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SHAWKAT M. TOORAWA

Pillars of Islam

In a well-known tradition, Muhammad explains that Islam is "built on five [things]." Sunni Muslims have come to represent these five principles as "pillars" (*arkān*), evoking a physical structure. Preachers throughout the Muslim world frequently remind listeners that just as pillars alone do not make a building, so too must Muslims adopt other acts and practices to complete the edifice of their belief.

The Sunni Pillars

The five Sunni pillars (*arkān al-islām* or *arkān al-'ibāda*) are (1) testifying or witnessing that there is only God and that Muhammad is God's messenger (*shahāda*), (2) establishing the ritual prayer (*iqāmat al-ṣalāt*), (3) giving alms (*ītā' al-zakāt*), (4) fasting in the month of Ramadan (*ṣawm Ramaḍān*), and (5) making the pilgrimage to the Ka'ba in Mecca (*ḥajj al-bayt*) if one is able. For Maliki Sunnis, jihad, or struggle in the cause of Islam, is the fifth pillar, the *shahāda* being the foundation on which the other five pillars rest.

The *shahāda*—Islam's fundamental doctrinal statement—must be uttered at least once in one's lifetime. Those born Muslim do this from early childhood. For converts, this testimony marks an entrance into and membership in the Muslim community and polity, resulting in the immediate obligation to practice the remaining four pillars (in the case of recognized monotheists [the People of the Book], the almsgiving tax [zakat] replaces the poll tax [*jizya*] assessed by the state).

"Salat" refers to the five daily ritual prayers prescribed by God. These prayers (and times) are known as *fajr* (predawn), *ẓuhr* (postzenith), *'aṣr* (midafternoon), *maghrib* (postsunset), and *'ishā'* (nighttime). The specifics of the ritual prayer are derived entirely from prophetic practice. Most Shi'i denominations combine *ẓuhr* and *'aṣr* prayers and *maghrib* and *'ishā'* prayers, leading many Sunnis mistakenly to believe that Shi'is ignore a basic pillar. Though not one of the five prayers, the Friday congregational prayer replaces the zenith prayer and is also an obligation—one that brings Muslims together in congregational mosques. This ritual prayer is preceded by a sermon (*khuṭba*) and therefore has often been used by political authorities as a platform for the promulgation of state ideology or political doctrines. In the 21st century, many Muslim governments control or provide the text of Friday sermons.

Zakat, repeatedly enjoined in the Qur'an, where it is often paired with the performance of ritual prayer, is a form of charity that embodies the believer's commitment to the well-being of the larger community. It is assessed as a 2.5 percent almsgiving tax on accrued wealth, goods, and stock (excluding certain items, such as jewelry). As its literal meaning—purification—suggests, this (re)distribution of wealth is not only an important communal, fiscal, and sociopolitical act but also one that "purifies" wealth and the wealthy. If one does not have the means to pay zakat, then one is entitled to receive it. Organized collection of zakat began under Muhammad himself. When tribes that had pledged allegiance to Muhammad refused to contribute zakat to his successor Abu Bakr, the latter regarded them as apostates; Shi'is too deem that zakat should be turned over to the appropriate authorities. In time, jurists, who elaborated the provisions regarding zakat in great detail, would formalize the handing over of zakat to the state treasury (*bayt al-māl*). This practice has continued into modern times: in some Muslim countries, ministries or departments are in charge of collection and distribution; in others, nongovernment organizations do so. Recipients include not only the needy but also sometimes poorer countries.

Obligatory fasting (*ṣawm*) takes place the entire month of Ramadan, the ninth month in the Islamic lunar calendar. There are very few sectarian differences concerning the proper fast—which lasts from daybreak until sunset—but there is considerable disagreement about the method(s) to be used to determine the beginning and end of Ramadan (or any month). The issue centers on the new moon and whether it is to be sighted with the naked eye or through predictive astronomical data. Related are questions about the jurisdiction of a given pronouncement: does a sighting in Mecca bind someone in Medina, and if so, is this predicated on the fact that they are both part of the same political entity? Several countries and communities follow Saudi Arabia's start- and end-dates for Ramadan. Critics view this solidarity as politically or ideologically motivated and at odds with established jurisprudence. There have been numerous international conferences on the moon issue, which has been divisive internationally and, in some areas, such as India and the United States, nationally.

The hajj is the pilgrimage to Mecca and its precincts, required of all Muslims who are physically and financially able to make the trip only once in a lifetime. It takes place between the 8th and 12th days of the 12th Islamic month, Dhu al-Hijjah, or "pilgrimage month," which together with the months preceding and following were regarded as a time of "sacred truce," during which none were permitted to bear arms in the sacred precincts (*ḥaram*). Muslim pilgrims in fact perform the rituals in a sacralized state (*iḥrām*), which include the wearing of the *iḥrām*, the name given to the two pieces of unsewn cloth worn by men and the simple cotton garments worn by women.

