RICHARD T. ANTOUN

Muslim Preacher in the Modern World

A Jordanian Case Study in Comparative Perspective

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Key to Transliteration of Arabic Letters and Symbols

Consonants

ا	a	د	d	ط	ṭ	م	m
ب	b	ذ	dh	ظ	TH	ن	n
ت	t	ر	r	ع	‘	ه	h
ث	th	ز	z	غ	gh	و	w
ج	j	س	s	ف	f	ى	y
ح	ḥ	ش	sh	ق	q		
خ	kh	ص	ṣ	ك	k		
		ض	ḍ	ل	l		

Vowels

	short	*long*
ـَ	a	ā
ـِ	i	ī
ـُ	u	ū

Other Symbols

o	indicated by the doubling of the letter
ـّـ	indicated by the doubling of the letter followed by a vowel
ء	indicated by ’

The voiced velar stop characteristic of Transjordanian (but not classical) Arabic and pronounced as the “g” in the English word “goat” will be transliterated by the letter “g”.

Key Arabic words frequently repeated in the course of the text will not be italicized and their long vowel marks will not be transliterated after first mention. Place names will be spelled according to the most common usage found on maps.

Preface

My interest in the Islamic sermon and the Muslim preacher began in November 1959 when I moved to the village of Kufr al-Ma, Jordan to undertake an ethnographic study that was to be the basis of my Ph.D. dissertation in anthropology for Harvard University. I became friends with the preacher, Shaykh Luqman,* a young man of thirty-two at the time, and subsequently listened to the sermons he delivered at the village mosque every Friday for a full year. In addition I met with him once a week to read the Quran. On six subsequent field work trips in 1965, 1966, 1967, 1979, 1984, and 1986, I listened to his sermons and observed his wider role in the community. I was fortunate that Luqman wrote out his sermons in longhand and delivered them from a text from which he departed occasionally to make extemporaneous remarks. When the subject of the sermon piqued my interest I was able, later in the week, to go to his home where he read the sermon for me as I typed up a transliterated version.

The Friday congregational sermon or *khuṭba* is a formal oral presentation delivered and subdivided according to set rules and interspersed with well-known prayer formulas, Quranic verses, and Traditions of the Prophet. But it is also an opportunity for selection and choice—selection of subject, and weighting of interpretive categories (theology, ethics, politics, and religious history). Perhaps more important, it is an opportunity for the preacher to articulate the formal religious message of Islam with the needs of the community, its problems, and its weltanschaung.

The author's modus operandi was to allow the content of each sermon to lead him in the direction of the analysis: for example, a sermon on kinship (chapter 4) to investigate the symbolic meaning of kin-based social relations and their articulation with other symbolic arenas in the community; sermons on work, magic, and education (chapter 5) to reflect on the potentiality of the Islamic sermon for modernization; sermons on the Meccan Pilgrimage (chapter 6) to pursue the meaning of pilgrimage multivocally within the Islamic tradition as well as cross-culturally; sermons, "lessons," and remarks about "factions" and "parties" to investigate a Muslim view of political parties and politics (chapter 7); and various sermons on the night journey and ascent of the Prophet,

* This name is a pseudonym, as are the names of many other villagers in this book.

Muhammad, to explore the possibilities of diverse interpretations of Muslim theology by different preachers (chapter 8).

The separate chapters of this book, then, are discrete essays that compose, if one may use a mixed but nevertheless appropriate metaphor, the single Muslim string of prayer beads. They unite in their variable presentation persistent themes regarding worship, social relations, ritual, style of life, kinship, and the changing modern world. While, therefore, most readers will probably feel more comfortable proceeding from the first chapter to the last in order (the first three essays are in some sense preparatory ethnographically and analytically for the others), they should feel free to examine each bead on the string in their own fashion and order, depending on personal interest and inclination.

More and more, as I continued to reflect upon this collection of sermons and upon other sermons that came to my attention, it became clear that they cross-cut the entire range of human concern from the most mundane (e.g., sexual intercourse, child-rearing, eating, entering a house, defecating, sitting down, walking, picking the teeth, working) to the most sublime (e.g., honor, death, learning, compassion, salvation). In what follows I have been able to describe only a small part of that panoramic concern, perhaps enough to disturb the stereotypes currently being trumpeted from the most elevated platforms by many Americans who see in Islam only violence and power or, contrarily, fatalism, and in any case not a genuine religion at all.

