Intelligence Service, marking the beginning of intensified surveillance, tracking, and

bureaucratization of urban management (Ibid.: 81). Several new laws aimed at security in the 1990s were followed, post-9/11, by ever increased police powers. While there is a newness to these forms of urban repression, on the other hand, my informants in the field saw them as the mere continuity of colonial repression, criminalization, and management. Table 5 presents the major legal measures in French counter-terrorism. While I presented a similar table for India in Chapter 2 in the context of secularism, I include the French table here, because counter-terrorism has been intimately connected with urban repression and marginality more precisely in France than in India. The recent history of counter-terror policies makes clear the gradual expansion of surveillance possibilities, stripping of private rights, and implication of all local administrations in the new security regime.

Table 5
Major legal measures in French counter-terrorism

Year	Action
1986	• Centralization of anti-terror authority in Paris • Creation of special regime and list of offences and police procedures
1993	• Postponement of terrorist suspect's right to see lawyer from 20-72 hours
1995	• Introduction of video surveillance in public places, night searches, and mass detention
2001	• Reinforcement of financial monitoring • Enhancement of police powers to search vehicles • Increase of airport security • Creation of new administrative body to ease access to police data • Expansion of DNA profiles database • Introduction of private security officers with enhanced surveillance powers • Increase in police flexibility for domestic searches
2002	• Penalization of minors by linking youth delinquency to terrorism • Enhancement of flexibility for vehicle searches and identity checks • Implication of prostitutes, mendicants, Roma, youth, and illegal migrants in anti-terror struggle
2004	• Linkage of terrorism and organized crime under same penal regime • Increase in police custody up to four days • Outlining of possibilities for police infiltration, espionage, and use of informants • Enhancement of surveillance of conversations and activities conducted in private places • Expansion of definition of organized gangs
2005	• Creation of regional centers to combat radical Islam
2006-09	• Strengthening of video surveillance of all public space and some private space • Facilitation of data systems related to illegal immigration • Implication of all local administrations and social service organizations in anti-terror struggle • Establishment of power to require security guards of any collective space • Targeting of foreign communities, extremists, separatists, and marginalized populations for increased surveillance
2008	• Creation of new databases on criminals and terror suspects

Sources: http://legislationline.org and http://legisfrance.gouv.fr. See consolidated versions of Décret 91-1052, Loi 95-73, Loi 2001-1062, Loi 2002-1094, and Loi 2006-64.

States, elites, and identity

There are a few key themes common to both these histories of Muslim dislocation and decline. First, both cases make clear the role of the colonial state in solidifying the bureaucratically defined category of Muslims that in turn determined their social status, identity, and conditions of mobilization. In France, an administrative corps that sought to retain its legitimacy and offices in the aftermath of Algerian independence continued a line of colonial management and logic that facilitated the segregation of North African foreign workers into stigmatized urban-peripheral zones. In India, the British colonial state, in tandem with Muslim elites, constructed the notion of a Muslim minority that would constitute a separate electorate. Following independence and the deep communalization of the polity, the Indian army's takeover of Hyderabad state saw the expulsion of Muslims from their former positions and their replacement by Hindus.

The subsequent causes of the dramatic explosion of unemployment (disproportionate for Muslims) are different in the two cases of Lyon and Hyderabad. One was due to a global crisis that had a worse impact on the segregated and low-skilled population and the other to the forced dissolution of a peculiar feudal order that had benefited Muslims. In the latter case, it was in fact an important moment of possibility for egalitarian restructuring but that was ultimately lost: the Communist, Telengana uprising at the time of Police Action drew both Hindus and Muslims and is considered one of the most successful peasant rebellions in the years following the Chinese revolution (Pernau 2000: 312). Political discourse, eventually, became increasingly defined in India by the BJP-VHP-RSS axis. The Congress Party that had previously championed Muslim minorities ceded the ground to the right-wing. In France political discourse also became heavily set by the National Front. While the Communist Party declined, the Socialists recentered themselves around educated, middle-class voters. Alienated from the traditional parties that had once appealed to them, Muslims increasingly turned to organizing around Islam. Interest in Islam and Muslim identity especially among younger generations has thus emerged in this context of decline.

But a critical difference between the two cases, apart from their models of secularism, is the role of Muslim elites. India had a Muslim intelligentsia that existed at the birth of the independent nation and landowners who benefited from colonial patronage (Hasan 1997: 51). Through the nation-building process, elites secured a legitimate, identity-based political space that was set in motion by the British (Ibid. 236-37). This was perhaps a Pyrrhic victory for Indian Muslims (Ibid.), who gained an avenue of mobilization but at the cost of great stigma and a violently communalized polity. In stark contrast, Algerian and other Maghrebi elites in France attained their positions by physically and culturally distancing themselves from Muslims in the housing projects. They were either created by or eventually co-opted by political parties concerned with public image and disdainful of religion. When these elites did try to appeal to a sense of Maghrebi unity for their own legitimacy, the results were awkward and unsuccessful (Geisser 1997). They had neither the legal and discursive space, nor inheritance of wealth, for a sustained immigrant or racial justice movement. Again, the paradox of French Republican ideology and laïcité is that the state appeals to universalism but actively constructs ethnic groups through urban policy—and in turn thwarts their attempts to become political actors (Noiriel 1996[1988]: 259).

Further, the nature of the democratic state in each case either facilitated or obstructed Muslim civil societies. France's *dirigiste* political economy has rested on a distrust of associational life that in turn has been weak and divided (Levy 1999). India's associational life

in contrast is stronger, especially if considered through the lens of *political society* and the postcolonial state (Chatterjee 2004) (as opposed to a traditional Western notion of civil society).[25] In sum, Muslim elites faced very different opportunity structures in creating an identity-based movement or politics. The nature of Muslim class relations that consequently emerged in each case is the expression of local and national political-economic histories and the state's relationship to civil society.

A social critique of religious judgment

Given these divergent opportunity structures to use religion toward cross-class alliances, there developed (or remained) in Hyderabad a relationship of strong elite paternalism toward the uneducated and impoverished Muslim masses, whereas in Lyon the state could easily break apart whatever religious-activist alliances had existed between middle-class Maghrebi activists and those in the quartiers. The immense difference between the political communities and antipolitics stems significantly from these divergent class relations.

However, at the cultural level, a very similar phenomenon is taking place between the two cities among the religious Muslims I knew: gendered, sectarian forms of Islam found resonance in the slums and working-class housing projects, to the dismay and disgust of many middle-class Muslims. This dynamic is implicated in the bifurcated class relations in Lyon and the strong paternalism in Hyderabad. Further, the turn to Salafist (for example) practice is popularly viewed as an identity crisis, ignorance, or part of unfortunate individual trajectories. In other words, the embrace of Salafist practice is viewed as an individual's ideological decision, indeed, her "taste." Hence the absence of class perspectives in the literature and the insistence I frequently encountered in the field that Islamic practice was divided by ideology and not by social class. I suggest here that Bourdieu's critique of judgment can help us understand the cultural division between middle-class Muslims and Salafists in poor neighborhoods. It helps explain how and why this social class division is blurred by individual identity-centered views and provides a way to think about some of the fundamental bases on which Salafist practices are judged. Further, appealing to Bourdieu's analysis of class distinction, I argue that the types of judgments I will later present are part of the symbolic struggle over a legitimate Islam: an Islam that is recognized by the state and international community as moderate and integrated.

Bourdieu argued that religious or political opinions tend to be seen as the outcomes of individual trajectories when they are actually "the product of collective transformations" (112). This exactly describes what I argue is occurring in the field of Islamic movements and everyday practice. While *Distinction* is an analysis of artistic and cultural consumption, I suggest that its principles apply to religious practice and "consumption" as a lifestyle, or art of living that may likewise express and legitimate social differences. Even though there exist many individual deviations from this class division, overall, the Salafist-mainstream divide is a social separation across class. What is seen as individual strength and intelligence (among the upper classes) is simply a product of one's upbringing and education.

In creating this relationship of distinction (intentionally or unintentionally) (31), the middle-class Muslims I knew were making a social break with Muslims in the slums and in the banlieues. However, unlike the bourgeois actors in *Distinction*, these groups of middle-class Muslims also constitute a dominated social class, perhaps not unlike the petit-bourgeoisie of *Distinction* struggling for cultural capital. Thus, they tend to absorb the discourses and language presented to them from above (462), despite their oppositional politics. Echoing the language of the state, they judge Salafist Muslims for their refusal to integrate, refusal to participate in "Islam

de France" or "moderate Islam" and for denying the value of gender equality. I take this application of Bourdieu's analysis a step further, by arguing that the rejection of Salafist practices by other Muslims is similar to the bourgeois cultural rejection of all that appears easy, literal, and accessible (32). As Bourdieu's working-class is alienated from signification and symbolism in favor of mere function and sensory appeal (42-43), Salafist focus on comportment and bodily practice differs from the more symbolic and complicated views of Islamic practice among the middle-classes. I am not arguing here that their practice is less meaningful or thoughtful (quite the contrary, as may be clear in Chapter 6), but rather, that direct physical practice takes precedence over the need to symbolize something intangible.

For example, the burqa is the premier example of a practice that is judged as a vulgar aesthetic, an overly literal understanding of a Quranic principle. Indeed, the burqa takes the spirit of gender segregation and the dangers of sexual desire to their logical conclusion. It is rooted in a very material understanding of desire and the body and achieves a purpose that for its adherents is eluded by middle-class practices of beautiful headscarves atop fashionable (if modest) Western or Indian clothing. In a sense, anything less than a plain burqa has a more symbolic, detached purpose and is perhaps more true to style than to function. According to Bourdieu, the body has a strong relationship to class at an unconscious level, and the "body schema" envelops a whole world-view and philosophy of one's self (218). He argued that as the working-class distrusted the available political languages concocted by dominant classes, its "only escape…is to fall back on what one *can appreciate*, the body rather than words, substance rather than form…" (465). Again, an important qualification here is that Muslim middle-class worshippers do not themselves have "legitimate bodies," that are *recognized* and free of embarrassment. They are not self-assured and detached from necessity (though their education and modest wealth offers them a greater sense of ease). All visibly Muslim worshippers in a sense are 'embarrassed' and alienated from their own bodies, using Bourdieu's frame (207). What is interesting, I argue, is that Salafist women so fully cover themselves up that they seem to extract themselves from this alienation, subverting the dynamic of judgment, or rather, fully embracing their social illegitimacy. To clarify again, however, in saying that their practice is material and functional rather than symbolic is not at all to dismiss the depth of their teachings. Their attention to intention and spirit was equal to that among the middle-classes, even as they may prefer function to symbols (see Asad 2005[2004]).

Apart from dress, other judgments of Salafists are that they are superficial in their interpretation and practice of Islam and they are uninterested in integration. For Bourdieu, the dominant classes "attribute to themselves spiritual and intellectual strength, a self-control that predisposes them to control others, a strength of soul or spirit which allows them to conceive their relationship to the dominated…as that of the soul to the body, understanding to sensibility, culture to nature" (479). Middle-class assessment of Salafists as superficial because of their dress and attention to physical detail in the act of prayer, as two examples, reflects the state's own obsession with Muslim clothing practices. But it further legitimates this social divide by posing an opposition between the spirituality inherent in its own understanding of Islam and the supposed vulgar insensitivity (to subtlety and complexity) of Salafist interpretation.

Finally, I argue that the debate over an integrated Islam might also be understood through the temporal dimension to social class differences that Bourdieu asserted. Individual trajectories among the poor Salafists in France, especially, were not forward-looking or particularly optimistic. The emphasis on life's brevity vis-à-vis the eternal afterlife is not so compatible with the search for permanence—in this case, an integrated, institutionalized French Islam that will be

passed on to generations of Muslims. Middle-class Muslim desire and interest in these matters expresses their need for recognition but also their sense of the future and hope for permanence of their way of life. The belief in "integration" and owning a stake in the future is thus shaped by one's position in the social world, or more precisely, one's class habitus.[26]

This discursive struggle within Islam is a symbolic struggle over legitimate Islam. It might be thought of as a struggle over classification: integrated, national Islam versus one that is communautariste, sectarian, and based on misinterpretation. What's at stake in the struggle is recognition, with the terms of the struggle imposed by the language of the state. To be recognized is to be "integrated" or "liberal." The labels subsequently attached to different Islamic communities (integrated, communautariste, etc.) form the basis of how they are represented and in turn, their political potential (479). The language used to 'classify' French Salafist Muslims for example, is fundamentally *demobilizing*. Salafists become a distinct community who are perceived only through the lenses I described above and which, I submit, offer little potential for political mobilization. As Islam becomes increasingly institutionalized and professionalized, the more there is a "symbolic imposition" (25) by which legitimate Islam is constituted. There already exists a hierarchy of training of imams and Islamic education. For example, the men and women who come to speak at more reputable mosques are serious intellectuals versus those in low-income neighborhoods, where instructors and imams have questionable qualifications and certainly no prestige. This hierarchy is one of many factors that transform "an arbitrary way of living into a legitimate way of life which casts every other way of living into arbitrariness" (57).

As I hope to show in the following chapters, the class judgment against Muslim residents of the slums and quartiers is misguided, in the sense that their teachings and beliefs can hardly be reduced to superficialities or an aesthetic without meaning. In the next chapter I turn to the political communities among slum residents in Hyderabad, families and communities who are severely judged and stigmatized even while being lovingly controlled by a middle-class paternalism. Their practices above all reveal not the superficiality of gendered Islam but rather, the full and complex political potentiality of their religious movement.

PART II

THE POLITICS AND ANTIPOLITICS OF ISLAMIC MOVEMENTS

Chapter 4: Political communities in the slums of Hyderabad

> The art of politics teaches men how to bring forth what is great and radiant… as long as the *polis* is there to inspire men to dare the extraordinary, all things are safe; if it perishes, everything is lost (Arendt 1958: 206).

The subaltern communities I spent time with in Hyderabad were securing the prerequisites to demanding and exercising redistributive and recognition rights given by the state. Their activities are foundations of civil society and hence, of political community. Because they are ultimately building the capacity to make demands of the state, I present their movement as a form of politics. Yet their politics are not about *Islamizing* the state or otherwise transforming its secular foundations. Instead, they are simply the intertwining of religious teachings with practices of citizenship that build social trust and in turn, the ability to criticize the state and make limited redistributive claims.

What I will emphasize in this chapter, however, is not the instrumentality of community politics as a means to concessions and rights but its practice, which represents the apex of citizens' potential from an Arendtian perspective. The mere act of gathering and speaking and leaving behind private life is the format of such politics, and it in turn inspires creativity and flourishing. Indeed, there is a kind of radiance in the Muslim communities I observed in Hyderabad's poor neighborhoods, where some of the religious gatherings have taken shape as *political communities*. These communities embody a collective sense of mission and responsibility, especially in light of state retrenchment and discrimination. Their reliance on middle-class resources and philanthropy and capacity to build a degree of social trust, I argue, is what facilitates the political and Arendtian nature of these communities. Looking at poor people's Islamic movements in the case of Hyderabad only through a lens of rights and instrumentality would miss the mutual accountability, interlocutors, creativity, and freedom they experience precisely in and through political community.

At the most basic level, Islamic revival in the form of neighborhood mosque collectives, the proliferation of madrasas, and the creation of women's Islamic welfare and training centers is the start of something new. Surely, all forms of Islamic piety have existed in Hyderabad for centuries; however, the infusion of labor remittances, philanthropy, and foreign donations as well as the reaction to anti-Muslim movements and state neglect have given rise to a fundamentally heightened and organized movement that melds both redistribution and religion. In an important sense, the novel uses of religion and the language of autonomy lend it an unpredictability. But alongside such unpredictability, it engages the possibility of practices of freedom. In particular, the movements in Hyderabad are distinct for the mobilization of women, who despite adherence to gendered norms, project an image of freedom that they practice in religious and skills-based collectivity.

In order to practice this, they are leaving their homes and private lives in unprecedented numbers for the sake of both religious and worldly education. For a population so isolated and "backwards," this is certainly an inaugural phenomenon. Although they gather on the basis of Muslim identity and often attend meetings and trainings with other female relatives or close friends, they are nonetheless exposed to new people, ideas, and horizons. In Arendtian language, they enter into conditions of plurality, where everyone has different life experiences and desires. This human condition of plurality, for Arendt, is precisely a source of freedom rather than an obstacle to overcome (Habermas 1991). Simply, it is the condition of democratic politics

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(Arendt 1958, 57; Zerilli 2005, 170). Thus, in this case shared ethno-religious identity is not experienced or presented as the crux of the women's activities. Rather, gaining skills, literacy, confidence, and potential is the core of their communities. In the process, they learn to speak to others and frequently relate their teachings and activities to the wider public realm and a broader sense of ethics. Further, their practices and discourses are not only around salvation and the afterlife, but are clearly oriented also toward building something permanent in *this* life—institutions, skills, and more equitable gender relations. The participation of both the men and women involved in these projects requires some courage and individuality, again, making this a political community in an Arendtian sense.

While women are benefiting materially and individually, and are encouraged to make claims of the state, the ties of mutual trust and obligation are what make this movement unique. In religious study circles and welfare activities as well as mosque communities, members are accountable to each other. They must contribute what they can, whether financially or through prayers. Turning to each other for their material and spiritual needs also requires a degree of trust. They develop trust in each other but more urgently, in their interlocutors. These are mosque leaders, women alims [trained scholars] who lead study circles, and activists, guiding them in their religious pursuits and educating them about public issues. There is a profound acknowledgment that the freedom they experience in acquiring education, skills, and literacy only take meaning through trust in local leaders and communal bonds. Using Arendt's language, members make and keep 'promises' to one another, and the power of the promise is superior to the "freedom" of individuals who are unburdened by any promises (1958, 244-245). While it remains (perhaps deliberately) ambiguous as to what such promises look like, they invoke an "agreed purpose for which alone the promises are valid and binding" (Ibid., 245).

Among the low-income Muslims I observed in Hyderabad, there are specific sets of practices that I argue are the foundations of their political community. These are material, legal, and symbolic projects that better their conditions but more critically, create ties of reciprocal obligation as ends in themselves. *Material* projects include the neighborhood efforts to feed, assist, and educate families, often anchored in mosques and madrasas. They also encompass ethical teachings related to austerity and charity. Other material projects are enabled largely by the role of Muslim elites and philanthropists, who fund women's self-employment training and educational opportunities. The *legal* project that I observed was the use of Islamic law in the creation of community ties to support women securing divorce in unhappy or abusive marriages. It also included campaigning against the marriage practice of dowry and its devaluation of women. Finally, members participate in the creation of *symbolic* value in the form of honor and moral community through religious education and ethics.

These projects differ to some extent by gender. While men work as critical leaders and participants toward neighborhood solidarity and responsibility, their roles had a primarily religious dimension around mosques and madrasas from what I could observe. Particularly, the hundreds of Islamic welfare activities and training programs did not cater to men but rather, uneducated Muslim women. Men were thus less prominent in the self-employment and skills training, and they also had little role in legal practices, which were mostly about women's exercise of Islamic law.

These three dimensions of practice—material, legal, and symbolic—are the foundations of belonging to a political community because they are key to the building of civil society. And inclusion in a strong civil society is a precondition of the fundamental right to citizenship, or the right to recognition as a moral equal. This framework can be derived, I propose, by the

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conception of citizenship as the "right to have rights" coined by Arendt ([1951]1979; Somers 2008). Civil society, balanced between the state and market, requires certain material provisions (such as employment), legal mechanisms, and supports from the state in order to resist being conquered by the market (or by the state itself) (Somers 2008, 25-34). Thus, participation in material, legal, and symbolic projects is essentially the building of civil society. In a sense, the poor communities I knew are claiming their citizenship and the right to have rights.

Their clear efforts at building civil society through Islamic revival speak to the supposed incompatibility of identity-based interests with the democratic public sphere. Contrary to many depictions of Islamic movements and associations, members here are using their religious identity in ways that nourish and enforce democratic public spheres (see Calhoun et al, eds. 2011). Again, they are not trying to Islamize state and society, even though their piety is arguably the most important dimension of their lives.

In this chapter I will first discuss the sense of collective responsibility and welfare that has developed in some slum neighborhoods alongside a push for greater autonomy from the state. I will then present the material, legal, and symbolic practices that form the basis of political communities. In presenting these, I will also analyze the ethical teachings that inform some of these practices. The data I use is based on my research in three low-income communities: First Lancer, located in the New City; Amberpet, situated at the border of the Old and New Cities; and Babanagar, a poor enclave in the Old City. (See Appendix.)

Collective responsibility

It was 4:30 in the morning when I was sharply awoken by the sounds of a snare drum and rhythmic singing. I peered out over the balcony onto the narrow dusty streets of First Lancer, the predominantly Muslim slum where I did much of my fieldwork, and saw the outline of a thin figure walking around with his drum. It was the Islamic month of Ramadan, and as I was to learn, this man held the honorable task of waking up the neighborhood in time for *sehri*, the pre-dawn meal with which one starts the daily fast. As his drumming continued, coaxing people out of their slumber, oil lamps were lit and fires were started to heat the morning water. In time, there were sounds of soft chatter as young boys and men hurried to the little blue mosque for the morning prayer. The call for prayer (*azaan*) was amplified from the mosque minarets, as the sun started to rise and the roosters crowed. First Lancer was officially awake.

Throughout the month of Ramadan, I got used to this routine. I didn't have to set any alarms, if I wished to participate in the fasts, and I didn't have to remember any prayer times. It was all done for me. Each day the fast was broken at sunset after a piercingly loud siren echoed through the neighborhood. All five prayers were marked by the amplification of the azaans, marking the passage of different parts of the day. This was my first introduction to the central role of neighborhood mosques in First Lancer and many other Muslim neighborhoods in the New and Old Cities. They set the pace of each day, provided physical refuge for many poor worshippers, reminded people of weekly religious obligations, and nourished a clear collective identity. It was all the more fascinating to witness this in a majority Hindu country.

Adjacent to the little blue mosque, Masjid Arabiya, was a small madrasa. Every morning at 6 AM a class full of young boys were learning Arabic, reciting the Quran, and struggling to memorize verses. The teachers were men in their twenties and thirties, extremely devoted to their work, and share the same poor background as their students. Madrasas, like mosques, have also expanded their presence and their roles. They not only provide Islamic education, but they also provide charity to poor families, moral guidance in private matters, and a sense of honor to

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the families of young men as well as women who receive madrasa education. Attached to the madrasa was also a women's "stitching center," a center that has now trained several hundred semi-literate women in self-employment skills. Everyday, dozens of burqa-clad women can be seen walking to and from the center.

As I present in this chapter, mosques, madrasas, and women's centers are the institutional anchors of political communities. They circulate announcements, literature, and imperatives toward providing various forms of support for the community and for these institutions. The idea that the larger Muslim community has a responsibility to preserve Islamic institutions and support Muslim welfare arises in numerous diverse and random settings. Walking into a small photography studio in First Lancer, I spot a bumper sticker on the wall: "To help Jamia Nizamia is the foremost duty of Muslims." Jamia Nizamia is India's second largest Islamic university, training hundreds of men to be Islamic teachers and leaders each year. After months of passing an old man, a traditional Islamic medical practitioner (*hakeem*), on the street near Masjid Arabiya in First Lancer, I decided to stop by one day. But when I expressed my disinterest in his services, he launched into a long diatribe against the government's deliberate undermining of Islamic medicine (*unani*). "The only way this system [unani] will survive is if Muslims support it," he scolded me. Time and again, he lamented the poor state of his "office," a stone hut located next to a "jaundice treatment center," and complained: "government will never give even one rupee!" As was often repeated by many diverse individuals, "government doesn't do anything." Thus, individual Muslims had the responsibility to uphold the community, whether through support for Islamic institutions or charity.

Neighborhood mosques are critical in asserting this notion of responsibility. All throughout the city, small mosques in Muslim enclaves amplify their announcements. The liberty with which they do so is somewhat unique to Hyderabad. Although amplification is banned in the city, there is a mutual understanding between the police and Muslim neighborhoods that the law will not be enforced. One politician told me that this was in exchange for allowing the makeshift Hindu temple that was illegally constructed at the floor of the Charminar, the city's central monument built under Muslim rule. Given this arrangement, mosques are able to make their presence even more public than might otherwise be the case.

Thus, announcements from Masjid Arabiya would blare through the loudspeakers several times everyday. Many of these were requests, or imperatives, to give money or provide physical assistance for a Muslim family. Typically, these were burial or wedding expenses. For example, the imam would announce a local resident's death, its hour, and the immediate start of collections for his burial. He would also call for extra prayers that local male residents were expected to attend. The sense of obligation toward community members was difficult to ignore when these announcements commanded such a powerful presence. Obligations to collectively finance wedding expenses were also customary and reinforced by mosques, again by announcements and collection efforts. Despite the many problematic facets of local marriage practices, marriage is viewed as a community obligation among poor families and significant part of local survival.

Religious practice is woven into this community disciplining, where mosque and local leaders (usually male) coax people to pray and read the Quran. Children especially are collectively disciplined in this regard. Sometimes, in an unintentionally amusing set of amplified announcements, young boys were scolded for rushing through their prayers or skipping their prayers in favor of playing outside the mosque or running home. One evening I heard an imam yell from Masjid Arabiya to dozens of giggling boys running out the door of the mosque: "Get

back here children! If you don't learn to pray properly now, you'll never develop the habit. You have to make it a *habit*!" Instilling in children the bodily practice, desire, and habit of daily prayer is every parent's task, but the authority, possession, and affection with which Masjid Arabiya additionally undertook such disciplining was striking.

Anwar, the madrasa caretaker and a beloved local leader in First Lancer, was someone to whom many young people felt accountable. As he was hurriedly walking down the street one evening, several young boys shouted out to him before he even noticed them, "yes, yes, we already did our prayers!" "See, we all have to remind each other," Anwar said. Anwar's critical involvement in the women's welfare and tailoring center attached to the madrasa also involved a desire to spread Islamic education. He was unwittingly frank in his motivation: "Once the women are gathered for some purpose, since we are associated with the madrasa, we can impose one hour to learn, to learn what is Islam, the rules of prayer, rules of fasting, how to cover their face. Because I'm principal of the madrasa, I can implement my rules. Muslims are soft-hearted. If I tell someone 'you have to spend one hour learning the Quran,' they'll never say no." Although Anwar never ended up implementing these religious lessons (for reasons I will discuss in Chapter 5), many residents felt accountable to him and valued his leadership in spiritual and material matters. His support and encouragement of numerous collectivizing projects was motivated by religious desire and his vision of a strong Islamic civil society, marked by practice, debate, and dialogue. He used the example of early Islam and the city-state of Medina. "In this period people traveled to see how Muslim communities were living, and Islam spread by example. There were debates and excitement. There's nothing today like this period of Medina."

This sense of responsibility to one's neighborhood Muslim community is rooted fundamentally in the state's neglect as well as police harassment of low-income Muslims. The most prominent political discourse I heard was that Muslims needed to live autonomously because they cannot rely on the state. Therefore, it was understood that the survival of Muslims as an ethno-religious community necessitated collective effort and sometimes avoidance of the state. This manifested in minute practices or decisions. For example, it was decided at Madrasa Arabiya to not pursue subsidized electricity rates, for which all non-profits and schools technically qualify. It wasn't worth the bureaucratic hassle or the risk of inviting government interest and control of the school.

Although some poor madrasas accept state assistance, many reject it deliberately. The First Lancer community was among these. One of the main concerns involved maintaining the integrity of Islamic education and not diluting it with worldly subjects. Specialization in Quranic study, for example, was seen as necessary and superior to an education fractured by various and secular interests. Hafiz Azmath, a madrasa graduate and *hafiz*, who worked occasionally in First Lancer, observed that big madrasas that accepted government management in favor of promoting English and secular courses were not successful on any front. "The result of these madrasas is nil. If you are studying four hours of English and then four hours of Arabic, you can't be a professional in either subject." He and others often commented on the complexity of Arabic (beyond most other languages), the vital importance of *tajwid* (art of Quranic recitation), and the many years of study required to gain a deeper understanding of the Quran. For these reasons, the imposition of secular education on madrasas was rejected as an undermining scheme of the state and those hostile to Islam.

For some individuals, staying away from politics and matters of the state was a principled position. For example, Anwar was approached by a prominent philanthropist a few years after the opening of the First Lancer women's center, to see if he had any interest in a political

appointment. The philanthropist was contemplating the idea of an independent political party, and a post for Anwar could have been a major improvement in his social position. Anwar politely refused, asserting that he had no interest in getting involved in party politics. "I understand he's frustrated and knows he can do a better job than current politicians. But he shouldn't be tempted by politics. He should stick to what he does best. These kinds of people, the rich, the politicians, are always surrounded by others trying to gain something. I don't want to be a part of that." Years before, during the inaugural ceremony of the women's center, he even refused to be photographed for the local newspaper, because he didn't want to be associated with any type of politics. His decisions were based on principle but also strategy. He insisted that a new political party would merely divide the Muslim vote and ultimately benefit Hindus. "It's the entire system [of politics] that's the problem and that can't change. Look at Obama, for example. I'm not surprised that he can't really accomplish anything." Anwar's overall distrust of wealth and of the state led him to focus squarely on the community and its autonomy. "We have to think this way," he told me, "because we are so-called minorities."

While Anwar and his companions in First Lancer represented one group of leaders in Muslim political communities, another that I came to know was in a poor area of Amberpet, where Nasir and his family lived and led a strong group of activists. While they housed two madrasas and were strictly religious, unlike Anwar's community, they engaged in public activism that went beyond the mosque and madrasa. Specifically, since the aftermath of the 2002 pogrom in Gujarat, Nasir started a group to deal with police violence against Muslims. He had volunteered previously with human riots groups for Naxalites and Dalits as well as with teachers' movements. But he noticed these groups were never comfortable dealing directly with Muslims, although their victimization by the police had been mounting. Over the years, he and his partners have succeeded in creating a community that raises awareness and provides moral and physical support for families confronting detention, torture, and abductions (which occur usually by a nexus of police and local mafia). The group also creates a political community in bringing attention to family violence, usually considered a private matter. For example, it held a week-long campaign in the area of Babanagar, where there are reportedly high rates of father-daughter incest and other forms of family violence. Local politicians condemned the campaign, as they were afraid of further slandering the Muslim community. But Nasir and his group continued their work. They also speak out against land grabbers and illegal loan sharks in the Old City as well as many issues related to the status of women, as I will discuss. In doing this, they have created relations with members of the Urdu press, lawyers, and many social activists.

These brief vignettes describe the overall ethos of Islamic revival movements in slum communities. Religious disciplining is intertwined with efforts toward community autonomy—that requires collective responsibility and accountability and is informed by a deep distrust of the state and politicians. In the following sections I will present the three major projects that define the political communities in the areas I studied.

Material projects

A significant component of the practices of political community involves redistribution and material improvement, especially in the form of women's self-employment training. All of these projects are combined with Islamic teachings and most importantly, they are not merely instrumental. They are foremost about community uplift and practicing certain values and forms of freedom that take community as the means and end. I focus here on collective contributions toward mosques and madrasas that in turn give back to the poor and the expansive growth of

women's literacy and self-employment programs. (In this latter phenomenon, low-income men are generally left out or in the background.) But first, I will discuss the ethical discourses and teachings related to matters of wealth and distribution that coexist with these material projects.

Although these projects are about education, skills, and work, the religious teachings that surround them emphasize asceticism and subsistence rather than growth. Critiquing Western financial systems based on un-Islamic practices, such as interest (*riba*), was an important part of ethical teachings about material life. At moments it seemed people rationalized or glorified their poverty through a religious lens, however, the centrality of distribution and work to the overall movements make this less salient. Acknowledgement of life's temporality and insignificance of wealth took place alongside the building of skills and education. For example, one young woman was busily practicing her sewing skills at a welfare center when she said to me very simply, "we're supposed to think about death 100 times a day." As Saleem, a teacher at Madrasa Arabiya said, "I have no interest in earning money, gaining the world, or making a name for myself. This is not my goal. My only goal is that in each home there is one religious person, who will create an Islamic atmosphere for his family. We are poor, and we want to die as poor persons." Another local Quranic teacher, Hafiz Azmath, himself a graduate of the famed madrasa at Deoband, summarized the priniciple message he (and others) wish to convey to their students:

> My children, this world is full of suffering. The life we get is very short. With this
> brief life, just pay respect to God and to your Prophet, live your life as the Prophet
> told you to. Don't ever worry about your food, your health, your family, because
> whatever happens is God's will. The goal of this short life is not to earn money
> but to spend it in worship.

The madrasa teachers I met were keen to emphasize that they were not concerned with having a career, but rather, conveying a sense of *ethics*. Saleem proudly noted that enrollment at Madrasa Arabiya had increased significantly in the last several years to over 100 students, the majority of whom are full-time madrasa students. "Other parents notice our graduates, and they see how polite and well-mannered they are. They respect their elders, don't get into fights, and they conduct their prayers very well. They are drawn to these manners and ethics."

Anwar, like other religious leaders, often mixed these ethics with his insistence on community autonomy from the state. Protective of the madrasa community's principles, which he thought would get corrupted by government assistance, he proclaimed, "We don't need your subsidies! We don't need your scholarships. We are capable on our own." When I saw him some years after our first meeting, he reported that the masjid and madrasa still remained poor and he was glad for it. "Money and income for mosques is ultimately bad for the mosque, because then people start arguing over salaries and budgets."

During the years I knew Anwar, his own financial situation gradually changed, through fortuitous circumstances that involved him in a local construction project. He eventually moved his family to a flat at the outskirts of First Lancer. But he remained attached to his roots and informed by the struggles that he knew. Anwar had to quit his education at age thirteen, and he worked as a sweeper at a hotel in Saudi Arabia for several years before returning to Hyderabad to care for his widowed mother. He used whatever savings he had from his work in Saudi to expand the full-time madrasa. He frequently bantered with me about the materialism of the U.S., criticizing the "machine life" of Americans as well as their supposed hatred of Muslims. "They're [Americans] going to say to you 'if you follow the Quran you're just going to grow your beard, stay in the mosque, and you won't earn the world.' May Allah help us. Our greatest

downfall is feeling inferior to them." "Don't listen to them," he would always warn me. Although he was supportive of me in my research endeavors, he was often wary of anything that elevated professional or worldly goals above religious ethics.

In our many conversations and in his occasional qhutbas, Anwar always emphasized that exploitation and excessive materialism were against Islam. A true Muslim never lives beyond her/his means and refrains from over-exploiting others.

> The Quran says, 'we will destroy the banks and promote charity.' If a man knows how to live, he can live on 1000 rupees. If you're earning 3000, and you think you need 5000, where will you get this extra money? You'll lie, cheat, steal, take interest, do anything. Interest [credit] is the one thing that is spoiling the whole world. Allah hates lavish living. If I have a headache I go to the pharmacy, take a tablet, and I'm fine. For a rich person, they'll bring an ambulance, scans, a day in the hospital. And then what? After thousands of rupees, they'll say 'congratulations, there's nothing wrong with you!'

He conveyed these messages in his mosque qhutbas: "Let's say this pen costs 20 rupees. But you are poor and you try to sell it for 5 rupees. I am not allowed to buy it like this. We are not allowed to exploit people's helplessness, ever. A selfish person will buy it for 5 and then sell it for more. This is haram [forbidden]."

While Anwar often lectured to me about never living beyond necessity, he was struggling with his own newfound access to consumer goods. Still, he avoided giving or taking interest his entire life, refusing bank loans when he used to live in Saudi and continuing to live in this manner. "It's a matter of faith to accept what doesn't seem to make sense, such as the idea that you'll gain more [wealth] without interest than with interest." He would use lots of calculations in his examples with me, as he'd been taking intensive math lessons with his young son and was eager to use his new skills.

I also encountered reminders about the sinfulness of riba in poor women's study circles, especially in reference to the problem of dowry as I'll discuss later. With the pressures of dowry and an increasingly consumerist society in Hyderabad, loan sharks were exerting more power in poor neighborhoods of the Old City. There have been sporadic cases of suicides related to debt payment harassment among both women and men. In this context, Islamic movements among the poor have emphasized anti-riba discourse, subsistence living and community forms of wealth. To avoid excessive materialism and debt, it was imperative for people to contribute what they could. As he wanted to illustrate this point, Anwar became emotional once as he told me a story about a battle during the time of the Prophet, when the community was piling all their provisions together. One man, who had lost his limbs, managed to contribute some dates to the pile. "The Prophet said that these dates on the top of the pile of provisions the community had gathered were worth more than the entire pile put together." Likewise, it is all the more meaningful when poor communities made active effort toward their own survival.

With this set of ethics, supporting the Muslim community was a moral and financial obligation. From the use of labor remittances toward mosques and madrasas to the creation of Muslim women's training centers, the question of Muslim welfare is deeply embedded in the everyday life of low-income and slum residents. Some of the obligations include supporting efforts toward local economic sustainability, facilitated specifically during the Islamic month of Ramadan. Many shop owners and workers I knew made most of their yearly sales during Ramadan, when it was expected that families purchase their goods from Muslim merchants. Donating to the neighborhood mosque was also an obligation, especially when funds go toward

local charity projects and needy families. Generally, small neighborhood mosques have scarcely enough funds for their own operations, apart from their charity efforts. Thus, leaders make weekly or bi-weekly announcements requesting funds for infrastructural projects and other necessities. When an announcement and speech was made at Masjid Arabiya requesting infrastructural repair for the madrasa and future welfare center, a number of people volunteered to do the work and construction, and this is how it was indeed completed.

In turn, mosques and madrasas give back to the community in important material ways. They provide meals during certain occasions. During Ramadan, Masjid Arabiya frequently provided iftar dinner, the meal to break the daily fast, to the neighborhood children. I would see volunteers light lamps, roll out carpets on the street, and bring out large vats of rice and curries, which the children hungrily devoured as they sat on the rugs. Madrasas also tend to provide free lunches for their students, which is of enormous benefit to many families who might otherwise send their children to beg on the street or work odd jobs.

Because prayer is required five times everyday, mosques also end up providing physical space and respite for many poor residents. Most families in the area live in cramped, one-room homes. Mustafa, an elderly resident of First Lancer, attended Masjid Arabiya everyday. He was one of perhaps hundreds of men in the neighborhood left unable to work after suffering an injury or medical crisis. After decades of supporting his family as an auto driver, he suffered a stroke and partial paralysis. Most individuals like him cannot afford hospital costs to receive proper treatment or rehabilitation. Mustafa's seven-person family lived in a one bedroom home. Masjid Arabiya played an important role in his life, as he hobbles to the mosque fives times daily. He prays, enjoys the qhutbas, and he begs for money. As it is everyone's responsibility to give him small amounts, he receives enough to maintain his survival. Further, the mosque provides an important social outlet and physical space for families living in such conditions. I could see that Mustafa's daily routine of walking to Masjid Arabiya provided some sense of independence amidst an extraordinarily emasculating and dependent state. Ilyas, another man, only fifty years old, suffered a stroke and could no longer work. His wife was tearfully complaining to me one afternoon of her and her sons' difficulties in trying to make up for his income. I felt mortified for him as he quietly listened to our conversation, while his wife kept pointing to him. Although he couldn't speak, his eyes starkly revealed his shame and guilt. For Ilyas' family too, his going to Masjid Arabiya allowed some relief to all family members—time for the men to leave the home and be with a community and time for the women of the house to enjoy their space.

