

Christians in Egypt in the late 1970s and the 1980s have resulted in stonings, church bombings, disruption of Christian services, and death. In Iran, the ulama in the 1950s mounted an unsuccessful campaign to persuade the government to pass legislation to suppress the Bahai, whom they regarded as apostates from Islam, and dismiss them from public office. In the aftermath of the Iranian revolution, the Bahai religion has been declared illegal, many have been imprisoned and executed, and their property has been seized. The Iranian government's insistence that the Bahai have been punished for political reasons has done little to silence its critics. In Pakistan and the Sudan, the imposition of Islamic law has resulted in the subjection of non-Muslims to the ban on alcohol and the suppression of sects that proclaim themselves Muslims. In Pakistan, the Ahmadiyya have been declared a non-Muslim minority, and in the Sudan, Mahmud Taha, leader of the Republican Brothers, was executed for apostasy.

Non-Muslim minorities face another potential restriction on their rights. If states become more Islamically oriented, will this prevent non-Muslims from holding key government positions? With the exception of the head of state or prime minister, in most Muslim states citizens, regardless of their faith, may hold any office. This Western, liberal, secular approach is increasingly contested by those who argue that non-Muslims should not hold key government, military, judicial, or legislative positions responsible for formulating and implementing the Islamic ideology of the state, since non-Muslims could not be fully

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committed to that ideology. Thus, while the constitutions of many modern Muslim states grant equality of citizenship and opportunity, the contemporary resurgence has resurrected pressures to reassert legally the often widespread traditional attitude toward non-Muslims, which has remained unchanged in Islamic law and is operative in the minds and outlook of many Muslims. This is reflected in the communalism evident in social life, if not in the workplace, the continued presence of communal villages or neighborhoods, and the tendency of most religious leaders and organizations, despite constitutional reforms, to teach and preach a restricted role for non-Muslims. As with the question of women's status, the tendency to legislate change from above, without adequately addressing traditional ideals and values that remain a part of faith and religious history, creates a dichotomy between modern practices and traditional ideals that must be resolved. The unresolved contradictions between the two are like a smoldering fire, barely visible until a strong change in the direction of the wind causes it to ignite and erupt.

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