I would be very much remiss at this point if I did not thank all those individuals, institutions, and foundations who have helped and encouraged me in my research, though they are in no way responsible for my conclusions. A joint grant from the Department of Anthropology and the Middle East Center of Harvard University enabled me to undertake my initial research in Jordan, and a later grant from the Milton Fund allowed me to remain in the field for a full year. Later, a grant from the International Affairs Center at Indiana University covered my transportation costs to and from Jordan, and a grant from the Joint Committee on the Near and Middle East of the Social Science Research Council covered the expenses of field research. During part of this second period of research I served as Visiting Lecturer in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology and the Department of Cultural Studies of the American University of Beirut. The chairmen of these departments, Samir Khalaf and James Peet, extended to me their full cooperation in arranging my academic schedule so as to make my research trips possible. Still later a grant from the American Council of Learned Societies that supplemented two grants from the State University of New York Research Foundation enabled me to conduct comparative research in Iran.

Many of the sermons analyzed in this book were first discussed in a

graduate seminar on the Social Organization of Tradition in Islam co-taught with my colleague, Akbar Muhammad, at the State University of New York at Binghamton in 1976. I wish to thank Professor Muhammad for affording me his insights on Islamic preaching traditions and for helping in the translation of some difficult passages. I also wish to thank Sohair Muhammad for transcribing and typing tapes of sermons. In 1977 I had the opportunity of presenting and discussing the sermons in an informal seminar on Islamic institutions held by Victor Turner at the University of Chicago. I wish to thank him and the students at both Binghamton and Chicago for their contributions. Although he has not read or specifically commented on this manuscript, I also wish to thank my friend and colleague, Fuad Khuri of the American University of Beirut, for the insights he has provided on Islamic institutions in our many conversations over the years. I also wish to thank Ralph Crow of the same university for calling to my attention the disparate content of urban and rural sermons.

Specific thanks is due to my friends and colleagues, those at other universities as well as those at the State University of New York at Binghamton for taking time out of busy schedules to read parts of the manuscript and to offer helpful comments and criticisms. In particular I wish to thank Jon Anderson, Bruce Borthwick, Jane Collins, John Esposito, James Fernandez, Michael Fischer, Patrick Gaffney, Catherine Lutz, Mary Hegland, Michael Horowitz, Jane McAuliffe, Michael Meeker, Alan Morinis, Henry Munson, Jr., Muneera Murdock, Judith Nagata, Manning Nash, David Powers, Khalil Semaan, James Toth, and Saral Waldorf. Dale Eickelman, Bruce Lawrence, Helen Rivlin, and Abd al-Aziz Sachedina read and commented on the entire manuscript and made many helpful suggestions about style and organization as well as analysis. I wish also to thank my brother-in-law, David Miller, for reading and commenting on chapter 3. All of the above helped to improve the manuscript but are not responsible for my interpretations and conclusions. I also wish to recognize the efforts of Peg Roe in typing numerous drafts of this manuscript, Stan Kauffman for preparation of figures, and Essa Al Sadi for photographs taken in Kufr al-Ma in 1987. I am also grateful to Gail Ullman, social science editor at Princeton University Press, and Maria Bulgarello, copy editor of this manuscript, for their guidance in improving it.

Finally, I wish to thank the Jordanians, too numerous to mention, particularly the people of Kufr al-Ma, who have received me with warmth and hospitality over these many years and all those who have tolerated with patience my interminable questioning and prying into every nook and cranny of their affairs. Special thanks are due to Shaykh Luqman

whose sermons inform this book. He received me warmly on every visit and shared with me his understanding of Islam in an open and straightforward manner and without expectation of return. My debt to him and his family cannot be repaid unless it be by the small contribution this book might make to a better understanding of Islam.

Muslim Preacher in the Modern World

Introduction

This is a book about the Islamic sermon and the Muslim preacher, a book that explores the potentiality and diversity of the Muslim preaching tradition. It is also a book about the process by which religious beliefs, ritual norms, and ethics are transmitted selectively by knowledgeable religious specialists or culture brokers to the people of their communities. Such a study is as much concerned with the symbolic message of the sermon as it is with the articulation of that message with society, whether with kinship group, village community, State, or community of believers.

The aim of the study is threefold. The first aim is to document what scholars have referred to as "normative Islam," or "normal Islam."[1] Normative Islam refers to how Muslims are expected to, or ought to act and think. That is, it refers to prescriptions for believers in the areas of worship, social relations, daily transactions, and politics. This study examines the diversity of normative Islam with respect to a single preacher's sermons but also, to a lesser extent, between the sermons of different preachers in the same area. The first goal, then, is documentation and exemplification.