As mentioned above, Masjid and Madrasa Arabiya operate entirely on community donations. In the Old City some neighborhoods actually pass around a collection box that goes toward funding local madrasas. The money goes toward teacher salaries and infrastructure but also toward providing the free lunches and clothing to the young boys and girls who attend. But in the Old City, as is also the case with Madrasa Arabiya, labor remittances from Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries are vital to the school's operations. Madrasa Arabiya was started twenty years ago but is today financed largely by remittance money. Anwar's brother, who works in Saudi Arabia as an engineer, frequently sends remittances to the madrasa. Remittances to Babanagar, for example, are so considerable that residents began calling the neighborhood "Little Dubai."

In all of these neighborhoods often attached to a mosque or madrasa is a women's self-employment training center. Thanks to local donations, remittance money, and elite philanthropy, religious organizations are increasingly instituting women's training centers, most

commonly in textile skills. This redistributive component focuses only on Muslim women (and small numbers of Hindu women, who are welcomed). In the entrenched context of Muslim women's isolation and "backwardness," women's advancement and education has been embraced as key to the uplift of Indian Muslims in general. This is dramatically seen in the case of Hyderabad. With the support of Muslim elites and middle-class philanthropists, women in slum areas are participating in intensive learning projects to improve their material status. Through their material projects, the women I knew were elevating the image of an "independent" woman, who has some education and perhaps employment. I have chosen the English word, "independent," as a loose translation of the literal Urdu phrase, "standing on one's own feet"—a phrase I heard repeatedly in relation to these projects. (But this concept must not be mistaken for the Western sense of freedom from others and achievement of individual sovereignty. Indeed, one is able to stand on her feet only *through reliance on other women*—to learn skills and critically, to escape abusive families and marriages.) The discussions below will illustrate how political community and a model of freedom (through skill, employment, and social bonds) is the crux of the material project.

Women's self-employment schemes include training in tailoring and embroidery skills and more recently, in henna artistry and beautician work. Scores of these centers exist throughout the city. The most prominent philanthropic foundation in Hyderabad has dozens of centers, through which approximately 30,000 women have received training in the last several years. The women are predominantly Muslim and must be technically in the "below poverty line" category, or "economically backwards" as defined by government policy. Nearly all wear the full burqa. With the facilitation of middle-class leaders, they have come to view job training and self-employment as important avenues of opportunity to mitigate their struggle to meet basic needs and develop self-esteem.

Redistributive projects like these are entirely intertwined with Islamic movements. While many are created by middle-class Muslims and elites, poor women are the recipients of these training programs and often bring to them their religious ideas and practices. Thus, they incorporate Islamic teachings and lessons ranging in frequency from weekly to monthly. The Islamic study circle I most frequently attended, in a slum neighborhood of Amberpet, took place in a home that was down the street from a textile-training center. Many of the women would attend their training and then walk together for a study circle in the late afternoon. They discussed their Islamic teachings during their trainings, and they sometimes discussed their self-employment hopes and prospects during their study circles. When I left the field, the study circle group had just begun thinking about the details of starting a revolving loan program.

The idea behind these training centers is to impart skills in these industries so that poor Muslim women might work from home and earn enough money to alleviate some anxiety about basic needs. Such self-employment would provide alternatives to domestic care-work or to being "useless," in their own unfortunate words. The particular industries of textiles and beauty services seem to build on a cultural love of femininity and enjoy an apparently limitless demand. Shaheen, a young Muslim woman from the neighborhood, had graduated from one of the centers. Her husband had lost their savings (1700 rupees) and Shaheen's small amount of gold jewelry to a conman who had promised him a visa to Dubai. But now, she says:
I make about 1500 rupees [approximately $35] every month from in-home work. Multiple people come to my door everyday with their tailoring needs. And if the customer looks rich, I can charge even more! I used to worry about how to afford food, feed my son and daughter every week. But now I know I can at least feed them, even when my husband can't help.

Shaheen's success is not exactly typical but represents the goal toward which the women were working. At some welfare centers, the organizers were able to secure bulk demands for garments, thus providing steady work. For example, a group of women at one center in the Old City had received a demand for tailored burqas from a company in Dubai. All of the women involved in the project earned some income at piecemeal rates. They arrived everyday and worked at the sewing and embroidery machines, exchanging technical advice and pushing each other to work harder.

As part of their occasional Islamic education at the centers, women also learn basic Urdu literacy. Rashida, a lower-middle class teacher at a training center in the First Lancer slum, teaches Urdu and Arabic reading (often combined with Islamic teaching) everyday during the women's lunch. She has done this continually over four years. Her own story is a mystery to the other women, as she never married or had children, an atypical background for most local women. Now in her fifties, she dedicates her time entirely to educating other Muslim women. She also sometimes uses her small income to buy dinner for the poor women at the center and for the young madrasa students at the boys' madrasa attached to the center.

According to many of the women, their husbands generally appreciate these welfare centers and support their wives' efforts, particularly as they can lead to some income. However, I did meet others whose husbands or parents opposed their leaving the house to attend the centers. Hina, a 19-year old woman, gained textile skills over several months at one of the centers but eventually had to withdraw, as her mother and brothers refused her permission to leave the house so frequently. It was her socializing with others and being "visible" on the streets (as she walked to the center) that they deemed threatening. Later, however, Madam Kulsoom, a manager of numerous welfare centers and philanthropic board member, managed to convince Hina's family that the centers were safe and positive. Thereafter, Hina attended from time to time though not regularly. Another woman, Lubna, in her 30s, attended her local center despite her husband's opposition. When I asked her if she felt scared of taking such a risk, she laughed. "I don't care what he says! I keep coming anyway." Like Hina and most other women, she travels to and from the centers with her female companions. Her friend quipped, "He just wants her to stay home all day, taking his beatings. He thinks that's a better idea!" Lubna continued, "I want to stand on my own, and he's not going to stop me."

These examples show how it is that a new, particular image of women comes to life through these training centers. This new model is enacted through a sense of increased independence (of movement, socializing, and opportunity) as well as reliance on other women, with whom one commutes everyday and shares knowledge of each other's family and marital situations. This type of community building indeed minimizes the type of isolation that nourishes the so-called "backwardness" of poor Muslim women.

As Madam Kulsoom's example above illustrates, elites and politicians have been asserting a strong role in advocating women's freedoms, something I focus on in the next chapter. While politicians generally aim to secure votes, they nonetheless participate in the kind of feminist rhetoric that has become part of these centers. I attended a certification ceremony at a textile-training center in an unusually dilapidated neighborhood of the Old City. The philanthropic board holds such ceremonies when a "batch" of women completes the 6-month training. There were about 40 poor Muslim women in burqas who had completed their training. I had trouble finding the school, making my way past the buffaloes, the "Bone Setter" shop, "Om Sai Men's Saloon," dozens of boarded up and blackened apartment buildings, and heaps of trash,

before I stumbled onto the small mosque and the ceremony taking place under a canopy. Someone spotted me and immediately called me to the dais to help hand out certificates.

There were several Board members, a police Inspector, and a local Congress Party politician ("corporator"). Mr. Krishna, a Hindu Congress corporator, made promises of securing a government loan, from self-employment training funds, for beauty parlor equipment for the center. He also promised to campaign for a junior college in the area, since it was difficult for women to commute to other colleges. He then launched into an impassioned speech in which he said: "Before these schemes, our mothers and sisters never even left the house. Today, they are learning to stand on their own." Madam Kulsoom then took the microphone: "It is [our] hope that women become financially independent, that they're not stuck inside the home and worried. This doesn't mean taking over your husband or going against him. Your independence will be a great help to your husband too!" Such discourse about the importance of women's financial independence, freedom to leave the house, and self-efficacy has come from a mix of elite paternalism (as Madam Kulsoom represents) and local political competition as well as the use of Islamic stories that circulate among poor women. For example, women commonly cited the story of Khatija, the Prophet Muhammed's first wife of 24 years until her death. She was an independent businesswoman, several years his senior, and had herself initiated the marriage proposal to Muhammed (prior to his religious revelations). She is often held as an example of an ideal woman, especially whenever someone doubts the wisdom of women's working.[27]

These types of stories and discussions about skills and independence also exist in the Islamic study circles I attended. For example, there was a related, local story that was discussed at one of the Amberpet study circles. Reena, a young Hindu woman from the slum had converted to Islam against her family's wishes. She attended the study circle events from time to time. Apparently, Reena had secretly wanted to become a nurse and over many years hid this desire from her parents, who would have disapproved. As Fehmina, one of the teachers, recounted:

> She desperately wanted to work at a hospital. So she prayed to God everyday. Then one day her sister got very sick, and they went to the city hospital for treatment. Reena watched the other doctors and admired the Muslim lady doctors. Then she started wearing the hijab like them. But she still didn't have the courage to tell her parents she wanted to be a nurse. One of the [respected] doctors at the hospital said to her father, 'Reena is so hard-working, and she has a special glow [*noor*] in her face. Why don't you make her a nurse? I think she'd be great.' And the father took his advice. Reena couldn't believe her prayers were answered— that God placed this seed in the doctor's mind. As she learned more about Islam she understood that God created us as capable of everything. Reena used to go to the women's centers and has learned how to perform prayer. When her father decided to support her career, she knew it was because of God's will. Masha'Allah [by the grace of God's will], she is independent.

The notion of independence must not be understood in the typical (Western) sense of independence *from* others. It undoubtedly connotes either education or employment, towards alleviation of poverty; for example, being a nurse was crucial to Reena's independence and pride. But such goals only take meaning in community. In this case, it was prayer but also support of her father and a women's religious community that was an integral part of the story of Reena's "independence." Reena could only be a nurse through moral community and support.

The new emphasis on women's education and right to work, even among poor Muslim women of the Ahl-e-Hadees tradition, was starkly represented at the state conference of the women's wing of Jama'at-i-Islami Hind (JIH) that I attended in 2006. The women's wing of JIH has numerous Islamic campaigns, Quranic classes, women's textile training centers, primary school projects for girls, and scheduled "inspections" of girls' madrasas. The conference, which drew nearly 40,000 poor women, had many stalls and banners promoting sex segregation and women's veiling—but always attached to the message of women's progress. One large banner stated: *We use pardah to cover our bodies, not our minds.* It had a picture of a woman in niqab next to an office chair, a computer, and with a group of surgeons around an operating table. Muslim women can be equally educated and participate in professional fields, as the banner promoted, so long as they wear the niqab. (There were also several large posters criticizing institutions of global capitalism like the WTO and IMF.) In the opening conference speech, a JIH leader praised the reform efforts of the Prophet Muhammed in his time: "He breathed new life into the role of women. He provided them with a field to work, avenues in which to work. He wanted them to have independence and freedom, a share of inheritance, representation. *In every field of life*, women's importance was acknowledged" (see also Vatuk 2008a: 518).

Targeting women's material status is clearly central to local Muslim politics and also part of low-income women's Islamic movements. But these projects are not merely instrumental in terms of welfare improvement and creating skills by which to engage the state. They further demonstrate a form of action that sets something in motion, comes about in concert, and one that projects a model of freedom. In this set of projects, the image of a freedom indicates education, skills, and literacy but a profound acknowledgement that these only develop and take meaning through communal bonds.

Legal Projects

The second component of political community in the slums, unique mostly to Muslim women, is uncovering and claiming women's Islamic rights to divorce and dowry-free marriages. Although there is an engagement with the concept of legal rights, the project is not actually framed around rights but rather, political practice, community, and solidarity. Legal struggles are about fighting for the general principal of women's rightful status in Islam— through a community of people to educate each other, accompany women to courts, and negotiate cases with Islamic judges. These are ties based on trust and mutual accountability. Through collective study and the creation of important interlocutors, the women are able to employ sharia to their benefit. In this section I show the ways in which religious slum communities are invoking Islam and sharia in the area of marriage and divorce despite the common stereotypes and hostility against the larger topic of Islamic law and the "backward" Muslims who defend it.

In a context of heightened communalization, the poor women I know who are actively involved in the Islamic revival assuredly claimed that they enjoy full rights under Islam and thus, the popular understanding is mistaken. Where there exists clearly different treatment of men and women in sharia, they explain the logic as based on inherent differences between the sexes. Because of historical and contemporary criticisms of Islam, coming from both international and domestic actors, it is nearly impossible to explore the issue free of charge. As one example, I had attended the citywide press conference for JIH (and Girls Islamic Organization) one month before the state conference described above. It was an awkward spectacle, with a number of male journalists asking hostile questions of the three burqa-clad women at the dais. As the local

President, Mrs. Fayza, spoke about current JIH platform issues, like dissolving women's fashion shows and beauty contests, it was obvious that JIH was perceived as a symptom of the "backwardness" of Islam. The exchange below illustrates the tone of the press conference.

> **Journalist 1:** Will everyone have to be in pardah [wearing burqa] at the state conference?
> **Mrs. Fayza:** No, it's whatever one wishes.
> **Mrs. Nadira:** People are giving a bad name to Islam by fixating on the burqa. But we are pleased that more young women are wearing it.
> **Mrs. Fayza:** We're also campaigning against extravagant weddings and gift-giving [*jahez*].
> **Journalist 2:** Don't you think the model nikah namah [Islamic marriage contract] needs to change?
> **Mrs. Fayza:** No…
> **Journalist 3:** But this is the modern era! Under what conditions would you change it?
> **Mrs. Fayza:** Sharia is for all time. It's not supposed to be altered.

This brief exchange demonstrates the popular disdain for women who seek to defend sharia—a disdain that obscures much of the feminist practice and political community they in fact promote. In this case, Mrs. Fayza mentioned campaigning against extravagant weddings, a practice that places enormous pressure on the parents of brides and induces great guilt or anxiety in the brides themselves.

More so than extravagant weddings, the marriage practice of giving dowry (gifts in cash or kind) to a groom's family has become rampant among the Muslim poor and has been taken up by JIH and other Islamic groups. Although the institution of dowry functions primarily among Hindu families and varies across region, poor and lower middle-class Muslims have also become part of the national "dowry problem." In the Hyderabad region in particular, the influx of Gulf labor remittances into Muslim communities has fed a consumer culture in which the practice of dowry is embedded (Waheed 2009). This form of dowry does not exist in Islamic law, which instead mandates the practice of *mehr*, the future promise of a monetary amount to be given from the groom to the bride. But in recent years, the giving of *mehr* been reduced or undermined (Vatuk 2008b) while the giving of dowry to a groom has become a norm. The practice has evolved into a racket that creates inordinate stress on families and in some cases violent harassment of young brides. Dowry has been criminalized in a number of ways, beginning in the early 1960s. While there are radical elements to these laws, the effects have been contradictory (Sitaraman 1999).

The extortion of money and consumption goods from a bride's parents, coupled with the requirement of costly weddings paid for by the bride's family, has raised the 'premium' attached to having daughters in poor Muslim families. Nearly all Muslims with whom I spoke about this matter argue that dowry is a Hindu custom that has spread among Muslims. Especially as Muslim male unemployment has increased, marriage has become a route toward not only dowry but also the potential monetary gain of marrying a woman with some education or earning potential. Although activists and mosque leaders lament the practice, they argue that families are helpless and have no choice if they wish their daughters to marry. So parents wait and save money where they can, while men often take temporary work contracts in Gulf countries and use part of their remittances towards their sisters' or daughters' dowries.

As Muslim women are becoming increasingly educated and to a small extent, employed, demands for dowry have increased rather than diminished. The women I knew from the self-employment welfare centers often complained to me: "Baji [sister], these days they're asking several ounces of gold at minimum! On top of that they want a car and *also* a scooter! The groom doesn't provide anything. In some cases, he never even pays the mehr." Sometimes their complaints slipped into requests for money. Hina, the young woman described earlier, had befriended me over many months, and I had come to know her family. At a dinner one evening in their home, her sister-in-law pulled me aside and described their desperation to marry off Hina. "You don't understand how anxious we are. We won't be able to take care of her for so many years like this. We're just waiting and waiting to find the money so that she can marry. Baji, please, since you care for Hina, won't you give something to help? Don't you want her to move on in life and have a family?"

In response to this phenomenon women's Islamic groups and other Islamic charity organizations campaign against dowry as well as costly weddings. Islamic teachers who lecture at the welfare centers and in Islamic study circle sessions address the topic of dowry and its incompatibility with Islamic principles. At one particular study session, the teacher asked me to participate in a general discussion about the status of poor Muslim women and their religious practice. When we approached the topic of dowry, I confessed that I couldn't understand why families participated in such a system. Ruhi baji, one of the teachers, responded immediately, "Parents are helpless. They don't want their daughters to wait forever to find a husband and then grow old alone." She then reflected for a minute. "But we do have families that are exceptions, who refuse it because they are religious and have fear of God. Fehmina's mother didn't ask for dowry from any one of her daughters-in-law." Fehmina was also a teacher at the study circle and very rigorous in her practice of Islam. While her husband lived permanently in Saudi Arabia, her daughter was a full-time madrasa student and had already memorized 22 Quranic chapters. She beamed proudly. Ruhi baji continued and lectured to the forty women in attendance:

So my sisters, you all must have the courage to say 'No!' 'I'm not going to pay someone to take my daughter, and I'm not going to demand dowry from anyone!' Insha Allah [God willing] little by little, this social evil will disappear, we'll eliminate dowry, and everyone will then *really* be practicing Islam.

One day, Fehmina invited me to a girls' madrasa graduation in the Old City. The students and community arranged a number of speeches and end-of-year performances. Among these were 'morality plays' where students depicted various social problems and sins. One play showed a woman's rapid disintegration and decision to commit suicide as a result of dowry harassment from her in-laws. The students acted out a scene of the bride's mother and father, already in ill-health, seeking a 50,000 rupee loan with interest in order to pay their daughter's dowry. Wracked with guilt for causing her own parents such anxiety, the young woman declared, "It's better if I just kill myself." A narrator then came in and lectured: "This is how our poor and innocent girls are exploited. God has showed us the evils of giving and taking interest [*riba*]. Interest is never allowed, no matter what you hear. We can find ways of saving ourselves from debt. And dowry is not in Islam. We must pray to God to stay on the straight path."

Aside from using Islam to struggle against dowry, women are also learning and teaching each other about their Islamic rights to divorce. While Muslim men may easily divorce through the Islamic practice of *talaq* (verbal repudiation), Muslim women who desire divorce must secure their husband's agreement. Nonetheless, the religious right of women to initiate a divorce (*khul*) does exist, although it requires the forsaking of the *mehr*. *Khul* appears to account for a

significant number of Muslim divorce cases, although the circumstances under which these occur remain unclear (Vatuk 2008b).

Although the study circles didn't take this up as much as the anti-dowry campaign, the idea of divorce with regard to domestic violence is increasingly discussed. The Amberpet study circle is connected to a self-employment center and a group of lower-middle class activists, progressive in their social campaigns and strictly religious. Hafeeza runs a women's madrasa in the same family home where the textile-training center is located. She receives phone calls at all hours from women in desperate marital crises and situations of domestic violence. Well-versed in Islamic law, she counsels women in these cases. She and her group of activists in Amberpet, related to Nasir whom I described earlier, told me the story of Noorjahan, a woman whom they assisted in securing a divorce through an Islamic judge (*qazi*). She had been abused and victimized for 15 years by her husband and in-laws. "If she was 5 minutes late in coming home, they would beat her. It got much worse when it turned out she couldn't have children." When Noorjahan made contact with Hafeeza and her brother (a well-known local activist), they walked her through the Islamic court and developed a relationship with the *qazi* (with the religious authority to perform marriage rites). She was able to initiate her divorce despite her husband's lack of consent.[28] Noorjahan later remarried, but her ex-husband turned to a civil court and in an ironic twist has been trying to use civil law to his advantage to overturn the qazi's decision.

The reality of many divorce trials in civil courts, according to Hafeeza and interviewees, is a drawn-out and humiliating process for women. By establishing consistent relationships with qazis, this group of activists is trying to bypass civil law where it is disadvantageous to women. According to them, civil courthouses are disproportionately full of poor, burqa-clad women. They have complicated family problems but are uneducated of the rights they might secure more quickly through Islamic law and the inherent (and historical) flexibility of sharia, as a set of principles rooted in social relations (Roy 1994). As word of local cases like Noorjahan's circulated through the slum community, poor women started to learn about how to claim divorce rights and most urgently, whom they might turn to in their neighborhood. Hafeeza and her close group of activists have become known as local friends and anchors in poor women's legal struggles. In this respect, these legal efforts are essentially about creating a political community and not merely about securing rights or legal reform. Legal empowerment in a way is something that is realized and *practiced* through conversation, performance, and mediation. In short, it only exercised in community and with the aid of interlocutors.

Symbolic Projects

Perhaps the most significant component of Islamic movements among the poor is its symbolic value. This includes the creation and circulation of honor as well as a moral community based on trust. Using Arendt's concept of the promise, residents are engaged in everyday practices of making and keeping promises (Zerilli 2005: 117). In this section, I apply this sense of promise and accountability to the case of Muslims in religious slum communities coming together for the purposes of creating honor and moral community.

One of the principles that inform the symbolic practices of these political communities is, as I've mentioned before, minimizing focus on the state. Contrary to popular perceptions, the mosque leaders I knew played a critical role in encouraging mosque members to not blame the state or direct their anger and efforts toward the state, but rather, focus on themselves and the community. This came through in everyday conversations and qhutbas. Especially after Friday prayers, groups of men would congregate and talk. While it was a rare occasion when I was able

to access such settings, one Friday afternoon I observed a conversation between Imam Zafar of Masjid Al-Iman, another mosque located a few blocks from Masjid Arabiya in First Lancer, and a group of young men. Al-Iman was started by a small group in the early 1980s, and approximately 200-300 men regularly attend the prayers and qhutbas. Just that week Muslims in a number of major cities, including Hyderabad, had rioted against the publication of the Danish cartoons caricaturing the Prophet Muhammed. Also that particular Friday marked President Bush's visit to Hyderabad, and there were major strikes all throughout the city.

The young men were all excitedly talking politics, interrupting each other, and wanting Imam Zafar's opinions. But he and the masjid secretary stated several times that they stay away from politics and have no intention of riling up mosque attendees or "causing arguments." Ibrahim, a 19-year old resident and follower of Imam Zafar, looked at him, "But what will be done about Iraq, about Palestine?" "Nothing!" Imam Zafar firmly laid the question to rest. "Nothing can be done. Just pray for them." Ibrahim and others continued, "All politics are corrupt. [Politicians] just want [electoral] seats, and then they throw you away." Imam Zafar started muttering prayers and turned away from the group. His turning his back to the conversation ensuing at the mosque clearly symbolized his refusal to engage questions related to the state. As he said to me, "my job is to help people stay on the straight path." For the imam and others I met, there was a sense in which rioting and reacting violently to either the state or those hostile to Islam was a degrading act that only brought shame to Muslims or detracted them from Islam and dignity of the community. To preserve honor, it was best to not engage the corruption of state politics. His followers, however, did not always agree.

I also discussed the Danish cartoon incident with Anwar. Anwar was against the demonstrations and anger locally and abroad. "Muslims brought this upon themselves," he exclaimed. "In Islam we shouldn't have any photography at all, and yet we photograph every single event in life from the moment of birth. So to go along with such practices and then complain about the cartoons doesn't make sense—it's hypocritical. When I got married, I insisted very vehemently, against my father-in-law's wishes, that there be no photography at the wedding." In Anwar's view, straying from the strict principals of Islam (as per his interpretation), is the root of problems in Muslim societies. An outward reaction, especially a violent one, to an incident like the cartoon publication is wrong, of no use, and hypocritical. At a qhutba in front of five hundred worshippers, Anwar shouted out:

> How many of you cried to Allah that the Prophet was disgraced? How many of you? None of you! How many of the rioters actually *felt* sad about it? Instead, many of them looted gold shops owned by Hindus. Our Prophet used to protect minorities' properties, and even in times of war he promised to protect their properties. That is true Islam. You can stand in front of the tea stall and talk about it all you want, get angry, but you have to have a reaction in your *body*. You have to pray to Allah to deliver justice. As Muslims you must never lose your temper. Crying over this issue, on the other hand, is good—it shows a reaction in the body, a burning from the inside, in the heart.

Again, Anwar used his influence to shape the politics of the newspaper riots as a symbolic issue. Anger and rioting contradicted Islamic values and was an external reaction that led to loss of honor for the community.

While painfully aware of the symbolic repercussions of their actions, these slum communities try to create alternate forms of honor when indeed, they are shut out from material and political avenues of success. The creation of honor comes largely from the value placed on

Islamic education and knowledge. Men and women alike gain honor through religious skills. Like their male family members who receive training in *hifz* (Quranic memorization) or graduate from madrasas, Muslim girls and women in Hyderabad are increasingly attending madrasas, either full-time or part-time, and encouraging their daughters to pursue training in *hifz* or *alim* (exegesis) programs. According to many informants, Hyderabad is unique across India in its support for women's Islamic educational institutions. The sense of honor that comes from developing expertise in Islam, I argue, is related to a combination of material and religious factors. Among the Muslim poor, the reality of state retrenchment and extremely limited opportunities for mobility offers little hope for earning respect. I commonly heard poor Muslim women referred to as worthless (*chillar*) or useless (*beykar*). Indeed, women I met in the welfare centers sometimes referred to themselves, matter-of-factly, as *beykar*. Those with some madrasa education, however, are far from useless in these neighborhoods. They have the critical skill of being able to teach Arabic and *tafsir* (Quranic explication), usually informally. They might thus earn some income, no matter how meager, but more importantly, they enjoy the honor and respect attached to this role. Indeed, they are the only individuals equipped to do the crucial work of spreading Islam (*da'wa*). In poor Muslim families with multiple children, parents sometimes choose one child to pursue formal Islamic education.

Rubina, a divorced woman raising three daughters, proudly told me she decided to send her eldest teenage girl to the alim program located in Amberpet. She said she had been dreaming of this for years, as it was something she herself was never able to do. Another young woman also proudly told me when her brother started receiving training to become a *hafiz* (one who memorizes the Quran) at a full-time madrasa. "The schools in our neighborhood are no good, so my parents thought, 'why not send one [child] to become a hafiz?' It's a big deal to memorize the Quran. It takes a lot of mental power." At a special study circle held in a neighborhood next to the Amberpet slum community, a number of young girls took to the microphone and recited prayers and *hadith* from memorization. One girl was so impressive in her memorization that the teacher called out to the nearly 75 women in attendance, "who is this girl's mother?" A poor woman stood up shyly, clutching to her ragged sari, as the crowd congratulated her.

Among the women, they also gained a sense of honor in acquiring technical and artistic skills, from sewing to henna application. Nearly every time I came to the welfare training centers, someone would want to show me their training booklet, a portfolio of the designs and techniques she was trying to master. With great pride, she would sit me down and show me her work, detailing the types of stitches and embroidery techniques she had used. Over time, I saw countless numbers of these books. There was often also someone who wished to demonstrate on me her skills in henna design. Thus, I rarely had a week when my arms and hands were not covered with henna.

Aside from the creation and circulation of honor among women, there is an intense comfort and sense of "peace" (*sukoon*) that many come to depend on from the regular study circle sessions. This symbolic benefit was likely also produced for men who attended Friday prayers at the mosques. Relationships with individual imams like Imam Zafar, provided solace to many young men. Generally, the Amberpet study circle became a moral community that involves a process of entrustment—trust in one another but especially in the teachers, who begin to serve the role as interlocutors. As one attendee said to the group, "I am anxious until the next study circle, and then I feel at peace. If I miss a session, I feel an emptiness in me." Another woman said that she needed the study circles to help her experience "fear" (*dar*), to be reminded of life's temporality. Although it seems counterintuitive, fear and awe help augment one's faith

and practice. They simultaneously create a sense of peace and certainty of the desire to live life according to their Islamic teachings. As the women often discuss, religious faith develops through a combination of love of God and fear of God's power. They remind each other of the Prophet's teaching to perform each prayer as though it were their last and thus, with great concentration and purity of intention.

The Amberpet women also sometimes share their experiences in facing external hostility to their practices. During one session, Yasmin, a woman who lives in the same slum neighborhood but was in fact educated in mathematics, became emotional and tearful while discussing the topic of the burqa. She said to me, "Please tell them [in America] that we absolutely are not oppressed. This is an illusion, a myth, that they've created."

> When I go to the college, my [non-Muslim] colleagues always tell me I should just take it off when I get inside the building. 'Why not be comfortable?' they say. They tell me they feel bad for me. I always have to explain to them that this is my choice. I'm *not* physically uncomfortable. Alhamdulillah [thanks to God] I don't even feel the heat. This is my faith, and this is what makes me happy. I really struggle with this. I like my colleagues, and I interact with non-Muslims all the time. I believe that they're sincere. But then I think to myself, they're not Muslim, and they don't understand. They always feel bad for me, but I feel bad for *them*.

The other women listened carefully, and Ruhi baji praised Yasmin for having the courage to be steadfast in her practice and setting an example with non-Muslims. The women talked about their responsibilities to explain themselves to others but also the limits of understanding. Fehmina said, "It shouldn't be a burden you always have to carry." "Try your best to explain," said Ruhi baji, "but if they can't understand, then just set a good example with your practice. Whenever you feel upset about this, just pray to God to give guidance [to others]." This episode showed not just the value Yasmin placed on her faith but also the trust she developed and practiced with the other women.

Another example of trust and moral community was a somewhat unusual practice that involved the use of supplications (*duas*). Every study session ended with approximately 15 minutes of supplications recited by the teacher. Usually, this was Fehmina. While it is customary among Muslims to ask each other to pray for them, this became an organized practice during the sessions. The week before, women would speak to Fehmina or hand her a note with a list of worries they had. Fehmina would then incorporate these into her duas the following week. All the women would cup their hands and close their eyes as Fehmina's recitation became increasingly impassioned. The supplications ranged from larger requests to God to grant the women paradise to help with everyday problems like employment or medical.

> My dear God, we are sinners, we are self-destructive! You are the forgiver, the merciful!
> Help us live according to your will. In all our homes send us your blessings and distance all our worries! Let us understand the difference between halal and haram. [….]
> Grant good health to brother Rafi, grant good health to Aunty Wahid.
> Normalize Sister Anjum's blood sugar, grant children to Anwar Sakina.
> Reduce Aunty Khatija's knee pain, make Habib interested in school.
> Put compassion in Ruqaiya's husband's heart, grant my three sisters pious in-laws.

Have mercy on Mrs. Malika's soul, give Fauzia *sabr* [patience].
Let there be unity and love between Mustafa and Asma.
Ease Roshan's work abroad, put love in Sharifa's mother-in-law's heart.
Protect our children, have mercy on our ancestors!
Protect us from the mistakes we make….

Often I would open my eyes to sneak a peek and see tears streaming down Fehmina's face, pointed upward. Many of the women seemed entranced and indeed, I sometimes felt I was witnessing a type of shamanistic performance. The end result was usually a feeling of relief and closure. The ability of Fehmina or Ruhi baji to channel this type of passion and emotion, while carefully addressing each woman's suffering, created a collective effervescence that marked an important closure to each study session. The women in the Amberpet study circle had reciprocal obligations, through the creation of honor and trust (required to reveal their experiences and ask for help in the form of supplication), that bind them together (Zerilli 2005: 118). They therefore achieve a certain, if limited, freedom in their mutual obligations to one another that are created specifically for their religious purpose.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I argued that there has been a creation of *political communities* in some of the predominantly Muslim slums of Hyderabad, where sectarian forms of Islamic revival have taken place. I presented the collective responsibility and mission, channeled through mosques and madrasas, which permeate these neighborhoods. Such emphasis on responsibility and autonomy exists especially in the context of state economic retrenchment and overall distrust of the state. Rather than directing politics toward Islamizing the state or depending on it, religious groups have directed it inward by creating and supporting community as an end in itself. I showed how women, especially, take risks by leaving their homes, becoming individuals, and building mutual trust and obligations. At the same time, this Arendtian moment coexists with the Weberian striving to influence the state because it is essentially a reconstituting of civil society—which in turn, resists and challenges the state.

The substance of political community consists of three sets of practices: material, legal, and symbolic. Material practices included first of all a set of ethical teachings around austere living, charity, and autonomy from the state. At the neighborhood level, they involved supporting needy families for episodes like weddings and funerals and contributing to mosques and madrasas, which provided occasional shelter and meals. Most significantly, material projects are initially funded by philanthropists toward women's self-employment and education. Legal practices are about creating community ties to facilitate women's rightful exercise of Islamic law in matters of marriage and divorce. The third set of practices is about the creation and circulation of symbolic value. This is in the form of honor, whereby informed by teachings of turning away from the state, residents produce honor through religious education and material skills. It is also in the form of moral community and mutual trust. In all of these practices, community and ties of reciprocal obligation are a means and end.

While community, beyond concessions, is the point of political practice, the tendency of many subaltern Muslims to avoid the state is curbed by their relationship to the Muslim middle-classes and elites. The masses of low-income Muslims more broadly constitute a coveted voting block in the city, and the competing groups that struggle for their political loyalty draw them into official and unofficial politics as well as redistributive claims-making. The following chapter will present the type of politics occurring among the Muslim middle-class and elites I knew, how

they encourage political communities among slum residents and at the same time try to discipline them ideologically in favor of their own interpretations of Islam.

Chapter 5: Politics of Redistribution

"As you can see, we've made a real difference here in the *basti* [slum]. The MIM put in all these roads you see here on the hill. Before, it was just dirt and rocks," Niaz pointed proudly at the windy roads we were walking under the hot February sun.[29] I was trying to pay attention to him but was distracted by the stench from the raw sewage floating in the water beneath the little bridge that ran through this part of First Lancer. It was one of several intolerably wretched lakes of raw sewage that Niaz, a local MIM representative (*corporator*) ignored as he guided me around the neighborhood to show me the Party's achievements. Riaz, my steadfast auto rickshaw driver, was also there. I passed a large stone placard announcing the area as an official MIM constituency, as it won representative seats there in 2002 after a ten year hiatus. Apparently, MIM represented this area earlier but was defeated after accusations of redistributive failures. After making some infrastructural improvements to the neighborhoods, it won again in 2002.

"We try to respond to local needs, money for schools, help in issuing ration cards, applying for home loans and issuing loans, installing electric phones and high marks (large public lights)." "That's great," I remarked. "What other projects has the party done here?" Niaz grinned. "Mmm, well, we're putting a large drain pipe on Ahmed Nagar Road right now. Rainwater was flooding everyone's homes, so we're taking care of that. And you know, issuing loans is really important. There are no government jobs for Muslims, whereas Hindu families often have a family member with a government job. This means difficulty for Muslims in getting government home loans. The banks want guarantors, tax papers, bank statements, and most Muslims can't provide these. Hindus, in comparison, are able to secure loans via family members. Home loans can be 10,000 rupees [$250]."

"We also buy almaris [trousseaus] for ladies at the time of their wedding," Niaz said. Riaz chimed in enthusiastically, "Madame [Parvez] is from America, bhai sahib [sir]. If you get any requests for wedding expenses, she can help." I glared at Riaz, who was proud of his affiliation with this American researcher and was increasingly offering my "services" much to my annoyance. "In my years here," Niaz continued, "the ratio of girls to boys has increased, so young ladies are having trouble finding husbands. After age 22, it's almost impossible. So the MIM tries to facilitate one marriage every month. We help them rent the local government function hall, and they just have to provide the food."

We continued walking around this part of First Lancer, passing lots of shabby storefronts and small stone houses with people sitting on the floor, trying to get through the afternoon heat. Niaz suddenly decided to show me a government school, a crumbling stone building that was missing an entire half of its tin roof. There were three dank rooms with a handful of ancient metal desks. The girls (it was a government girls' school) were all sitting outside in the sun, on the dirt. The teachers were a little unsettled by our sudden appearance but recognized Niaz. One of the teachers explained that there are no bathrooms in the school, so the girls try not to go to the bathroom all day long. If they really must, they go outside in a nearby bush but they might be harassed by boys roaming around nearby. "We don't even have chalk," she said. "I'm not sure what you're doing [with your research], but if you wish to donate something, we can use anything—a chair, a blanket." I asked Niaz why it was so unusually decrepit, and he explained that the land is privately owned by a family residing in the U.S. The owners refuse to pay for any maintenance but won't sell the land to the government, which in turn wasn't offering a fair price and refused to pay for any repairs. The result has been a long-standing court case.

"This is the state of schools for Muslim children," Niaz affirmed as we walked back to the neighborhood MIM welfare office. Since the day I arrived in Hyderabad I'd been hearing about the sorry state of education in predominantly Muslim areas—and in turn, the multitude of private and MIM welfare projects geared especially toward education. A common sentiment I encountered with regard to the MIM was that no matter how corrupt the Party might be, it was imperative to have Muslim representatives to ensure some modicum of distribution to Muslims. The Party committees and individual corporators like Niaz recruit workers at the neighborhood level, conduct social work, inspect individual welfare needs, and field welfare requests through the coordination of private donations.

In addition to the presence of MIM, there are Gulf remittances, donations from wealthy Arab patrons, and philanthropic projects. The result is an intensely competitive field of redistributive politics. Islamic revival projects and everyday practice is again intertwined throughout this field, as religiosity is exploited, encouraged, or discouraged in certain ways in the struggle to promote Muslim mobility and gain political legitimacy. From lower-middle class Islamic groups to elite Muslim leaders, public discourse and state-directed politics are based almost entirely on redistribution. In a society of dramatic wealth inequality and heavy politicization of religious identity, Islamic revival among the middle-class is inseparable from redistribution. The small schools, donor-funded madrasas, and women's welfare schemes were fundamental elements of the everyday Islamic culture I knew in Hyderabad—and the paternalism toward the poor and competition among elites and middle-class leaders that I encountered infused a certain tension and energy that determined the nature of this field.

What I call the *politics of redistribution* encompasses the Muslim middle-class and elites' relationship to the state, to each other, and also to the poor. There is on one hand an electoral politics (dominated by the MIM) that frequently tries to mobilize identity, uphold recognition politics, and maintain highly competitive relationships among elites. On the other hand there exists a sort of politics of paternalism geared to the poor masses. The latter is ruled by philanthropy, charity, and discourses of autonomy from the state. Although recognition politics are tied into political practices especially due to electoral competition, it is redistribution that measures political success in the competition and that dominates the field.

This chapter presents a profile of several organizations and their relationship to the state as well as their competition for political and electoral legitimacy among poor Muslim constituents. This is followed by a discussion of their paternalistic relationship to poor and semi-literate Muslims, their judgment, and their desire to reshape forms of Wahhabi-influenced Islamic practice. The last part of the chapter shifts to demonstrating the development of such a political disposition of paternalistic compassion. I highlight the experiences of four particular individuals who have had significant impact on the city.