The Shi'i Pillars

Twelver Shi'is have ten pillars (*furū' al-dīn*), which they call "branches" or "practices" (*furū'*). The six additional ones are a

20 percent tithe on profits, payable to the religious authorities (*khums*); struggle in the cause of Islam (jihad); commanding right (*al-amr bi-l-ma'rūf*); forbidding wrong (*al-nahy 'an al-munkar*); loving the *ahl al-bayt* (*tawallī*)—namely, the Prophet and his family (Fatima, 'Ali, Hasan, Husayn); and antipathy for the enemies of the Prophet and his family (*tabarru'*). As is clear from this additional list, all have direct social and political implications, and none but the last is especially Shi'i in character, as Sunnis too embrace the other practices as duties. To the five Sunni/Twelver Shi'i pillars (ritual prayer, almsgiving, fasting, pilgrimage, struggle), the Isma'ili Shi'is add two—*walāya*, or the devotion to God, the prophets, and the imams, and *ṭahāra*, or spiritual and physical purity—again not especially denominational, except for the inclusion of love of the imams in *walāya*.

See also Friday prayer; pilgrimage

Further Reading

Michael Cook, *Commanding Right and Forbidding Wrong in Islamic Thought*, 2001; Frederick M. Denny, *An Introduction to Islam*, 2010; Moojan Momen, *An Introduction to Shi'i Islam: The History and Doctrines of Twelver Shi'ism*, 1987; Andew Rippin, *Muslims: Their Religious Beliefs and Practices*, 2011; Abu al-Hasan Sadeq, *A Survey of the Institution of Zakah: Issues, Theories and Administration*, 1994.

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pluralism and tolerance

Pluralism and tolerance are considered constitutive elements of good governance, especially liberal democracy as it developed in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. For this reason they are widely debated among modern Muslims, including Islamists of various persuasions. For the same reason, this entry will focus largely on modern debates. Pluralism and tolerance are clearly related and both cover a broad semantic field. They concern relations within the Muslim community, as well as between Muslims and non-Muslims, and are closely tied to understandings of freedom, liberty, and citizenship. However, there is a difference of emphasis between the two: Pluralism is discussed mostly with regard to the Muslim community, or *umma*, especially concerning the plurality of political views and interests and their institutionalization within civil society and a multiparty system. Discussions of tolerance, on the other hand, tend to focus on relations between Muslims and non-Muslims—more specifically Christians and Jews as the prime representatives of the People of the Book (*ahl al-kitāb*)—within a Muslim polity, or within an Islamic state.

On Method

The issue of (religious) authority has been of great relevance to Muslims from an early date, and it has always been controversial. As a result of mass education and new forms of mass communication spreading from the late 19th century onward, individuals, groups, and institutions who previously would not have been considered qualified to speak on Islam have asserted their right to do so. As a result, an unprecedented variety of speakers have made statements of uncertain status on Islam in general and pluralism and tolerance in particular. The 'ulama' (religious scholars) have by no means disappeared from the stage. But next to them, and often in competition with them, other voices employ different modes of expression, some of them decidedly modern. These include Islamic activists and intellectuals who share what has become known as the "Islamic discourse" (*al-khiṭāb al-islāmī*).

Islamists (*islāmiyyūn*, *uṣūliyyūn*) are defined here as a discursive community sharing a number of claims and assumptions: that Islam provides a comprehensive set of norms and values ordering human life in all its manifestations; that this set of norms and values derives solely from the Qur'an and the Prophetic traditions (sunna) and that it is enshrined in the shari'a; and that to follow other sources of normative guidance, such as modern political ideologies, amounts to *shirk*, or "associating" other powers with God. From this they conclude that for Islam to be fully realized within a given community or territory, the shari'a must be "applied" exclusively and in its entirety, and that the application of the shari'a makes Islam into a unique, self-contained, and all-embracing "order" or "system" (*niẓām*) competing with other ideological systems. Islamists pursue various strategies to realize their goals, nonviolent as well as violent, in contrast to the majority of Muslims, who reject violence except in cases of legitimate self-defense. Distinctions among Islamists, Muslim scholars advocating an "Islamic solution," and other Muslims speaking on Islam are less clear when it comes to the precise shape of the "Islamic order" in general and definitions of pluralism and tolerance in particular.

Many of the positions reviewed here are not strikingly original. However, they illustrate a specifically modern legal-cum-political reasoning that aims to be true to the Islamic heritage (*al-turāth*) and at the same time fully attuned to present realities. Global power relations clearly affect the style of writing and the thrust of the argument, giving it a defensive ring. Even authors expressing themselves strictly in Islamic terms, condemning the adoption of un-Islamic concepts, do so against the backdrop of a challenge posed by the West and modernity as defined by the West. This includes understandings of pluralism and tolerance as core elements of modernity and good governance. At the beginning of the 21st century, debate has become overshadowed by the threat of militant Islamism and the fear of terrorism, calling forth attempts to define "true Islam," which is not what its enemies claim it to be. Opposition to Islamist violence also informs reflections on the status of pluralism and tolerance among Muslims and between Muslims and non-Muslims.

Faced with Western demands on the one hand and Islamist militancy on the other, Muslim scholar-activists have attempted to define a "middle ground," *al-wasaṭiyya*, a concept that came to the fore in the 1990s and is widely identified with the Egyptian-born