Documentation and exemplification are crucial at this stage in the relationship of Western, particularly North American and European, societies with the Muslim societies of Asia and Africa. Over the last fifteen years discussion of "Islamic revival," "Islamic resurgence," and "Islamic fundamentalism" has preoccupied scholars and diplomats, businessmen and journalists, military strategists and ordinary citizens. Unfortunately, the entire discussion within and outside academia has taken place, for the most part, in the absence of most of the vital evidence: the message of Islam as it is rendered every Friday in mosques throughout the Muslim world in milieus as varied as peasant villages, urban bidonvilles, prosperous suburbs, and Sufi convents. One cannot discuss intelligibly the resurgence of Islam toward the end of the century (or any other time, for that matter) unless one has some prior idea of the themes that have been propounded by the mainline carriers of religious tradition before that time. This book documents and exemplifies that tradition in one peasant village in Jordan in the 1960s, some time before the presumed Islamic resur-

1. See the discussion of "normal Islam" in relation to Abdul Hamid al Zein's "Beyond Ideology and Theology: The Search for the Anthropology of Islam" in the next chapter.

gence, in order to give interested parties some sense of what it is that is "resurgent."

Beginning with Geertz's classic *Religion of Java* (1960), many excellent studies of the Islamic religious tradition in its local environment have been written by anthropologists including, among others, *Saints of the Atlas* (Gellner 1969), *The Rope of God* (Siegel 1969), *The Hamadsha: A Study in Moroccan Ethnopsychiatry* (Crapanzano 1973), *Saint and Sufi in Modern Egypt* (Gilsenan 1973), *Moroccan Islam, Tradition and Society in Pilgrimage Center* (Eickelman 1976), *Iran from Religious Dispute to Revolution* (Fischer 1980), *Recognizing Islam* (Gilsenan 1982), *The House of Si Abd Allah* (Munson 1984), *Knowledge and Power in Morocco* (Eickelman 1985), and *Hindu Javanese: Tengger Tradition and Islam* (Hefner 1985). These authors have provided the interpretation of Islamic tradition in a wide variety of contexts including urban Sufi orders, legal and theological shrine centers, small market towns, mountain villages, coastal entrepots, and remote hinterlands. And they have dealt with a number of interesting themes: the psychological functions of shamanism, the adaptation of a mystic order in the bureaucratized environment of a centralized state, the study of religious discourse in a formal educational as opposed to a popular everyday context, the role of such discourse in revolution, the impact of historical change on religious roles, symbols, and ideologies, the reinterpretation of hinterland religious traditions against the background of a changing (money) economy, and the juxtaposition of Muslim world views taking into account differences of age, sex, education, occupation, and style of life. However, none of these studies has documented and exemplified the message of the single most important institution/role for the propagation of Islam historically and contemporaneously: the congregational sermon delivered in the Friday mosque by the Muslim preacher. That documentation and exemplification is the first goal of this book.

The second and related aim is processual and analytical—to analyze the process by which the Islamic message is handed down and interpreted by the culture broker (here the rural Muslim preacher) in his particular environment, the Jordanian village, and—to afford perspective—to compare that process, however briefly, with similar processes outside both Jordan and the Muslim world. That process is "the social organization of tradition" and involves the necessary selection from and interpretation of tradition. In several chapters, therefore, the focus will alternate between the Muslim preacher in Jordan and other culture brokers within and outside the Islamic tradition who must confront the same general problem: interpreting a message for a particular clientele (who interpret the message themselves as well as receive it) at the same time that they deal with

overarching political and religious hierarchies whose norms and aims often differ from those of both the culture broker and his audience.