A profile of major Islamic and philanthropic associations

The number of Muslim minority associations among the middle-classes in Hyderabad is immense as is their diversity of agendas. The few that I profile here are therefore not at all intended to represent the entire field. They are, however, among the most prominent institutions, whose names I encountered frequently. Moreover, the MIM party as a force of opposition in the state is a major player in the political field and heart of the tense electoral politics in the city. I begin this section with a presentation of the MIM.

As I mentioned briefly in Chapter 2, the MIM was formed in 1927 to support the Nizam's state and oppose Hyderabad's surrender to India. During its early era it had evolved into a

militant organization, considered a terrorist organization by the Indian state. By the 1960s, it was a mainstream political party, aimed at representing Muslim constituencies. It has ruled the Old City with an iron fist and is considered simultaneously the defender and oppressor of poor Muslims. In my observation, I found the Party an unusual blend of charismatic authority, unapologetic corruption, and defiance in its pro-Muslim stance. Led by elite politicians, the MIM mobilizes Muslims along identity lines, thereby manipulating religious identity to gain electoral advantage. Party members themselves practice mainstream and reformist forms of Islam but are careful to not criticize the practices among the subaltern. Indeed, informants I knew accused them of catering to more orthodox elements in the Old City. Leaders are known for dressing in the traditional Hyderabadi Muslim *sherwani* and caps. During political events and processions, gigantic and life-sized billboards display images of the MLAs (Members of Legislative Assembly).

Although MIM surely exploits religious identity, its major projects are related to distribution and welfare. It has hundreds of welfare activities, from small-scale offices (as in First Lancer), two major hospitals and a number of health centers, medical and engineering colleges for Muslims, and a large cooperative bank. At any given time it makes promises of various local programs, from sanitation to road repairs. But in general, the welfare programs that MIM operates were vehemently criticized by the poor residents and mosque-goers I met: false promises, charging interest, turning away sick patients at the hospitals for being unable to afford the fees. In the absence of another party that Muslims feel they can trust, they have ambivalent relationships to MIM.

The Party's own ideology has developed in reaction to what it views as an upper-caste Hindu agenda of oppressing Muslims. Indeed, this view was pervasive far beyond the rhetoric of MIM. Given this, the MIM is the primary champion of Muslim recognition, holding a near monopoly on the staging of anti-government events and demonstrations related to religious identity. This is one area where I heard some praise for its role. For example, on December 6th, the anniversary of the destruction of the Babri Mosque, Party members attempted to shut down activity at the state legislature. In February 2006, during the Danish newspaper cartoon controversy, the MIM led major demonstrations after Friday prayer in the Old City. A fight erupted between protestors and police officers, leading to major rioting and the use of tear-gas. The BJP had also joined the melee in a counter-demonstration to taunt the MIM. MIM leaders were arrested and jailed overnight, including an activist I had met just days before at the Party headquarters. The demonstration, and even the riots (of which they denied any role in promoting), appeared carefully orchestrated and showed the MIM's role as defenders of Muslim identity.

Another set of incidents I observed involved MIM's role in planning the city's Milad-i-Nabi celebrations (of the Prophet's birth date). The scale and nature of the celebrations appeared unprecedented in Hyderabad's history, causing tension within the community and culminating eventually in Hindu-Muslim riots (starting with assaults by the right-wing, VHP). The celebratory green flags that were draped throughout the city for weeks actually displayed the MIM motif of a crescent moon and star. Religion and politics were thus carefully manipulated to overlap. Party members organized the flag displays, processions, and mixture of religious and political speeches that were amplified in various poor neighborhoods into late-night hours. Although the Party can't be held responsible for the VHP's actions and the riots that ensued, its role in facilitating Muslim religious nationalism was clear. Again, there is deep ambivalence toward the MIM's mobilization of Muslim identity, although other elite leaders I knew had

strong secular convictions and opposed MIM's activities. For example, the use of loudspeakers to amplify prayers is prohibited in most cities, and there was a court ruling against their use in Hyderabad. The Party fought against the ruling and eventually secured an agreement with the state government to not enforce the law in exchange for allowing the maintenance of a makeshift Hindu temple that has sat at the base of the Charminar monument in the Old City, illegally for 25 years. The MIM secures many other religious rights, including those of women in burqas to be examined only by female officials for public examinations and other such requirements.

But when it comes to issues of redistribution, which define the ethos of local politics, the Party is criticized as a machine and accused of electoral corruption. Allegations include vote bribery in the Old City enforced by threats of violence. One of my informants at an Islamic school in the Old City said that a friend of hers was paid by the Party to vote multiple times in the election—something that is enabled by the failure to check the voter identities of women in burqas. Others talked about cash handouts and distribution of new auto-rickshaws, for example, right before elections. Despite these serious problems and mafia-style tactics, Party members see themselves as doing long-term work to change the Old City.

I arranged a visit one day, with the help of Niaz, to the MIM's head office in Darussalam. The entire complex is several acres and houses the main office, the Party's newspaper house, a medical center, two colleges, and a main branch of its cooperative bank. To my sudden surprise, Niaz took me straight into the main office and introduced me to Sultan Owaisi, the Party president who had served as Member of Parliament for six terms. Owaisi passed away in 2008. He was considered one of the most powerful politicians in the state and had been unyielding in his belief that Muslims had to gain as much autonomy from the state as possible. Owaisi was sitting behind his desk reading a newspaper when I walked in. Gigantic family photographs adorned the office. He calmly looked at me and commanded me politely to speak only in Urdu. He was soft-spoken and gentle, as he lectured to me about the history of the Party and its motivation to defend Muslims after their massive dislocation following Police Action. I found myself getting swayed by his words, as we were interrupted by clients coming in, bowing down and kissing Sultan Owaisi's hand and thanking him for some favor or another. He seemed aware of public criticism of the Party but firm in his belief that the Party is having the long-term effect of reducing poverty in the Old City.

Unlike non-MIM elites I had met, Owaisi had little interest in commenting on the nature of religiosity among poor Muslims other than asserting that Islamization has increased alongside greater oppression of Muslims by the state and international powers. He was dismissive of debates and state discourses about reforming madrasas, for example, asking, "How can poor people think about education when they barely have food in their stomachs?" "The government doesn't have good intentions with us [*inka zain saaf nahin hai*]. But at least they guarantee a few things, like Haj subsidies."

Owaisi told one of his elected councilors to give me a tour of the compound, where I visited the bank and the *Etamaad* newspaper house. The bank, which started in 1987, now has 12,000 shareholders and 4 branches. It provides loans that at the time totaled 60 crore rupees ($13 million). These range from educational to personal loans, business, mortgage, and gold. Clients are predominantly Muslim, though there is a percentage of Hindus that are also members. The idea behind the bank's business again is that Muslims are victims of discrimination when it comes to qualifying for bank loans and receiving government assistance. Here, the staff completes all paperwork, defends the loan applications to the deciding Board, and supposedly works generously with clients who end up defaulting. There were dozens of clients there when I

visited. The bank does, however, charge interest, so although it exists in the name of the Muslim community, it is not an Islamic enterprise. According to the representative who spoke with me, most Muslim institutions do not have the resources to operate interest-free.

On the way back to the head office, we stopped at the *Etamaad* building, which had been built three months previously. It was fairly luxurious, with its new computers, leather couches, and new European printing press. The MIM had officially entered the competition of the local Urdu press. Before I left Darussalam, Owaisi's councilor urged me: "You can also write that we have colleges parallel to government colleges and offer almost the same number of degrees. No one else has so many. Minorities get 51% at these places, whereas there aren't even 1 or 2% Muslims in government colleges. Please be sure to write that."

I visited Darussalam because I wanted to see the perspective of the Party itself, after hearing devastating criticisms from other close informants. For example, one prominent activist told me that only business classes benefit from MIM banks, while low-income Muslims are charged interest rates at over 30%. At worst, the Party is accused of deliberately keeping certain neighborhoods in the Old City poor, lest people gain political consciousness and demand new leaders. In sum, the MIM carefully plays the game of redistribution (while ensuring its own long-term profit) but its domination rests almost entirely on its use of ethno-religious identity.

Still, the Party members I met were proud of their work and open in conversations with me. This was unlike other state-related institutions, such as the Wakf Board, where I failed to find information or obtain an interview. Wakf refers to [Muslim endowment property, exists in Islamic law]. The AP State Wakf Board has existed since 1995, and like all state Wakf Boards, is charged with administering Wakf properties and lands. Wakf property in Andhra Pradesh state consists of several thousand buildings and half a million acres of land. Hyderabad's Wakf properties are immensely valuable and in theory belong to the Muslim public. But the Board notoriously mismanages the properties, whose real history and wealth remain shrouded in mystery. I should have known better before showing up at the Wakf office. In fact, a young man I knew from First Lancer claimed his uncle worked at the Board and would be happy to meet me. When I arrived, his uncle was nowhere to be found and I was somehow channeled toward a random commissioner. The commissioner was exceptionally rude and running through numerous motions to distract me and avoid conversation. He was obviously suspicious I was a journalist. I thanked him and left. When I later recounted the story to my philanthropist informants, they were amused. "The Wakf Board has way too much to hide," they noted.

In addition to this nexus of state-Muslim properties and institutions is an immense field of private philanthropy toward Muslim welfare. Some members are active in electoral politics but mostly, they manage a paternalistic politics based on charity. Members range from individuals who contribute to private schools or madrasas to wealthy elites with philanthropic foundations that fund entire colleges and dozens of women's welfare and training centers. The latter has a visible presence in the city and a political role in struggling with the state for Muslim reservations in colleges and government employment.

One example of a major foundation is the United Economic Forum (UEF), co-founded by a well-known leader in the construction business. In 1993 he also helped found the Hyderabad Zakat and Charitable Trust. The Trust actually centralizes and distributes zakat funds throughout the city. In any given year zakat funds total over a half million US dollars, and because zakat is not supposed to accumulate, this amount is actually spent on the poor throughout the state. I was stunned to learn that such a large amount was collected and distributed each year. With its 150 volunteers and numerous local offices, the UEF focuses mainly on education, opening schools in

villages and in the city and providing scholarships to students. All students who receive UEF funds are required to declare that they will not accept or demand dowry. It also provides for pensions and marriages for poor families. At the time UEF was also conducting relief work in Gujarat, in the years following the violence of 2002. Volunteers helped construct homes for families that were dislocated, built four new housing enclaves in villages, and built two Urdu-medium schools. The founder stressed to me that UEF's work also benefits Hindus, who received assistance in Gujarat as well as educational scholarships. Like other elites I met, he had a broader vision of his philanthropy as going beyond the boundaries of religious identity and grappling fundamentally with the ineptitude (or malevolence) of the state. In his own thinking, he said to me, "I don't believe in always blaming government. Anyway, government is only a bureaucracy that just slows down our work. We should just get on with our business."

UEF's work is a larger-scale version of many charitable projects throughout the city targeting poverty and illiteracy among Muslims. One fairly well-known organization is COVA (Confederation of Voluntary Associations), an association that established itself in the Old City and is run by a group of educated activists. COVA actually was formed after the Babri Masjid riots by a group of activists that wanted to work toward Hindu-Muslim harmony. It has branches in six different states, works with nearly 800 different groups, and is headquartered in Hyderabad. Locally, volunteers work against child labor by enrolling children in "bridge schools." They provide career guidance, English classes, and enroll children in sports activities. They also fund women's self-help groups, textile training, and jute work for a group of widows (whose alternative would have been making bidi cigarettes for 15 rupees a day). Groups within COVA also offer subsidized health insurance and travel through different districts to conduct voter awareness projects. Further, it trains partner NGOs in anti-prejudice campaigns that include countering stereotypes about Muslims, and operates a theater group that goes into slums and puts on plays promoting communal harmony. According to a worker at COVA, in 1994, a group of Hindu and Muslim women worked together to form a "human chain" around the Charminar in the midst of rioting and successfully prevented a major communal riot.

Aside from encompassing such organizations that take welfare as their primary activity, the field of middle-class associations includes religious groups and study circles—but that also incorporate redistribution into their work. This again includes the donation of building space or funds for madrasas that include some English training or women's tailoring centers that are attached to mosques, as I presented in the last chapter. Among the lower-middle class segments of the field, I include such groups as Students Islamic Organization (SIO) and Islamic Academy of Comparative Religion (IACR), both with an active presence in the city. Their Islamic practice differs considerably from that of elites but is not quite the same as that of poor residents I discussed earlier.

SIO was founded in 1984 and is a branch of Jamaat-i-Islami Hind. Its Hyderabad district office is located just south of the Musi River at the border of the Old City. Like JIH it has had a stable history with the Indian government, though it was banned briefly during the Babri Masjid controversy in the 1990s as well as during the Emergency period under Indira Gandhi. SIO has networks at 150 colleges throughout the state and approximately 1000 supporters, according to its state president. SIO's primary aim is to promote Islam among students as well as dialogue with non-Muslims. It conducts piety campaigns and monthly training camps, where students study the Quran and hadith, Quranic recitation, and other forms of practice. When I was there, the group had a public campaign against Valentine's Day for its impiety and support for commercialism. SIO advocates gender segregation and veiling, though the president stressed to

me that he supports women's spaces in the mosques and lamented Hyderabad's lagging behind in this. The bulk of SIO's activities, however, are related to students' educational and career development. Their welfare activities include book lending libraries, career guidance conferences, tutoring for various entrance exams, and facilitating scholarship applications to Muslim trusts and international foundations (especially in Arab countries). The group has a guidance counselor available in the central office everyday, where apparently non-Muslim students also come to take advantage. Further, SIO works toward madrasa reform, specifically offering classes in computer training for madrasa students. In this regard, SIO diverges from other groups that enjoy some popularity among students including Tablighi Jama'at. Tablighis avoid political or welfare campaigns, however, they apparently request career guidance from SIO from time to time.

Another association I came to know was the Islamic Academy for Comparative Religion (IACR), located in the New City and founded by a group of university affiliates and professional young men. Like the founders of COVA, they also created IACR immediately after the destruction of the Babri Masjid. IACR has primarily theological goals of promoting Islam and dialoguing with non-Muslim in effort to counteract stereotypes of Islam. With its 40-50 members, the group conducts classes on dawah and organizes conferences on different theological and political themes, ranging from the meaning of monotheism to religious human rights, the divinity of Jesus, and the meaning of terrorism. It works also with sheikhs from outside of India as well as with the well-known theologian, Dr. Zakir Naik. Non-Muslims specifically want to debate with them on issues of polygamy and jihad, primary stereotypes they tend to associate with Islam. "But we take it in a positive way and welcome the opportunity to explain our religion," Brother Asifuddin remarked.

While Brother Asifuddin and another volunteer I met claimed they didn't wish to involve IACR in politics because they felt individual change (and piety) must come first, they also downplayed the issue of minority religious recognition per se in favor of a redistributive approach. "Why should everything be turned into religious issue?" Saif, a long-time volunteer, questioned. "'But we are a minority,' people say. I never use the word minority. Why should we program people to feel inferior?"

What we need is money for the poor, education, jobs, social security, a reduction of discrimination in government offices, private companies, and hospitals. …Religious rights are safeguarded in an environment where education and welfare needs are satisfied. Madrasas [for example] that cling to their institution and don't want interference will sacrifice all their worldly needs for their religion. But it doesn't have to be this way. Religious needs can be safeguarded only through welfare.

When I discussed with them IACR's position on gender, they had similar views. Although IACR does not include women in its membership, it does support women's spaces and right to entry into mosques, much like SIO. Moreover, they were seasoned in responding to attacks on the role of women in Islam. Saif argued, "If you think just giving space for women in the mosque [and things like that] will better their position, you're very naïve – their basic health care and livelihood is more important. In the lower segments of our society women are in desperate situations because their husbands aren't earning anything. Opening up all mosques to women is not going to give them what they need to raise their status. These [religious debates on gender] are artificial issues." Thus, even groups like IACR that are focused strictly on religious platforms deeply embrace redistributive projects and paradigms. IACR itself did not yet have

the funds for large welfare projects, but it was in the process of beginning a blood donation program, aimed at gathering 5,000 volunteers to donate blood for poor hospitals.

The last organization I'll present is a middle-upper class women's Islamic study circle that met once a week for Quranic and hadith explication. The class started in 1988 and is in the same social network as elite foundations such as UEF. Approximately 30-50 women of various ages (though generally 35+) attend each week and many do volunteer social work, again establishing small schools in predominantly Muslim slums. All shared an interest in enhancing their religious practice. Most did not wear the hijab in their everyday lives, though several of them did, including the two teachers. None of them wore a burqa. Because they were loosely connected to UEF, they frequently collected funds for charity or *qurbani* (sacrifice and distribution of meat to the poor). They also welcomed an older, semi-homeless woman who would attend every week and sell her hand-pressed ginger-garlic paste. On some occasions, I paid a few rupees for her auto transport.

Every week, the teachers interspersed political critiques and commentary into their teachings of different Quranic chapters, the rules related to the five Islamic pillars, and the qualities of piety. For example, Khalida apa lectured briefly about the dishonesty of Members of Parliament. "They're stealing public funds, investing in Swiss banks, and not distributing to the people. They are denying God!" She and the other teachers also often made reference to international politics and the war on terror, unexpectedly tying these issues into the lessons. When we were learning the Quranic chapter, "The Thunder" (*Surah Ra'ad*), Khalida apa commented about the availability of natural energies to improve the human condition. "But of course, it's okay for Israel to pursue something like nuclear energy but not for Iran," she interjected sarcastically. In another session, the teachers were explaining religious injunctions to not use one's powers and strength to oppress other people or societies. "For example, look at the United States. It has such strength and resources but uses these to oppress the weak. It dwells on its victimization in 9/11. Instead of attacking others, why not reflect and think more carefully about why other societies are against you?" Thus, the women to some extent politicize their religious space, raising consciousness of national and international issues and referencing redistribution. They are also well aware of their own status as middle-class or elites, and this influences the way they understand their financial responsibilities and relationship to their poorer sisters.

Mutual autonomy and opposition

Elite Islamic associations actively demand state accountability and redistribution, assert serious opposition and competition, and ensure a certain level of autonomy for their work. During my research the main policy issue in which Muslim elites and the MIM actively made claims of the state was reservations, as mandated originally by the Mandal Commission. In 2005 Andhra Pradesh became the first state to rule in favor of 5% reservations for Muslims in all government jobs. The BJP had challenged the ruling on different occasions and succeeded eventually in attaining a High Court ruling against the legality of reservations for Muslims. One of the arguments was that it would encourage Hindus to convert to Islam. The case lingered in the court until 2010 when a 4% reservations rule for a number of specific Muslim-origin groups was finally upheld by the Supreme Court. Muslim philanthropist leaders I met were busy campaigning and lobbying the state to push forward with the bill and seek an overturn of the High Court ruling. In 2010, just prior to the Supreme Court ruling the MIM held major demonstrations in the Old City, and there were posters, billboards, articles in the Urdu press, and

public conferences with both religious and philanthropic leaders for several weeks. It is difficult to suppose what may have happened with Muslim reservations in AP without the mounting activism and political weight of elites.

In my observation Muslim leaders held onto contradictory affirmations about the state. In their own capacity, they launched opposition and made claims on behalf of the poor. But I also heard time and again about the importance of autonomy from the state. For example, Mr. Haq, a major philanthropist with political connections, would lecture to me about this. "[Anon] is a troublemaker. They tell poor and uneducated Muslims in the Old City that the government is going to take away their religious rights. They create religious antagonism. Part of their stupidity is that they're always blaming government instead of doing things independently." When I first met Mr. Haq, the historic Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) in the north of India was embroiled in a controversy over its quotas for Muslims. I asked him what he thought and he responded, "It's a sudden and unfortunate event for them. But the mistake AMU has always made was to insist on getting government sponsorship." With regard to his own work, he was adamant. "If government gives money, it'll try to control everything. Reduce the number of reservations for Muslims, control what teachers we hire, etcetera."

Elites like Mr. Haq in fact contribute so much wealth to Hyderbad's poor that they earn a fair level of respect and in turn, autonomy. Further, ruling politicians themselves join their bandwagon or ride their coattails when they can. For example, politicians visit Mr. Haq's women's training centers from time to time, taking special interest and making promises and speeches—though neither they nor their political efforts had anything to do with the centers. During the welfare center certification ceremony in the Old City that I discussed in the last chapter, in addition to the foundation Board members, there was also local police Inspector Gopal and a Congress Party corporator that attended as guest of honor. Mr. Reddy, the Congress corporator, made promises of securing a government loan, from self-employment training funds, and for beauty parlor equipment for the center. He also promised to campaign for a junior college in the area, since it was difficult for women to commute to other colleges. He then launched into an impassioned speech that echoed the same feminist discourses of the middle-class Islamic field: "My sisters, it is your support and love [*pyar aur mohabbat*] that elected me as corporator. Our minority [Muslim] sisters are no less than anyone else and are worthy of the same rights to education and welfare!" After the ceremony, the police Inspector and Mr. Reddy (both Hindu) joined everyone inside the center, whose walls were covered with Islamic posters, teachings about everything from prayer, 'finding a marriage partner the Islamic way,' how to do perform ablutions after menstruation, and several other details about comportment and behavior. There were also 8x10 drawings of all the different *mehndi* designs on the wall. I saw a young woman with mehndi all over her arms showing the designs to the Inspector, a rather odd portrait in my mind. Mr. Reddy and Inspector Gopal's presence lent political legitimacy to the foundation's work, but it was equally or more important for the local Congress Party itself to be associated with Mr. Haq's redistributive programs. In a way, philanthropic work in slum communities takes pressure off the state, and leaders prefer this in exchange for respect and autonomy.

At the same time, for those in the lower-middle class stratum I've discussed, the relationship to the state is far more hostile. Nasir, presented in the last chapter, has been under near-constant police surveillance for several years for his activism on behalf of Muslim civil rights. In 2008 the police booked a case against Nasir, accusing him of conspiracy against the government after he had spoken against the detention and torture of Muslim youth accused of the

Mecca Masjid bombing. Dozens of religious and political activists came to his defense. In my own experience, when I was leaving India one year I found myself detained by the police Inspector's office on the grounds that I had been meeting with Nasir (a fact they could only have known through spying). After inquiry and investigation, they decided to leave me alone. But I left India worried sick for Nasir, who later assured me that this was routine business for him. Thus, it's important to distinguish between two very different levels of state relations. There is the autonomy and recognition given to elites engaged in major redistributive campaigns and the surveillance and harassment when it comes to lower-middle class Islamic activists who criticize the state.

Competition among elites

Although I observed competition among middle-class associations and among elites in both Lyon and Hyderabad, in the latter it was a defining feature of the political-Islamic field and had important consequences for the poor. This is due largely to the fact that low-income Muslims in Hyderabad constitute a significant voting block. Over the decades they have been mobilized by the MIM, but the Party has increasingly faced concerted competition. The result is greater mobilization and greater support for welfare programs. This competition, which often takes violent form, plays out in the local Urdu press, where popular and educated readers alike follow the issues and know the newspapers' biases. Mainstream media outlets also report related incidents.

The main axis of competition that I saw during my research was between Mr. Haq's foundation and the MIM. The first time I suspected something was when I went to visit Mr. Haq in one of his offices and found that he was sitting with a loaded gun on his desk. I nervously asked him why he had a gun on his desk. He gave me one his tired smiles and said, "I have some enemies, people who don't like what I do." Over the following months, I saw that these enemies were not necessarily Hindu right-wing groups as one might expect but rather, members of MIM. Perhaps this is why Mr. Haq had hinted to me several times, "Our main problem is that minorities are against minorities!"

That same year, the MIM had launched its own Urdu newspaper, *Etamaad*. It was competing directly with another Urdu paper, owned by Mr. Haq. According to media reports and my own informants, MIM-affiliated thugs assaulted a journalist from Mr. Haq's paper and started a fire in the press office. Since I was often with Kulsoom apa, and she worked closely with Mr. Haq, I was privy to a number of conversations. I was in his office when Zaidi, one of his Board members, was trying to convince Mr. Haq that they needed to concoct an advertising strategy to compete with *Etamaad*. Kulsoom apa noted, "A few years ago there *was* room for several Urdu daily papers." "But there's a limited number of Urdu readers," Zaidi was concerned. "We have to be aware of the presence of a new paper like this." "I don't care for such things," Mr. Haq broke his silence, looked at me and nodded "how are you." "I just want to provide quality articles. Let people read what they want to read. Anyway, I'm not worried. MIM hasn't provided welfare or schools."

But Mr. Haq's loyal Board members and supporters were concerned for him. On one of our drives to Babanagar, Kulsoom apa and a friend of hers were discussing Mr. Haq. "He's such a good man, an *angel*! God will protect him. The more you help people, the more good you do in the world, the more people will come after you to hurt you. God will punish them in the afterlife, although they sure seem to get what they want in *this* life. MIM thinks it can get by just distributing auto rickshaws and cash hand-outs in time for elections!" After the Babanagar

school day was done, I was drinking tea with Kulsoom apa and some of the staff. Abidah, from the Old City, was recounting her horror after reading about the assault of one of Mr. Haq's workers. Another teacher said, "I hadn't heard about it. My husband is in the [Mr. Haq] camp. I have a friend who was paid something like ten rupees to go vote for MIM several times. She hid under her burqa, and nobody checked." Abidah sighed, "They've controlled the Old City for decades. Nobody can touch them. But Muslims vote for them because at least they're Muslim. Other parties, the Congress, TDP, they'd rather wipe out Muslims entirely." I didn't ask Abidah whether she herself votes for MIM since she couldn't admit that as a worker at a Mr. Haq-sponsored school. She continued, "[MIM politician] shows up at big functions and parties and complains about how pitiful (*ghareeb*) and barbaric we are in the Old City, but then he comes to the Old City and begs us for votes. He holds out his kurta [shirt] like a beggar. Tell me, what do you call he who begs from a beggar?" She was resentful. Then Kulsoom apa's friend, a wealthier woman from the New City, misunderstanding Abidah's sentiments, chimed in. "Well, and why are they [in the Old City] so barbaric in the first place? Because you [MIM] don't help them!" This conversation reflected the animosity between "Mr. Haq supporters" and MIM supporters as well as the somewhat conflicted relationship people like Abidah have to both the MIM and philanthropic elites.

The harassment of Mr. Haq was a consistent theme during my research. One of my close activist informants mentioned that he once received a suspicious call from a woman claiming to be a mistress or wife of Mr. Haq. He realized quickly that she was a decoy and was hoping to enlist him in creating a scandal. He told her he couldn't help her.

Rather than backing down in this competition, however, Mr. Haq and his Board members engage in political discourse and rhetoric that indirectly challenges the MIM. I saw this most clearly at the inauguration ceremony of the welfare center in First Lancer, something that I personally became involved in when I conveyed Anwar's desire for a center in the slum [basti] to Kulsoom apa. Anwar's young daughter had seen my photograph in an Urdu paper from a graduation ceremony at the Babanagar school. So Anwar began asking me if I knew Mr. Haq and could help institute a center in First Lancer. After months of planning, the inauguration day finally arrived. About a hundred people from the community were there, and announcements were made from Masjid Arabiya. Dozens of young boys from the madrasa were giggling and misbehaving as Anwar nervously prepared for the grand arrival of the Foundation members. To the sounds of drumming and firecrackers, Mr. Haq and several Board members arrived.

After Anwar opened with Quranic recitation, Board members started their speeches. One member had in fact run in local elections and had campaigned in the area (against MIM). I had the strong sense he still harbored electoral ambitions. As he noted the severe poverty in First Lancer, he spoke passionately into the microphone: "You must think about who are your political representatives, and why are your conditions still so terrible!" In an area ruled by the MIM, these were provocative things to say. "I say to you, Mr. Haq, poverty is not just in the Old City. It is here in the New City as well! Muslims must never be dependent on anyone—they *must* stand on their own. Mr. Haq, I request that you help build a college right here in this area!" Everyone excitedly applauded. Mr. Haq also took to the microphone, pleading emotionally, "You have your representatives *right here*—you *must* hold them accountable! Don't be afraid to demand change from your representatives. The Minorities Finance Corporation has nearly 80 lakh rupees for Muslims, so you have every right to go and request money for local projects." He ended the speech with an urging to stay away from petty squabbles [*nafrath*] within the

community. "I've tried to stay away from fights, jealousies, the things that keep us divided. I am doing the work that God wants me to do."

Members cut the ribbon to the sound of applause, and I was among the several people who entered the small training center with the Board. They prayed the Maghreb prayer, laughed and joked, and talked politics. It was clear that their symbolic presence (in the form of the women's center) would not be welcome by the MIM. As this one ceremony shows, these women's centers are politicized by elites and enter the dynamic of political competition. Indeed, the last time I visited this particular center, I made my way past the lake of raw sewage and the goats eating from it to find the non-descript building. I was thrilled to see a number of women busily working. But what most caught my eye was a very large poster of another prominent philanthropist, who had promised to provide a tailoring contract (based in Dubai) for the women. Apparently, a Board affiliate (who had recently been stabbed and hospitalized by thugs) had stopped by the center to affix the poster to the wall. Ironically, if Anwar saw it, he certainly would have felt disapproving on religious grounds, though perhaps powerless to take it down.

Elite paternalism

"Terrible! The conditions of Muslims are *terrible*. And you know why? Because they're lazy! Just look at these [poor] Hindu construction laborers, working all day, carrying concrete on their heads. Then look at the Muslim…he's resting in the shade!" This was the observation of Bilqis apa, a charming and charismatic older woman I knew through the Al-Muminoon study circle. She, like many of the women in the study circle operates a pre-school for young children in a predominantly Muslim slum. Whether it was lazy, backwards, aggressive, or lecherous, the stereotypes applied against poor and uneducated Muslims in Hyderabad are similar to those against racialized minorities throughout the world. The most common word I heard to refer to Muslims especially in the Old City can be translated roughly as cheap or petty (*chillar*). Additionally, middle-class activists and elites I knew thought of them as fundamentalist and prone to communalism. Proper and liberal Islamic education was often seen as the behavioral solution to their social problems and vulnerability to political manipulation. But all of this disdain for the uneducated masses was inextricable from a sense of paternalistic responsibility that I believe was strong and typically heartfelt. Moreover, the comfort and gratitude that low-income families felt from the presence of Muslim elites was similarly strong, with some exceptions that I will discuss.

Abidah, a caretaker at the Babanagar school, said to me one day: "This is such a big deal for these girls, and they're performing well [in their training] because you [the Board] are giving them respect [*izzat*], you take them seriously. Usually, people from such poverty are ignored— we're told to sit in the corner, eat from separate plates. This is the first time that we're treated with respect from the outside world." Indeed, whenever I came to the school, I was practically clobbered with affection from the young women, who were continually astonished that I treated them respectfully.

Kulsoom apa's role at the school was particularly important in this regard. Although she sometimes kept the women and teachers at an arm's distance and held beliefs about their backwardness, she was also very attached to them and to her work. One late morning she picked me up to go to Babanagar and was visibly upset. When I asked her what was wrong she said it was the frequent infighting at the center—something unique to the "unruly" "interior" Muslims of Babanagar. We got to the center and marched into the sewing room, where everyone was shouting. A number of the women, teachers, and the "Master sahib" who manages the income-

generating aspect of the women's textile work, were anxiously waiting for Kulsoom apa to mediate. Apparently someone had started a rumor that an affair was occurring between the master and Zainab, one of the women who had begun to take charge of some of the textile projects. The master, a middle-aged married man, and Zainab vehemently denied this and began to cry while trying to defend themselves. Another source of the fighting was the brewing resentment that Master sahib had not provided enough work in over two weeks, and he had chosen only five women to sew garments. Kulsoom apa, deeply upset and struggling in her managerial role, scolded the group and became tearful herself. "We are all supposed to be one family! This is why I volunteer, why I come here, because I want to help you. You are family to me. Islam doesn't teach us to be petty like this. You are here to concentrate on your work and make progress." At one point later, I heard her say to one of the teachers, "this is exactly what you people do [*ap logue karthe aisa*]." Still, Kulsoom apa's presence, authority, and insistence on a sense of community were critical to the paternalistic functioning of the women's center.

The interjection of religion played a large part in this paternalistic relationship but is more complex than what I presented so far because Islam is used inconsistently, or only when needed. For elites like Kulsoom apa, appealing to broad concepts from Islam was necessary to create discipline and community in order to better manage these welfare centers. For example, during the conflict above, Kulsoom apa several times referred to hadith (teachings of the Prophet) about how to behave with others. Amidst all the shouting, these were the only moments that created pause and agreement. Soon after the conflict, she started a weekly Quranic recitation session, which she felt was important for the center.

But the relationship to using Islam in redistributive charity wasn't clear, and some centers incorporated it more than others, depending on who were the members and how much proximity it had to the foundation presidents. Mr. Haq, for example, preferred to keep all religious matters out of the training centers, believing they would be divisive. This was part of his paternalistic shaping of the poor, whom he felt needed more worldly engagement and less religious. Hafeeza, whom I introduced in the last chapter, had once asked Mr. Haq if she could combine Islamic education into the center he had founded next to her madrasa. He refused, saying that he didn't want to deal with different sects trying to impose their visions and ideologies. "He said, 'I just want the women to learn some skills and that's it.' So I said, okay, fine, if that's your wish." Mr. Haq is attentive, therefore, to the tendency of lower-middle class leaders to add religion into material and political matters and thus uses his authority to curb it. Anwar also had grand plans of including Islamic education in the First Lancer center but never followed through. Though I don't know for certain, I suspect that he knew it would annoy Mr. Haq and so decided to let it go.

Anwar also had no choice but to interact with Kulsoom apa, as manager. As she didn't really wear a hijab, let alone a burqa, this violated his fairly strict gender-segregated practices. The issue of women's veiling is one of the principle points of disagreement between the poor and the middle-class activists and elites I knew. Ultimately, the opinions and practices of the latter were hegemonic. Sometimes this was a simple top-down strategy on the part of elites, and at other times there was a real dynamism and debate around gender. After several months of visiting the Babanagar school, I observed a major incident around gender that involved the female principal, Madame Rabia. At a staff meeting one morning, the teachers for the Islamic and Arabic classes had raised the issue of Madame Rabia's not covering her hair. Ideally, they argued, she should wear a burqa. They also criticized her programs, such as celebrating students' birthdays and always speaking in English with them. The teachers had apparently

campaigned around the Babanagar neighborhood defaming Madame Rabia and telling parents that the school had brought in an "unIslamic" and "English lady" to teach their children. Led by a religious hafiz at the school, the teachers had printed a pamphlet against Madame Rabia, and distributed it at the Friday prayer to hundreds of people. As a result some parents started to launch complaints about her.

She and Kulsoom apa were discussing the incident, as Kulsoom apa tried to calm Madame Rabia's fury. She assured her, "Don't worry. They won't get their way. Mr. Haq is on your side and will fire them [the teachers] if we need to. They're ignorant. They don't understand Islam. They don't realize that wearing the hijab is an extremely personal decision, and no one's supposed to tell us how or when to do it." Madame Rabia insisted, "I always wear the whole burqa when I go to Charminar [Old City center]. But my parents and in-laws were modern—they always encouraged me to work, learn English, have a life." Kulsoom apa eventually left the office, and Madame Rabia said to me, "You see, after all, these teachers are so backwards, so ignorant [*jahil*]. They have no idea that these kids need to know English, learn science, or they'll never get jobs. This is why Hindus will always be better off than us. The Old City will always remain poor, as long as they keep this mentality about religion. They will only eat rice and sleep and read the Quran—and this is why Muslims will always be backwards!" Madam Rabia's path was not easy, but she was ultimately victorious and her ideas became dominant, as I will present later.

The discomfort with women's veiling, mixed in with paternalistic affection, was also visible at the regional JIH conference I discussed. At one point during the weekend, several philanthropists' wives and board members visited the conference as honorary guests and sat at the dais in front of the sea of low-income, burqa-clad women. Somehow, they appeared uncomfortable and awkward, with their hair only lightly covered under decorative scarves. One woman was wearing sunglasses throughout the speeches. They made brief dispassionate comments about raising the status of women and then quickly left the conference. Their elite status and separate veiling practices and comportment vis-à-vis the thousands of poor women spoke to this relationship of power. In other words they supported the poor in their welfare endeavors but were themselves exempt from the practice of burqas and clearly uncomfortable spending much time among this population.

Women and men alike judged the burqa as regressive and unnecessary. One day I incidentally met a prominent Muslim newspaper editor, and without any prompting on my part, he said, "I like your kind of hijab, not this full burqa. They [women in burqas] are making a mockery of Islam." Like many middle-class women, I was wearing a light scarf on my head. On another occasion, I was with another philanthropist, and we stopped by the Jamia Nizamia University campus just to take a look and take a photograph. I quickly covered my hair out of habit, and he laughed at me. "You are becoming orthodox because the occasion demands it!" Mr. Husayni despised most forms of veiling as well as dress practices among young men of sectarian forms of Islam. Though he had esteem for traditional Islamic institutions, he had difficulty accepting the conservatism of an institution like Jamia Nizamia. "These people are destroying Muslims all over the world." In Mr. Husayni's opinion, madrasa education was spoiling the future careers of Muslim children. He spoke many times with me about how young people were more concerned with external religiosity and not with their inner piety and character. "Our problems are mainly created by so-called religious-minded people. …It wasn't so fundamentalist fifty years ago in Hyderabad. Now, when I see young men wearing their Islamic caps, I just have an allergy to it. When my students wear it, I tell them, 'You shouldn't

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do this. You don't look like a student.'…I don't want to make religion an institution. It should stay in the heart."

One interviewee, a Muslim ex-politician whom I will discuss later, went further in his assessment. He vehemently lamented the "idiocy" and "fundamentalism" of Muslims and especially practices among uneducated families. He dismissed as "rubbish" the claims of madrasa teachers who insist it is their free choice to study at madrasas instead of at secular schools. His insistence on reform has made him a target of attack by Islamic ulema, specifically for advocating birth control, curbs on polygamy, and regulation of madrasas.

But again, the anger, judgment, and frustration coexists with a sense of responsibility and sympathy that perhaps only exists because of the city's unique history and dramatic wealth inequality. Both Mr. Husayni and Mr. Akbar, the former politician, have spent their entire professional lives struggling with the state for redistribution and engaging with impoverished communities. At the everyday level, I frequently observed elites acting out of sympathy in the moment to assuage people's anxieties. For example, at one of the women's training centers, when I was with Kulsoom apa, a burqa-clad mother and her daughter approached her and confessed that they couldn't afford the girl's school fees. They both started crying, as the mother said she had to withdraw her daughter from the 6th class. Kulsoom apa was upset by this, especially because the girl appeared very smart and promising. She told them there was a Mr. Haq sponsored school right there in the neighborhood and that she would see to it that the girl could continue attending. Because the majority of philanthropic work is oriented toward education and the reduction of child labor, these organizations do their best to minimize the obstacle of school fees.