The study of the social organization of tradition or, as I prefer to call it, the accommodation of traditions, can be pursued from five perspectives: (1) from the perspective of the beliefs themselves or the text (here, the sermon); (2) from the perspective of the linker and interpreter (here, the preacher); (3) from the perspective of a cognitive system; (4) from the perspective of the social structure; and (5) from the perspective of the folk. The first perspective involves sorting out the elements in the text, noting the mix of little and great tradition elements, and analyzing the attempt to deal with behavioral and cognitive diversity through social processes such as accommodation, toleration, universalization, compartmentalization, and juxtaposition of elements.[2] It is obvious that for the scholar interested in the actor (preacher) as well as the cultural product (the sermon), the two perspectives blend in the analysis. Therefore, in a previous essay (Antoun 1968c), I focused on both perspectives, that of the linker and the text, in analyzing a sermon on violations of modesty by women and noted that such violations were classified as reprehensible (*munkarāt*) by the preacher who invoked Islamic law and ethics and vigorously and uncompromisingly condemned them.[3] Taking the text (sermon) as a point of departure as do many of the chapters in this book, involves simultaneously a third perspective, that of a cognitive system, broadly construed (in the instance mentioned above, modesty as the logic of protection and control). This third perspective, which involves the perspective of argument cumulatively pursued metaphorically and metonymically, is taken most explicitly in discussing kinship (chapter 4) although its parameters are introduced in analyzing the role of the preacher (chapter 3) and pursued again in a more analytical vein in comparing five sermons on the Prophet's night journey and ascent (chapter 8). The fourth perspective is that of the social structure in which beliefs, rituals, or eco-

2. The emphasis here is on dealing with and accommodating diversity and not on identifying and tracing the origins of cultural elements. Anthropologists such as Marriott have made some interesting attempts in this latter direction (see Marriott 1955). The present author is less sanguine than Marriott about the possibilities of tracing the particular origins of elements in traditions with a capital or small *t*.

3. At the same time, many violations of modesty were tolerated by him and by others on a day-to-day basis. The tacit assumption was that as long as the most elevated interpretation of law and ethics prevailed at the cognitive level, toleration of deviance at the behavioral level was permitted. This is in accordance with a view of the world as a laboratory in which the Islamic ethic in institutionalized settings (such as mosques, religious courts, and mystic orders) would constantly reduce the scope of unbelief and wrong action. See Richard T. Antoun, "On the Modesty of Women in Arab Muslim Villages: A Study in the Accommodation of Traditions," *American Anthropologist*, Vol. 70, No. 4, 1968c for details of this argument.

nomic dispositions are analyzed in relation to such contextual variables as age, sex, status, and kinship differences as well as implications for social control and politics. This perspective, although not the dominant one in the book, is important and recurring; it is taken up at the end of chapter 2 with respect to the peasant predicament, in chapter 4 with respect to kinship, in chapter 5 for economic activity, and in chapter 7 for politics and social control. The fifth perspective is the perspective of the folk, the perspective from the bottom up. Those who listen to the preacher are, after all, not simply passive receivers of a dogma as one scholar has suggested.[4] They themselves interpret, if only by giving more or less weight to various parts of the message, but also interpret by sometimes rejecting outright certain interpretations in favor of others. All five perspectives, then, are utilized in varying degrees in each chapter to study the process of the social organization of tradition.

If the first aim of this study is documentary and the second is analytical, the third aim is humanistic and experiential. The sermons recorded in this book are not only examples of guiding norms for Muslims in worship, social relations, and everyday transactions. They do not simply provide information for Muslims about prayer, fasting, and pilgrimage on the one hand and how to treat your neighbor, kinsman, and co-religionist on the other. These sermons also provide meaning at the deepest experiential level from the side of both intellect and emotions. The Quranic verses, Traditions of the Prophet, and prayer formulae that lace the sermons together "are" the ultimate reality for both the preacher and his listeners. As William A. Graham has pointed out (1985), the recited Quran (not its written form) is the closest approximation to the divine for the believing Muslim. Its character as the verbatim speech of God sets it apart: "Whereas the divine presence is manifest for Jews in the Law and for Christians in the person of Christ, it is in the Quran that Muslims directly encounter God."[5]

Quranic verses were meant to be recited aloud as attested to by the introduction of three hundred passages in the Quran by the word *Qul* ("recite"). Graham states that "to read the bare text one had to (already)

4. Gilles Kepel, in an otherwise rare and perceptive analysis of a sermon by the popular "free" (see chapter 3) preacher of Egypt, Shaykh Kishk, has taken this view. Shaykh Kishk's audience, as that of any other Muslim or non-Muslim preacher, has been regarded as passive and uninterpreting only because that audience has been ignored by scholars who failed to treat it with the same serious intent as the religious specialist. See Gilles Kepel, *Muslim Extremism in Egypt: The Prophet and the Pharaoh* (University of California Press, Berkeley, 1986), esp. 186.