The paternalistic affection of wealthy elites is also sometimes displayed through their visits to the welfare centers and schools. The most ostentatious version of this I observed was when some of Mr. Haq's American-educated family members visited Babanagar. Mr. Haq himself was unable to come. Kulsoom apa had been frantically preparing for the visit, making sure the younger students had speeches and songs to perform, hand-made gifts to give, and other ways to impress the powerful visitors. For the first time in my visits to the center, I felt disempowered. As I tried to blend in with the young women, wearing my burqa and sitting on the floor, Mr. Haq's relatives arrived, comfortable, glamorous, and kind. His wife stood at the front of the room and spoke about how proud she was of all the young women and their progress. "This is all a blessing from God. You should begin each day with Fajr prayer [early morning], remember God in everything you do, and be determined to work hard and make progress in your lives. I am so happy to see Haq's dream come true." Her son and daughter-in-law then spoke in English, also praising the women and offering advice. The women (and men in attendance) were honored, though they could not have understood the English. Kulsoom apa was relieved and satisfied that the visit was successful.

Over time, however, the politics and competition in the elite world of associations were draining Mr. Haq, and his particular visits became infrequent. One of the last times I saw Kulsoom apa, she was pleading with another wealthy relative of Mr. Haq's on the phone: "Please, you know Mr. Haq hasn't been able to come in so long. If you'd just come to two of the centers next week, it would make the poor girls so happy. They would be thrilled. Even if anyone from the Foundation can come, it would mean so much to them, to show them that we give them *izzat*."

Kulsoom apa was tireless in her management of the centers. Yet another example was her facilitation of completing government applications for self-employment assistance. This

encouragement of making welfare claims of the state is a final and critical component of the unique relationship of middle-class and elite activists to low-income Muslims. Often it was rhetorical, but sometimes it translated into practice. Again at the Babanagar school, I arrived one day to see her and assistants helping the young women with their applications to a state program that provides sewing machines to 200 of the poorest applicants. The atmosphere was hectic and confused, as many women did not know their addresses or ration card status. So we were attending to each application, helping them write and making phone calls to verify their information. These numerous examples demonstrate the characteristics of this class relationship—its intrinsic power inequality, cultural and religious judgment, material concessions, as well as affection and attachment.

Political dispositions of paternalistic compassion

The stories below illustrate this particular political disposition that drives a paternalistic politics of redistribution. They reveal the disappointment with the state, commitment to charity work, and relationship to the uneducated Muslims in the Old City. These activists all share a life-long dedication to poverty alleviation among Muslims, a serious distrust of the state, and desire to reform the religious practices of the poor (especially gendered practices). They also either resigned from government service or avoided it, as they arrived at the conclusion that the government has no interest in Muslim education or political power.

Mr. Akbar

> Muslims are killed like rats here, throughout the country. But they're also
> prepared to fight back. And this scares them [the state]. Government has proved
> that if it wants to prevent riots, it can. You don't do irrigation, industry, education,
> but you maintain law and order [if you're scared enough]. – interview with Mr.
> Akbar

Mr. Akbar was once a prominent politician in Hyderabad. He was a member of state government for two terms and held appointed posts before resigning from his party. Mr. Akbar's father had been a wealthy industrialist in the colonial era that had major business dealings around the state and had political connections from colonial officers to the Prime Minister. While involved in numerous enterprises and minority programs, much of Mr. Akbar's philanthropic work has been directed at education. He continues to work tirelessly in private work and state lobbying despite suffering grave disillusion during his tenure in government. I include an interview with him because it so clearly represents the sincere struggles some elites have undertaken with the state in the politics of redistribution as well as their controversial support for reformist Islam and their close but disdainful relationship to poor and uneducated Muslims.

Mr. Akbar noted that Andhra Pradesh state in fact allocates a good deal of funds for minority welfare relative to the rest of the country. But it still remains insufficient to address the enormous poverty among Muslims. Based on his own political experiences, Mr. Akbar wasn't a big proponent of Muslim autonomy and felt that Muslim institutions needed government facilitation and assistance. When he saw that the state had no interest in providing this, he eventually came to believe that negligence was a purposeful government strategy. "Wakf Board, Minorities Commission, Minorities Finance Corporation, Urdu Academy – we have agencies of the state to promote some aspects of welfare. I have noticed over the years, that government tends to ignore these organizations to such an extent that if they are self-destructive - I believe

they allow it deliberately. 'Let them destroy themselves' is the idea. And Muslims are very capable of being self-destructive, and they have been."

Mr. Akbar discussed the example of the Wakf Board, noting that AP has more Wakf-registered properties than any other state. In the 1950s, just after Indian independence, AP had 32,300 Wakf institutions according to Mr. Akbar.[30] These included lands, buildings, mosques, *dargahs*, *ashurkhanas*, and graveyards, all of which were religious, cultural, or Islamic educational. Under an act of Parliament, the Wakf Board is an autonomous party, though the state may exercise some controls. But according to Mr. Akbar, rather than exercising its controls, the state sat back and watched as the Board mismanaged the thousands of Muslim properties. "We had 32,000 buildings and acres. I don't think hardly anything was left unoccupied by government, hoodlums, politicians, Hindu societies, [random] Muslim societies. It's practically gone. Government is supposed to have some control of the Board. But from day one, Muslims said, 'leave us alone, this is our autonomy.' So we have destroyed it—*destroyed it!* In my experience, I saw there was nothing I could do because it's 'autonomous.' Parliamentary members, members of assembly, social people, *muthawalis* [trustees], religious scholars—each one swallowing, allowing it to be swallowed, making money out of it. It's a pathetic state of events."

"'How to destroy Muslims?' I'm beginning to think it's a real strategy." Mr. Akbar, like most philanthropists and activists I knew, concentrated on the field of education. Specifically, he lamented several times that Urdu-medium schools comprise less then 3% of the state's total schools. For a population whose native language is Urdu, Muslims are dramatically underserved and alienated from government schools—and, he argued, the problem is only worsening. According to him, the government allows the appointment of Telugu-speaking teachers to Urdu schools. The school performs terribly, and when the teacher retires, the position becomes converted to a Telugu post. Gradually, there's a loss of Urdu teachers, failure of students, and under-enrollment. The state then justifies the school's closure. A second reason for the failure of Urdu schools is that the government doesn't pay decent rents to building owners, who in turn refuse repairs. The physical infrastructure becomes in such disrepair that the government shuts down the school or merges it. The reason it becomes a disproportionately Muslim problem, according to Mr. Akbar, is that Muslims have no avenue or will to request government repairs.

"And nobody cares. I myself went and met the chief secretary, armed with data I gather for all these fights I put up. I told him, 'there is 2.2% enrollment in Urdu-medium schools, which are only 2.8% of schools. So unless there is some Muslim officer who is sitting at the head of the department, in the government, where he controls policy, things are not going to change.' He listened to me very carefully, he took it well. But even when it's brought to the administration's attention, nobody cares. It's a *sham* democracy."

For Mr. Akbar, though he sees a willingness of Muslim masses to defend themselves in the context of riots, for example, he sees a great ignorance and passivity when it comes to politics. They don't see the value of education, and they don't make enough demands of their representatives.

> I am working for the welfare of the community. I use politics, I use my political platform, my connections. I've been a minister twice, I know all the officers and they know me. So I think I can get a lot of things done. But not many people come. People just come to ask for minor things, small things, charity. Nobody comes and says 'why don't you ask the government to open 1000 schools in the villages.' Nobody, not one person! And I try to tell myself I'm doing a bloody

great job. I'm a social activist, I intervene in the government regarding what matters. But nobody else cares, except my wife perhaps.

Mr. Akbar's frustration is not only at government but also at what he believes is a problematic culture that has overtaken low-income Muslims. The frankness with which he speaks and the content of what he says about Islam and Muslims has created many enemies and made him a controversial personality in the politics of Islam. In our interview, he criticized the poor attitudes of many Muslims towards education.

Hindus are also very poor but they send their children to school, they think there's a meaning to education. Muslims don't think so at all! If you ask a poor man [Muslim], why are you not sending your child to school, he says 'parkar kya karega?' [what's the point?] 'Will he get a government job?' Ok, there are so many poor Muslims self-employed, driving an auto-rickshaw, taking home an average of 8000 rupees a month, and they're satisfied. I employ four drivers, and I think three of them can't read or write. They've come up in a class where they never thought education was important. They're 22-23 years of age, and they can't even write their own car number, can't read a bill or count money. …We have employees who are Muslims in the office—they're the ones who come late, who don't record what they've done, they don't do their work, they don't do anything accurately! The more you look, the more you see something is terribly wrong.

Related to his socio-cultural critiques of the poor was Mr. Akbar's intense dislike of religious "fanatics," who he believes keep most Muslims steeped in backwardness. He argued that madrasa education is a death-knell for children, if they grow up without math, language, and science. He supports liberal reforms of Islam and like others I met, believes there's been an increase of superficial forms of practice and ritual but not true Islam and true faith. Mr. Akbar had strong desires for change but was up against powerful religious forces that left him feeling threatened and demoralized. Indeed, he is criticized by local ulema.

I am a liberal, I want something to change, change drastically. But if I say a word, something about Islam, my opinion, there'll be ten swords drawn against me. Politically, because I have a political background, the mullahs, the politicians, and the ordinary man, using the Urdu media, will try to finish me off because they want to be correct about everything. Nobody can reform this community. Nobody can reform personal law, for example. You can't even ask for it, ask for a reinterpretation. …It's popular to be on the right side, to be conformist. Nobody will stick his neck out and say, 'let's think in a different way.' Therefore, we are self-destructive. We refuse to look at things in a different way, and yet we are not even following the spirit of Islam. It's unpopular, it's like *blasphemy*. It *is* blasphemy. They'll kill you.

Madame Rabia

Madame Rabia was a young, middle-class woman who was appointed principal by Mr. Haq's foundation Board of the primary school in Babanagar. She was chosen out of 150 candidates who applied for the position. The school serves 500 Muslim students, all of whom are from the poorest BPL neighborhoods of the Old City. She had lived most of her life in

Secunderabad (north of the New City) and attended Christian schools and colleges. She was fluent in English and refused to cover her hair, though she identified strongly as Muslim. With her resilient personality and forceful style, Madame Rabia has been fighting local residents and parents for the last 5 years and has finally started to earn their respect. The Board has consistently supported her decisions, despite her controversial role in the neighborhood.

Madame Rabia moved to Babanagar eight years ago when her parents, in a disappointing move, fixed her marriage with a man who lived there. Eventually, her husband became her "number one support" in encouraging her to continue her work in making changes at the school. But moving to the area from a solidly middle-class upbringing was a shock. "I used to think, if I stay here, I'll lose everything [about myself]." But she decided to channel all her energy into her work and making a difference in the area. Even though Madame Rabia stands out when she's in public, she hasn't given in to the local customs. "I don't believe in orthodox things, the burqa. This is the modern world. I believe in Islam, God, and his Prophet, but I don't have to show it. Whatever I have, whatever I believe, is within me. I don't need to wear the burqa and walk around and show everyone. I know everything [about Islam], and it's inside me." She wraps a shawl around herself (atop her sari) and walks to the school everyday. People look at her and give her funny looks, but she doesn't care.

That same spring in which teachers had campaigned against her, she continued to receive trouble. It all culminated on April 6, "the worst day of my life that I will never forget." According to her, there was a male Urdu teacher who had harassed another female teacher and became inappropriate with her. When Madame Rabia called him in to discuss what happened, he became angry, saying "who are you to tell me what to do?" She decided to call the Board and request that he be fired. The next day he was given a termination letter (that arrived from the Head Office). In the middle of administering Urdu exams, he stopped, gathered all the teachers and students. They all exited the school and went "on strike," chanting slogans against her—and locked her inside the school building. She called the police, who came and tried to arrest everyone, but Madame Rabia insisted that they release the female teachers. "They think because they're older than me, they don't have to respect my authority," she complained. Two years after that incident, all of the teachers came to her and apologized for their complicity.

Now, she says with authority to those who criticize her refusal to wear a hijab, "Don't interfere in my personal matters! Why are you concerned with what I'm doing?" Further, Madame Rabia has instituted a number of changes in the school. She told me proudly that things are improving—the children are healthier, and the parents value what she's trying to do. But she lamented the parents' lack of education and crudeness. She said the children would come to the school, dirty, unbathed, starving, and some would vomit or faint in the middle of the day. "When you have 6 children, how can you care for any of them? About 2 years ago I started bringing in soap and nail-cutters, and in the morning I started cleaning up the kids. You would not believe how much it's changed since you were here before. Parents are starting to change and pay attention, but there's a long way to go." "But these people will *never* change, Fareen. It's in their blood." She said their narrow-mindedness is exacerbated by male-female segregation, and that dealing with the parents' backwardness is her biggest challenge and source of misery. She's learning to take it easier, control her anger, and deal more calmly with those who challenge her.

As to the teachers at the school, with the support of Mr. Haq's Board, she ensured that only women teach the Islamic courses. Of twenty-two teachers in total, only four are men.[31] Although she supports religious instruction and prayer in the school, she tries to minimize the

presence of religion and in fact banned women's wearing of the burqa (among teachers and students).

> I say to these teachers, 'you are like second parents to these kids. If you don't understand this [if all you think about is religion], don't even come out to teach. It's better to just stay at home.' The female teachers wanted to wear [the niqab] in the classroom, and I said no, that face-to-face contact is critical. We are a private Muslim school, but we are also accountable to the state. The district education officers visit the school a few times. I don't want them to visit and see all these teachers in the niqab. … There's no doubt there's been an increase in religiosity and the burqa since I've lived here. But I won't allow it among my students. They have to take it off in the school. Parents objected at first but then eventually accepted it. I still have critics. But a burqa is not a school uniform!

Madame Rabia also continues to use English, despite earlier opposition, and enforces the language as much as possible. "I always tell [the students] you need to keep speaking English, and if you have no one to speak with, then stand in a mirror and speak to yourself." I watched with amazement as she spoke, with her unique blend of despotism and affection, to a burqa-clad mother and her daughter. She spoke Urdu with the mother and English with the girl. "Are you scared to move on to the 10th class? Are you avoiding your exams?" The girl was mumbling something, and the mother was too diffident to speak. "Pass or fail, ma [my dear], you have to take the exam. Just see it as practice. Eat well, drink well. I explained a number of times, to not be scared. You have to get rid of this fear."

As Madame Rabia discussed with me, and as I heard ubiquitously, education is the only hope for Muslims in the Old City. She was happy to note that it's become more acceptable to send girls to school, and that some parents are now sending their children to the Babanagar school because there's a "lady principal." She's even had parents come from other neighborhoods because they had heard of this lady principal. In just a few years, she went from being defamed throughout Babanagar to attracting students from all over the area, despite her lack of outward Islamic practice. "Now, I always try to motivate my teachers. 'See how great we ladies are! We're taking care of 500 children, as well as our own. Allah is always with you. Keep faith in him and the Prophet. Islam is all about your intention – so just be positive."

Mr. Husayni

To my mind, Mr. Husayni reflected all the sophistication and grace of the old aristocratic Hyderbadi culture. His grandfather and father were important members of the Nizam's court, and Mr. Husayni's own career and home has reflected his inheritance of their work and public responsibilities. He worked several terms in the national administration before retiring, was involved in the administration of Wakf property, and has also written scholarly monographs on Islamic reform. "I am a non-practicing Muslim," he once confessed to me. "But I believe in the Quran."

Mr. Husayni has managed components of Muslim endowments, making enough profit to finance the philanthropic work he undertakes: absolving debts for poor families, paying marriage expenses, and mostly, operating a number of primary-secondary schools. With his academic background and family heritage of princely administration, he knew practically every detail of Hyderabad's political history. However, far from being a defender of the princely dynasties, he had a careful class and caste analysis of how Old City poverty came to be so entrenched after

Hyderabad's surrender to India. Occasionally, he would unexpectedly throw in some cultural arguments almost for good measure. Mr. Husayni's own father had a senior post in the Nizam's administration and was replaced by someone much less qualified than him after Police Action. For him and all others, there was no legal recourse. Although Muslims were expelled from their government posts with no skills or presence in industry, they also "never knew how to save and invest money," according to Mr. Husayni. "Whatever they earn, they spend. Money circulates within the community but is never invested."

Based on his years of experience in government, Mr. Husayni had witnessed a gradual communalization of politics. Like Mr. Akbar, he also concluded, "government is not interested in long-term change." He joked that he had been basically a "one-man commission" and the lengthy government reports he wrote about the status of Muslims were relegated to gathering dust in the state archives. He now spoke with the ease of someone who had left behind government service and took great joy in his private endeavors, specifically his focus on children's education.

Also like Mr. Akbar, Mr. Husayni worried about so-called growing superficiality and fanaticism within Muslim societies. Again, he had complex analyses about the exploitation of Islam by Hindutva, and other right-wing, forces. Even more so than Mr. Haq, for example, he felt that religion should be private rather than institutionalized. (This is despite his lobbying for government support of Islamic institutions, such as Dairat al Maarif scholarly archival house, that was clearly about redistribution as opposed to the bolstering of religious identity per se.) Mr. Haq was suspicious of Wahhabi-influenced Islam but also of Sufism, on the other extreme. "Why are the Hindu-right and the U.S. so interested in promoting Sufism? I have to ask myself, what are they trying to accomplish? Are they really our friends?" With regard to gender, he vehemently disagreed with the local obstructions to women's masjids and did not believe in the importance of women's veiling.

Mr. Husayni asked me on a few occasions to visit his schools in the Old City, as it would be interesting for the young students. The students were a mix of lower-middle class and poor though not as low-income as those in Babanagar. The first school I visited was in fact a merit-based secular school. From the decorations on the wall to the dispositions of the teachers, the secular orientation of the schools was clear. Prayer and Arabic education were optional. The students spoke English and had hopes for attending college. Given their overall isolated upbringings, they were thrilled to have a visitor from the US and cornered me in droves to ask me various questions. During one visit, they showed me the "dental camp" that was in process. Every Sunday there was some social welfare component incorporated into the day's activities. That day, a dentist came and did a cursory exam on each student. I then sat in on the 10th grade class, where students were delivering presentations on different scientific processes. I listened and watched, as they very nervously practiced their language and presentation skills on topics ranging from the pulmonary system to electromagnetism. After having visited a number of predominantly Muslim schools, the quality of the teaching here was very advanced. But again, girls outperformed the boys, who appeared to me almost marginalized and struggling.

Mr. Husayni took me into the principal's office where he spoke to five adolescent girls about their future plans. He lectured to them against pursuing medical education, because he felt the market for doctors was shrinking and that it would require a lot of debt that they couldn't afford. At another visit, Mr. Husayni stopped to make conversation with a big group of adolescent students. "What do you want to do when you graduate?" he asked. "Doctor!" one student shouted out. "Teacher!" said another. "What about an advocate [lawyer]?" asked Mr.

Husayni. "This is against Islam," one girl interjected. He quickly tried to convince her otherwise. "Anyway, whom can Muslims turn to when they are in trouble? We have to have advocates to defend us." This one moment reflected a number of things that were crucial to the politics of redistribution: the secular orientation of elites; their paternalistic affection, concern, and disciplining of poor youth and families; and their encouragement of women's education and work opportunities. In his own ways, Mr. Husayni engages in redistribution, politicizes the nexus of Muslim identity and distribution, and promotes the type of Islam that he believes most reflects the original teachings.

Mr. Haq

Unlike the few other elites that I knew, Mr. Haq was not from a wealthy family, and his story reads like a true rags-to-riches tale. He earned much of his fortune from his years of work and business dealings in the US, where he invested well and pursued certain fortuitous avenues in his personal life. But he struggled during his younger years in the US. Mr. Haq grew up poor, in Hyderabad's Old City. He was orphaned at the age of twelve but wound up going to college on a sports scholarship. He said he had always been "haunted" by memories of the poor children in Hyderabad and images of the child labor he knew. So he decided to return to India in this late phase of his life and commit full-time to philanthropic work.

Mr. Haq maintains numerous business investments in Hyderabad and abroad. He was often surrounded by various assistants and other board members. His driver takes orders from him all day and manages a great deal of his daily details. I observed Mr. Haq in several settings, and he can seem formidable and authoritarian, which would flow naturally from his position of power. However, I also saw a softer side, which transcended some of the sycophancy that surrounded him and which was rooted in deep compassion for poor families and moral resolve. His work for the poor was more important than all other matters including, perhaps, his family life. Similar to Mr. Akbar, he was often under attack and had an air of solitariness because of it. He worked all hours, often meeting with his newspaper staff late at night.

In his philanthropy, Mr. Haq took pride in running his educational institutions on solid ethical foundations. For example, he ensures that school fees are very minimal (as low as 10 rupees a month for some of the poorest families). He complained that some private Muslim foundations run as enterprises and operate as profit-making businesses, a complaint that I heard elsewhere. The goal of educating the poorest students therefore becomes lost. Mr. Haq also took pride in remaining independent from the government. "If government gives money, they'll try to control everything… the hiring of teachers, reducing the number of reservations for Muslims or eliminating them completely." I was in his office one day at his college when a young, burqa-clad woman came in and started crying that she couldn't afford the year's tuition. Another Board member kept arguing with her. "Look, ma, half the student body is in your position. You can't just get what you want for free. You need to go take a loan against your house!" Mr. Haq vaguely haggled back and forth with her for about fifteen minutes, possibly just for the principle. But he eventually agreed that she'd simply pay what she could, and the school would cover the rest.

Driving around the Old City with him, he told me likes to model his activities on the era of the Islamic caliphs and the democracy of Abu Bakr and that he felt strongly against engaging in any communal tensions. "The Quran says that you must respect your neighbors and you must respect all religions." This certainty also reinforced his general desire to keep religion out of his educational institutions as well as support for secularist policies. For example, he disliked the

use of loudspeakers to amplify the five daily prayers, the sound of which now seems integral to the culture of the city. "Prayer is not meant to bother others," he said. (The High Court ruled against the use of loudspeakers for all religious groups, but off the record negotiations allow it to continue.)

Despite his staunch secularist stance, Mr. Haq had a more paternalistic style as opposed to abrasive in his criticism of the religiosity of the poor. Perhaps he felt so strongly about their poverty and educational needs that debates about Islam itself were secondary in his view. Thus, I didn't hear him denounce the burqa so much as quietly support figures like Madame Rabia. Moreover, his wide funding of women's stitching and training centers planted him firmly in the middle of the growing discourses over the status and rights of Muslim women. According to Kulsoom apa, approximately 25-30,000 women have benefited from Mr. Haq's centers. As to the primary schools, girls are also slightly over-represented and are performing better than the boys on their exams. Indeed, it took me time to adjust to the odd gender dynamic of particularly the stitching centers—the profound gratitude and affection that the scores of young women had for Mr. Haq and his predominantly older, male Board members.

When he was rapidly expanding these centers, Mr. Haq would visit them, and the teachers, schoolgirls, and young women would prepare appreciation rituals for him. On a few occasions I awkwardly sat at the dais with him and the Board. After the Board members handed the girls various gifts for their scholarly achievements and efforts, young women and girls recited their poems and speeches praising him and his generosity. They also took to the microphone to recite prayers (*duas*) for Mr. Haq, praying for his health and long life. When I was there during Ramadan, the ceremony ended with a filling iftar meal for everyone at the end of the day's fast.

Over the years, Mr. Haq's visits to the centers declined, as he became worn down by local politics, legal harassments, and his own health concerns. I also heard from Anwar that Mr. Haq was in fact considering entering politics or possibly creating a political party, though it seems he was dissuaded from it. Nonetheless, his political efforts and wealth were crucial to the passing of the 4% reservations for Muslims in education and government employment. He apparently spent a great deal of his own money to see that senior lawyers would defend the case for reservations before the state and High Court. From cooperative banks, low-interest lending toward women's self-employment, free and low-cost primary schools (which he plans to expand to surrounding rural areas and that have benefited about 20,000 poor children), and the thousands of dollars worth of relief work in places like Gujarat, he has worked consistently toward his goal of eradicating child labor. I can only assume that he is no longer as haunted by his memories of the Old City. The question of who exactly will maintain his impact in the long term, and in what capacity, remains open.

Conclusion

Hyderabad's Muslim middle-class and elites have maintained the link between ethno-religious recognition and economic redistribution, or between culture and economy. Indeed, the link is so strong, I argue, that one wonders what would be left of Muslim identity mobilization in the city if there were ever deep economic transformation. Redistribution, though constituting the dominant terrain on which politics plays out, is also embedded in recognition and further, in a politics of paternalism.

Weaving in and out of Islamic discourses, middle-class activists and elites target the state through lobbying, encourage the poor to make claims of the state, and use their own wealth to

promote Muslim welfare and education where the state has failed. Part of what maintains and drives this politics is the competition among elites, with the MIM as a driving force with its machine politics, and Old City Muslims somehow constituting a voting block. But further, a paternalistic culture that is perhaps a remnant of the old aristocratic rule of the former princely state, is embedded in the psyche of many middle-class and wealthy Muslims. They are attached enough to the memory or image of Hyderabadi Muslims that it is no less than a duty to continue projects of patronage. Alongside this, they try to assert their hegemony in the religious realm by discouraging what they view as "fundamentalism" and encouraging an Islam that is more broad, private, and worldly. In the process, they exert symbolic violence against the uneducated and sectarian Muslims they engage and patronize. But the poor take their material benefits, profit from education, and find themselves in a dynamic debate about the meaning and spirit of Islamic practice and ritual.

The political dispositions that underlay this field and sustain prominent individuals in it have developed in accordance with first-hand disappointment with government, years of exposure to the severe poverty of the Old City, and specific beliefs about a liberalized Islam. Mr. Akbar resigned from state government the more he came to distrust its intentions vis-à-vis Muslims. His struggles toward his ideals for Muslim education and poverty alleviation leave him disillusioned both with the state and with Muslim communities, whom he views as increasingly superficial, religious, and apathetic. Nonetheless, he continues his foundation work and expansive philanthropy. Madame Rabia reluctantly became involved in educating hundreds of Hyderabad's poorest Muslim children. Like Mr. Akbar, she fights the religious conservatism that she believes is holding back economic and social development. She has gained many enemies but has also begun to earn respect from the least expected quarters in a relatively short time-frame. Finally, Mr. Husayni and Mr. Haq, informed by their emotional and political ties to the city, have used their great wealth to conduct major philanthropic work that has arguably, altered the economic and political situation of many thousands of Muslims. Mr. Haq, especially, has gained attention, respect, and relative autonomy from the state. He has actively lobbied and opposed the state while simultaneously bolstering support for philanthropic *and* community autonomy.

These parties, activists, and philanthropists could not have easily emerged in the social-historical context of postindustrial and laïque France, the subject of the next chapter. Unlike figures like Mr. Haq or the MIM, the most professionalized Islamic organizations in Lyon are controlled or monitored by the French state and cannot effectively buffer those in the quartiers from surveillance or anti-Islam policy. Antipolitics in a neighborhood like Les Minguettes is left alone by the Islamic middle-class activists in Lyon. Physically and metaphorically, the antipolitics I saw were spaces of desolation, where only the promise of faith and God could provide solace.

Chapter 6: Antipolitics in the banlieues of Lyon

> I believe the phenomenon of dissent grows out of an essentially different
> conception of the meaning of politics than that prevailing in the world today. That
> is, the dissident does not operate in the realm of genuine power at all. He does not
> seek power. He has no desire for office and does not woo voters. He does not
> attempt to charm the public, he offers nothing and promises nothing. He can offer,
> if anything, only his own skin—and he offers it solely because he has no other
> way of affirming the truth he stands for. His actions simply articulate his dignity
> as a citizen, regardless of the cost.   Václav Havel (Wilson 1992, pp. 320-21)

It is quite an understatement to say that the men and women I knew in les cités outside of Lyon do not operate in the realm of genuine power. Being removed from the realm of power and even from the desire to inhabit it, their Islamic revival has taken the form of *antipolitics*. My analysis of Salafist Islamic revival outside of Lyon is inspired by the concept of antipolitics that developed in the 1970s and 80s in the context of East European dissidence. Antipolitics refers to the rejection of state engagement in favor of the valorization of private life, as a substitute for democratic political participation (Renwick 2006; Goven 2000; Havel 1985; Konrad 1984).[32] The movement was promoted and practiced by intellectuals and artists and provided ideological momentum toward the reconstruction of autonomous civil societies. While there were different variants of antipolitics and dissident thought more generally, I use here the radical version of the movement that rejected all forms of state engagement and actively rejected being labeled as political (Renwick 2006). Hungarian writer George Konrad had distinguished antipolitics from "apolitical," arguing that apolitical individuals were merely "dupes" of professional politicians, the "young people who can always be brought out for parades" (1984: 227, 231). Antipolitics, in contrast, implies a degree of conscious opposition to the political realm.

French Salafist, Islamic revival in the working-class banlieues shares several characteristics with the original movement of radical antipolitics (1984: 202-204) and in doing so, differs dramatically from political communities. First, the movement seeks primarily to expand the boundaries of the private sphere, in a world where every facet of life seems to involve the state. This glorifying of the private realm starkly contrasts to the Arendtian value placed on the concept of the public that I emphasized in the political communities of Hyderabad. Unlike the subaltern classes I knew in Hyderabad, the Salafist Muslims and especially women in the periphery of Lyon are engaged in a struggle to defend, expand, and reconfigure the private sphere against an intrusive state that seeks to "protect" Muslim women and the French public sphere. In their defense of the burqa, for example, they view the practice as an integral part of their private sphere in the sense that all matters of the self and body (along with family and intimate relations) are understood as private (cf Scott and Keates, eds. 2004). This goes against the claims of the French state, which has insisted its presence in public space impacts society for being anti-social and sectarian. In a sense, the women believe that the burqa is part of the private sphere that they must inherently practice outside the home. I argue that they are seeking a sort of inversion of the private sphere—toward one that is de-territorialized and that is defined more through social interaction and less by physical space (see Dupret and Ferrié 2005). Valorizing the private sphere follows the major interventions of the French state—regulations of the headscarf and burqa, the defeat of many Muslim political activists in working-class neighborhoods, and the advent of new forms of surveillance. Antipolitics and its emphasis on

the private is thus a response to the despair that has followed the collapse of civil society. The trajectory of civil society here is effectively the opposite of that seen in Hyderabad.

Antipolitics was also theorized originally as a retreat into "unorganized private life," presumably including families and friendships (Konrad 1984: 204-206). It prioritizes seeking moral community among individuals as opposed to formal associations or institutions. State regulation and control of public life, from mosques to youth associations, have led to a retreat into less organized communities. The "*mosquées des caves*," for example, serve as spaces of informal religious gatherings in contrast to the more structured and visible larger mosques. As a form of unorganized private life, Salafist Islam in the banlieues generally operates through informal networks of friends and is decentralized and lacks clear leadership, relying instead on teachers and sheiks. The women I knew in the neighborhood of Les Minguettes sought to form a moral community and refuge from their social and economic ostracization and from conflicts with men in their lives, in spite of the lack of associational structure and barriers to social trust posed by state surveillance. The individualized nature of Salafism is indicative of the retreat of the formal associations of civil society among working-class Muslims, as personal and private relationships are favored. However, family life per se is fraught in the case of Les Minguettes, and the mosque community is sometimes a refuge from both an oppressive state and family: one's individual relationship to God is more important than community and even family. In Hyderabad, by contrast, family life is the subject of reform and using solidarity and religious principles to improve women's situations.

Finally, antipolitics emphasizes spiritual conditions, truth, dignity, and inner states of being that could avoid the heavy hand of an overwhelming state. In seeking dignity, antipolitics is thus not about hope for the future but rather, as it was theorized earlier, "respect for the present" (Konrad 1984: 185) and "push[ing] the state out of our nightmares, so as to be afraid of it less" (230). Again, this ethos contrasts to the very forward-looking "world-building" of the Arendtian political community and even the symbolic project of creating and circulating honor.

As I will present, the absence of strong Islamic civil societies in Lyon's banlieues, major obstacles to economic stability, as well as disintegrating families, have set the foundation for antipolitics. The continual messages of patience (*sabr*) and serenity that I heard at the mosques in Les Minguettes spoke directly to the bleak situations of many of the people I knew. For Salafist Muslim women, trusting divine will, and thus developing serenity, was presented as key to augmenting one's faith. Eliminating intermediaries and public rituals was also central to their faith and hence, antipolitics.[33] Elevating spiritual conditions, faith, and serenity so above material life is remarkably different from the political communities in Hyderabad's predominantly Muslim slums, where material projects were inseparable from Islamic revival.

In this chapter I will first discuss the overall precariousness of my subjects' lives and how this is expressed at the mosque and leads to a marked emphasis on individual salvation rather than collective and worldly projects. I will discuss also how antipolitics seems to differ between Salafist Muslim women and men. I will then present the three parts of the antipolitics I observed: reconfiguring the private sphere, retreating to a moral community, and achieving serenity in a life defined intrinsically by suffering. The data I use is based on my research in Vénissieux but includes some observations from the banlieues of Bron and Vaulx-en-Velin. (See Appendix.)

Precarity and Salvation

On a cold November evening in the infamous working-class neighborhood of Les Minguettes, outside of Lyon, I am staring at a graffiti drawing of a pistol pointed at President Sarkozy's head. I am pacing at the entrance of a tower-block apartment building anxiously waiting to be let in for a Quranic course. After finally being buzzed in, I make my way upstairs in the dank elevator, holding my breath to avoid the smell of urine, and am relieved when I see Farha, a French-Algerian woman in her mid-thirties. Dressed in her black burqa, she is warm and cheerful. "Alhamdulillah [by the will of God]," she smiles. "You found me!" I follow her to the back room of her apartment, where three women are sitting on the floor reciting a verse from the Quran: "And there will be endlessly flowing water and abundant fruit, of unlimited seasons, and [the virtuous] will be seated on thrones, raised high…." Farha, who teaches Quranic recitation at her home and at the mosque, raises her arms and smiles at this image of paradise. Sonia and Asiya, two students, close their eyes and shake their heads, imagining the bliss that might await them. But Farha reminds them, "Only God knows who will enter paradise. For those who don't enter immediately, there will be 'negotiations.'" Sonia and Asiya murmur worriedly at this reminder. All three women are wearing the burqa. "If one is close to God, there will be rest, grace, and a garden of delights…." Farha makes them repeat this, multiple times in unison, painstakingly slowly, in order to refine and perfect the Arabic diction as well as aid their memorization of the verse. When this lesson in *tajwid* (Quranic recitation) is over, after two hours, we all go to the kitchen to chat over mint tea and bread. Farha discusses, among several things, the pain (*mal au coeur*) she felt the other day when seeing a young Muslim woman in provocative dress being ogled by a number of men at the bus terminal. She was regrettably hesitant about reproaching the woman for her dress and behavior. After a long conversation about these matters and more prayers, Sonia and I walk in isolation to the bus terminal. I step over broken glass as a car, blasting rap music, whizzes past us.

Traversing my way through banlieue housing projects, from one isolated pocket of religious practice to another, I often carefully kept to myself. Although I knew that crime rates here didn't compare to those of American cities, the lack of commercial and public life often created a sense of unease (Simon 1998; Césari 2005). My wearing the hijab, I felt, both stigmatized me and protected me as I found my way around these neighborhoods. What I witnessed in small mosques and in people's apartments seemed to echo the sterility of Minguettes. Far from building potential civil societies, the people I knew were in retreat, practicing forms of Islamic discipline that centered on the individual and her salvation as opposed to a collective project. Their antipolitics, their turn away from the public, came largely from the precariousness of their lives, work, and in many cases, relationships.

References to such precarity appeared routinely in Islamic teachings and discourses and everyday conversations at the mosque. Mosquée Ennour, one of the mosques I attended in Les Minguettes, provided a small space where several women I knew would talk, complain, and laugh about their worries. These discussions were often interjected in the middle of Quranic teaching sessions. They frequently involved anxieties over immigration status, frustrations with various French bureaucracies, and complaints about their struggles to find work or self-employment activities. In general there was a certain degree of instability to the religious community because of the precarious nature of immigration status and work. Saara, who had been teaching Arabic over a short period had to end the class when her legal stay in France expired. I didn't realize the class was over until the very last day when she embarrassedly and abruptly confessed to me that she had to return to Algeria. Sumaiya, a migrant from Syria, also

had a very hesitant approach to the future, even in mundane greetings. Whenever I would say "see you next week," she would reply "maybe, but who knows. I don't know. I always say *inshaAllah* [God willing]."

Sumaiya was one of the teachers at Mosquée Ennour. She taught Arabic literacy and Quranic memorization and explication. After several months of knowing her, she broke down in front of me one day at her apartment in Minguettes, much to her embarrassment. She had been wanting to invite me to her place, as she lived across the street from Mosquée Ennour. "It's so difficult to cook when you live alone," she said as she hurriedly put together a plate of frozen potatoes, stale bread, and cheese spread. Her two-year old daughter was crying, as Sumaiya complained to me about her numerous errands that week: going to the pediatrician, the pharmacist, her daughter's nursery, her own job-training in Lyon, job-searching, dealing with the bureaucracy of receiving her family assistance checks, taking the bus to buy groceries, and applying and reapplying for citizenship. She had enormous anxiety over her inability to acquire French citizenship. She had submitted several dossiers for citizenship, each time getting rejected due to some bureaucratic requirement.

Sumaiya survived on approximately 300 euros a month. She had worked on and off in Lyon, was recently laid off from a job as a telephone operator, and was receiving training to be a licensed babysitter. But like other women I knew, she was having difficulty completing the various state-required trainings for a babysitter's license, as the multiple, all-day trainings took place in different locations throughout Lyon. She argued that it was too difficult to get hired by companies while she wears the veil and was fed up and exhausted with looking for work. (She was willing to take off the veil in order to find a job.) Her mosque persona was cheerful and confident. But as I saw her that day, she wasn't able to hide her anxiety. On top of everything, she was considering divorcing her husband, a Tunisian man who'd been living in Switzerland for eighteen years. He rarely visited her and their daughter. It was her second marriage. "Please," she said. "Don't tell anyone at the mosque." Sumaiya's solitude, her desire to hide the reality of her life from the others at Mosquée Ennour, reflected the overall desolation I found unique to Les Minguettes.

The antipolitics I present in this chapter are based on the lives and teachings of a community of predominantly Salafist women. While I had some exposure to Salafist men in working-class neighborhoods, I have only a broad sense of the teachings and issues at stake. There were elements of antipolitics among Salafist men, however, there was also a more public orientation at the neighborhood level. Salafist men do meet in available public spaces in the banlieues. Muslim-owned "McSnack shops" in the banlieues have become important spaces for Salafist men to meet, discuss ideas, and watch soccer matches. (Although I often took lunch at such halal eateries, I was almost always the only woman in sight. A friend mentioned that Salafist men who try to work or have small businesses such as this are forced to interact with women in these settings despite their belief in strict sex segregation. Perhaps as a result, I was never made to feel uncomfortable at these eateries).

Yassin, a young man of Algerian origin, spent a good deal of time at these shops, though he didn't himself identify as Salafist. Yassin grew up in a nearby banlieue. His father worked in a factory, producing elevator cables, and his mother worked briefly cleaning houses. Yassin was the only one among his several siblings who performed daily prayers and actively strove toward greater piety. He acknowledged that Salafist men had had a social impact in his neighborhood, where they had campaigned against drugs, alcohol, and gangs. But he disliked certain elements of the movement and viewed it entirely as a result of economic dislocation.

In a way, since society has excluded them, they've dug in their heels and said, 'we don't need society.' This is why there's an attraction to this movement. Our economic situation here is catastrophic! An unemployment rate of 50%? Imagine that! We can't even get a job in a fast-food joint, especially if you don't have a diploma. It's worse than it was for our parents. Before, it was hard, but at least they could work in the factory. But today, even those who are looking can't find anything. And if you don't have any qualifications, forget it. Maybe at best you'll find a temp position, where you might work for three days, then they tell you to come in Saturday night, then maybe on a Monday morning, and that's it. What kind of life is this? Our parents, they worked hard and they didn't earn much, but they were paid every month, and they could manage.

In his own situation, Yassin had gone to local university and had employment—but it was occasional and precarious.

I met Yassin through his close childhood friend, Mounir. Mounir also grew up in an HLM building in a banlieue several miles from Minguettes, and worked as a janitor in his housing complex. The first time we met, we sat at a park bench, and I was confused when he asked me several questions about my "identity card." He showed me his card and asked me if Americans were required to carry theirs all the time. He had an intense curiosity about the U.S., and asked if I would help him learn English. The last time I saw Mounir, he was unemployed and without even a phone, blacklisted from mobile companies for six months. His hair had grown long, and I teased him, "You look like a terrorist, Mounir!" "Everything's a hassle here," he said. "I can't get a driver's license, can't open a bank account. I'm thinking seriously of moving to Algeria. I think all of us could live on my father's pension."

Mounir's disaffection from his life in France was colored entirely by the state's hostility toward Islam. For example, a small mosque that he and his father had attended for many years was forcibly closed at the mayor's direction in 2004 with vague promises for the construction of a new mosque. "More and more, the mosques in the banlieues are being closed. Everywhere! It's a very big problem. The government just wants one grand mosque for the entire community of Lyon. They think it can be like a church. They don't understand that we pray five times a day, not just once on Sunday." Mounir and Yassin complained also about a Tablighi prayer space in their banlieue that had been rented from a Catholic church association. When the Church's lease expired, the association wished to move forward and sell it to the Tablighi group. The mayor tried desperately to obstruct the purchase but eventually, legal assistance from the international Tablighi movement enabled the purchase to proceed.

Mounir's particular housing project complex, similar to those in Minguettes, was among those notorious for crime and drug activity. According to him, it was the proselytizing of Tablighi and Salafist Muslims in his complex that led to dramatic declines in alcohol abuse and street fights. "Islam has cleaned up all these problems," he exclaimed. "It's a totally different place now, and it's safe." At the time when I met Mounir, he was not actively involved in any Islamic group, though he had many Salafist friends. A year later, during a conversation with Yassin, I learned that Mounir had actually begun to identify himself as Salafist.

Yassin: Mounir, for example, he's a Salafist!
Parvez: What do you mean? He identifies as one?
Yassin: Yes and no. He's a pragmatic Salafi, more pragmatic than the others.
Parvez: He spends time with me, so I wouldn't have thought…
Yassin: Yes, because he studied a little bit [some college]. He knows some

history, and so he's a little more open-minded. I think that's why he's more open.

Parvez: And you? You don't identify as a Salafist?

Yassin: Me? No…. I don't bother myself with all that. The important thing is that I practice. I don't want to be attached to any movement.

The ambiguity with which many like Mounir identify as Salafist, I found, was an easily observed phenomenon, true to the loosely defined and individualist orientation of Salafism in the banlieues. Mounir never directly told me he considered himself Salafist, though he spoke often about the movement and his Salafi friends. This was likely because he knew the degree to which Salafism was stigmatized and despised by middle-class Muslims.

Thus, Mounir and Yassin engaged the Salafist movement in the banlieues from different perspectives but both acknowledged its social impact. In this respect Salafism among men in the *quartiers* may have a more public orientation in contrast to the women's antipolitics that I regularly observed. Men are certainly stigmatized and harassed, but their practices are not the center of national attention as is the case for Muslim women. Nonetheless, they all face great precarity in their lives and consequently, focus a great deal on individual salvation. Combined with the effects of state surveillance and social mistrust, their hopes for salvation and Islamic revival are far from the community politics I saw in Hyderabad. In the following sections I present the three components of antipolitics in the working-class banlieues.

Reconfiguring the private sphere

The recent history of state intrusion into Les Minguettes has left most residents suspicious of outsiders and jaded. Until I adjusted to this, it felt difficult to just be normal. I grew tired of the ubiquitous EuroSecurité guards on the bus and at the terminals. On several occasions, they would stand right next to me and smile at me on and off for an entire bus ride and then walk right behind me as I got off the bus. The suspiciousness of residents is something I learned through the process of gaining entry, which was painful and arduous, thanks to years of police surveillance and security efforts. It's telling to recount my early attempts at entering the religious spaces of Minguettes, as they spoke volumes about the ethos of the area and its antipolitics.

Because my many middle-class informants didn't have contacts in the *quartiers* (or none that they would share), I took to walking around the residences until one day, I saw a small café tucked away at the basement level of one of the buildings. I was relieved, sat down, and ordered some coffee. No other residents were there. There was a teenager behind the counter watching television and smiling at me, and I realized that he knew I was an outsider. Another man, about forty, walked in and started sponging the countertop and periodically watching me. He kept toying with a video-game machine and nervously flipping television channels. After finishing my drink, and sharing numerous awkward smiles with them, I said hello and told them I was from the U.S. They immediately looked unhappy—and unhappier still, when I blurted out that I was a student. The older man started angrily shaking his head and waving his hand. He then proceeded to yell at me for several minutes:

I can't answer any questions for you. How am I supposed to know who you are? Why should I trust you? We are on the news, everywhere you look! Everywhere! We're always being watched. There are police at every corner, all around this entire complex. Everyone wants to defame us, show that we're terrorists, search

for terrorists. The U.S. is behind this, we know that. You're going to go back
there, tell people things, and they'll start making recommendations. Don't you
understand? *Recommend* things, try to change us. Even if you seem very nice,
even if your study is very general, I can't speak to you. You're better off speaking
to women, go to the mosque.

When I asked him where the mosque was, he pointed in two different directions that I didn't understand. In the course of his yelling at me, and my feeble attempts to respond, I think he started to feel sorry for me. But by the end of his tirade, I felt a mutual understanding. "It's okay, it's okay," I assured him. "I understand."

I walked out of his café, pretended like I didn't see the obvious drug deal in front of me, and headed for the bus terminal. I passed two women wearing the hijab on a bench. Although I was traumatized, I decided to ask them for directions to the mosque. They looked at me suspiciously and then silently pointed to an apartment building. I finally found the building and a big metal door, locked shut, with a small sign for the mosque. There was a posting for Arabic and Quranic courses for women and children. It had a phone number on it, which I wrote down. Later, when I called the number and inquired about the courses, the woman who answered kept asking me repeatedly, "Who are you?" I answered her several times but doubt that I relieved her suspicion. She reluctantly told me to come to the mosque next Tuesday.

Thus, I finally made it inside this "basement mosque" (*mosquée de cav*), began to attend the prayers and classes, and very slowly began to know this small community of women who attended every week. From there, I made contacts with women at Mosquée Hasan, and my experiences there comprised a significant part of my research in Minguettes.

As my own experiences show, Minguettes is known for its hostility to researchers and journalists, who on occasion have had stones thrown at them by neighborhood youth. The climate of stigmatization has led to resentment of those who might seem to treat the neighborhood as a kind of zoo, to be observed and photographed. Early in the fieldwork, in another banlieue, I was taking a walk with Mounir. We were in a neighborhood of housing projects, five minutes from a small mosque. I saw a large spray-painted sign: "death to America." I pulled out my camera to take a picture when Mounir grabbed my hand and stopped me, explaining that I might easily have incited a confrontation with nearby youth who would suspect us of being journalists, state agents, or researchers. In time, I recognized the distrust of outsiders and the social code that involved keeping things private and insulated. I was also told by a resident that women are perhaps even more distrustful of outsiders or researchers, for fear of causing trouble for their husbands and sons.

When I found Farha's study circle, referenced at the beginning of the chapter, Farha and her students were thrilled to include me as well as to proselytize. This, however, was also not without obstacles. Farha's husband twice told me that she wasn't available, when she was. I had to convince him with great assertion that I'd received their contact information through his mother, which was true. After weeks of bumbling on all our parts, I was accepted. I found that they didn't care whether I was from the U.S. or anywhere, because they deeply believed that Islam had a universality that needed to be distilled from cultural factors and national boundaries.

All of this suspicion that I encountered was a defining factor of the area. Vénissieux, in which Les Minguettes is located, has become subject to surveillance in part because of its association with the growth of Salafist Islam. Indeed, Deputy André Gerin, who initiated the national commission on the burqa, is the former mayor of Vénissieux. Three major incidents have defined Les Minguettes in the last decade. The French arrests of two young men who were

sent to the Guantanamo prison camp occurred in Les Minguettes. (They were returned to France in 2004 and 2005, convicted in 2007 of criminal association, and released on appeal in 2009.) There were the arrests of several family members who ran a housing project mosque. Their apartment was raided as they were accused of having ties to Chechen militants. Their mosque, which I attended during the fieldwork, was left unorganized and stained by its ill-repute. Finally, Abdelkader Bouziane, the former imam of Mosquée Hasan, was deported in 2004 for posing a threat to public order, as I mentioned in Chapter 1. When I was doing my research at Mosquée Hasan a few years after the deportation, several people outside the mosque community told me with no doubt that there were state agents who attended the women's classes on a regular basis. I was initially incredulous that there was a spy among this group of women that I was coming to know. Eventually, when I saw the degree of privacy that each woman sought to maintain, it no longer seemed so outrageous. No matter how much we came to know and like each other, nobody ever really knew the private details of each other's lives. There was always an element of uncertainty and mistrust.

An underlying mistrust colored not only my initial entry into Minguettes and the general relationships inside the mosque, but it clearly defined the relationship to the state and law enforcement, as is well-known. Sumaiya, for example, often complained about raising her daughter in a neighborhood like Minguettes. Sumaiya had the usual complaints, such as the weekly burning of cars. "But you know, I understand why [our kids] riot," she reflected on the harassment of Maghrebi youth in the neighborhood. "The police are *constantly* bothering them. We hear stories all the time, and I saw it myself." She relayed various local stories of mysterious disappearances and even murders of Maghrebi youth. "You never know, but I really think— many of us do—that it's the police." The phenomenon of mistrust follows the collapse of civil society and heavy state intrusion. Hence, the increased importance of maintaining and protecting a private sphere.

But it was not always like this in Les Minguettes. Although it has been part of the deindustrializing, undesirable urban periphery for decades, it also enjoyed a period of intense social activism and flourishing civic associations during the 1980s and 90s, under Mitterand's socialist administration. This included Islamic associations as well as projects initiated by secular associations such as SOS-Racisme and DiverCité, active on behalf of immigrant rights. France's first and largest national demonstration for immigrant and racial justice was initiated in Les Minguettes in 1983. The demonstration, called "marche des beurs" by reporters, followed a series of riots in the neighborhood after a local teenager was injured by a policeman. Although few recall this event today, the name Les Minguettes continues to be attached to the memory of 1983. "There was so much hope back then," recalled Ahmed. "Today, it's all gone. There's nothing." Ahmed's popular Islamic youth association in Vénissieux had once hosted weekly activities including family events, scholarly tutoring, youth clubs/sports and after-school activities, and training in debate and public speaking. According to Ahmed, as local youth began feeling politically empowered, their presence appeared more threatening to André Gerin, then-mayor of Vénissieux. In the aftermath of 9/11 this network of Muslim activists was attacked by the state and placed under surveillance, eventually leading to their decline. Ahmed, like a number of former activists, was blacklisted throughout Lyon as a fundamentalist and potential terrorist. His defense of the two brothers who were sent to Guantanamo led to greater notoriety for him and a public confrontation with Mayor Gerin in which other Muslims were pitted against him. His association collapsed and today, said Ahmed, "I have a family now, kids to support. I

can't put my family at risk. For all of us, it became too hard to find work or even have respect. And I'm tired. I can't do it anymore." He mused:

> What did we want when we were younger? To get out of the banlieue. To be *le bon francais, avec la bonne baguette* [a respectable Frenchman with a baguette under his arm]. Now, there are exactly two structures left in Minguettes: the drug dealers and the mosques. And the mosque leaders are totally incompetent and uneducated. They don't have the means to be politically active or organized.

Ahmed's particular trajectory reflects the decline of Les Minguettes, its structures of civil society and the hopes that bonded together Islamic (as well as secular) associations. It also shows the precise mechanisms by which the state itself demoralized and broke apart networks of youth and Muslim leaders, leaving only a drug market and unorganized mosques in their wake.

The state's regulation of mosques and Muslim activists also coincided with the banning of the headscarf in schools and a growing discourse about the oppression of Muslim women. Conversations in mosques or covering one's hair were no longer considered private matters. In this context, reconfiguring and expanding the private sphere is a primary desire of antipolitics. Indeed, the most recent step in eroding the private sphere has been attacking the burqa. This did not come as a surprise to any of my informants. As Sara, a close informant who wore the niqab, stated: "It's starting again." Given this monitoring of Islamic practices, defense of the private sphere is among the only responses available to poor Salafist communities. In arguing that Salafist women seek a de-territorialized conception of the private sphere, I mean that the burqa is a private practice of the self that the women seek to carry with them into public space. To the state, the presence of the burqa in public space is harmful to the public and to the women themselves for promoting sectarianism, fundamentalism, and violence against women (National Assembly hearings 2009). What the women wear in their apartments is the only domain that the state really concedes as the private sphere.

In addition to the notion of de-territorializing the private sphere, there is also a reconfiguration of the private sphere toward the self and away from the domain of family life. This is perhaps expected in a context of the disintegration of urban, immigrant families. While the state is eager to enter the domain of the Muslim family by insisting that men are coercing women into wearing burqas, Salafist women are rejecting both the state and men (or any other family members) as their agents of liberation. Their private sphere is strictly about their individual relationship to God and requires, if necessary, expulsion of both the state and their families.[34]

Although this conflictual scenario in no way pertains to all of the women of Mosquée Hasan, it was not far into my research that it became abundantly clear that most of the women chose to wear the djelbab or the niqab—indeed, sometimes against the wishes of their husbands, parents, or brothers. While the question of whether or not women choose to wear the burqa permeates all national debates on the practice, many women of Mosquée Hasan were unmarried (and thus were not coerced into the practice by a husband) and/or came from non-religious families. Thus, the dominant trend at this mosque was precisely the opposite scenario that the French state and public continually evoke. For some women, misconceptions and disgust of the practice had painful personal consequences, especially when they occurred in the context of their own families. For example, Amina was a 29-year old woman of Algerian background, born and raised in France. Her particular story is full of regret and anxiety. Estranged from her family and currently unemployed, she lived alone in Vénissieux. Her family did not practice Islam, and her brother was abusive. She had minimal contact with her mother, who said to her (vis-à-vis

her djelbab), "you think anyone's going to want to marry you, dressed like that?" Although of Muslim origin, her family mocked her religious practice and offered her no material or other support.

Contrary to the popular image, there are also numerous women who assert their desire to wear the djelbab or niqab against their husband's will. Ahmed, the former activist from Minguettes, recounted the story of his good friend: "His wife insists on wearing the burqa, and it's driving him crazy. He finds it completely embarrassing." During a session at Mosquée Hasan, one woman, perhaps in her mid-30s, broke down crying in front of fifty of us students. She had a scarf roughly tied around her hair and was wearing a tight Moroccan robe (instead of a dejlbab), unusual among most of the students at Mosquée Hasan. "My husband doesn't want me to wear the hijab. He insults it, constantly criticizes me for wanting to wear it. Others make fun of it too. And I have a job in the [Vénissieux] city administration. I have to take it off for work— I don't have a choice. I don't know what to do." Unable to reconcile her desire to start a rigorous spiritual and religious practice with her external constraints, she said she was growing increasingly depressed.

Malika, one of the teachers at Mosquée Hasan, was concerned and troubled but insisted that the djelbab (and at least headscarf) is not optional but is obligatory. Whenever such stories or questions came up, she was sympathetic but firm.

> Remember, the Prophet's companions were always mocked and ostracized. They were even tortured. I can't be the judge of your decisions, but all I can say is that it's not a choice, we can't say no to God. You have to have courage to do what you believe. People laugh at me all the time. They get in my face and ask me aggressively why I do this. Try to explain very simply and directly, in a well-mannered way. But once they get aggressive or mock you, just leave it. Don't engage them. Just turn inward.

She then offered to give this particular woman the number of a sheikh in Saudi Arabia who could talk to her husband. (The general approach to these questions is to try every possible avenue to reconcile with one's spouse. If, ultimately, a husband obstructs his wife's Islamic practice, she has the right to demand a divorce.)

Salafist reconfiguration of the private sphere as increasingly oriented away from the family is also evident in the phenomenon of French conversions to Salafist Islam and "born again" experiences (Roy 2006). The standard line of explanation for the growth of Salafism is its appeal to the marginalized sons and daughters of immigrants in the declining working-class banlieues (Césari 2002). Having suffered the loss of cultural identity and exclusion by French society, these young men and women are drawn to Salafism for the many ruptures that it demands and celebrates—a rupture from family ties, street culture, and French (non-Muslim) society (Roy 2006). Disaffected youth of working-class banlieues, even those without an immigrant background, do not feel part of any culture or society and welcome the redefinitions that Salafism imposes on one's life.[35] It is argued that Salafi Islam in France reflects the detachment of ethnicity from Islam (Ibid. 2004, 2006). As Mélissa, one of numerous young French *converties* I knew, proclaimed: "I gave up everything. I left my family, everything I knew, when I embraced Islam."

This detachment of Islam from ethnicity is a dynamic process that is explicitly discussed in the mosque setting. For example, I witnessed the following discussion at Mosquée Hasan between Malika, who was teaching that day, and the students.

Student 1: What about a person who's Arab, Muslim, but doesn't pray or anything? But he fasts during Ramadan. Will he go to hell or heaven?

Malika: Nobody can say who goes to heaven or hell. But he doesn't believe? He doesn't have faith?

Student 1: No….

Malika: Then he's a *kafr*. There are Muslims with *weak* faith, and those who simply don't believe. If he doesn't believe in God, he's a *kafr*. It doesn't matter if you're Arab, or if your name is Muhammed or Abdullah.

Student 2: At another mosque I go to, the imam said that we shouldn't label people who were born Muslim as "kafrs."

Malika: Right now in France, unfortunately, you just do as you want, regardless of sunnah [the way of the Prophet]. If he *believes* but also sins, well, we have no right at all to call him a kafr. But you think that a non-believing Arab is more Muslim than a practicing Muslim whose family was Catholic or atheist? I don't believe that at all.

In this discussion, Malika makes clear her position that one's ethnic status has nothing to do with being a "believer." What matters instead is the state of her/his faith. As Malika discussed numerous times in her courses, they cannot take for granted their status as Muslims simply because they were born into Arab or Maghrebi families. This is something that distinguishes the Salafist movement from "folk" Islam and also from middle-class discourses that take a more ambiguous approach to the question of defining who is Muslim. Another way to understand this phenomenon is precisely through the notion of reconfiguring the private sphere. The status of being Muslim, for Salafists, is not linked to embracing a public or extended family but rather, an inward orientation and set of beliefs—which are inherently private. Families often only stand in the way of one's private relationship to God. Thus, the defense and expansion of the private sphere against an intrusive and paternalistic state is crucial to antipolitics. But here, women are engaged in an antipolitics against both the power of the state and sometimes, their families.

Retreating to the lairs of a moral community

The women I knew in Les Minguettes were not only barred from secondary education and employment (not legally, but effectively) but also frequently subjected to social ostracization. Poor Salafist women were retreating into the "lairs" (Konrad 1984: 203) of a semi-organized, private community to find moral support and refuge from the politicization of their practice and further in this case, from conflicts with the men in their lives. Although many women I met shared close emotional bonds with their Salafist husbands, there was a certain tension between men and women at Mosquée Hasan. The regular presence of numerous women at the mosque, amidst the very deliberate attempts to keep men and women segregated, produced problems from time to time. For example, several men were occasionally doing repair work on the mosque's façade outside the women's entrance, and there was a mutual annoyance that the gendered boundaries were being transgressed by each other's presence. I was told, second-hand, that a few men at the mosque resented the women's active organization and leadership at Mosquée Hasan.

In other situations, there were women who felt more competent to teach Islam than the male imams. Sumaiya, for example, sometimes snickered or shook her head during the Friday qhutbas. I recall one qhutba that was replete with dubious information. The imam lectured, "It's very important to choose a good wife, because this will influence the behavior of your children.

First, you have to clean yourself (…) and pray before you sleep with your wife. If you do so God will give you good children." Sumaiya looked at me and smiled knowingly. Eventually, she stopped attending the mosque for a while. She told me politely, "I really didn't like the imam. I don't think he always knew what he was saying."

Although the women had some conflicts with men and were isolated from much of society, their regular meetings at the mosque represented an attempt to build a supportive community especially in light of the marginalization they usually faced. The ethos of religious practice at both Mosquée Ennour and Hasan reflected this tension and sense of urgency. During prayers, for example, there was an obsessive focus on standing close together, shoulder to shoulder. At times I was nearly knocked over as women grabbed my arms, pulling me closer to them. I got the impression of a community huddling together, trying to protect itself. "There can't be any space between us [as per the Prophet's teachings]," I was told. "If we stay close together, the devil can't get past us." This sense of protection existed alongside the fundamental uncertainty and mistrust among the women that I discussed earlier. The women facilitated each other's spiritual path, shared teachings and ideas about Islam, and could empathize with each other over the stigma they confronted. All this was the case despite the absence of complete openness and trust.

The tendency toward refuge and support sometimes manifested itself through the phenomenon of spirit possessions, or possession by *jinns*. One Sunday, Yasmine, a young woman who regularly attended Mosquée Hasan, suddenly started speaking gibberish and shaking. This soon turned into screaming, weeping, tearing her clothes, and foaming at the mouth. Everyone was extremely frightened. Malika grabbed Yasmine and held her tightly. She loudly recited Ayat-ul-Kursi, an important verse and prayer in the Quran that is commonly recited for protection and blessings. Its recitation is thought to have the power to alter certain circumstances and diminish danger. With Malika firmly holding her, Yasmine calmed down. Malika explained that such evil spirits exist, though we do not know exactly why, and emphasized that we all had to sit closer together and surround this young woman in order to protect her. So the women moved further inward, forming a tight circle on the floor. The next week, Amel, another student, collapsed backwards onto my lap and was quivering and weeping. Even after we all worked to calm her, she continued to moan and fall over the next two hours. The teachers repeatedly explained:

> This sister is very sick. Just as God created humans, he also created a parallel race of spirits that we can't see. They come here precisely to scare us, to stop you from coming here. But inshaAllah [God willing] you will continue coming to the classes. Don't have fear of this sister, just pray for her.

I gently broached the subject with Nasreen, a woman who had some training in exorcism (*roqaya*). "How do we know [Amel] doesn't just have some illness in her head?" "No no, that's not Amel who's moaning and shaking, it's the jinn. Amel isn't actually like this in everyday life. But look what courage she has to keep coming here. I had a friend who was coming to the classes last year when she got possessed. She got so frightened and couldn't handle it. She left and never came back." My own bias was to consider these episodes as a physical release of stress, a channeling of personal stress into a more religiously acceptable form that then attracts attention and sympathy. But whatever the reality, these episodes clearly served to tighten the community, as we were all encouraged to keep coming to the mosque and to sit closer together.

While the women gave and received moral and religious support, there was little they were able to share in terms of their material prospects. Because of their djelbabs, Salafist women

in Minguettes faced both economic and social ostracization. Few employers hire women who wear the hijab, let alone the djelbab. The reality of unemployment, especially for the unmarried women, was an everyday obstacle and source of stress. Most of the unmarried women I knew were searching work as domestic workers, one of the few jobs in which they might be allowed to wear their hijabs or djelbabs. Amina, presented earlier, was searching for work and growing increasingly depressed by her situation. She would often convey to me the benefits of rigorous Islamic practice but was mortified to admit to me one day that she couldn't quit her cigarette addiction because of her depression. One Ramadan night at the mosque she had to slip out to have her cigarette. (The status of smoking in Islam is unclear. Mainstream Muslims do not consider it sinful, while the Salafist community I knew claims it is sinful for being wasteful and unhealthy.) I found myself in an odd scenario, following her in the dark and rain to find a secret place where she could indulge. We whispered in the dark outside an apartment entrance, she in her black djelbab and with her pack of Marlboros. I then found myself having to spray her djelbab with an entire half-bottle of eau-de-toilette to cover up the smell. "What can I say," she said. "I'm depressed. I don't have a job, I'm alone, so I sit around all day and chain-smoke. We all have our own path. But please, don't tell anyone at the mosque." With Amina's financial troubles, she was anxious to marry so that she could depend on a spouse to work. Marriage, although encouraged more generally in Islam and especially among Salafists, represented a practical solution to the impossibility of working and wearing the hijab. If gossip spread that despite appearances she was in fact a chain-smoker, her reputation in the mosque communities would be tarnished and she would have trouble finding a husband.

Amina was able to subsist on her unemployment benefits after being laid off by a telephone company, but the benefits were to terminate in a few months. She would then live on welfare assistance of 450 euros per month, and her rent was 250 euros. She was starting to worry as the deadline was approaching, "but then I remember that God is guiding me and I shouldn't have fear. Malika always tells us not to worry, to trust God. That's what I'm trying to do. It always feels good to hear her say that." Amina, like several other women, had come to depend on the moral support and weekly routine of coming to Mosquée Hasan. When classes were occasionally canceled, she was exceptionally disappointed.

The economic exclusion poor Salafist women experience is also related to their estrangement from the education system. A significant number of young women I met at Mosquée Hasan had dropped out of high school when the 2004 law against the headscarf in public schools was passed. While taking the metro after class, I had a conversation with Fatima, a French-Algerian woman who dropped out of high school after her first year. We spoke softly in each other's ears, two pariahs well-attuned to others' perceptions of us.

> **Parvez:** I hate being stared at like this. Do you find it difficult?
> **Fatima:** Yes of course. But I don't even see it anymore. I don't feel bad anymore. This is really something beginners feel. In the beginning I used to see it, they thought I was weird, or crazy. Then I realized that it's *them*. They're the ones that are crazy, that have a problem.
> **Parvez:** Was it your decision to drop out of school, or your parents'?
> **Fatima:** It was me. I got tired of taking [the scarf] on and off [at the entrance to school], and I started feeling really uncomfortable. I explained to my mom that I didn't want to go anymore. She was disappointed, but she understood. You know there's been a crisis here over the last five years [over this issue]. So I just dropped out. I fell out of touch with the world of school and students.

But I actually started working as a housecleaner with a bureau [in the banlieue], and I don't have to take off my hijab. I know how things work now, and I can navigate the world of work. My life is full. I have free time, but I stay busy with my Islamic study.

At 22, Fatima had already gone through years of personal struggle over her decisions and gradual turn toward a rigorous Islamic practice. She took some pride in earning money as a housecleaner, but even this was fraught, as she complained to me that the other women with whom she shared her duties were rude to her. "One of them is a Maghrebine [of Algerian origin and non-practicing Muslim]. Sometimes they're the worst. She sneers at me while we work. I try to ignore her. I'm trying to transfer to something where I can just work alone, in peace." Fatima's sense of alienation from French society was something she balanced with her study of Islam. The courses at Mosquée Hasan provided consistent structure and meaning to her. "Twice a week is good, twice a week is okay," she mumbled to herself as we were driving to her apartment: two sessions were just enough to carry her through each week.

For Fatima and her older sister, Sara, who also quit high school, their intensive study of Islam was an important and satisfying replacement of their secular education, but they would have liked to have finished high school or pursue a university education if their religious practice was tolerated. During one of the classes at Mosquée Hasan, a student asked to what degree it was acceptable to pursue science and higher studies in the absence of the larger goal of promoting Islam. The teacher had been discussing the compatibility of scientific knowledge with Islam. She gave an ambiguous response to the question, citing "only God knows [the relationship between worldly knowledge and spiritual advancement]." "But we all know," the teacher reminded everyone, "that for us [in France], it's not even an option."

Alongside the marginality of unemployment and poverty is the constant social stigma of wearing the hijab. Being stared or jeered at in public, on the streets or in public transit, is an experience to which all of the women I knew became accustomed. I witnessed this on numerous occasions. For example, I was walking to a grocery store with Caroline, a French *convertie* who wore the djelbab. Her exceptionally petite frame often appeared drowned by her brown djelbab. She stood out in public, but she seemed nonchalant to the many stares she would get. We were standing at a pedestrian crossing in Minguettes when I saw two men in a truck pointing at her and laughing. I felt infuriated, but she didn't care. On another occasion, I was waiting for the tram with Amina and Nasreen, both of whom wore the djelbab. A woman physically pushed Amina as she was about to board the tram. I was confused as to what exactly happened and was in disbelief. "You *really* think it's because of your djelbab?" I asked. "Absolutely, there's no doubt. She's just trying to provoke me. They really have hate." She and Nasreen explained for my benefit that this was simply part of their everyday lives.

Fatima's older sister, Sara, had a particularly strong sense of upset with the attitude toward Muslims in France. Sara in fact chose to wear the niqab and would thus be directly impacted by any possible banning of the burqa. A week after I had met her, one of the local banks in Minguettes put up a sign on the door with an image of a woman in a niqab with an 'X' through it. Sara remarked: "I was expecting this. But what's most upsetting is that it's other Muslims who are doing this. They're sell-outs. I hate the fact that they're the ones who represent us [to the state], who speak for us. Actually, they don't represent us [in the banlieues] at all." Sara was criticizing the few Muslim associations and institutions like the Paris Mosque (la Grand Mosquée de Paris) that announced their support for the commission to debate the burqa.

Both Sara and Fatima remember clearly the attacks on the hijab when the 2004 headscarf law was being debated. I asked Sara what she would do if there would ever be a ban on the burqa either in public institutions or elsewhere. "I'm going to get out of here. My husband and I are looking into getting a house in Algeria. We can't take it here in France anymore. I spent a year in Egypt a few years ago and was so much happier being in a Muslim country." Over time I lost track of the number of people, both men and women, who claimed they were exhausted with their stigma and would be happier in a Muslim society. As Fatima said, "ultimately, we have to move back to a Muslim country. You see the way people look at us and hate us. Why put up with that?" When I asked her if she would miss France, she reflected for a moment. "Yes, I'll miss the euro," she said. "But then I don't need much in life to be happy." She laughed, "our parents left Algeria for France, and thirty years later, their kids want to leave France for Algeria." While many Salafist Muslims do find ways to emigrate to places like Egypt or Yemen, at least temporarily, for others it's not realistic. As Fatima admitted, adjusting to a poor country like Algeria might prove too difficult despite the poverty and marginality they experience in France. Interestingly, when Fatima left to spend the month of Ramadan in Algeria, she was contacting me nearly every few days inquiring about the group and classes at Mosquée Hasan, which she was sorely missing. Students like Fatima had come to depend on the teachings that became central to the creation of this moral community and, I argue, to the public disengagement and autonomous refuge that defines their antipolitics.

Achieving serenity in a "life of suffering"

In this section I present the prevailing themes of several months of the women's classes at Mosquée Hasan. I found that these were largely oriented toward patience (*sabr*) in the face of suffering and how to find happiness in a life defined intrinsically by suffering (*la vie musibah*). In my experience with both middle-class mosques and Islam in working-class banlieues, this focus on life's temporality and the fact of suffering was unique to the Salafist community in the poorer mosques. With the absence of strong Islamic civil societies in the banlieues, major obstacles to economic stability, and disintegrating families, the mosque's continual messages of patience (*sabr*) and serenity spoke directly to the bleak situations of many of the women. For Salafist women, trusting divine will, and thus developing serenity, was presented as key to augmenting one's faith. This often served the purpose of alleviating the women's anxieties and regrets. "Everything is in God's hands," Malika would say. "Once you accept this, *apply* this, stop living in the domain of the imagination [imaginary fears], then you can sleep in tranquility," she'd say with a lull (*tu peux dormir traaaaanquil…*).

In order to achieve perfect faith, one must continually work to reform her heart and in doing so, she privileges her private and inner state. Indeed, the private and personal nature of one's faith was often emphasized: it was considered prohibited to boast about one's Islamic practice such as fasting and charity or to even assume that one has purity of heart.[36] Wearing the djelbab, for example, was viewed as obligatory but no guarantee of one's inner state of faith. Contrary to local stereotypes of Salafists as obsessed only with outward practice and vesture, Malika stated to me, "look, I never judge anyone for their practice. I don't know why others think we're obsessed with the djelbab. It's only one practice. You can have the perfect outward practice but have no faith, and vice versa."

The ultimate goal of reforming and 'nourishing' one's heart, attempted through prayer and practice, was feeling love of God. This was the key to having complete faith as a Muslim. The feeling of love is a nebulous concept in this context, and the women frequently asked

questions about what it meant. The teachers emphasized that it is never a simple matter of outward practice, but rather a state of heart that one achieves or with which one might be blessed. Deep compassion, for example, exists in the heart and is an important religious virtue that reflects love of God. But no one really knows the state of her own heart, or that of others. Dalel, one of the teachers at Mosquée Hasan, repeatedly told the story of a Jewish woman (at the time of the Prophet Muhammed) who was a prostitute. As recounted in the sayings (*hadith*) of the Prophet, this woman offered a bowl of water to a sick dog one day though she, herself, was suffering from thirst. According to the Prophet, all her sins were forgiven based on this one act of compassion. "But," Dalel was quick to remind us:

> Not everyone glorifies God through compassion in the heart, as she did, though she didn't know it. It's a function of what's in the heart of each individual. Everyone is particular. To be forgiven for a grand sin like adultery, for example, you have to regret (*tawba*) and commit good acts. But both regret and good acts are weak, if they are weak in your heart.

The women often discussed what it meant to have regret. The state of regret (for a sin) is said to be accepted by God only when sincere. Thus, there are specific practices, prayers, and reforms in one's daily life to demonstrate regret, yet it is only when one *really feels* the remorse that the sin might be forgiven.

The students would frequently ask: how does one go about reforming her heart? The ambiguous answer reflected a mix of physical practice, good acts, and prayer—specifically supplications to ask God to strengthen one's faith. Indeed, there were moments when the women explored the details of physical practice in great detail, with a sense of anxiety. But there was clear acknowledgement that excessive detail about comportment can be negative. Dalel one day fielded numerous specific questions about the act of physical prostration in asking for forgiveness. Finally, she dismissed the questions: "Look, above all, in prayer you should be full of happiness. It's something primordial. My sisters, be careful about getting so caught up in details that you forget what's in fact primordial."

In addition to good acts and prayer, one's heart is strengthened through the enactment of *sabr* (patience) and trust in divine will in the face of life's adversities and ultimately, the fact of mortality.

> To not accept the fact of death, to actually blame God, is sinful and ignorant. It's like taking the characteristics of non-believers inside of us. The act of lamentation is a contradiction of *sabr*. The word, sabr, derives from the word for 'imprisoning.' Imagine, if something tragic occurs, you can lose control and act crazy, throw yourself on the ground. Imagine instead that you draw your arms toward you, turn inward, and 'imprison' or enclose that part of you, and stay calm. Sabr is like a medicine that is bitter but delivers sweetness and serenity. Especially in our Arab countries, when someone dies, you see women tearing their clothes and screaming, "woe is me!" To hit yourself, tear your clothes, is not permitted. Only God gives life, and only God can take it.

The achievement of patience and the 'imprisoning' of grief is part of maintaining one's dignity, that I argue extends to all situations of suffering.

It is often through trial that one is challenged to enact patience and achieve a stronger state of heart. One woman asked Malika, "what if I think God tests me more than I deserve to be tested? I didn't sin that much after all." Malika responded, "we don't have the right to proclaim

ourselves or anyone else as sinners or non-sinners. God tests the state of our hearts, and that's all. Why do we suffer maladies? The Prophet said, 'to test our hearts.' And why? 'To elevate our rewards.' Despite the agony, the recompense will be even greater." Faridah, a French convertie, asked, "but how do you practice patience? How can I make it work?" "For example, through language," Malika responded. "Don't ever complain and lament your situation. Supplications, ask God continually to open your heart and help you develop patience."

The idea of never complaining fit a larger pattern of teachings around speech and social interaction. Specifically, through discussion of the Prophet's teachings, a number of behaviors were considered sinful, including gossip, probing personal questions, questions or comments designed to embarrass someone, lies, and spreading information of which one is unsure. "In general," said Dalel, "it's not good to talk too much. If I talk a lot, about anything and everything, I forget all remembrance of God." During my research it was not until I processed this message about speech and social behavior that I better understood the culture of this mosque community. Like most observers, I shared the tendency to view burqa-clad women as unsociable. I learned, however, that many of the women simply tried to incorporate these messages into their comportment with the goal of attaining sabr and dignity. Maintaining a degree of privacy and silence was essential to their relationship to God. While this is true to their teachings, at the same time it is difficult to entirely disentangle the phenomenon from their fear of surveillance and lack of social trust.

With many of the mosque teachings centering on *sabr* in the face of adversity, even tragedy, this begged the question of whether or not it was possible to attain joy in *la vie musibah* ("this life of suffering"). Malika herself posed this question and indeed, devoted much of her sessions to addressing it, employing the writings of Sheikh Sa'di from a small booklet entitled *Les Clefs pour une Vie Heureuse* (Keys to a Happy Life). Many of us diligently clutched a copy of this book on a regular basis. She lectured:

> It *is* possible to find happiness in this life of suffering (*musibah*). In sadness and misfortune, what is the path of [Muslim] believers? That when there is joy, you *recognize* it, you feel it in your heart. Only real believers recognize that these blessings come from God, that we have our eyes and ears, we can eat and drink. We can hope for other things in this life, but it is *obligatory* to be satisfied with everything that God gives us, even misfortunes, even grand catastrophes. My father, in Algeria, he's an old man and poor. But he's serene. You see smiles on the faces of all these poor old people in our countries [Maghreb]. Not here in France. The more riches they attain, the more they are full of worries. For all humans, it's innate to seek the way of peace. But we have the aid of God and faith. We recognize joy, and that it comes from God. This is the main difference between believers and non-believers [*kafrs*].