5. Graham "*Qur'an* as Spoken Word: An Islamic Contribution to the Understanding of Scripture," in *Approaches to Islam in Religious Studies*, Richard C. Martin, editor (University of Arizona Press, Tucson, 1985), 29.

know it by heart."[6] Hodgson (1974 :367) has said that the Quran "was never designed to be read for information or even for inspiration, but to be recited as an act of commitment in worship" and Nelson (1985) has stressed that the professional Quranic reciters themselves aim to engage the heart to produce the various emotions that facilitate understanding and reflection upon particular Quranic verses.[7]

The Quran is recited outside the mosque in taxis, shops, homes, Sufi convents, and Husayniyyahs. It is recited on the occasions of mourning, burial, the birthday of the Prophet, and daily during the fast month of Ramadan. In addition, Quranic phrases accompany and often introduce or terminate the daily activities of eating, entering a house, leave-taking, sneezing, and undertaking a journey.

But the most regular and significant recitation of the Quran is on the occasion of the Friday congregational prayer service. Recitation precedes the Friday sermon and follows it, and the preacher punctuates his sermon with appropriate verses as does the worshiper in the culminating Friday congregational prayer. This experiential dimension of Quranic recitation in which, as Hodgson states (1974: 367), "the event of revelation was renewed" on every occasion of worship permeates the preacher's Friday sermon and has been therefore rendered in **boldface** type to bring it to the attention of the reader.

The sermon delivered and heard has a power rendered pale and second-hand in read sermon texts such as those included in this book. When the preacher describes the "womb" (kinship) in terms of "The Compassionate" in Traditions of the Prophet and his companions, when he declares that the heavens do not rain down gold and silver (and therefore that the believer must work for his daily bread), when he retraces the steps of Muhammad on his last pilgrimage to Mecca, the holy, and when he describes the Prophet's night journey to Jerusalem and ascent through the seven heavens, he is affirming an ultimate reality, a faith-driven society, and a personal commitment.

Since the personal experiential component of Islam is conveyed in Traditions of the Prophet (*ḥadith*) as well as the Quran, such Traditions are italicized in the sermon texts and excerpts. Despite the wide cultural gap between the reader of these sermon texts and the Muslim believer in the worship setting it is to be hoped that they convey, in however incomplete a manner, the feeling of Muslim preaching as well as its intellectual and ethical message, which are, in any event, inextricably tied together.

The stress on the experiential dimension of this study along with the

6. Ibid., 32, 34.

7. See Kristina Nelson *The Art of Reciting the Qur'an* (University of Texas Press, Austin, 1985), 87ff.

analytical may offend the social scientifically oriented reader. How utterly romantic, obtuse, and muddleheaded can a scholar be—suggesting that he can represent the experience of one's religion! Of course, faithful representation is impossible. In the discipline of anthropology, however, attempts to give some sense of the flesh-and-blood nature of other cultures has a solid basis in the work of one of its pioneers, Bronislaw Malinowski. Moreover, anthropologists have recently begun to recognize more clearly, reinforcing the tendencies in the work of Clifford Geertz and Victor Turner, the necessity of enriching normative, model, and system-oriented work with the texture of human experience. Lila Abu Lughod's discussion of the relationship of the existential situation of Bedouin women to their composition of poetry, Robert Hefner's attention to the impact of individual culture brokers and their distinctive family traditions of learning on the transmission of old and new intellectual technologies in Java, and Henry Munson, Jr.'s intimate study of the contrasting world views of a young modern Muslim woman and her first cousin, a middle-aged Muslim fundamentalist, all emphasize the necessity of taking account of individual experience (and not just the individual as an analytical category) in order to understand the complicated process of the interpretation and transmission of tradition.[8] Pierre Bourdieu has addressed the problem of the gap between analysis and experience from the analytical side, insisting on the complication of the analytical concepts with experience-oriented insights (e.g., distinguishing between "ordinary" and "extraordinary" marriages, "first-order" and "second-order" strategies, and calendars as opposed to "practical [islands of] time").[9]

The discussion and analysis of Shaykh Luqman's sermons (chapters 3, 4, 5, 6, 8) stand in their own right as an exemplification of one version of the Islamic preaching corpus and as an indication of its diversity and potentiality. But this study also aims to deal with *Luqman's* human situation as examined in the "peasant predicament" and the "social structural (village) predicament" (chapter 2), as well as his idiosyncratic life history (chapter 3). At the same time, the study calls attention to the cross-cultural character of the culture broker's predicament across a variety of religious traditions and locales (chapter 1). In so doing this study fulfills one of its primary aims: to describe a process analytically without dispensing with the individual and human dimensions that give it substance.[10]

8. See Abu Lughod 1986; Hefner 1985; and Munson 1984 for details.

9. See Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, Richard Nice, translator (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1982) for details of this argument.

10. Because of the humanistic and cross-cultural implications of this study and the hope that it will have value to more than a strictly academic audience I have, with rare exceptions, not italicized frequently mentioned foreign (mainly Arabic) terms after first mention.

I will now outline the particular circumstances which led to the present study. In 1959–1960 I began conducting research in the Jordanian village of Kufr al-Ma, a peasant community with a population of about two thousand Muslims. In view of the paucity of data on peasant societies in the Middle East, I determined to carry out an ethnographic study of the village. Part of that study involved the translation of sermons delivered by the village preacher every Friday as part of the congregational prayer service. I listened to well over sixty such sermons during that and subsequent field trips in 1965, 1966, and 1967, and recorded and translated twenty-seven. I found the preacher and the sermons extraordinary in a number of respects. The preacher had achieved his vocational status at the age of twenty-four only after a struggle with both his father and the village community, this in a thoroughly "Muslim" community; the preacher never had any formal training in Islamic law or ethics, but had learned Islam from a number of peripatetic preachers some of whom were hardly noted for their sophistication—this was, after all, an economic backwater of Transjordan. Yet when I left the village in 1967, the preacher had gathered a considerable library, including four commentaries of the Quran and the most sophisticated works of al-Ghazzali (the Muslim Aquinas).

The sermons, always effective and delivered in an evangelical style to a large congregation, ranged over a variety of topics, including ritual (the obligations of worship, such as prayer, fasting, and pilgrimage), theology (the meaning of judgment day), and religious history (e.g., Muhammad's prophetic career). But the great majority of sermons were ethical in intent—for example, how to treat one's wife, one's children, one's neighbors, one's kinsmen, and how to divide one's inheritance. The great majority of sermons were apolitical unlike the sermons given in large towns and cities where, for instance, pan-Arabism, the struggle for Palestine, and the struggle for Algeria loomed large. I have waited twenty years for the publication of comparative data so that I might place this particular preacher and his sermons in perspective. It has not been forthcoming. The reasons are not too difficult to infer. Muslims, no matter how educated or how secularized, find it difficult to describe and analyze what still has a powerful emotional appeal. Indeed, how many of us would be able to walk into our own church or synagogue and do so? And Westerners find it difficult to master the classical Arabic in which sermons are invariably delivered.

The in-depth study of the content of Islamic sermons and the role of the culture broker, the preacher, in selecting themes from the vast corpus of Islamic law and ethics—and he must select—will help fill a gap in the literature and at least form the beginning point for the study of process and constitute a baseline for comparative work in both time and space.

The study of the Islamic sermon is particularly instructive for the study of comparative religion and comparative social structure. Islam, unlike Christianity, has a focus on orthopraxy rather than orthodoxy. That is, Muslim law and ethics have direct and detailed applications for the minutiae of personal relations, and the orientation of religion is toward society rather than toward theology on the one hand or the State on the other. This conclusion is attested to by a number of facts. The Muslim calendar begins not with the birth of Muhammad, or the revelations of the divine message, but with the foundation of the Muslim community in Madina in 622. The term of reference for the religion is "Islam," referring to the society stamped by religion as well as to the religion itself. There is no word for orthodoxy in Islam, but orthopraxy (*sunna*), Muhammad's deeds and words, is a leading source of Islamic law and ethics, and its opposite, innovation (*bid'a*), is abhorred. Of the five so-called "pillars of the faith"—profession of faith, prayer, fasting, the giving of alms, and pilgrimage—only the first refers to belief; all the others refer to actions. The main charge of the Muslim ruler is to protect the law and to safeguard its implementation; otherwise, basically a laissez-faire view of the state is taken. The Quran, in fact, propounds ethics rather than law. Very few penalities for misdeeds are found in the Quran while there are many specific exhortations toward right conduct. Of the sermons I heard during the Friday congregational prayer service each week over the course of a year, two-thirds related to ethics. Finally, orthopraxy is institutionalized in the Friday sermon, the mystic brotherhood, and the Muslim court. The point is that the khuṭba in Islam is not a "sermon" as we understand it. Historically, from the beginning, the mosque was a community center in which a whole range of political, economic, and social problems were addressed, disputes mediated, advice sought, and vital information passed. That is, the sermon with all its symbolic richness as an exemplar of Muslim culture and history—Muhammad was the first Muslim preacher—cannot be considered apart from its social structural context and the vital changes stimulating or besetting the community.