According to Malika and other teachers, it is only through love of God and patience that one might attain happiness (*la vie heureuse*) and embody the state of being Muslim. For this community of women this was particularly meaningful, given the multitude of obstacles in their lives, discussed earlier. Malika, herself, had a 10-year old daughter who was mentally and physically disabled. I sometimes saw her around Les Minguettes in a cheap wheelchair, and several of us would affectionately help her with schoolwork when she came to the mosque. Malika's own background thus made her lectures on serenity and faith more compelling.

She, Leila (another teacher), and Dalel addressed topics such as the importance of living in the present moment, forgetting the past, and not worrying about the future. Again, the

emphasis on such themes spoke to the anxieties and fears that daunted many of the women. In the passage below the teacher reminded the women that they cannot control their life paths and must continually practice a type of discipline in order to have faith in God and thus, serenity. It also lists the women's common worries, including having children and unemployment. Finding a husband was a persistent worry, as most local Muslim men had unstable jobs or none at all.

> You have to always work on yourself. If your heart has peace, then anguish and sadness disappear. You don't have work, you're worried about the future, your retirement, what'll you do when you're sixty? Or you don't have children, a husband, and worry about who'll take care of you when you're old. But we can't know the future. Only God knows—*no one* else can access this. An individual can't do anything to intervene other than work on herself. And we don't even know—we could die before any of these situations present themselves. So don't waste time worrying about what you may never confront.

The following two passages, each from different occasions, address the importance of letting go of past grievances and fear. Fear was often presented as a temptation of the devil, intended to lead one away from faith in God and the present moment and toward sickness.
The fourth point we discussed about the good life is to forget unpleasant things from the past. What does this mean? It doesn't mean to be amnesiac. To be human means we're constituted by our past. You can't *forget* but you don't want sadness to resurface. You have to make an effort in your heart, make an effort to close the door, struggle against the sadness when it tries to resurface.

> Faith is an act of the heart—so don't let it fall into the domain of imagination. As soon as an individual falls into the domain of illusion, he's going to fall into nervous depression and sickness of the heart. Generally, the origins of our fears have no reason. How many people, in their minds, *imagine* problems? A mother doesn't cultivate her child's fear of darkness but tries to get him to understand that it's imaginary. You sleep alone at night, you hear a noise, and your imagination runs wild. Or the fear of losing your child is so strong that you're too anxious at the park—you worry he'll disappear when in fact, he's right there at your side. This type of fear brings anguish, sickness, in some cases hypochondria. If you trust in God, all sickness of the heart and body can disappear. There'll be a sense of peace in your chest and a joy that's indescribable. God is the creator of the sun, the moon, the earth—and so I place my faith in [him] instead of all else. This is sufficient.

This particular lecture demonstrates the utmost importance placed on one's individual relationship with God. When Malika discussed trusting God above all else, she explicitly referred to other systems of belief, other people, technologies, and the state.

Given the predominance of these themes in the women's courses at Mosquée Hasan, it was clear to me that the women were working to achieve a state of perfect faith (*la foi complète*), and this revolved around their ability to attain serenity and conquer their fears. Thus, their spiritual conditions—of which wearing the djelbab is an important component—were of greater importance than the reality of their material lives or political status.

Conclusion

The Islamic revival occurring in the declining, working-class banlieues of Lyon is a form of *antipolitics*, the use and glorification of private life as a substitute for democratic political participation—in a context of simultaneous state usurpation and defeat of Islamic civil societies and politicization of Islamic practice. I presented the larger context of precarity that shapes the lives of my religious informants, their isolated pockets of religious activity, the sterility of a neighborhood like Les Minguettes, and the anxieties over work, self-employment, and citizenship status. While this precarity is the context of both Salafist women and men, there seemed to be a more public orientation to the men's religious movement, whereby men meet in public spaces and have engaged in local projects of socio-moral reform.

But among the women I knew, the movement had a very individual and private orientation. I discussed three components of their antipolitics. First, they were in struggle to defend and expand their private sphere. Their notion of private life extended even into the family and their relations with men which were sometimes strained. I recounted the persistent barriers to entry and suspicion I initially encountered that clued me in to the importance of the private sphere and the legacy of surveillance and security efforts. The lack of social trust that underlies the defense of the private follows the collapse of Islamic civil societies. Second, women were retreating into a moral community, attempting to create such a community despite the lack of openness and trust. Their mosque space served as a refuge and source of support amidst daily and pervasive ostracization and estrangement from employment and education. Finally, their primary goal was achieving serenity, as more important than material life and any sense of politics. Their teachings emphasized patience (*sabr*) and contentment in the face of all forms of suffering as well as the overcoming of fear. Each of these three practices brings the women back to their individual relationship to God and to protection of their private lives and selves. Antipolitics in the banlieues is a preservation of faith in an era of ruthless politicization and state control.

The women in the political communities of Hyderabad I recounted were also politicized, in their stigma as "victims" of shariah and more violently, in their reality as the wives and mothers of men who faced police harassment and torture. But as I showed in the last chapter, they are surrounded by a powerful community of elites that draw them into the politics of redistribution. Elites encourage worldly political communities and offer some protections and guidance in navigating their relationship to the state. These are benefits and protections that are absent for the women I knew of Les Minguettes. In the final chapter of Part II, I turn to Lyon's middle-class Muslim worshippers and activists. Facing their own political battles and marginalization, they remain busy in a state-directed politics of recognition—a politics that has done little to lessen their estrangement from Salafist Muslims in the *quartiers*.

Chapter 7: Politics of Recognition

For a brief period, it became my routine to stop by one of my local alimentaires for my baguette and banter with Zied, the shop owner. He sat behind the counter all day, making running commentaries about politics, grumbling about the arrogant bourgeois locals, and blaring old Egyptian pop songs from his little radio. Every time I saw him, he complained about French "racists" and their hatred of Islam. A man in a business suit walked in for a bottle of water and newspaper. "But *he's* not a racist! He's one of the good ones!" Zied shook with laughter, pointing at his regular customer who blushed and nodded at me. "Yeah, well, I definitely find it hard to wear the hijab here," I said later. "I know," he said. "My wife," he put his hand to his heart and then lifted it proudly into a fist, "she wears the veil."

Whenever there were no customers, he would lean in and lower his voice, frequently glancing out the door to make sure no one else could hear him. "They keep us [*musulmans*] weak, you know." "Even though you have so many mosques, so many associations?" I asked. "But there aren't enough! And we're all divided." He excitedly grabbed two coins and a pencil from his cash register to illustrate. "The government said, you here are Algerian [*sliding one coin*]; you here are Tunisian [*another coin*]; and you over there are Moroccan [*pencil*]. And oh boy did they *hate* the Algerians!"

Zied had lived in Lyon for over 50 years, having emigrated from Tunisia as a child. I asked him why his family left Tunisia, especially since he found life in France so hostile. He answered me sheepishly, "Our neighbor moved to France, and he'd come back and visit, wearing nice suits and carrying packs of Marlboros. Then everyone started scrambling to leave." I met two of Zied's cousins, who also left Tunisia many years ago. One of them, Aziz, was unemployed and would come by the shop. While none of them had much money, they all had avoided life in the quartiers. Aziz said that when they arrived it wasn't exceptionally difficult to get an apartment in Lyon, and they didn't have anyone to support, as they were bachelors. "I knew my kids would get corrupted if we lived in the quartiers. I did my best to avoid it." Zied teased another white customer, dressed in a suit, as he sold him a case of beer. "And voilà, *he's* not a racist! Hey, when are you going to find a job for Aziz?" Another evening as we were chatting about where to go for the end of Ramadan prayers, he introduced me to another cousin, Ramzi, a car mechanic. Ramzi was sitting in a van outside with a hookah and clearly drunk or high. As Zied tried to convince me that Barack Obama was really a Muslim, Ramzi was slurring, "There are *five* holy books, the Torah, the Bible, the Quran…." He tried to count on his fingers. "But Muslims don't know anything, we don't practice, even me, look at me." His words petered out.

Zied and his entourage were amusing characters, but their stories and relationship to Islam and to bourgeois France spoke volumes to me about their contradictory experiences and practices of religion, their political attitudes, and how passionately they felt about their perceptions of discrimination. Indeed, this dynamic was not an uncommon experience I had whenever I walked into Muslim-owned shops. At least two times, if the Muslim owner suspected or asked if I was Muslim, he would tell me not to purchase certain products because they contained lard. If I ever took a taxi to a mosque, the Maghrebi driver would invariably start confessing to me that he doesn't practice Islam and feels guilty. When I wore the hijab, I sometimes received comments from Maghrebi strangers. Once in the Vénissieux subway station, a TCL transport worker approached me, "oh it's so difficult, your hijab, but it's good, it's good [*ça fait plaisir, ça fait plaisir*]". Because I was often on guard, I wasn't very sure if he was

mocking me or being serious. With or without my hijab, I had numerous encounters, involving strangers, with everyday Islam and discrimination. One regrettable incident involved a university woman who came to meet me at my apartment when I was interviewing babysitters for my young son. She wore the headscarf and was of Maghrebi background. My son happened to be crying at the moment, and she spoke sweetly to him, "oh I know you're scared of my scarf! It's ok, I'll take it off, don't cry." I assured her it wasn't at all an issue. When I called to let her know that I wouldn't be hiring her (certainly for other reasons), her tone and brief words made it so clear that she was accustomed to being rejected, presumably because of her hijab. I had heard from several friends that "under-qualified" was a euphemism for veiled. The three words that I heard countless times across the spectrum with regard to Islam in France were the following: "it's so hard" [*c'est très dur*].

During my longest period of fieldwork, I lived in a neighborhood close to downtown Lyon but right adjacent to rue Paul Bert, full of halal butcheries, Islamic bookstores, and numerous North African shops. At any given moment, there were women in burqas wandering over to the Islamic bookstore, flyers for Islamic events and organizations, cars blasting music, and young Maghrebi men eyeing the non-hijabi women shopping and running errands. All of these details comprised the everyday Islamic culture that I knew in Lyon: vibrant, full of contradictions, in constant confrontation with discrimination, and existing side by side with profane and secular life.

Such details are the backdrop for what I argue is the centrality of recognition and recognition claims among broadly middle-class Muslim worshippers. The *politics of recognition*, like the politics I described in Chapter 5, encompasses middle-class relationships to the state, to each other, and to Muslims in the working-class banlieues. Middle-class associations and activists are divided roughly by those who invite and accommodate the state in the struggle to achieve recognition and those who take a more militant approach in their opposition to the state. Both sections, together, are estranged from Salafists in the quartiers. Unlike the case in Hyderabad, there exists a real rupture between recognition and redistribution, with the latter having virtually no place in the politics of Islam.

This chapter presents mainstream Islamic organizations in Lyon as well as those that are highly critical of them and of their obedience to the state. I will show their overall trajectory of a rise and fall with regard to their connection to working-class Muslims in the banlieues as well as their dislike of Salafism. Similarly to the activists in Hyderabad, there's a certain political disposition that underlies the dominant type of politics here. I end the chapter with illustrations of four individuals whose experiences show the split political dispositions that were central to recognition politics, one marked by disenchantment (due to nonrecognition) and the other by continued desire for "integration."

A profile of mainstream Islamic associations

The Islamic organizations and two major mosques that I attended from time to time were oriented mostly toward reinforcing Muslim identity and facilitating Islamic piety. Their project of ensuring the future of Islamic identity and practice in France was intertwined with managing their relations with the state and struggling for religious rights and respect. A few of these associations are connected to l'Union des Organizations Islamique en France (UOIF), an umbrella organization founded in 1983 and comprised of over 200 religio-cultural associations (Bowen 2007). Many of Lyon's Islamic activists were at some point involved with l'UOIF, arguably the most popular national Islamic organization, though some were also very critical of

it. One long-time activist referred to l'UOIF as his "first love" and felt very strongly and optimistically that it would facilitate the integration and creation of French Islam.

Nearly all of the associations I knew were led by young Muslims in their twenties and thirties with a keen sense of their right to French identity. For example, l'EMF (*Étudiants Musulmans de France*), a national student group, tries to ease everyday life and help Muslim students manage discrimination in their universities. In one instance there had been a recent case of racial profiling at one of the city's medical campuses where the administration held the identity cards of a number of "foreign looking" students. EMF became involved in defending the students. The group is an incarnation of an association that was formed by students from the Maghreb in 1989. It changed its name in 1996 and has been active in Lyon only since 2001. EMF is self-funded with annual fees and offers some financial assistance to students such as meals and help in finding housing. Interestingly, as one of its leaders made clear to me, the group is socio-cultural above all else and does not engage in religious activity. Social gatherings and sporting events comprise the bulk of its public activities. Yet it upholds its status as Muslim, drawing students into the association based on the idea of a distinctive identity that must be recognized and protected regardless of religiosity.

Other associations likewise cater to youth identity and focus on cultural events but usually with religious components. JMF (Jeunes Musulmans de France) is a part of l'UOIF and holds numerous sporting events, usually promoted through the mosque. When I was there l'UOIF leaders were starting a program to choose 25 students (boys and girls) that they would groom to become JMF leaders. They would receive two years of training in prayer, Arabic, and Islamic law.

Among Lyon's more popular associations is l'Union des Jeunes Musulmans de France, the Union of Young Muslims (l'UJM), a twenty-year old association that has undergone many changes throughout its existence. According to my informants, in its early years, members of l'UJM were strict in their religious practice and disdainful of those who engaged in things like smoking or co-ed mixing. It has since sought to widen its network and welcome those with a variety of relationships to Islam. Like all other organizations, it operates entirely though donations. It holds cultural events, religious activities, and also numerous conferences and lectures around political issues. Themes range from the compatibility of Islam and democracy to how to live in a *laïque* society to the role of women in the Palestinian struggle. L'UJM also facilitates all-night religious sessions that include prayers, discussions, and Quranic explications. Most prominently, it created a publishing house and bookstore in 1999. The bookstore, Tawhid, is not far from downtown Lyon and attracts several passersby everyday. Tawhid is a peaceful respite for those involved with the organization. In my time in Lyon, I would come by to converse with the volunteers and browse their impressive book collections that spanned topics of everyday piety as well as the domestic and global politics around Islam.

While Tawhid has held Islamic classes since 1999, it began housing a formal educational program in 2006 known as Le Centre Shatibi. Volunteers had been making preparations for the Center for a year in order to professionalize the program and give it public visibility. They were planning for a 3-year Islamic education program that included Arabic language, Quranic recitation (*tajwid*), and Islamic sciences (history, sharia, ethics) and hoping for an annual enrollment of 40 students. Tuition is required in order to adequately compensate the Islamic teachers, who tend to be poorly paid. The Center consults with some well-known imams in the area as well as with Tariq Ramadan and Hani Ramadan, who taught a series of courses there.

In addition to these associations, there are dozens of mosques throughout Lyon and its immediately surrounding neighborhoods. Lyon's Grand Mosque (la Grande Mosquée de Lyon) was inaugurated in 1994 with the financial backing of several Muslim countries and after many years of opposition. In addition to housing daily prayers, it offers children's and adult classes, children's performances, special lectures, Ramadan prayers and Eid festivals, as well as a recently created social service section that manages requests for emergency assistance from Muslim families. The mosque also collects donations for Palestinian children, orphans, and victims of natural disasters. Over the last decade it has sent many thousands of euros abroad. I attended a summer barbeque at the Mosque that drew several hundred people and included youth events, outdoor stalls, and an evening lecture titled, "Spiritual elevation in artistic expression." This was followed by a nearly sold-out *anasheed* performance (Islamic vocal music).

The other mosque I attended more frequently was Mosquée Hijra, located in a lower middle-class and working-class area adjacent to Lyon. Many Hijra attendees are also connected to Tawhid, and the mosque tends to be managed by a relatively young group of educated Muslim worshippers who are politically engaged and proud of their simultaneously Muslim and French belongings. Mosquée Hijra shares similar programs as the Grand Mosque and like Tawhid, it hosts monthly conferences with academics and religious scholars or imams that address practical and spiritual religious issues but also political debates such as voting and the civic obligations of Muslims. It has also on occasions encouraged demonstrations against anti-Muslim gestures such as by Le Front National.

Mosquée Hijra is also closely connected to CRCM (*Le Conseil Régional du culte musulman-Rhône Alps*), the regional branch of CFCM, whose 2003 top-down creation I discussed in Chapter 2. Because CRCM is by mandate engaged with the state, the mosque also participates in political debates about Islam in France. Some of these are critical of state discourses and outspoken against "Islamophobia." Indeed, since CRCM's inception, it seems to have become more vocal in its opposition to state discourses. The president of CRCM has publicly criticized the ruling party's recent proposal (April 2011) to have a national debate on Islam's compatibility with laïcité. He has published in mainstream newspapers and facilitated a collective struggle against anti-Islam politics (*La commission de lutte contre l'islamophobie*) that is taking place in the mosque. However, there is also a rather mainstream bent to CRCM and l'UOIF-affiliated groups that others critique. Generally, mainstream associations tend to engage the language of integration, insist on the peaceful and law-abiding nature of the vast majority of Muslims, and accept the idea that Muslims must conform to the requirements of laïcité.

The regular worshippers I met at Mosquée Hijra walked a line between lamenting the political weakness and subservience of mainstream associations while also bearing loyalty to them and taking pride in their own "integration." Their religious teachings reflected this awareness of the need to reconcile regular Islamic practice with their role as French citizens, marked by the global stigma of Islam. For example, one of the last talks I attended there was a lecture by a well-known sheikh titled "Love of God." The mosque was packed with hundreds of attendees, and we all sat in silence listening to the sheikh lecture about whittling Islam down to the basic sentiment of love for God, in a world in which outward religious practice was increasingly difficult.

> Our Prophet knew that in a materialistic society, people needed to be [spiritually] educated. But when there's too much information [like today], we have to just take what's essential. Love of God is the most efficacious practice. It's not *extremism* but rather, liberation—liberation from one's self. And how do you

achieve this? Take the time to contemplate the concept of compassion [*rahim, one of the names for God*], the greatest force that will manifest on the Last Day. Read the Quran, not just with rhythm but also with *heart*. It's fine to understand what's halal and haram [permitted and prohibited], but this doesn't really get at *knowing* God, of love. The great companions [*saheba*] of the Prophet weren't grand theologians but they understood the essential.

Although issues of halal, haram, and practices like tawjid (recitation) are certainly central components of any mosque teachings, the approach here is much more attuned to the notion of living in a laïque society, even avoiding the supposed dangers of Islamic religious thinking (such as "extremism"). Achieving spirituality is the primary goal. In other words, religious discourses tend to encompass some awareness of the need for recognition by the state and public.

Inviting, accommodating, and protesting the state

Although many people I knew lamented the weakness, divisions, and disorganization of Lyon's field of Islamic associations, there is still a level of political action that very clearly lacks among residents of areas like Les Minguettes, for example. The first set of activities is part of a politics of recognition merely by necessity and includes negotiations with municipal administrators toward mosque and Islamic school approval. When I was there, CRCM's president had just completed negotiations with the Vénissieux municipality to finally approve the construction of a mosque catering to the Turkish community. The project had been obstructed by the municipality in some form or another for twelve years. CRCM and major mosques are always in a delicate dance with mayoral authorities to assuage public fears of Islam and ensure cooperation with public events. For example, each year a mayoral delegation or deputy visits the Eid prayer gathering at the end of Ramadan in a show of support. (This is not an uncommon practice in many secular countries.) I attended a prayer organized by Mosquée Hijra in a public gym and attended by several hundred to a thousand worshippers. The mayor of the town (outside of Lyon) visited at the end of the prayer. He took to the microphone and wished the attendees a happy Eid and was thanked for his cooperation by the organizers. For some, as I will discuss, this type of political gesturing on the part of Muslims is hypocritical and subservient; for others, it is required.

For one of my close informants, Hakim, attaining cooperative relations with local government is the primary solution for enabling Islamic practice. "In France, Muslims are victims of the law," he said to me. Hakim was a long-time leader with l'UOIF and had worked for several years toward the opening of a new Islamic center in a small city near Lyon. His great excitement for the center and its future potential was endearing, and he was very personally invested in the project, having campaigned for donations and literally laying down tiles and painting walls with the help of his wife. Hakim summoned all his diplomatic skills to maintain good relations with the municipality, asking his colleagues to let him control the negotiations himself. Without government allies, he remarked, they might have faced last-minute bureaucratic obstacles, as happened with Lyon's Islamic high school, Al-Kindi (which he also helped administer). With his enthusiastic optimism for a uniquely French Islam, Hakim's long-term goal is to be involved in local politics. "Muslims aren't politically informed or involved. And they don't vote in high numbers, which is why politicians don't care about them."

Indeed, while activists are involved in a politics of recognition, there is no "Muslim vote" or formal political mobilization. One exception to this is the Parti des Musulmans en France (PMF), a political party that enlists candidates in a handful of local elections. PMF, though not

well known, has an outrageous reputation. Its platform is "anti-laïcité" and anti-Zionism, and seeks the overturn of the anti-headscarf law among other things. One of the few towns where a PMF candidate contends in the local election is Vénissieux. I met Nadir Ben-Abbes the same year he had received just over 1% of the vote in that year's election after a low turnout and minimal campaigning. Ben-Abbes has lived in France since infancy after his parents left Algeria and now lives in Lyon, working as a bus driver and tramway operator. "My parents, my grandparents—they *died* for this country!" he would turn red and become increasingly upset as he spoke. "I say to my kids, 'you are *home*, this is *your* country.' I don't ever want them to feel ashamed [the way we did]. I'm with PMF because Muslims shouldn't feel ashamed to practice their religion or stand up for their rights, to organize politically on the basis of this identity." Ben-Abbes had been politically active for over twenty years. Having avoided the Communist party for their staunch atheism, he worked for many years with the Socialists. However, he always felt marginalized and felt that they too were anti-religion.

Ben-Abbes didn't exactly come across as professional, and his conspiratorial tangents about the Free Masons didn't help his case. He was portrayed very negatively in a documentary on French Islam that had aired on television channel M6. When I ran into Yassin, the friend that had first introduced me to Ben-Abbes, he and I guiltily joked about his beliefs about the Free Masons. Yassin told me that a journalist had once subjected Ben-Abbes to hidden camera footage that then aired on YouTube. Ben-Abbes himself complained that other politicians have entire teams of assistants writing their agendas and feeding them lines, something he could never afford. Gérin, Vénissieux's mayor at the time, made insulting comments about Ben-Abbes' candidacy, and other candidates also didn't at all take him seriously. But he believed that there could be a day that his platform would resonate with people. He deliberately chose to run in Vénissieux because of the high concentration of Muslims. It's difficult to say what would be the real electoral potential of a more professional and affluent Muslim political party, but a party focused so heavily on religious recognition is surely overlooking the majority of issues that are critical to residents of areas like Vénissieux's *quartiers*.

Other ways that middle-class Muslim activists engage the state is through protest and demonstration rather than negotiation or electoral participation. This wasn't always about religious recognition. Many Friday qhutbas at Mosquée Hijra were outspoken against the war in Iraq and sometimes urged attendees to go to street demonstrations. Political and humanitarian activism around Palestine was very prominent in Lyon, close to the hearts of many in the Hijra mosque community, and qhutbas sometimes addressed these issues. During the 2007 siege of Gaza, for example, the qhutbas and atmosphere at the mosque were particularly emotionally charged.

Political demonstration also included the work of Le comité 15 mars, a group that formed after the 2004 banning of the headscarf. A number of people at Mosquée Hijra took part in Le comité, trying to offer support to the schoolgirls dealing with the consequences of the law and engaging in public protest. More recently, as I mentioned, the mosque is forming a committee to better organize opposition to anti-Islam rhetoric and violence (such as the vandalizing of Islamic sites) and speak out against the UMP's exploitation of Islam.

While there is a politics of recognition directed at the state, there is also a deeply negative view of the state among most Muslims I met in this field of associations. Most were suspicious of state involvement in Islam and lamented the obstacles local government often posed. As one example, France's third private Islamic high school, Al-Kindi, was constructed in one of Lyon's banlieues around the time of my research. Just before its anticipated opening, the education

department claimed the building violated hygiene and safety codes, and the school was delayed by several months. Alain Morvan, the head of the Academy of Lyon, admitted his opposition to the school for its "communautarisme." He was later dismissed by President Sarkozy. Such incidents are fairly common. Where there are not any state relations, such as with the Centre Shatibi (private Islamic courses within an existing institute), there is at least some bad press. The Center's collaboration with Hani Ramadan came under attack by newspapers and feminist organizations, galvanizing people to protest the "menace of Islamization and sharia." Tawhid in general, in which Shatibi operates, is under broad surveillance according to volunteers. One volunteer told me that Tawhid and its founders certainly have files with the secret service and that he's fairly sure that spies have browsed the bookstore on occasion. He himself had answered phone calls from state agents inquiring about their activities.

EMF, the university students association, is apparently also under general surveillance and phone tapping. Local universities consider EMF a radical group that seeks mainly to convert students and promote Islam. It is popularly viewed as communautariste and has had strained relations with CROUS, a national public administration that manages student assistance and awards grants and housing assignments. EMF gradually lost its representation in CROUS, following publicized elections in 2004 in which the group was accused of being communautariste.

As Maryam, a dedicated activist with Mosquée Hijra, noted, "The state is always obstructing us. Like CFCM, for example—they [the state] should just let it do its work. They don't facilitate our work but instead de-motivate us, even though what we do is not all religious or proselytizing. We're simply doing the work of citizenship." Maryam and her close friend, Ismat, were recounting to me their reaction specifically when the anti-headscarf law was passed. "It destabilized us a little, all of our local associations. It really put the brakes on our efforts. We saw that even if we struggled against [the law], they passed it anyway. And that really impacted us. We had to wake up to reality. We weren't divided on the issue [as often depicted]. But we realized that it would be difficult to gain respect—that Islam in France is going to remain difficult." Ismat added later, "It's the same colonial habits, of interfering in our affairs, as though we don't know how to organize ourselves, train our own imams."

Nearly everyone I spoke with disliked the idea of state involvement in the training of imams. Various proposals have been under consideration for expanding imam-training into national universities. Aisha, a young woman of Moroccan origin and active at Mosquée Hijra, grew up in Château-Chinon, where her father worked at the Institut Européen des Sciences Humaines (IEHS) that trains imams. She and several others said that they did feel a need for imams to learn French but beyond that, any state assistance would be problematic. "They [IEHS] don't receive any support from the state and frankly, if they did, the government would want to have control over the curriculum. Imams should be able to discuss positions on political matters, for example, in reference to the Quran and sharia, not just what's best for the French state."

Kamal, active in one of the youth organizations, said about the state: "They don't want to integrate Islam—they just want to control it. They want a 'soft' Islam, and the best way to achieve it is to open schools for the training of imams and then prevent the real message of Islam from being spoken…because the real message of Islam is anti-capitalist, anti-communist, anti-everything, and this is what the state wants to avoid."

Farid, whose trajectory I will present later, was most vocal and pessimistic in his beliefs about the state. While he remains active around specific political causes, his hopes for recognition and respect for Islam have dissipated.

> Alright, I'm going to be a little mean in saying this. But the French state, maybe even all European states, have never wanted to really integrate Islam and Muslims. Even if there are some humanitarian [humanist] politicians who want Islam to be integrated, the majority aren't interested. Quite simply, they don't want us. … I think if the state could just send us all back to our countries of origin, if it wouldn't pose a problem with human rights regimes and things, it would do it. But since it can't, what does it do instead? It just passes laws that are increasingly repressive. …Forget about 'integration'—even just respecting Muslims is a problem, to stop considering them as terrorists, Islamists, fundamentalists and instead as normal people that just want to live their lives. But politicians and journalists insult us morning, afternoon, and night.

While people often told me their negative experiences and beliefs about the state, I often had trouble grasping it because of all the activity and liveliness that I perceived as an outsider. I was frequently impressed by all the mosques and access to Islamic culture that I observed, though everyone I knew complained that it was inadequate. But there were moments when I understood exactly what they meant. One of these was during the Eid prayer I referenced earlier, where it seemed we were packed like sardines in a gymnasium with terrible acoustics and no carpets for the attendees. I personally found it claustrophobic. There was a table with desserts and some drinks, but it wasn't enough. By the time I reached the table myself, I saw at least two disheveled women stuffing large bags with handfuls of the North African pastries. I felt embarrassed for them and frustrated at the discomfort, which no visit from the local mayor could assuage.

Disillusion and divisions

Apart from the group of associations and mosque community I presented above, Lyon also has a network of groups and activists that are more critical of mainstream associations and decry their willingness to work with the state as well as their abandonment of redistributive concerns. These groups, allied broadly with anti-globalization movements, also include secular and non-Muslim allies. Further, there is some overlap with members of the Mosquée Hijra community and l'UOIF members as individuals have gone back and forth in their trajectories. Based on my interviews and experiences with people in this subset of the Islamic field, I gained a clear sense of what was a rise and fall of these critical Islamic groups as well as of the l'UOIF-inspired youth associations that were far more ambitious in the past. These groups peaked in their influence and activity in the 1990s and declined in the post-9/11 period. My informants lamented this, had their own theories and targets of blame, and suffered disillusion through the process.

UJM is one of the main associations that had had a social base in the *quartiers* in the 1990s and now, according to current and former volunteers, has lost that base. In the mid-1990s the apparent strength of UJM was precisely that it was anchored in places like Vénissieux and had respect by local residents. According to a former volunteer, UJM had a real audience back then, and it prevented many young people from sectarian practices, drugs, and "delinquence," while also encouraging them to be political and embrace a Muslim identity. With social

activities and events, families in the *quartiers* developed trust in UJM leaders. "And so the state detested us," claimed Farid. Many members of UJM themselves, had come from the *quartiers* in the early years. This provided the organization with a great "richesse" that also diminished over time, as the older generation left and/or became preoccupied with its own families. Bilal, now a volunteer with Tawhid, expressed great regret over this disconnect. "We've become detached from the very base of the community," he said. "It's one of our main preoccupations but it's just too difficult. We're far from the banlieues for one thing, and we don't feel welcome there anymore." Bilal argued that the cleavages within Islam are perhaps most marked in Lyon, where the Salafist versus mainstream/reformist divide has made work in the banlieues even more challenging.

Farid, in a separate set of conversations with me, concurred. "At some point all the Islamic groups lost their weight to Salafism. We just no longer correspond to their [residents'] reality on the ground." So UJM has focused now only on youth education, teaching Arabic, and Islam. According to Farid, UJM and UOIF are only equipped to handle their own structures and activities, and there aren't enough people today to take the lead. The majority of local members attend prayers and events. "The real work to be done is in the *quartiers*, but it's too hard and no one wants to do it. Back when I was involved, UJM's strength was that we worked with other organizations, but somehow it all dissolved, and now we have to start from scratch. We're not organized and structured enough now to really struggle with the state." "Today," Farid asserted, "no one from these associations can truthfully say, 'I work in the *quartier*.' In fact, everyone has abandoned them."

Even with issues of recognition of Islam, removed from the economic concerns of the banlieues, associations have been somewhat depoliticized—or rather, are critiqued as weak by more critical activists like Farid. For example, although Islamic associations held meetings and demonstrated against the headscarf ban, they quickly abandoned the issue after the law was passed. In Farid's experience, "They washed their hands of the issue and everyone went back to their homes. When the law passed we all cried and said 'this can't be possible.' We had large meetings to discuss the issue—but then everyone returned to their corners, and we never united." Farid had the same complaint and disillusion with regard to his current humanitarian activism for Palestinians which is unrelated to religious activism but includes many members of Islamic groups. People come to their events, "shed some tears over Gaza," and then disappear.

Mainstream associations focusing on religious recognition and rights are also critiqued for their easy cooperation with the state. Other groups like Tawhid, in contrast, "are not interested in trying to compromise with the state, shake the hands of politicians, bow down to politicians." One of Farid's friends, also loosely affiliated with Tawhid, laughed: "The earlier generation of immigrants had an extreme inferiority complex, and [our] generation [i.e. at Tawhid] has the opposite complex!"

This radical edge or irreverence for the state is what fundamentally separates the critical associations like CMF, CCIF, and Tawhid from mainstream associations like l'UOIF and CRCM. I'm including in the category of critical social justice associations, secular groups like Forum Social des Quartiers Populaires (FSQP) and DiverCité, because their members overlap considerably with current or former Muslim, Islamic activists. Abbas, for example, is a longtime activist in the Lyon region with both Muslim associations and groups like DiverCité. His primary focus has been socioeconomic problems in the *quartiers*, police violence, and anti-Muslim hate crimes and discrimination. He has been stigmatized and blacklisted as a fundamentalist for several years. He told me that he had made it to the top three of a list of

candidates for a teaching post in Lyon but was dropped at the last minute following accusations of being a fundamentalist (intégriste). He diligently rummaged through the piles of papers on his desk to show me the complaint of discrimination he filed, though I knew it wouldn't get him anywhere. Abbas is part of the leadership of activists who are highly critical of the mainstream and media-savvy Islamic field, specifically for being so removed from life in the *quartiers*. "We call them [this new class of 'beurgeois' Muslims] 'bobards.' They've been run over by individualistic values and just want to work for themselves. It's not Islamic. Getting food in everyone's stomachs is the foremost duty of Muslims. The Prophet said 'He who sleeps on a full stomach while his neighbor goes hungry is not one of us.'" Abbas recounted a story (that I had also heard from others, later) about the Interior Minister some years back inviting a group of Muslim leaders to dinner. The meat that was served wasn't halal, and no one spoke up about it. Some ate the dinner, while others put aside the meat. Apparently, he argued, it was a deliberately manipulative attempt to see just how pliable these leaders would be.

  In the 2007 national elections Abbas supported the candidacy of José Bové, a radical syndicalist and anti-globalization activist. He traveled to Château-Chinon, to the training institute for imams, for electoral discussion and campaigning. He wound up arguing with one of the instructors when he claimed that all political parties were the same and bad for Muslims. Students and instructors castigated him and insisted on voting mainstream. This was a classic example of Abbas's alienation from the mainstream Islamic community.

  Abbas, I argue, faces the harsh challenge of balancing his loyalties to Muslim communities and Islam and his overall commitment to social justice that transcends the need for religious recognition. In other words, in my observation, he's disappointed with the lack of redistribution politics among middle-class Muslims and the lack of recognition politics among the secular social justice organizations he supports. I believe I had a taste of this when I attended a weekend-long administrative meeting of DiverCité in an office in Vaulx-en-Velin. DiverCité is a leftist grass-roots association that was founded in the mid-1990s in the Lyon region. Its primary agenda has been justice for working-class, foreign, and immigrant residents.

  I wore my hijab to the meeting and immediately noticed I was the only one in a headscarf. People were polite, but I still felt like an elephant in the room. In what I began to take as quintessentially French, there was incessant debate, long monologues, and lots of reflection about the goals and future of the organization in between food and cigarettes. There were a handful of Maghrebi members, one or two Afro-French members, and about half of members that appeared white. One of the themes that came up a number of times, apart from budgetary and administrative concerns, was DiverCité's struggle to attract interest in the quartiers. That year in fact, members had participated in the creation of a new organization, Forum Social des Quartiers Populaires (FSQP). FSQP held its first conference in Saint-Denis (outside of Paris) as a coalition of several associations active around issues of social justice and police violence in the quartiers. Abbas was very vocal in his disappointment with DiverCité and FSQP's lack of success in reaching out to local residents of the *quartiers*. "We should've done a better job, spent more time and effort. If we'd had bigger names at the concert, we may have drawn more young people from the quartiers. We were targeting people in the *cités*, and we didn't fully succeed. We have to realize too that some people are paid [agents] to break this up, to make sure our project won't succeed."

  Abbas further warned everyone that the group had to be careful in its choice of collaborators so as not to marginalize different groups and to avoid elitism. He used an example of a feminist minister who claimed to support the group. "She was a pseudo-feminist. *Real*

feminists aren't racist or Islamophobic. So let's be careful about who we work with, yeah? Because remember, in the past we didn't want to accept some individuals who were campaigning against Guantanamo. Some of you said, 'hey we don't want to give just anyone a platform who arrives under the pretext of *Muslim victim*.'" Although there wasn't necessarily an argumentative dynamic at the meeting, there was a certain tension and emotion surrounding these issues—of who DiverCité represents, with whom it collaborates, and how does it do justice to different constituents based on gender, class, and religion.

At some point in the meeting, a Black activist from Paris spoke and captured everyone's attention. "A lot of people in the *quartiers* don't have anyone to speak for them. Our group is probably alienating to women who wear the veil. Abbas would be a good candidate to speak to them. Look, I don't want to be an 'ethnicist,' but this is reality. For example, I'm probably the best candidate to speak to African immigrants." Finally, the meeting concluded with a Maghrebi man in his early twenties and resident of one of the *quartiers* outside of Paris. While I couldn't help but think he was the token "*quartier* resident," he allowed the meeting to end on an optimistic note with his own enthusiasm. He said that he was an artist and that he was excited about DiverCité having artistic projects among youth in these neighborhoods. His presence was critical for an organization struggling to reconcile its political goals with the troubles it had in maintaining a base in working-class neighborhoods—as well as its troubles in giving and gaining trust. The role of Islamic practice in the *quartiers* and the organization's uncertainty in engaging religious residents is very much part of these concerns. According to one volunteer, DiverCité is not nearly as active as it was in the 1990s because of these varied crises it has faced.

Ilyas, another long-time member of DiverCité, tried to make more of a positive case for the association in my conversations with him. But then he also admitted that DiverCité already had its "hour of glory," and that the banlieues now (at least of Lyon) were a "no man's land." "It's difficult now to mobilize people in the banlieues. When we go to discuss things with them, we realize that it's the same discourse as before, the same reports! [We have nothing new to offer them.] And nothing's changed for them! For everyone, not just for Muslims, for the first time we don't know what's going to happen tomorrow or what's going on right now. We do know that people have moved more toward Islam, and this has become predominant." But Ilyas insisted that the problems of the *quartiers* far surpassed the potential and abilities of Islamic associations—that the social and economic miseries of the banlieues were not problems that Muslim organizations would know how to fix, even though social justice is a primary duty of Muslim believers. He criticized organizations like l'UOIF for depoliticizing its mission in favor only of religious recognition and praised DiverCité's pioneering work on immigration, former war soldiers, "colonial management of the quartiers," Palestine, and the "criminalization of Islam." Not only has mainstream institutionalized Islam neglected issues of redistribution, according to Ilyas, but it has also failed to account for millions of euros that are generated through the halal industry, Muslim funeral industry, and others.

Ilyas reflected a great deal on this state of disillusion, telling me (as did several others) that many Maghrebis were increasingly seeking ways to leave France. As for his own activism and the future, he was pragmatic and thoughtful. "Today's generation isn't interested in politics and associations. But there are other means now, like blogs. There are countless blogs coming out of the banlieues, and that's not a coincidence. It's up to us now to see how we can connect with them through these different means."

Disdain for Salafism

While the activist communities I knew struggled with their disconnect from the banlieues, a major obstacle that arose time and again among specifically religious worshippers in the middle-class communities was the growth of Salafism. They saw the growth of Salafist Islam as a major ideological divide that was splitting the Muslim community (far above ethnic or other potential divisions) and moreover, that was a deeply problematic interpretation of Islam. My informants often complained about Salafists coming to their mosques and trying to proselytize and correct their prayer and comportment. They also complained about the so-called refusal of Salafists to integrate into French society.