Certain social scientists (e.g., Borthwick 1965) have argued that although the sermon has significance for such traditional themes as the propagation of nationalism, it has limited significance for the propagation of modernization. Other social scientists (e.g., Bloch 1975) have argued that as language becomes more formal and "restricted" it loses its capacity to deal with special problems. The Islamic sermon, to some extent, approximates such "restricted codes" and therefore can be used as a rough test of the hypothesis. The study of the Islamic sermon, then, will be significant for resolving some important questions currently being posed in some of the social and cultural sciences.

However, the main contribution of this study will be to provide docu-

mentation of the nature of the Islamic corpus, its degree of diversity, its flexibility with respect to current social issues and specific social structures or, given a more Machiavellian view, its capacity for manipulation, that is, its significance for social process. Given this general orientation, I follow the implications of each sermon selected, in the various directions indicated by its content (e.g., the rhetoric of religion, modernization, family ethics, education, attitude toward political parties or individual salvation). In the final chapter the processes of Islamization, Islamic resurgence, and reinterpretation of tradition will be discussed generally in terms of their significance for the modern world.

Although the bulk of the data included in this book is from my own field research in Jordan, it is my intention, as indicated by the first chapter, to be cross-cultural in perspective, drawing on examples from within as well as outside the Islamic world. This cross-cultural perspective is evident whether the focus is on a process (cultural brokerage), an institution (pilgrimage), a role (the preacher), or a broad interest area (politics). I have introduced data on culture brokers from Latin America and the Philippines, on preachers from the United States and England, on fundamentalism from Iran and West Virginia, and on pilgrimage from India and Iran. The aim in each instance is not to carry out a cross-cultural study in any formal sense but to illuminate by way of contrast the distinctive character of the institution or process being analyzed in its Muslim and/or Jordanian and/or peasant context. But a second and equally important aim is to remind the reader of the universal aspects of the process or interest area being discussed and the variety of responses/patterns possible.

At a number of points, particularly in chapters 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, and 9, questions are posed about the reinterpretation of tradition in relation to the transformation of society. It is no secret that the revolution in the oil-pricing system in 1973 had and has a powerful impact not only on the oil-producing countries of the Middle East but also on nonoil producers like Jordan, who sent large numbers of migrants, both white-collar and blue-collar, to work in the Arabian peninsula. Although we have raised questions along the way, particularly in chapters 4, 6, 7, and 9, concerning the relationship between socioeconomic change and cultural change, here religious change, few answers to such questions have been given in this book. This is by intent. The author has recently (1986) gathered considerable data on the impact of international migration and the pursuit of higher education abroad on this now substantially postpeasant community, and he intends to analyze that impact on the religious institution in a sequel to the present study. To read back these startling changes into the sermons of the 1960s, however, would be a major error of analysis. Although Jordan had undergone a variety of political and economic vicissitudes by the 1960s and Kufr al-Ma had been touched by most of them

(see chapter 2), the moral economy of the village still reflected to a large degree a peasant and tribal culture with a focus on kinship and the guest house arena, and the sermons of the preacher reflected this fact (see chapter 4). The problem of the reinterpretation of tradition against the background of international migration and the transformation of rural society, a transformation which posed a challenge to a way of life based upon kinship and community ties, is quite another story still to be told.

The Social Organization of Tradition

In modern times Robert Redfield, M. N. Srinivas, and McKim Marriot were the first to write analytically about the process of "the social organization of tradition."[1] The social organization of tradition is the process of constant interchange of cultural materials necessarily involving choice and interpretation between the self-styled "learned" (but also so styled by the common people) men and women of a society and the great majority of people whom Redfield designated as "folk" in earlier works and "peasants" in later works.[2] This process usually involves some kind of accommodation between what the learned men ("literati" or "intelligensia" as Redfield called them[3]) would like to see done or believed and what the

1. See Redfield's *The Folk Culture of Yucatan* (1941); *The Primitive World and Its Transformations* (1953); and *Peasant Society and Culture* (1956); Srinivas's *Religion and Society Among the Coorgs of South India* (1952); and Marriot's "Little Communities in an Indigenous Civilization" (1955).

2. These two terms are sometimes used as synonyms in Redfield's works, and at other times they convey quite different meanings. Singer (1974) argues that Redfield's contrast of "folk" and "urban" in the *Folk Culture of Yucatan* relates to "structures of conventionalized meanings" in which "folk" cultures "are transformed by contact and communication with urban kinds of cultures." Redfield's central interest was "whether cultures differ as to degree to which the quality of organization is present and as to the nature of the connections among the elements." "Folk culture" is an "ideal type towards which a well organized culture tends." According to Singer, Redfield's folk-urban continuum concept was not a theory about borrowing or diffusion of discrete cultural traits. Rather, Redfield was concerned about the transformation of meaning structures and the acculturation of elements. See Singer, "Robert Redfield's Development of a Social Anthropology of Civilizations," in *American Anthropology, The Early Years*, John V. Murra, editor (West Publishing, Boston, 1974), esp. 224–29.

3. By "literati" Redfield meant that part of the elite in a complex society (i.e., after the urban revolution) who "are official carriers of the classical written tradition which provides the social system with a sophisticated and elaborate justification for its existence and continued survival" (Redfield 1956: 29). The literati consciously reflected upon and refined cultural materials having their origin in the traditional "folk" tradition, and they usually did so in an institutionalized setting (e.g., school, temple, cloister, guild). The "intelligensia" for Redfield were also culture brokers, intermediaries between local life and the wider life, sophisticates and interpreters who represented the powerful rather than the weak. But they were a modern version of such brokers, operating now as intermediaries for a "national" state, "national" church, and "national" school system (e.g., as mayors, doctors, school teachers, and engineers). Moreover, the cultures for which they mediated and on which they reflected were "heterogenetic" and intrusive rather than traditional and folk; they reflected the breakdown of local traditions and the development of mass culture through changes inspired by science, technology, free general education, mass production and organized consumption, and the mass media.

great majority of people regarded as proper in deed and word. Redfield argued specifically that peasants were men of the countryside rooted in villages who had to take account of the city—its power, its marketplace, its beliefs, its style of life—and the kind of people it produced, gentry or townsmen. Redfield, perhaps unfortunately, stressed acceptance on the part of the folk at least at a normative level[4] of a more "sophisticated" way of life and neglected investigating the numerous options and kinds of accommodation available to peasants including sheer juxtaposition of beliefs, revival, dissimulation, and outright defiance. Still, like most pioneers, Redfield's broadest formulations allowed and even pointed to the way for future analysis.

Although Redfield had designated the formalized, literate, and institutionalized views of the learned as the "great" tradition and the views of the folk as the "little" tradition, he defined the process of the social organization of tradition as a two-way flow of ideas. Srinivas and Marriot analyzed this two-way flow in terms of "parochialization" (by which ideas flowed from urban centers and were accepted and fixed in many "parochial" milieus [villages]) and "universalization,"[5] a flow of ideas from the villages and tribal encampments to the urban intellectual centers by which folk concepts were given the imprimateur of the sophisticates. Redfield's designations of the options of the folk, whether in terms of belief or action, resulted from his view that the transformation of "folk"[6] society was caused by the urban revolution which had marked the turning point of the human career and the development of "civilization"—with which peasants had to come to terms intellectually as well as politically and economically. The city and its elite exercised moral guidance as well as political domination.

If Redfield emphasized the gap between the great and little traditions—and, therefore, the necessity of the social organization of tradition and

4. A norm is a statement that can be elicited from an informant as to what behavior "ought" to be (or is expected to be) in any particular situation and in relation to any particular person. A normative level of analysis, therefore, stresses the ethical implications of action rather than cognitive, expressive, or statistical (incidence) aspects.

5. Actually, the terms *parochialization* and *universalization* were first used by Srinivas in 1952 and later elaborated and refined in an important essay by Marriott (1955).

6. For Redfield "folk" clearly did not mean "peasant," but rather prepeasant mainly tribal tradition. Redfield has been much criticized for his delineation of a folk-urban continuum, particularly in his 1941 work; for its evolutionary implications ("folk" are assumed at some point to become "urban"); for its implicit devaluation of folk tradition; and for its ahistorical view, particularly as applied to Latin America with its long colonial tradition. The weakness of Redfield's framework, although recognized and commented on in the last section of this chapter, is not the proper focus of this chapter or this book. Rather, it is its potentiality and refinement that is the focus. I have especially profited from discussions of Redfield's early Latin American work with my colleague, Jane Collins.