My own experiences with Salafist women in Les Minguettes, as I presented in the last chapter, didn't at all corroborate the stereotypes that so many people have of them. I did on a few occasions see burqa-clad women proselytize, but I also experienced this among mainstream Muslim women. The obvious caveat to my discussion of middle-class judgment of Salafists is that my observations of Salafist Muslims were for the most part restricted to women. Therefore, I'm less equipped to form my own opinion of Salafist men, and it's possible that their teachings and interactions in mosque settings are different.

Notwithstanding possible gender differences in Salafist teachings and mannerisms, the men and women I knew in the communities I've discussed here expressed serious concern about Salafists. Farid, for example, never quite approved of my interest in the Salafist mosques. "There's nothing to study there," he seemed irritated. Gesturing with his hands to express tunnel vision, he insisted that they're narrow-minded and quick to condemn other Muslims as unIslamic and doomed to hell—sometimes for things as superficial as dress. "But then they happily attend our Islamic schools, like Al-Kindi, for example. They want to use our resources even while they think we're not good Muslims." As to the ban on the burqa, he's against state legislation of Muslim practices, though he believes that the burqa is in fact *bida* (innovation or corruption of Islam) and a grave misinterpretation as opposed to merely an extreme version of veiling.

Several others took a more sympathetic view, arguing that Salafism is a response to discrimination and confusion over identity but nonetheless a superficial and mistaken interpretation. Ismat, an activist and leader at Mosquée Hijra, mused, "It's a refuge for them, because they're so confused over their identity. They don't know if they're Algerian or French or Muslim or Arab." Maryam, also of Mosquée Hijra, interrupted, "They just don't think they're French. They don't feel French because of all the discrimination that faced at school and at work. Fine. But it takes a certain strength of character to be able to say 'you can close the door on me, but I will keep struggling so that you understand me, understand that I *am* French.' It takes a certain maturity to be able to say this." Another friend and informant in the middle-class mosque communities was Laila. She had begun turning to a more rigorous Islamic practice and felt badly that middle-class Muslims "didn't care" about other Muslims in the quartiers and that they were simply satisfied to have their own families, jobs, and consumer goods. Above all, it was unIslamic. "But it's a real difference in ideology," she noted. "The Salafists have gained influence, and they don't care about the future of Islam in France. They just retreat, and they make their wives stay inside."

These opinions of Salafism did not repeat the terms of the dominant discourse in the sense that they weren't associating it with "communautarisme" or terrorism. But they represented a different version of anti-Salafist discourse, one that invoked the language of national identity and integration and thus, absorbed themes espoused by the state. In terms of

gender, they didn't tend to view Salafist women as practicing against their will or as victimized as the state presents, but they did view them as generally dominated by their husbands.

Political dispositions of disenchantment and desire

I present in this last section the stories of close individual activists, how they developed their piety, the salience of discrimination, their experiences with veiling, and their beliefs about French identity and politics. These experiences helped solidify the political dispositions of recognition politics. As they all shared a common struggle for ethno-religious recognition, they diverged in their faith in integration. While Khalil ultimately decided to leave France out of frustration and disenchantment, Farid refocuses his energies away from mainstream associations to more critical projects. Maryam accepts the discrimination against the hijab but feels she is working towards an integrated, French Islam as well as identity. Hakim, meanwhile, feels hopeful for the future of French Islam, working hard to institutionalize its spaces and win approval by the state. All of them were raised in France but have strong emotional ties to their parents' countries of origin in the Maghreb.

Khalil

I met Khalil at a Ramadan dinner at Abbas's home. It was a couple of days before the Eid celebration. Abbas cheerfully announced that the Empire State building was lit up for Eid, and we were commenting about how impossible it was to imagine such an event in France. "Never," said Khalil. "They don't care." Khalil had a slightly tougher disposition than Abbas, who surprised me by how jovial, almost innocent, he seemed in contrast to the way he's depicted in the media.[37] Unlike Abbas, Khalil was definitely suspicious of me. But this belied his warm generosity and eagerness to talk about his experiences that gradually became prominent.

Khalil was born in France when his father emigrated to work in construction. He was raised in a semi-rural province nor far from Lyon. His father had been a resistance fighter against the French in Tunisia, and this greatly shaped Khalil's early consciousness. "If you want to know why we act the way we act," he repeated to me, "you need to read more about the colonial experience." "When I used to work in the *cités*, kids would be stopped by the police. The cliché was that the police would ask you 'where are you from' and you'd say 'I'm French.' And the cop would smile as he wrote you up, because in the backs of their minds, both knew that you weren't really French."

Khalil had worked as an activist in the banlieues of Lyon throughout the 1990s. But he finally gave up his activism when he deemed it a failure. "Three generations of Muslims tried and failed to better their conditions," he said. "And now things are worse than ever, and there's a logical turn to Salafism." Khalil argued that Salafism is the last step before terrorism (even though he agreed that most Salafists are not engaged in politics). In his own life he has turned toward a more rigorous Islamic practice and has come to respect the Salafist movement. Disillusioned by the failures of the social justice and immigrant movements, he moved to Egypt with his family, where he felt he could better raise his four young children in an Islamic lifestyle. Khalil was angry, passionate, and perhaps conflicted in his decision to turn his back on France— something that Abbas, for example, would never do. "There's a saying in France," Khalil told me. "'We accepted the contract.' I ate pork, I almost married a white woman. I left my religion. I did *everything you wanted* and got nothing in return."

In childhood, Khalil and his siblings were the only Maghrebi kids in school and suffered numerous physical fights and racial incidents. Despite being tracked in school toward manual

skills, he eventually went to university and studied political science. A professor eventually told him that he wouldn't earn money in academic pursuits, and so he left. Recently, he became fairly successful in business, though this wasn't without struggle. When he tried to acquire a bank loan, he was denied and told he was on a list of high-risk borrowers. But now, he jokes that he's a "capitalist pig" after having left the activist world he used to share with Abbas and others.

His politics had also changed. For example, he and Abbas were bickering about the new Islamic high school, Al-Kindi. Abbas didn't support its creation because he disliked what he claimed were separatist tendencies. "We have to work together and include non-Muslims. Why should we settle for separate institutions?" Khalil vehemently disagreed, arguing that Muslim can't count on respect for their practices, and separate Islamic structures are the best form of protection they can hope for. Especially for those in a headscarf, the issue was critical.

Khalil's wife was third-generation French-Algerian and joined him in his interest toward greater piety. "People stare at us [because of her hijab] when I'm out with her, just stopping at the corner shop. It makes me so angry, makes me want to start fights with them." But as far as I could tell, he never really did so. On one occasion, we were looking for a restaurant for lunch in a tourist quarter. I waited outside with others while Khalil went inside to ask the maitre d for a table. The maitre d seemed unenthused and when he came outside and saw me in my hijab, he hesitated and then told Khalil the remaining tables were reserved. We said nothing and moved on. Later during lunch I asked Khalil if he believed the maitre d and he said, "Not at all. Absolutely not at all. He saw you in your hijab and then changed his mind." There was nothing to do about it.

Before returning home to Egypt, Khalil impulsively decided to take a couple of us to Marseille. There, I learned more things about him as I followed along on his relentless paths throughout the city. Gradually, he confided that his lifestyle in the past had been very unIslamic. But two dramatic and life-changing events seemed to have drawn him closer to religious practice as well as his political attitudes. He had mentioned a few times that he had been a boxer. He boxed for 17 years, was quite successful, and en route to becoming a professional. I asked him why he stopped. He paused and told me he'd been shot in the chest and was permanently injured. He was frequenting a nightclub with some friends, when one wound up in a fight with the club bouncers and started yelling to Khalil for help. Khalil ran to the basement of the club to help his friend, and one of the bouncers (or gang members—it wasn't clear) suddenly shot him in the chest. The doctors had nearly pronounced him dead and declared his eventual recovery a miracle. He would never box again. "But for some reason, God wanted me to live." In general, Khalil had a tendency to cast these events and people as racially motivated. So, he insisted, he was shot at the hand of "some racists." Later, we talked about his brother's death also at the hands of "some racist."

The second and most important event was the death of Khalil's older brother when he was a teenager. I'd known that he'd had a brother who passed away but never asked any questions, until he started to bring it up himself. He shook his head and looked away, "My mother, she became crazy after that." But then he quickly said, "It was good that he died. My [other] brother [Amin], that's when he turned to Islam and brought it back to the family." He said that Amin was deeply moved and shocked, when the family took their brother's body back to Tunisia for the burial. He witnessed all of the Islamic rites and the local community that had come to take control and help with the rites. At that moment, he decided to change. Apparently, the family had been temporarily living in an apartment complex. He said his brother was playing

his guitar loudly, and "some racists" came by and started giving him a hard time and eventually pulled a gun. Perhaps the episode was more complicated, but this was Khalil's experience of it. We each have our own destiny, a life-span that is predetermined by God. My brother had to be sacrificed for the family to come back to Islam. I'm always struggling to stay on the right path. There are lots of things I did that I regret, but that I can't take back. But my faith is everything I am. If you want to understand me, why I do the things I do, why I think the way I think, then you have to understand my faith.

When we left Marseille for Lyon, Khalil was wired on energy drinks before stopping to pray at the side of a gas station. (Praying outside in public space is another practice that has come under controversy in France.) He then insisted on stopping in Aix-en-Provence to find a former imam and mentor with whom he used to be close. After lots of hurried walking down narrow cobblestone alleys, we finally found the door to a tiny basement mosque. Khalil tried to get the imam's phone number from the man who had answered the door, but he refused to give him specific information. Khalil grumbled and rolled his eyes as we left the mosque, "Muslims are so paranoid. I'm so tired of it!" He finally convinced someone at a kebab shop to give him the imam's information. Imam Rachid then joined us for dinner and was thrilled to see Khalil after nearly a decade. He had lived in France since the end of the Algerian war and had offered his services at the mosque for over twenty years. He had a very European disposition and spoke English. Although he and Khalil both had fond memories of Aix, they also shared their sadness. "I never go back to Algeria," he said. "The country is ruined. But you know, I don't feel French either, even after all these years." Khalil nodded, "Yes, that's how it is. I moved to Egypt recently, and I'm not sure I want to come back."

Maryam

Maryam was in her early thirties and born and raised in Lyon. Her father emigrated from Algeria in the 1960s and worked as a janitor of city buses. Her parents are comfortably retired and visit Algeria from time to time. I met Maryam through another woman, Aisha, at Mosquée Hijra. I was sitting outside with Aisha, when we spotted Maryam and her husband, Karim. Karim asked Maryam and Aisha if they needed anything for their study circle. "See," Aisha turned to me. "Here, men and women work together." "Actually," Maryam laughed, "the men work *for* the women!"

I always felt silly for noticing the women's clothing, but I couldn't help but be impressed with Maryam's style (and that of many other women at Mosquée Hijra). She would saunter into the mosque always elegant and dressed in clothing carefully coordinated with her hijab. She held a leadership role at the mosque and had been with Hijra since the beginning and through its challenges, from local opposition to its construction to the vandalizing of its facade. Almost every time I saw her, she was busy with some administrative task, registering people for Islamic or Arabic courses, testing their level of Arabic literacy, or answering questions about course content. She helps plan out the annual schedule of events at the mosque and makes arrangements for Eid prayers including everything from prayer mats to arranging a children's section. When I saw her at the prayer, she was again busy handing out fliers for the mosque classes and seminars and seemed proud of the whole event, as the mayor arrived to deliver his felicitations. She and Ismat, her close friend and collaborator at the mosque, also helped prepare the year-end barbeque at the mosque that would draw hundreds of members.

Karim, Maryam's husband, was highly educated and also active at the mosque. He and Maryam saw themselves to some extent as comfortably Muslim and French and felt strongly

about a pious but relaxed and integrated Islam. For example, Karim had a strained relationship with Maryam's brother, who happened to embrace Salafism and divided his time between France and Algeria. "They want to remain separate from French society, they don't want to integrate," Maryam complained. They want to live exactly as the Prophet lived instead of accepting modern life."

In terms of her own piety, Maryam was highly devoted, prayed five times daily, educated herself through the mosque in Islamic sciences and tajwid, and facilitated halakah (study circle) sessions at her apartment for groups of women. She was also very serious and strict in her veiling practice. Once when we were at a friend's place, we had loosened our hijabs while talking and drinking tea. When the friend's husband suddenly came home, Maryam jumped up from the couch and frantically tried to refasten her hijab and signaled to me to do the same. "It's absolutely critical to have limits [between men and women]," she said. "When we interact in everyday life, you have to keep some distance. We [Muslims] are conscious of this reality, we know very well that there's a certain kind of relation [of desire] between men and women—it's natural. You don't have to hide yourself, cover your face, but you have to be aware."

At work, Maryam has been pragmatic with regard to the headscarf whenever possible, though she did have a computer training course where she decided to quit when the instructors said she had to take off her scarf. In her most recent full-time job in office administrative work, her employers allow her to wear a bandana but not a hijab. But she said she knows that this won't continue much longer, because they find it annoying. "They think I'm 'showing my religion' in the workplace, and it annoys them." I met several women in Maryam's circle who had similar encounters. One Algerian woman, whose husband is a leader at Mosquée Hijra, was prevented from participating in a babysitting co-op in their neighborhood. The other mothers said they won't have her watch their children, and refused to babysit her daughter, if she wore her hijab. Her husband was trying to help her contest this, but in general, no one I knew was successful in contesting her discrimination. Ismat, Maryam's close friend, used to take off her hijab for work even though it caused her great trouble. Today, she is able to wear it because she happens to work with predominantly Muslims. She recounted to me, "Not long back, I spoke with a lawyer about [wearing it in the workplace], and he said, 'but it's so hot outside! Why would you want to wear it anyway?' How can I explain to him that this is my faith?"

Finally, Aisha, who later moved to Paris to join her husband, would report back to Maryam. She was unsuccessful in completing her training in psychology, because no hospitals or clinics would accept her in her headscarf. She said to me, "we [women] are psychologically exhausted, so tired of being seen as victims." I asked Maryam at one point if it was important to her that her daughter would eventually wear the hijab, and she said yes, it was extremely important to her. "But I don't really know what we'll do in the future and what will happen with the [headscarf] law. I don't feel good about forcing this conflict onto a young teenager, to make her deal with hostility at school. Maybe we'll just have to hope that she'll choose to wear it once she finishes high school."

For all the hostility they face in the workplace, the women I knew through Mosquée Hijra supported each other through a dense structure of solidarity and friendship. Maryam often seemed to figure centrally. She threw a party one evening to celebrate Aisha's approaching wedding. She sent her husband and daughter away for the night, as about 15-20 women came over to celebrate. I wasn't used to seeing them in this light, unveiled, belly-dancing to North African music, listening to eclectic rap music. Aisha was charismatic and practically glowing, as

her friends teased her about her upcoming marriage. The wildness was abruptly cut short in time for the Isha prayer, which Maryam diligently led. It then resumed well into the midnight hours.

Maryam's social circle appeared almost entirely Muslim, from my observation. For most of the women I met, this narrowing of their social life is something that developed toward the end of high school. Still, Maryam felt strongly that she has reconciled an identity that is simultaneously French and Muslim, but it was a long process. She discussed with me the shame she had internalized as a child, of her parents, and language. But in the last 10-15 years, with the dramatic growth of Islamic organizations, she developed her knowledge and piety and found peace with her identity. Like for many young practicing Muslims, her parents taught her an Islam that was primarily cultural, traditional, and perhaps even contrary to what she now practices. With the expansion of conferences and Islamic literature in French (as opposed to Arabic), she began to understand religious tenets for herself.

> It's through these associations that we reconciled our identities, that I learned I can be French and Muslim at the same time. These two things don't have to be contrary. … You know, we're not recognized as French, we're not recognized as Muslims, we're not recognized as Maghrebines, so it's really a lot of work to construct ourselves. But there were people there to guide me through this, to explain to me that I am just as French as *Jacqueline*, even with my religion. I'm lucky that I had people [through the mosque, etc.] to explain this to me.

Ismat, who was born in Morocco and raised in France, joined the conversation:

> The media has mixed up everything – Arab, Muslim, terrorist, it's all the same. In the last ten years we've felt more racism. The French are worried that Islam is growing. Maybe they're not racist, but they're scared. They're just scared. …The problem is that the French want to impose their culture—we have to be French just like them, dress like them, eat like them, that's what they want. We can very *easily* be French—but *with* our religion and culture. …In the future, once we can have a normal politics, act in all types of organizations as Muslims but without any difference, and *really* be considered French, then things will have advanced.

As to Maryam's relationship to the Maghreb, she hadn't been to Algeria in 15 years and had a vague kind of attachment to the country. But foremost, she emphasized, her identity is about her religion. "What's most important to me is my religion. Before anything else, I'm Muslim. After that, well, I was born and raised in France, I will certainly die in France, so France counts more in my eyes than Algeria, even though my roots are in Algeria. But I confess that I wouldn't want to be buried here. It's just too hard to respect Islamic rites here [in France]. I'd rather be buried in a Muslim country, maybe in Algeria or Morocco." As Ismat concluded of her own search for identity, "Islam is about my existence on earth, it's about what's universal, what is my purpose here in being alive. My identity as French is just about France, my relationship to this country. And I need something greater than my attachment to [France, or the Maghreb.]"

Hakim

Hakim was also born and raised in Eastern France, on a farm outside of a former mining town. His father left Algeria in 1940 and worked in the steel industry for thirty years. He retired when the plant shut down in 1970. Hakim now works in Lyon in the field of juvenile justice, advising youth through their court proceedings. He said about half the youth are of Muslim

background and from the quartiers. He thus has a keen sense of the social problems in the quartiers, while he acknowledges that Islamic associations play little role in these areas.

Hakim has been with l'UOIF for over a decade and has held various leadership positions. His volunteer activism keeps him fairly busy, as he travels throughout Europe and Turkey for various political and Islamic conferences. Like Maryam, he combines a dose of criticism with a pride in his identity and practice of Islam and strong optimism for the future of Islam in France. He also practices Islam rigorously, combining some elements of Sufi philosophy, and periodic fasting as part of a spiritual regime. Hakim often spoke about his parents and his belief that greater interest in Islam is partly related to the desire to honor one's immigrant parents. "Our parents tried to tell us something about Islam, and like all kids, we didn't listen. As adults, we go back to what our parents taught us. These kids in the banlieues, for example, they're very interested in learning about Islam now, even if they don't practice it."

In Hakim's own experience, his love for his father, who had passed away, motivated some of his thinking and attachments. He said that when he travels around the country raising funds for his local Islamic center, he does it on his father's behalf (such that the spiritual rewards would go to his father's soul). "When you do these things," he recommended to me, "you should dedicate them to your parents." As with Khalil, Maryam, and others I knew, Hakim's relationship to the Maghreb is ambiguous but holds a powerful place in his imagination. He visited Algeria once in childhood and later, for his father's burial.

I was surprised to find the issue of burial invoked somewhat frequently. There was a frank morbidity and sadness to these conversations, which combined all of the salient issues in the politics of recognition: national and universal identity, recognition and approval by the state (for Muslim cemeteries), one's relationship to Islamic rites, the permanence of Islamic structures, and hope that future generations would have the capacity and will to honor Islamic traditions (such as cemetery care-taking). Ilyas, whom I mentioned earlier, spoke about the "disastrous" situation of Muslim Maghrebins who die with no kin or resources to provide for their burial and the increasing impossibility of repatriating their bodies to the Maghreb. Hakim also described the lack of Muslim cemetery space in France as "catastrophic."

Hakim's struggle to maintain his religiosity and succeed in the politics of recognition is also transmitted to his young children. He would like to take them to Algeria from time to time so that they have a sense of their grandparents' past and of Muslim society. But he also knows he won't impose anything on them. He smiled at the image of his 7-year old daughter. "She already loves playing with her hair. Maybe she'll never be ready [to wear the hijab]. Ultimately, it'll be her choice."

Although Hakim worries over certain issues, he has great hope for the future. In relation to the divisions within Islam, for example, he was less judgmental of Salafists than others and perhaps more pragmatic. In his own community, for example, he constructed a single entrance to the Islamic center as opposed to separate entrances for men and women. He said he was concerned about the reaction from other Muslims but was relieved that no one ended up criticizing the decision. "Hopefully, we can set an example for other Muslims, that it's okay to have a single entrance." "Even if we're not unified on everything, we still constitute a community. What matters is that we share the shahadha (faith in one god and the Prophet)."

With regard to the obstacles posed by the state, he certainly was critical but again, optimistic:

I think in France it's more difficult to be a Muslim than in other countries, because of the history between North Africa and France. I just have to hope that

things will change. In my twenties, I thought we were going to build another world. Then, you know there was this recent vote by the French Assembly to pass a law proclaiming the 'positive role of colonization.' And 19% of the deputies voted for it! And a lot of French people agreed with it! When I saw that, I thought, 'no, this is impossible, it can't be true.' …When I saw that, I thought, okay, we still have a lot of work to do.

Hakim's faith in a truly French Islam overrode his current critiques of the state's manipulations and even of racism and "Islamophobia."

CFCM, for example, is only a few years old. It's still manipulated by foreign countries and by the state. It's too early to say what's going to happen. But I hope one day it will stabilize. And the younger generation won't be so connected to the home countries [Maghreb]. They'll have a more unified identity as French and be able to accomplish more. I hope in maybe ten years, French attitudes toward Islam will change. Maybe they'll overturn the [headscarf] law. Or I'd like to think maybe there'll be an Islamic high school nearby that my kids can attend. I think it's going to get better, I really do.

Farid

Farid was among my more critical informants, disenchanted like Khalil, steadfast in his activist work, passionate about social justice, and sensitive to the challenges and disappointments he's faced as an activist and practicing Muslim. He was one of my first formal interviewees but I soon befriended him and his wife and shared several meals with him and his family. He was born and raised in France but in fact had a very close relationship to Algeria, where he visited his extended family in their rural abode every couple of years. He also chose to have an arranged marriage with a woman from Algeria who moved to Lyon to join him. His friends teased him for taking such a step and marrying relatively young. Farid managed to find short-term contractual jobs and save enough money to support his family and get through brief periods of unemployment. He wasn't raised religiously and chose to develop his religiosity when he was in high school. Part of the instigation was his feelings of social rejection from his non-Maghrebi peers, but mostly, "God finds us and guides us." Since he moved toward greater piety, his social circle also became limited to fellow Muslims.

Farid was the first in his family to take a real interest in Islam. His relationship with his parents remained strained for various reasons, though Safiya, his wife, tried to ease the tension. Farid claimed he couldn't visit Algeria with them, because their memories of their old life there were too psychologically troubling, causing great fights between his mother and father. "Anyway, my father's a *kafr*." "Oh come on, Farid!" Safiya stopped him. "You're being really unfair. Does he have faith?" "Sure," Farid said. "But a Muslim is someone who actually applies Islam in his life, not someone who just claims to believe." As with many things and people in his life, Farid held his parents to his very high personal and moral standards.

But to be fair to him, he can't be accused of hypocrisy—he also held himself to the same exacting standards. He spends a great deal of his free time doing volunteer work, supporting international social justice campaigns, organizing conferences and public demonstrations, raising funds for Muslim political and humanitarian causes, and taking the lead in benefit events. Although quite young himself, he complained that today's youth doesn't want for anything and cares more about the latest consumer goods rather than helping the poor. "There's a growing

individualism here in France. But to be a good Muslim—to be a good human—is to be concerned with humanitarianism. I try to be as active as I can, even if it's not much." "Is it this bad in the U.S.?" he would earnestly ask me. "You know, not being able to count on anyone? Everyone in his own corner [*chacun dans son coin*]?"

Farid's work revolves mostly around international issues since he decided to withdraw from some of the Islamic associations in which he used to participate. "They're so internally divided, petty squabbles, jealousies, conflicts over who gets to be the spokesperson." As he was telling me this, his phone rang and he was drawn into a conversation precisely over one of these conflicts. Despite his disillusion, he doesn't give up on his politics. He argued vehemently, "If Muslims don't fight for their rights they will eventually just leave and go back to the Maghreb. It'll become [in France] how it was in Spain—they'll be persecuted and repressed until they're all gone."

Farid's attitude clearly differed from Hakim's optimism and consequently, his politics were much more oppositional and critical than the mainstream organizations within the field of recognition politics. One of the first times we met, along with a friend of his, he joked: "We're not Taliban or Al Qaeda." Apparently, it's a quip they use to simply say, 'we are Muslim but we are not with the Taliban and not with Al Qaeda." Farid worried a bit about surveillance of his activities, though he was very open and felt he had nothing to hide. He was shocked when the two brothers in Vénissieux were sent to Guantanamo, as he had known them. "They were just like me. I couldn't believe it. It seemed so random when they were arrested." When he asked me about my career plans and teaching, he was excited: "Great! Please tell all the students in your classes that Muslims in France are perfectly good, we're not terrorists!"

Conclusion

Lyon's middle-class Muslim associational field is dominated by claims-making in favor of group difference and rights. One of the consequences is the marginalization of a class-based political imaginary. The notion of social justice in operation is clearly defined by religious recognition as opposed to economic redistribution for working-class residents of Muslim background. This is nearly a complete inverse of Muslim minority politics and politicization in the case of Hyderabad. However, this decoupling of culture from economy has not been straightforward but has occurred alongside state surveillance and regret and controversy within and among Islamic organizations.

While individuals within "mainstream" organizations do criticize the state, there is a separate subset of associations that overlap with civic groups in their agendas and that are highly critical of mainstream Islamic groups. These groups and activists confront the redistribution-recognition dilemma most directly and are at an impasse over their lost connection to Muslims in the working-class quartiers. They lament their own loss and criticize the emphasis on recognition that has come to dominate the larger field, even as individual activists face great ethno-religious discrimination themselves. But whether it's mainstream Islamic associations or more left-critical Islamic, social justice groups, all conclude that the growth of Salafist Islam has posed a barrier they don't know how to surpass and that they find profoundly troubling.

The class bifurcation and ideological tensions over recognition (and its ruptured relationship to redistribution) can be seen in a set of political dispositions among Muslim activists. These are split between disenchantment with the possibilities for social justice and desire for recognition plus successful integration. Khalil's experiences of racism and disillusion with the failure of his activism eventually caused him to quit the field and reclaim a greater sense

of religiosity. Farid's oppositional politics and intensity of opinion has left him in and out of different associations in the field of recognition politics and now more narrowly focused on humanitarian causes abroad. Maryam and Hakim represent the more mainstream, practicing Muslim communities. Despite the discrimination Maryam has faced because of her headscarf, she sees herself as "integrated" *through* her associational involvement. Hakim, likewise, works to reconcile the different elements of his identity and more broadly, has great hope for an integrated French Islam—and faith in the goodwill of the state in ensuring this. "I spent a lot of time thinking about the history of Cordoba," he told me once. "I even went there, just to see, to confront the reality of the place, compare it to what I'd studied. That was the golden age…. And so much of the French Enlightenment had its origins in [Muslim] Cordoba. We have to prove this, people need to know. There once was a time… that was scientific, artistic, creative, tolerant."

Chapter 8: Conclusion

The dream, or myth, of Cordoba hangs above some pious Muslim worshippers like a ghost. In this imaginary, it was a time and space where the contradictions between religion and polis were dissolved and multifaith collaboration prevailed. The notion of extracting pious ethics and politics from each other that I have supported may seem to go against this vision of harmony. But today, where the mere name of Cordoba elicits images of terrorism, the spectre of shariah, and shameless insult to the victims of 9/11, contemplating the many unities of piety and politics seems a luxury. The two domains have already been painfully conflated, as Islam—with all its diversity and divisions—has been hyper-politicized across the globe. In New York the construction of a loosely-Islamic based community center is opposed by the majority of residents and 68% of Americans nation-wide, for the politics it supposedly represents.[38] In France, in the name of dignity and security, a Muslim woman can be fined practically a month's worth her income if she covers her face in public. In India, police organize to arrest and torture a young man whose Muslim name suggests he is guilty of terrorist plotting.

On the surface it is an entirely defensive posture to resist the idea that pious practice is inherently political. But in an era in which states are rapidly limiting the private realm, religious freedoms, and civil liberties, it is worth taking pause to reflect more on what we consider political and why. Through an ethnography of Islamic movements in Lyon, France, and Hyderabad, India, this dissertation tried to uncover the real-life complexities that show why politicizing Islam across two very different societies is so problematic.

To restate the question I posed at the start: what sorts of beliefs and practices of religious mosque communities support what sorts of politics and under what conditions? Under the conditions of a militant form of secularism that seeks the elimination of religion from public space and institutions, the politics directed at the state are recognition politics that revolves to a great extent on reinforcing and supporting Muslim identity and practice. Under the conditions of a flexible secularism that facilitates religious practice, state-directed politics are largely about redistribution. In the latter case, historical forces further created a stratum of wealthy Muslim elites and middle-class families with strong cultural attachment to the city of Hyderabad and its Islamic heritage. This led to cross-class relations based on paternalism. Among the poor in Hyderabad, despite male dislocation and emigration, the existence of remittance money and competition among Muslim elites led to political protections and the encouragement of community politics, which combines religious ethics and concern for piety and salvation with "world-building" and feminist rhetoric. In Lyon, surveillance and the criminalization of gendered religious practice, alongside a profound class bifurcation that was perhaps set in place by historical-structural conditions, has left Muslims in the declining *quartiers* to antipolitics. Across the cases, men and women of all classes believed that the state is generally hostile to Muslims and hostile to Islam, but it was the middle-classes that had faith in "integration" while the poor tended toward autonomy and retreat from the state. For the middle-classes, religion may be symbolic and thus, integrated into dominant mores; but for subaltern and sectarian Muslims, there are practices whose physicality and expression cannot be denied.

The relationship between piety and politics is thus determined fundamentally by the state—its policies toward religion and ethno-religious minorities and the way it determines class and class relations. It is an expression of the historical institutionalization of social groups as determined by these realms of state and economy (see Fulbrook 1983). Because these factors are so unique to particular cases, generalizing about "political Islam" or "radical Islam" across entire

regions and populations is deeply problematic. Only by accounting for the state, class, and gender dynamics as well as clarifying specific conceptions of politics, can Islamic revival movements be fully understood. Their implications for state and society derive also from these factors.

In a post-9/11 era of greater surveillance and usurpation of private life, turning away from the state rather than seeking its transformation has been the response particularly among those without the resources to secure a satisfactory future through secular life and education. What does this imply about political potentiality in these societies? I argued that what defines this potentiality, in the absence of direct claims of the state, is the building of community ties based on trust and obligation as prerequisites to state engagement or reconfiguration of official power. The barriers to building such norms and trust in the quartiers outside of Lyon has prevented a *political* community and made antipolitics one of the only social alternatives. In Hyderabad, despite police violence and surveillance, trust has been built with the facilitation of elites, more robust associational life, and in acts of production: piety training takes place alongside material projects.

In these concluding discussions I will first return to the literature on political Islam and point out how this study has tried to address some of its shortcomings. I will then explore the contributions to understandings of politics, class relations, and gender vis-à-vis religious movements. Last, I will discuss the implications of this research for policy and thinking about Muslim societies.

Civilizations and globalization

As I presented in Chapter 1, the literature on political Islam may be divided broadly into cultural and structural approaches. My research critiques cultural, civilizational approaches to Islamic movements in two principle ways. First, the class divisions among Muslims coincided with very different and conflicted interpretations and stances toward Islamic doctrine and sometimes even differing views on what distinguished a believer from an unbeliever. The treatment of Islamic movements as based on monolithic doctrine and teachings will thus bear little resemblance to everyday reality. Further, treating Islamic texts and in turn, piety, as inherently political is contradicted by an analysis that more clearly delineates the meaning of politics. Again, interpretation and practice vary according to context. Second, this same literature asserts that the political struggles and desires of Muslim communities originate in jealousies of Western powers. Among those I observed, envy or humiliation by the West was practically non-existent. The relationship to "the West" was simply not a significant factor in shaping the politics of Muslim societies.

My research also complicates existing structural approaches that do avoid essentializing Islam. For example, those that analyze movements along a spectrum of moderate to radical cannot address the phenomenon I described in Lyon and Hyderabad. Salafists are considered radical, however, they do not engage the state and do not seek its transformation. There is no basis on which to consider Salafism in Lyon as political Islam. Middle-class Muslim communities in both cities use similar political means, but equating them both as simply moderate political Islam neglects their nearly opposite claims (of recognition and redistribution).

Finally, there are those approaches that take globalization and its resulting class inequalities as the central explanation for Islamic movements. This literature suffers three main shortcomings that I tried to address. First, it muddles what it seeks to explain on the ground because it does not distinguish between types of movements. Islamic revival is all the same and

is always seeking to "Islamize" the state. In contrast, this dissertation made distinctions between everyday Islamic revival movements in the Muslim-minority context, their gendered composition, their teachings, goals, and relationships to the state. Second, these movements cannot be understood only through the category of globalization. The literature has taken for granted anti-Muslim discrimination, violence, as well as models of secularism that directly impact religious communities. In reducing these movements to consequences of globalization, the literature not only neglects the richness and full implications of them but it also seems to absolve the state of any responsibility. Instead, I examined the role of the state and elites in the processes of secularism and urban marginalization to look more specifically at the historical forces that paved the paths of these religious movements. There were very particular and local post-colonial histories of dislocation and ethnic marking that are not captured by the lens of globalization. Third, the literature classically separated the ideological appeal of Islam from the material projects of Islamic movements. According to the literature, people either turned to Islam for material welfare or to provide a sense of meaning after the failure of development. The failures of state distribution and the salience of unemployment were important factors in both Lyon and Hyderabad. But in neither case were the ideological or material benefits clearly operating alone. What was at stake was the exercise of citizenship, not only existential meaning or welfare. Indeed, in the French case taking the Salafist path entailed potential material losses. In the Indian case Islam and material life were so intertwined that the culture-economy division made little sense. In sum, arguing that Islamic revival or political Islam is motivated by an ideological void *or* welfare needs overly simplifies these movements and again, ignores the way they are first of all politicized by the state.

Conceptions of politics

The argument that piety and politics are not always the same, or specifically, that a similar class divergence in piety leads to divergent forms of politics, is an alternative way to think about the relationship between Islamic civil societies and the state. It departs from those that argue that transforming civil society through piety is effectively a transformation of the state, because it challenges the very (secular-liberal) normative foundations on which state structure and governance rest. Accordingly, piety is inherently political.[39] I have argued that this post-structuralist view of politics is less analytically useful when one starts comparing across different cases, where movements face different obstacles and conditions. In conflating piety and politics, it also conflates private and public, leaving no analytical space for a private sphere. Although this approach stems precisely from critiques of the state, it happens to coincide with the logic of the state with regard to religion and politics and gives insufficient attention to the degree to which many Muslim societies avoid the state and politics. While not wishing to unreflexively accept my subjects' perceptions, I tried to take seriously people's rejection of the political before characterizing their movements a certain way.

In the urban periphery of Lyon, the isolation and intense retreat from public life necessitates an interrogation of the meaning of politics. The women's marginalization by the state, public, and other Muslims calls into question the notion that they are transforming the state in their individual quests for piety. This may be unique to the particular context of minority Muslims in a *laïque* nation as opposed to a country like Egypt (Mahmood 2005). Individual training in piety in the French case is limited in its impact, in the context of withdrawal from school and the obstacles that prevent this *moral* community from building social trust and in turn, *political* community. For these reasons, I argue that a concept of antipolitics better explains

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what is happening outside of Lyon than the post-structuralist emphasis on political subject-formation. Also for these reasons, I did not characterize Salafism in Lyon as the activities of a counterpublic or other concept that implies an emancipatory discourse and desire for recognition. Antipolitics, again, is not directed at hope for the future or redressing power relations.

Unlike the French case, religious Muslims in the slums of Hyderabad are building the seeds of civil society because their communities revolve around mutual trust and obligation. From an instrumentalist point of view, they are building the base from which to either make claims of the state or resist the state. From an Arendtian perspective, the creation of a "world-building" community based on norms of trust and reciprocity and the transcendence of individual private concerns are ends in themselves. It is the *practice* of politics that represents the highest end. Moreover, this participatory practice of politics coexists with sectarian, "fundamentalist" religious teaching. Thus, these political communities have little resemblance to the conventional view of the relationship between Islam and politics.

Class relations and symbolic violence

I argued in this dissertation that class relations within Muslim communities fundamentally shape how and whether or not subaltern classes of Muslims engage in forms of politics. This argument supports a host of literature in urban poverty that attributes critical importance to the role of minority middle-classes (Wilson 1987; Jargowsky 1997): the capital that they provide in the form of commerce, jobs, informal networks, and role models, as well as their relative political advantages and access. But in Hyderabad, despite class segregation and rising inequality among Muslims, the particular local cultural and political history ensured a strong cross-class relationship, albeit one of paternalism. I do not wish to idealize the case of Hyderabad—as I discussed, the poor are subject to great symbolic violence and stigma. At the same time, they have benefactors that will fight for them; and their access, therefore, to food and education is more than what I observed in the outskirts of Lyon. The potentially sinister side of these class relations, however, lies in the machine politics and competition and in the possibility that elites and politicians do not really desire the uplift and independence of low-income Muslims. The question of who exactly are the organic intellectuals that surround political communities is crucial (Gramsci 1971).

This question would perhaps be less crucial in the case of Lyon, where I would argue that a group of organic intellectuals was more clearly defined, and the political terrain is not marked by violent competition for a Muslim voting block that has severe consequences. But the class bifurcation, which led to regret and paralysis, was caused partially by the state's harassment and defeat of Muslim associations and of those same organic intellectuals. In each country, it would be useful to have further comparative work, including cities with different sets of class relations among Muslims. What do piety and politics look like in a North Indian city, for example, where there are not the same cross-class ties but the same national model of secularism?

Lyon and Hyderabad had divergent politics but almost identical middle-class judgment of sectarian practices, particularly the burqa, gender segregation, and full-time Islamic education. Using Bourdieu's analysis of class judgment in the fields of culture and lifestyle, I argued that this dynamic is part of a symbolic struggle over legitimate Islam, where legitimacy is granted by the state and acceptance by dominant society. It is an Islam that is recognized, "integrated," and that exists 'in the heart' rather than externally. The division between mainstream and sectarian, politicized, Islam is in short a social separation. From this vantage, what is commonly thought

of as a struggle over politics, terrorism, women's rights, and liberal versus reformist Islam is also, or above all, the exercise of symbolic violence against the "vulgar" practices of the poor.

Political sociologies of gender and agency

My treatment of gender in this dissertation was through an intersectional approach that incorporated class position and religious faith. To the extent that I had some observation of men's activities and interviews with men in religious associations, I could better assess truly *gendered* phenomena. However, I chose not to characterize the piety and politics I observed as women's movements because my subjects' identities as women were not the focal point of their mobilization. Further, I did not want to qualify Islamic movements as women's movements, just as the multitudes of studies of Islam are not qualified as men's movements (when it is only men who are represented).

But it was true of France and India that women have come to the forefront of Islamic revival. They work alongside men as well as in their own separate spaces. Their increasing religious assertion, production, interpretation, and independence within mosque communities are undoubtedly new phenomena (Mahmood 2005; Jouili and Amir-Moazam 2006). In the case of Lyon, Salafist women are taking leadership positions in their religious communities, providing support for one another, and finding meaning in their precarious lives. But their turn to Islam has led the state to further marginalize them in French society and alienate them from the education system. French conceptions of gender justice have not been able to address this irony.[40] Salafist men, meanwhile, are also stigmatized but seem to have some space for social-public activity. In Hyderabad, gendered forms of practice have become completely intertwined with feminist rhetoric about women's education, work, and sense of independence. As uneducated and low-income men appear increasingly marginal to the project of redistribution, the effects on gender remain an open question. Will men happily accept women's earning potential and bargaining power? Or will their own exclusion from economic empowerment backfire? Further, one might criticize the focus on women's self-employment as a neoliberal program masquerading as feminism, as critics of Grameen Bank-style programs have done (Karim 2011). Far from encouraging individualistic behaviors and support for capitalism, or placating Muslim communities, the projects in Hyderabad are not imposed by foreign NGOs and are based fundamentally in community relations.

I argued that women's centrality in Islamic revival cannot be excised from the fact that the state has targeted them especially. It is women's practices—indeed, their bodies—that embarrass the middle-class, that represent propensity toward terrorism, and that define the nation as liberal-secular. This does not mean that women want to make a political statement or draw more attention to their lives, which are already under international scrutiny—but simply, that the state (and in India, mainly the Hindu right-wing) politicizes them, and their own politics or antipolitics emerge in this context.

The overall picture of gender and Islam in these two cases also makes clear that the state is not always the defender of women's rights. Sociologists like Lazreg (1994) and Charrad (2001) have argued that feminists need an active state to enforce women's rights, while other theorists have emphasized the patriarchal nature of laws and state bureaucracy (Brown 1992). Here, it is precisely the state that has created obstacles to women's agency, whether through law or economic retrenchment. With regard to reforming family law in India, for example, few feminists deny that ultimately a state-enforced civil code would benefit Muslim women. But my research highlighted the importance of a genuine grass-roots movement that secures women's

access to legal justice as opposed to a top-down strategy between Muslim leaders and government. Moreover, the stories I encountered in Hyderabad reveal the patriarchal corruption and inefficiency of civil law. Again, without discounting the role of legal rights, perhaps a more meaningful feminist victory is the creation of political community and relations above state-granted rights.

Finally, as many studies involving gender are compelled to address the issue of agency, there are different readings that can be made of the accounts I provided from Lyon and Hyderabad depending on how one defines agency. The significance of religious faith and practice in these women's lives supports Saba Mahmood's assertion that agency in this context is the capacity to act and to live a virtuous life. Therefore, the women I observed in both cities exercise agency through their enactment of piety. But I wish to add to this understanding of agency a more *social* dimension, whereby agency is also the capacity to develop community and bonds of trust with others. And through this lens, the women in Les Minguettes are prevented from *acting*, in an Arendtian sense of meeting their fullest potential.

Post-9/11 politics and piety

The broader context that informed this study is comprised of the post-9/11 wars on terror that have led to increased state surveillance, monitoring and closure of mosques, and interventions in Islamic education and predominantly Muslim neighborhoods all around the globe. Among the middle-classes, 9/11's aftermath created a heightened sense of cultural shame and need to support a liberal and "moderate" Islam. Among the poor, it has had a de-politicizing effect, a desire to retreat from the state and public life. The wars on terror, I argue, have made the class dimensions and relations among Muslims more salient and perhaps more silent.

But the fact of 9/11 must not be overstated. Muslims have been associated with security for decades, and Islamic revival movements are thought to have begun in the 1970s. In France the politicization of Islam is linked to the war in Algeria and its effects on France in the 1990s. In India the turning point in Hindu-Muslim relations was the 2002 Gujarat pogrom—if not the 1992 post-Ayodhya riots.

Whether in the context of post-9/11 politics or not, the principle question that informs most thinking about Islamic piety and politics is why has religiosity increased. This question has driven both cultural and structural approaches to Islam and to some extent, echoes throughout this dissertation. If we accept the proposition that religion is a response to the fact of anomie and suffering (Berger 1967; Geertz 1973), then we would easily predict that Islamic revivals in many parts of the world would take place amidst rising inequality and numerous forms of degradation. But like Geertz wrote of the malaise caused by the obsession with definitions of religion, I believe there is a political and intellectual malaise caused by the obsession with explanations for increased Islamic religiosity. In my own research the question of why were women so willingly taking up the burqa in such great numbers became far less interesting and fruitful when compared to the issues that mattered the most in their lives: their access to education and employment and ability to participate in a world outside of their private, individual selves. At a certain point, the reasons for the growth of sectarian practices are less important than simply accepting the fact that they provide meaning to their adherents, men and women alike. As Saba Mahmood eloquently asked in *Politics of Piety*, "Do my political visions ever run up against the responsibility that I incur for the destruction of life forms so that 'unenlightened' women may be taught to live more freely? Do I even fully comprehend the forms of life that I want so passionately to remake?" (2005: 197-198). In this same vein, I ask what forms of violence are

we willing to commit in the quest to explain and in turn, alter these forms of Islamic practice, in our dubious assumptions that they are of critical political consequence? The women and men I came to know called for very little than non-intervention in their communities despite their obvious needs for employment and material supports.

The irony that I came across early in my research is that the further poor and sectarian Muslims retreated from the state into their private lives or communities, the more the state politicized them. It remains unclear what may be the future consequences of the immense pressure the French state exerts on these communities in a place like Les Minguettes. In the meanwhile, it is almost certain that legislation will keep Salafist women locked in domestic spaces and further estranged from French society. While I have painted a much brighter picture of politics in Hyderabad, it is also the case that the Hindu Right has made anti-Muslim discourse and violence more acceptable in everyday life. Hyderabad's political landscape may be unique, but it still demonstrates the vital importance of strong civil societies and parties that can fight back in their defense. Community solidarity and trust are the keys to at minimum, self-preservation, and most optimistically, to the potential for flourishing that lies in a non-instrumental vision of politics.

NOTES

[1] For example, on the 2006 question of "the importance of God in your life," 11% of French respondents listed 10 on a ten-point scale compared to 58% of Indian respondents.

[2] However, official discourse has downplayed Islamism in India. Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh stated in a 2005 interview: "We have probably one of the largest Muslim communities in the world and we take pride in the fact that these 150 million Muslims live as peaceful citizens of our country, that there is not a single incident of their being involved in Al Qaeda and other international terrorist groups" (Cohn 2005). Similarly, the Gujarat state government has downplayed communal tensions in effort to attract foreign investment. Just eighteen months after Hindu-Muslim riots took over 1,000 lives, Gujarat's chief minister launched the "Vibrant Gujarat" campaign to attract foreign business (Solomon 10/13/2003). Finally, the U.S. State Department has "praised" Indian Muslims for their lack of militancy, which it claims results from their recourse to electoral democracy (Haniffa 12/20/2002).

[3] Composite nationalism was the title of a 1938 book, *Muttahida Quamiyat aur Islam*, by Husain Ahmad Madani (Malik 2008).

[4] Political Islam, or Islamism, however, is only one branch of politics occurring in Muslim societies and "but a fraction" of mobilization among Muslims, especially in the West. For a critique of the phrase "political Islam" see Hirschkind (1997).

[5] The division of Islamists into moderates and radicals is employed in different ways. For example, Suhaila Haji uses the terms to distinguish between those Islamists (moderates) who support equal minority rights within an Islamic state and those who would curtail them (radicals) (Haji 2002).

[6] Islamism is often characterized as "statist" so long as the state is Islamic. To this end, many states in the Muslim world have sought to Islamize themselves in attempt to gain legitimacy with Islamists. See Nasr (2001).

[7] The first two factors were also addressed in cultural explanations but usually to explain humiliation and resentment of the West.

[8] Martin Riesebrodt (1993) defines fundamentalism as a social phenomenon and in some cases, a protest movement, born of crisis, or opposition to legal-rational modernity. Fundamentalists, for Reisebrodt, seek recourse in their tradition, whether religious or other.

[9] The relationship between "modernity" and political Islam occupies a central position in the literature. A somewhat recent trend, in response to arguments of Islamism as regressive and anti-modern, has been to insist upon the very modern orientation of the movement—the use of communications technologies, involvement with international capital flows, and general support for capitalist economics.

[10] Stark and Finke (1992) also reject the secularization thesis in Europe, arguing that there is no evidence of long-term decline in religious participation and that participation in Northern and Western Europe was already low prior to modernization.

[11] Neither Hindu nor Muslim rulers enjoyed divine right or ultimate religious authority no matter their claims to spiritual authority (Heesterman 1997: 160; Hintze 1997).

[12] The question of Jews in France, however, was important to the development of laïcité. The 1905 law followed immediately after the Dreyfus Affair, and Jewish anticlericalism and support for laïcité were well-established. See Birnbaum 1996; Leff 2006; and Joskowicz 2008.

[13] The Emergency period was declared in 1975 under Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and lasted 20 months. Elections were postponed, constitutional liberties were curtailed, and the country was effectively under dictatorial control (Brass 1994).

[14] Specifically, as T.N. Madan wrote, Articles 25-30 of the Indian Constitution guarantee various forms of freedom of religion and are in tension with Article 44, which promotes a uniform civil code (1993).

[15] Alsace-Moselle refers to the region in Northeastern France that was part of Germany from 1871-1919. Because laïcité was encoded before the territory reverted to French rule, the French laws of secularism do not apply there.

[16] Between 1921 and 1924 the Khilafat movement rapidly declined. The movement was a campaign of Indian Muslim leaders that facilitated their collaboration with Hindu leaders in the nationalist struggle (Minault 1982).

[17] The charge of *communautarisme* is also used against other identity-based movements such as language and region.

[18] See Wacquant (2008) for an analysis of the differences between French banlieues and the American ghetto.

[19] See Tévanian (2005) for an analysis of how journalists and so-called experts constructed the veil as a social problem.

[20] Historically, the Salafist movement refers to a reform movement within Sunni Islam to return to the original teachings and practices of the Prophet Muhammed and the Quran. Its origins as a movement are debated, with some

citing 18th century Arabians and others citing 19th century intellectuals in Egypt. It is also internally debated as to which Islamic groups, schools of thought, and practices, may be considered Salafist. Salafism has historically been a pietist and apolitical movement, after some involvement in state politics in the late 19th and early 20th centuries (Stemmann 2006). See Euben and Zaman 2009; and Hourani 1983.

[21] Fraser has more recently written about globalization's ushering in of a postnational phase, in which social interaction has shifted away from the sovereign nation-state framework (2007). The notion of the public sphere, as a space inhabited by citizens speaking the same language and oriented toward a shared national and territorial identity, has less and less applicability with the growth of migrant and non-citizen populations—who most likely do not enjoy equal access to the public sphere in the first place.

[22] Ashutosh Varshney takes issue with Khalidi's figures. He writes in an endnote: "If we use the census figures for statistical trend analysis, one can show that this figure is absolutely beyond the realm of statistical probability" (2002: 353).

[23] Sonacotra was created in 1956, and most housing compounds were erected in the 1960s. It was a consequence of the war and directed at eradicating the shanty-towns around Paris. It focused on transitional and subsidized housing for French-born families as well as some student housing. After 1962 it officially catered to all foreign workers. See Topalov (1987), Simon (1998), and Bernardot (2008).

[24] "Arabes de service" is a slang term that connotes token minority individuals, who are patronized and exoticized. When I heard the term in conversations, it sometimes also referred to one who would enact the stereotype in exchange for status or position.

[25] Chhibber (1999) argues that associational life in India is practically absent, making society vulnerable to party mobilization. In a 2003 review, Rudolph strongly disagreed with Chhibber's arguments on both methodological and conceptual grounds.

[26] In relation to the mosque movement, Mahmood rejects Bourdieu's conceptualization of habitus as unconscious inscription in favor of the Aristotelian conception in which habituation (to virtue) is intentionally pursued. She further argues that many traditions of discipline such as moral and bodily practices cut across class and do not clearly reflect participants' social positions (2005: 138-139).

[27] Badran (1995) also observed the same story invoked in her study of Egyptian feminist movements.

[28] According to Vatuk (2008b), qazis in India do not have the authority to dissolve a marriage if the husband refuses his consent, although such procedures (known as *faskh*) exist in Islamic countries in cases of cruelty. Thus, in this particular case the qazi evidently went ahead and declared a divorce on the grounds of cruelty.

[29] *Bastis* are not necessarily squatter settlements marked by improvised or illegal housing indicative of shanty towns, although there are makeshift elements of the houses in the *bastis* I observed.

[30] According to Dr. Hasanuddin Ahmed, a 1990s survey indicated over 35,000 waqf properties and 133,000 acres of land in the state of Andhra Pradesh (1998: 90-91).

[31] This in part reflects the demographics of Indian school teachers in general.

[32] This is in contrast to other meanings of antipolitics, most notably James Ferguson's concept in *The Anti-Politics Machine* (1994). Through an ethnography of the development apparatus in Lesotho, Ferguson argued that the model and practice of international development was fundamentally de-politicizing.

[33] Eyal (2000) argued that Eastern European antipolitics emphasized purification of one's path to truth and that this was similar to Protestant asceticism. This is compatible with Olivier Roy's (2006) argument that there has been a growth of evangelical trends and purification within religions, including Islam.

[34] This is in contrast to the antipolitics of Hungary, where, as Joanna Goven (1993) argues, women's domestic work allowed for men to participate in social and intellectual life. Antipolitics, in other words, worked primarily for men.

[35] While my research in Les Minguettes corroborated much of this phenomenon, I place greater emphasis on the role of social exclusion and state hostility (above the role of globalization) in defining the context of Salafi success than do Roy and others.

[36] Killian (2007) discusses this theme as it arose in her interviews with French North African immigrant women. Her subjects were first-generation Muslim immigrants and represented a wide range of Islamic practice. They also included those who supported a ban on the headscarf. Thus, they contrasted sharply with the primarily French-born and Salafist women in my study. Killan argues that the importance attributed to "heart" reflected a comfortable compromise, in which the requirements of laïcité (that religion be private and hidden) melded with the women's beliefs that religion is foremost about faith and purity of heart. The women in my study shared this belief about faith but not out of any compromise with the state. Indeed, their belief in the burqa indicates their rejection of this interpretation of laïcité. More importantly, they believed that purity of heart comes about *through* external practice.

[37] In 2007 channel M6 aired a documentary on Islam in Lyon. Abbas was interviewed, but the editing made him appear threatening, according to him and others who spoke with me about it.

[38] A CNN poll, conducted in August, 2010, was widely cited in the media.

[39] Tuğal (2009) argues that everyday piety is political because hegemony, which links society to the state, is constituted through everyday life. This is compatible, Tuğal writes, with Bourdieu's analysis of the embodiment of principles of division.

[40] As one example, Elisabeth Badinter is widely considered among the most prominent intellectuals and feminist writers in France. She has published numerous pieces against the burqa in French media. For a profile of her work and background, see Kramer (2011).

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METHODOLOGICAL APPENDIX

The research for this study was conducted over five years, from 2005-2010. I stayed in Hyderabad from October 2005 to May 2006 and again from January 2010 to April 2010. I stayed in Lyon from May 2006 to September 2006, October 2007 to December 2007, and again from May 2009 to September 2009. Each visit accomplished different things, from gaining trust and entry, observing more clearly the class differences in religious practice and political tendencies, pursuing a deeper understanding of everyday life and piety, and eventually gaining insight into the historical reasons for the different forms of politics in each site and class group. Although there were limitations to fragmenting the research into a number of phases, I was able to observe changes and consistencies across this five-year period. My interest in observing the nexus of politics and Islamic piety on the ground led me to choose ethnography as the method that would capture much of the complexity and depth that would easily elude survey research and to some extent, interview methods.

Participant observation

The primary source of data that I used was my observations as a participant in mosques, Islamic study circles, Islamic organizational meetings and events, and neighborhood life or activities. I conducted participant observation in these spaces and communities 3-6 days of the week and took fieldnotes after every outing. During off days, there were often related phone calls or incidents in the local newspaper that I was following. I also took fieldnotes after observations in public space such as overheard conversations in cafés about Muslims in France or prominent banners in Hyderabad wishing worshippers a happy Ramadan. I discreetly recorded mosque qhutbas and a number of interviews.

My ability and decision to ease back and forth between very religious and sectarian communities and an occasional social life with non-Muslims on the other end of the spectrum provided a lens into the various perspectives on national questions of Islam. However, I had less time and opportunity to spend with middle-class Hindus in Hyderabad and thus, did not have much direct exposure to non-Muslim perspectives in the city (in contrast to Lyon, where I had a non-Muslim community of friends).

Field sites in Hyderabad

In each city I concentrated on a number of low-income neighborhoods in addition to middle-class spaces and activities. In Hyderabad, these low-income neighborhoods were: First Lancer, Amberpet, and Babanagar. The city of Hyderabad is divided into the "Old City" and "New City" sections, with the former located roughly south of the Musi River. The Old City is home to both Hindus and Muslims, but the majority population is Muslim and poor, with some exceptions of wealthy families who own or inherited palatial style housing in Old City neighborhoods. I divided my overall time equally between the Old and New Cities. All three areas where I did research are officially designated by the state government as BPL ("below poverty line"). BPL refers to households with annual incomes of less than 75K rupees (less than US $2000). I spent roughly equal time in each neighborhood, though my time in Amberpet was most concentrated during my 2010 stay.

First Lancer was the first field site I came to know. It is a predominantly Muslim enclave located in the New City, close to a wealthy section of the city increasingly characterized by luxury shopping and housing. It is part of the larger Ahmednagar district in Nampally, which

has been an MIM constituency for ten years. Nampally is one of two MIM constituencies in the New City. Under the era of the Nizams, First Lancer housed the royal military, many of whom were men of Afghan and Yemeni origin. Today, many residents descend from former soldiers of the Nizam's army. The immediate area where I spent time was shaped largely by Masjid Arabiya and nearby mosques and is commonly considered a slum [basti], with residents living in 1-2 room stone housing with tin roofs and no running water.

Amberpet is an enclave that seems to weave in and out of Hindu and Muslim streets and consequently, has experienced some communal rioting and unrest in its history. Amberpet is technically in the New City but borders the Old City and is thus farther from the wealthier areas of Hyderabad. The area where I spent time is largely Muslim with an MIM presence. However, the larger Amberpet constituency is ruled by the BJP party.

The third area on which I concentrated was Babanagar, located far into the Old City and considered among the poorest two or three enclaves of Hyderabad. Babanagar is predominantly Muslim and is more connected to Gulf communities, labor, and remittances than the other two neighborhoods. Also part of an MIM constituency, it is commonly cited in the press for social problems such as trafficking, crime, and illiteracy.

In Babanagar I met the largest number of people, followed by Amberpet and First Lancer. Combining the three mosque/madrasa/welfare communities, I had regular exposure to an approximate total of 150 Muslims of BPL neighborhoods and consider approximately 30 as relatively close informants. The majority of these low-income Muslims were women, but there were about 5 men (of the 30) who became close informants and many others whom I spoke to at some point.

Additionally, I often visited other women's welfare centers or middle-schools mainly in the Old City on a one or two-time basis and thus saw hundreds of women at work in these centers and students busily learning. Other participant observations in low-income gatherings apart from my regular time in the three neighborhoods I described included a girls madrasa all-day graduation ceremony, the regional JIH women's conference, the 2010 Milad-i-Nabi celebrations in the Old City, a large Muslim orphanage, and a visit to Dairat al Maarif, which is an institution of Islamic learning and archives established in 1888.

My participation in the middle-class Muslim activist and religious communities were critical to gaining entry in these slum neighborhoods as I will discuss. There were 5 principle middle-class or elite communities I observed. These were: Mr. Haq's foundation, within which I knew 5 board members and workers; Mr. Husayni, from whom I met two of his partners and several school teachers; the Al-Muminoon study circle, where I met approximately 50 middle and upper-class women almost every week; and members of the MIM party, of whom I knew two officials and met several others at the party headquarters. My time in these circles was spent in various locations, from schools in the Old City to Board offices in the New City and foundation members' homes. The study circle I attended was held at women's homes in a wealthy neighborhood of the New City.

Field sites in Lyon

The working-class areas of Lyon that I frequented were technically suburban towns that comprise Lyon's urban periphery. Within these suburbs I concentrated on housing project neighborhoods marked by their stigma and high unemployment rates. These were a notorious housing project in the neighborhood of Les Minguettes in the town of Vénissieux; the Mas du Taureau projects in Vaulx-en-Velin; and some HLM areas of Bron. All three areas are defined

as *les zones urbaines sensibles* (ZUS). Of these, I spent the vast majority of my time in Les Minguettes, followed by a number of visits to Vaulx-en-Velin and marginal visits to Bron. France's banlieues differ widely in their socioeconomic structures and ethnic and spatial compositions. Vénissieux and Vaulx-en-Velin are similar in their significant immigrant origin population and working-class history. However, Vaulx-en-Velin appeared more ethnically diverse (in my observation) compared to the particular cité in Les Minguettes, which had a highly visible North African presence. Les Minguettes has a foreign population of 31% (INSEE 2009). (Maghrebis and Turks comprise 49% of Lyon's foreign population in total, according to 2008 INSEE figures.) Compared to Les Minguettes, the spatial structures of Mas du Taureaux lent the area a greater dynamism and spaces for socialization. Les Minguettes, in my observation, was unique in its sterility and isolation. All 3 neighborhoods are accessible by public transport as of the last 10-15 years, but the commute is long and not always convenient. In 2008 a new tramway began operating from central Lyon to Les Minguettes, though I found it took just as long as the previous metro-bus combination.

I met the greatest number of people in Les Minguettes, where I became part of two mosque communities. One of these was attached to a housing project and another was a separate mosque. At these mosques, I had regular exposure to approximately 50 women and came to know 10 women very well. My 3 closest male informants from working-class areas were from Bron and Les Minguettes.

In addition to my regular sessions at the mosque, I attended a major gathering of Salafist Muslims that took place in Vaulx-en-Velin in 2009, attended the Saturday market at Les Minguettes several times, met friends near the public library in Minguettes, spent time in a local Black church community from Martinique (through a friend), and visited a nearby mosque a few times in the area of St. Fons.

The middle-class Muslims I knew belonged primarily to Mosquée Hijra in Villeurbanne, adjacent to Lyon. Here, I regularly saw 50-75 worshippers and consider 5 women and 3 men as close informants. Other close informants outside of the mosque community include 3 local activists, all men, who live near to downtown, and 2 Muslim men of Tunisian background. I went to the mosque about once a week and in 2007 enrolled in a regular Arabic course, where I met numerous students. I saw regular informants about every other week in social gatherings. Additionally, I attended several events at the city's Grand Mosque, iftar dinners (for the breaking of the Ramadan fast) at people's homes, and the communal Eid prayer in 2007. I also attended 3 days of the annual l'UOIF convention at Le Bourget, outside of Paris, in 2006.

Activities and dynamics

My time in mosques and study circles consisted of prayers in congregation, listening to qhutbas, listening to explications of the Quran and hadith and participating in discussions. In these women-only spaces, I also was privy to numerous conversations about everyday life, politics, and family issues. In Hyderabad, most mosques have not allowed for women's spaces, so my participation took place at private study circles and the madrasa/welfare centers. At the welfare centers, I mostly conversed with the women, as I watched and learned about their work and assisted with ceremonies and special events. Because of the strong class connection based on charity, I was frequently in the position of accompanying my philanthropist informants to their schools and welfare centers. I would discuss various things with them and then usually take a place on the floor with the dozens of women at work. In the neighborhoods, I often met people

in their homes in both Hyderabad and Les Minguettes to talk and share a meal. I also attended special lectures and community events as an observer.

In both cities I lived in apartments in modest middle-class neighborhoods and walked or commuted into the slum areas or les cités. In Hyderabad, all conversations and interviews took place in Urdu with the exception of a few philanthropists with whom I spoke English. In Lyon, all conversations were in French. Nearly no one in Lyon spoke English, though the majority of the women and men I knew spoke a dialect of Arabic.

In terms of dress I generally conformed to the expectations of the particular community I was in. This ranged from no head-covering in elite communities in Hyderabad, to the traditional shalwar-kameez and loosely wrapped hijab, to the full burqa (including niqab) in poor areas like First Lancer and Babanagar and other parts of the Old City. In France I wore modest Western dress with a tightly wrapped hijab covering my head and neck when I was among middle-class informants and a hijab with a long Moroccan robe when I went to the banlieues. Although I had worn the burqa in India, I chose not to in France because I could not manage the stigma and isolation I felt simply from wearing a hijab.

My background with Islam allowed for my acceptance as a participant in these religious communities, despite serious initial barriers to entry in the French banlieues. My ethnic background as South-Asian American was also a critical factor that shaped the research experience. In Hyderabad my familiarity with the culture was perhaps important to my being accepted, while my American upbringing and nationality implied status and wealth such that some people may have felt they could not refuse assisting me. In this respect my role as an American researcher certainly imposed a level of symbolic violence on people I encountered and approached. In contrast, in France my American nationality worked against me. The French people I met, Muslim and non-Muslim, had negative associations with American politics and culture. On the other hand they eagerly embraced aspects of Indian culture in a way that was often amusing and orientalist. They would seem to forget I was American and immediately asked questions about Bollywood films, dance, and Indian cuisine. It may be an overstatement to say that my experiences in India were critical to gaining acceptance in a place like Les Minguettes, but this nonetheless bears some truth.

In terms of class disparity between myself and my subjects, this was a striking dynamic in the slums in Hyderabad. Nearly every week, at some point someone would cry in front of me when recounting stories of their troubles and poverty, and over time I grew hardened to their sufferings. No matter how much I may have connected with them, there was always the question and possibility that I had money or connections or even mere donation items to offer. As I had gotten used to the power I exerted in the field in Hyderabad due to perceptions of my class status, it was a difficult to face the lack thereof in Lyon. There were no clear reasons to assume that I was wealthier or more privileged than my peers and informants, especially as I kept such details ambiguous in Les Minguettes. People associated me mostly with India, a poorer nation, and thus, I no longer enjoyed the benefits that came with being considered privileged. More precisely, I sensed that I did not have anything tangible to offer my French subjects. The one exception I experienced was with a close working-class informant who asked me to teach him some English. The relative lack of power I had in Lyon as an ethnographer, however, allowed for more natural or 'equal' relationships to develop vis-à-vis Hyderabad. Informants transitioned to friends in a way that was much less attainable in Hyderabad.

Gaining entry

There were several points of entry from which my research developed in Hyderabad. The first was a personal reference I used to contact Mr. Haq. Mr. Haq then introduced me to board members and to Kulsoom apa, who graciously let me accompany her to the dozens of women's training centers throughout my research. I also had a personal contact that led me to an interview with Mr. Akbar, who then gave me Mr. Husayni's contact information and other activists whom I met or interviewed. Prior to arriving in India I also sent several cold-call emails to various organizations and Urdu editorial offices explaining my research and asking for assistance. One of these led to a meeting with Nasir in Amberpet from whom I became connected to the local women's madrasa and study circle. Finally, in 2005-6 I had lived in a flat that was at the border of First Lancer. I wandered into the neighborhood with my auto driver, who introduced me to Anwar.

I was generally warmly welcomed into these conversations and communities, but there were early suspicions in the slum neighborhoods, especially just a few years following 9/11 and the growth of security apparatuses in the US as well as India. One man in First Lancer refused to speak with me, and another resident (who later became a friend) was very nervous on several occasions when I came by his shop. Further, there were some organizations and individuals that made clear their discomfort with interacting with women without a burqa and in a few cases, without a male relative. In these cases I did take up the burqa or asked a male relative to accompany me.

My entry into the religious spaces of Lyon began with my attendance in 2006 at the l'UOIF conference outside of Paris. There, I met two activists, one of whom worked outside of Lyon and another whose fiancée was an activist and member of Mosquée Hijra. I met her, with his reference, and she introduced me to the community there at the mosque. However, my middle-class informants were unable to provide contacts or the assistance of anyone who could accompany me to Les Minguettes or other working-class neighborhoods. Just having arrived from Hyderabad, which had become my frame of reference, this was a shock to me. I thus wandered around the housing project in Les Minguettes until I found my way to the two mosques I ended up studying. In my naivite, I did not know at the time that these had been raided and associated with post-9/11 arrests. I met other working-class informants such as Mounir, through the web site of the Grand Mosque.

The gender dynamics I faced in Hyderabad were less an issue in Lyon partly because there were not numerous institutions and organizations run by men that I attempted to access. On the other hand, there was less flexibility that I observed with regard to the hijab. In other words, it would have been considered strange or a personal weakness to wear the hijab in some settings and not in others, a practice I had been accustomed to from India. This was my feeling specifically among practicing mosque attendees.

The suspicions and doubts with regard to security questions were most dramatic in Lyon, as I discussed in Chapter 6. Middle-class Muslims welcomed me warmly with few exceptions, though I would not be surprised if 1-2 individuals wonder even to this day if I worked for the US government. In the working-class housing projects, the atmosphere was tense and cautious, perhaps even paranoid. For this reason, I quickly learned I could not casually announce my identity and status to residents or mosque worshippers but had to gradually finesse my entry.

In both cities my research was both covert and overt. In the middle-class communities, I openly discussed the research but was more ambiguous among my poor and working-class subjects. My subjects in the slum neighborhoods and welfare centers in Hyderabad knew I was a

researcher, however, their lack of education and weak literacy was such that they may not have comprehended what that meant. They were not particularly keen on asking me work-related questions. In Lyon's banlieues I typically said I was a student visiting from America but did not clarify that I was observing their specific mosque. To have done so, I believe, would have created great nervousness and doubt and possibly, ended the research. Eventually, I was more forthright that I was studying Islam in France. Again, because of their own estrangement from education they did not really have the resources to engage me on what that entailed.

Above all, it was a shared background and interest in Islam that facilitated my acceptance and relationships. But this also posed an ethical challenge, as my subjects presumed levels of religiosity and faith that made me worry I was being deceptive. This was more the case in Lyon, where worshippers overcame many barriers to practice Islam and worked hard to augment their faith. The relatively greater flexibility of religious practices I experienced in Hyderabad, I believe, lowered the expectations of me. At the same time, the teachers in Les Minguettes stated many times that one's faith and practice are deeply private and must not be judged, which softened the ethical dilemma I perceived.

Representativeness

Informed by the extended case method (Burawoy 1998), this study was not directed toward the ideal of representativeness. Like many ethnographers, I was opportunistic as could be in following leads and taking advantage of contacts or people's willingness to help. Therefore, where and whom I studied resulted from the opportunities I had and was able to pursue. My arguments do not represent all religious Muslim practices and politics in either city. However, with time I began to gather a broader picture of the activist network and major debates with which many Muslims were grappling. The same names and organizations repeatedly came up in conversations and interviews.

In Hyderabad there are dozens of predominantly Muslim enclaves I could have pursued, but I believe I captured a fair amount of diversity by being able to study an area like First Lancer in the New City and Babanagar, which is very similar to the other poorest neighborhoods in the Old City. My research findings may be skewed by the focus on philanthropy, which again resulted from my initial contacts. There are presumably many sections of the city that have not been drawn into the political dynamics I described. At the same time, I was continually stunned by the expansion of women's training centers and philanthropic efforts into what seemed like most major neighborhoods of the Old City as well as parts of the New City. Additionally, the prominent role of philanthropists and the MIM can be seen by a summary look at city newspapers that report on them with some frequency.

In Lyon there were also numerous mosques I may have attended to attain a sampling of middle-class Muslim worshippers. Mosquée Hijra did have a public presence in the city and was connected to activists from major national organizations. However, it was one of a few mosques of such stature that I could have pursued. My decision to focus on Les Minguettes instead of Vaulx-en-Velin, for example, was because of its reputation for having a larger Maghrebi, Muslim population. Les Minguettes and the Salafist community there do not necessarily represent life in Vaulx-en-Velin or other working-class banlieues. But it was the name that most frequently arose in reference to the growth of Islam and indeed, became the epicenter in many ways of the controversy over the burqa. In sum, I cannot claim this ethnography was representative of Islam in either city, however, it did capture significant trends and neighborhoods that have defined debates about Islam in both cities.

Biases and definitions

My argument about the class divide in religious practices, or forms of piety, was frequently unpopular when I discussed it with people in both field sites. They tended to view divisions within Muslim society as ideological and not class-based, and I had several spirited discussions about it with activists and informants. In my ethnographic research, the class divide was a very clear observation. But my attention to it may reflect my theoretical biases. More critically, it is important to point out the complexities of the class structure in both societies—that are neglected in my argument for the sake of simplification.

In Hyderabad the range of class positions among Muslims is very wide. There exists a significant wealthy elite, a solid home-owning middle-class, a lower-middle class with some college education and comfortable rented flats, and poor families with some access to consumer goods and unstable sources of income. Finally, there are poor families in makeshift housing with insufficient food and income, followed by street beggars. Given this complex structure, it may be problematic to consider elites and middle-class Muslims in the same category, or poor but stable families with semi-homeless families in the same category, as I did for the sake of my argument.

The class structure among Muslims in Lyon (including converts and non-practicing citizens of immigrant origin) appeared less complicated to me on the surface. What I have labeled as middle-class is closer to a lower-middle class segment in other societies. Despite education and living outside of the *quartiers*, most subjects have low-skilled jobs and temporary work. With the exception of some successful individuals in politics, entertainment, athletics, or business, I was not aware of a particularly unified or significant wealthy, Muslim-origin elite—despite statistics pointing to the integration and upward mobility of many Maghrebins. Of both Hyderabad and Lyon, further research is necessary toward establishing a more precise picture of minority class structure.

Aside from difficulties and ambiguities in defining class categories, there is also the crucial question of who exactly is a Muslim. Although it is Muslims who are the object of my study, the question of defining what or who is Muslim is always rhetorical, for the answer depends on who has the power to define this ethno-religious category (Bilgrami 1992). There are always parties with opposing interests at stake in defining a religious community including the state, xenophobic movements, religious elites, religious activists, and worshippers who wish to narrowly define the community in accordance with theological tenets. Throughout my research I found that even though the diversity of Islamic practices and beliefs in India may be similar to that of France, it is viewed through a very different lens. It is commonly taken for granted that Muslims in India constitute a religious-ethnic community, whereas in France this is always suspect. The way belief and practice are defined—and indeed, the way people, of in this case Muslim origin, view themselves—is politically determined. It is also steeped in complex regional histories that constructed Muslims in particular ways, as Chapters 2 and 3 demonstrate,

Survey research seeking to capture Muslim belief and practice, I argue, tends to reflect a number of biases and obscures the complexities of Muslim identity as well as the institutional contours set by the state within which individuals and groups may practice Islam. Nonetheless, as a starting point toward grasping larger tendencies, polls in France show an increasing tendency to self-identify as Muslim and claim to have faith but low levels of practice (but higher than Catholics) (Laurence and Vaisse 2006: 75-83). Each of these findings may be interrogated in a number of ways. Through ethnographic observation, it became clear that there are many

ways of being Muslim in both France and India. These are influenced sometimes by an intense theological engagement, a sense of political identity, or sometimes simply through familial attachment, a nostalgic longing for the country of one's immigrant parents (Silverstein 2004). On the other extreme are Muslims who proclaimed all those who practiced cultural rituals and superstitions that appeared polytheistic (*shirk*) as "non-believers." This would render a significant percent of the so-called Muslim world non-believers. Again, the perception of these diverse forms varies, and I was continually surprised by the ways people inhabited the identity. An auto driver in Hyderabad drank alcohol every week and never set foot in the mosque—but would never deny his faith and identity as Muslim. Ilyas, a French Moroccan man, described himself as a non-practicing agnostic and Marxist. But I was taken aback one afternoon when he told me he was fasting for Ramadan, indeed, all 30 days of the month. This was a common observation in Lyon, whereas in Hyderabad fasting during all of Ramadan was seen as a great challenge and test of faith.

The relationship between Muslim belief and practice is clearly inconsistent and is a contested question among self-identified Muslims. For a population so inconsistent, immensely diverse, and fractured, what can be said of the notion of Muslim "community"—other than that it comes together in a politically charged atmosphere in the minority context? Despite divisions (often manipulated by the state), there does exist the imaginary of the universal Muslim *ummah*, or community of believers. As Abdul, another informant in Lyon, stated, some degree of faith (in the existence of one God and the status of Muhammed) alone is enough to constitute a community. "There's a reason," he said, "that we break the fast together, perform the Haj [pilgrimage] together, and sometimes pray together."

The Muslims I observed, lived amongst, and interviewed were all self-identified believers and saw themselves loosely as members of a religious community. Usually, though not always, their most immediate sense of community was through a local mosque or association. In Hyderabad, however, religious associations overlapped with philanthropic or welfare organizations.

Interviews

Apart from participant observation, I also conducted 39 interviews across the sites. These ranged from informal to semi-structured, depending on the interviewee. I conducted interviews during the first half of my research and decided against interviews during the latter visits, as I sensed that they altered the dynamic with my interviewees. In an atmosphere of surveillance and fear, approaching people for interviews on the topic of Islam and politics often made them uncomfortable. On a few occasions, interviewees asked that I not record our conversation. Certain questions also appeared annoying to them such as those about women and Islam. Clearly, they were exhausted with having to defend or describe their views. Moreover, working-class subjects especially might have felt that they had to perform or sound intellectual. As I noticed how much more at ease and candid people were as soon as I turned off the recorder, I gradually phased out interviews. The list below summarizes the number and type of interviews conducted.

<u>France</u>

Activists with organizations or mosques: 11
Politician: 1
Residents of les cités: 3

<u>India</u>

Politicians: 2
Philanthropists: 3
Madrasa teachers: 3
Activists with Islamic/welfare organizations: 6
Mosque leaders: 4
Slum residents: 6

Media and documents

I followed related local politics in each country by regular reading or perusal of *Le Monde*, *Le Progres*, *Lyon Capitale*, and *Lyon Mag* in Lyon and the *Times of India* and *Deccan Chronicle* in Hyderabad. I also followed periodically the *Milli Gazette* and the Urdu newspaper, *Siasat*. In terms of websites, I frequently checked the French Muslim forum, mejliss.com, where I could see some of the ongoing religious questions, controversies, and local needs.

Throughout the research I collected organizational pamphlets where they existed as well as local flyers and appeals for donations or proselytizing literature. Statistics were gathered from the French institutes, INSEE and INED, l'Observatoire national des zones urbains sensibles, the Government of India census, the Government of India Sachar Report, and the website of the Chief Rationing Officer of Hyderabad.