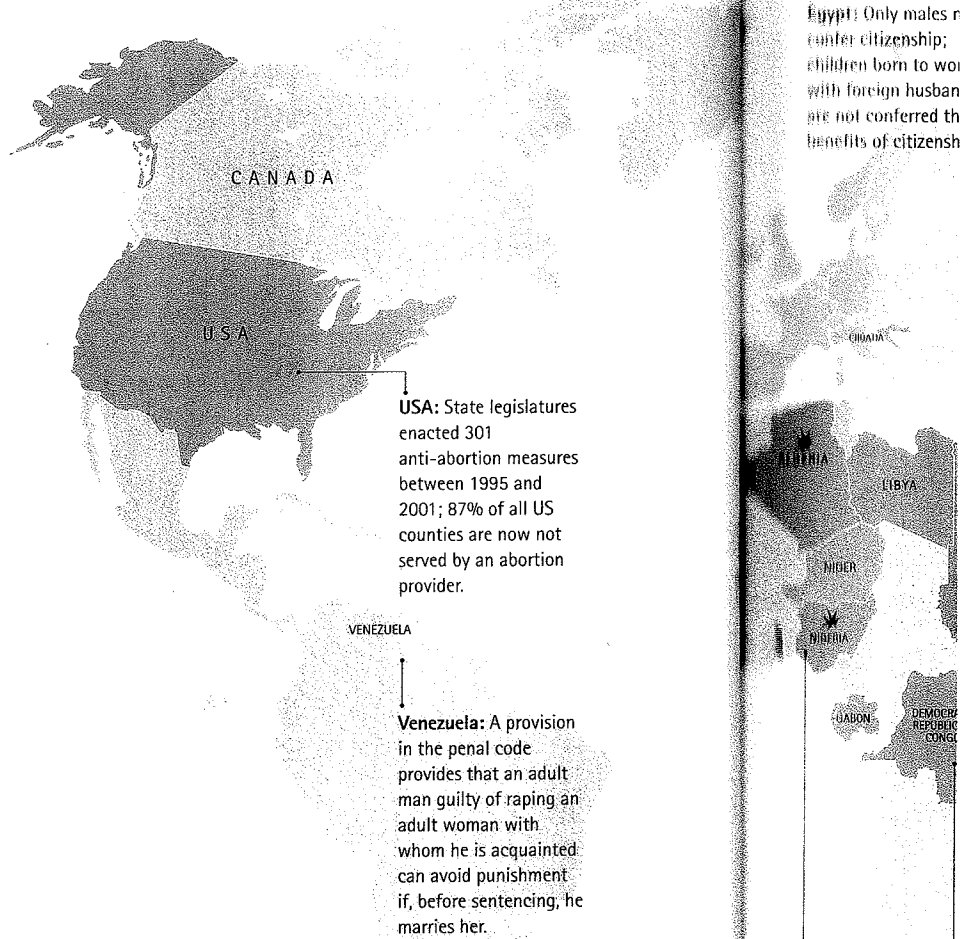


### 3 In Their Place

As a broad political observation, we might say that women everywhere face *de facto* restrictions on their public presence, dress, and private and public behavior. But in many countries, “keeping women in their place” is a literal undertaking. Mobility and dress restrictions, enforced in a surprising number of countries, are rooted in standard patriarchal assumptions about men’s right to control women, in potent combination with fundamentalist religious interpretations.

Women’s rights are under increasing pressure from religious fundamentalism in many countries – Hindu fundamentalism in India, Christian fundamentalism in the USA, Roman Catholic in Croatia, Islamic in Algeria, are just some of the examples. The rising tide of fundamentalism is everywhere contested. Feminists have been especially active in challenging the legitimacy of fundamentalist proscriptions, and in offering alternative interpretations of religious texts.

Restrictions on women are in most cases symptomatic of wider human rights abuses and political repression. They are cultivated in a climate of widespread oppression that affects women and men in many ways.

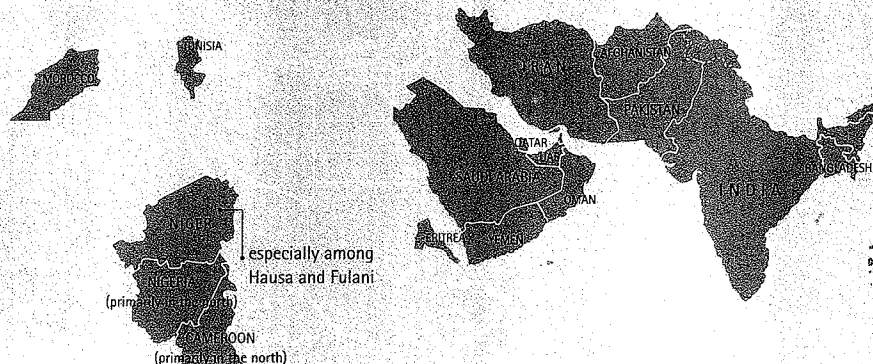


Egypt: Only males receive citizenship; children born to women with foreign husbands are not conferred the benefits of citizenship.

#### The practice of seclusion

Seclusion of women known to be an accepted practice early 2000






Women are restricted in their public movements, and often strictly cloistered in the home. In many of these countries, seclusion is practiced only among some ethnic or religious groups.

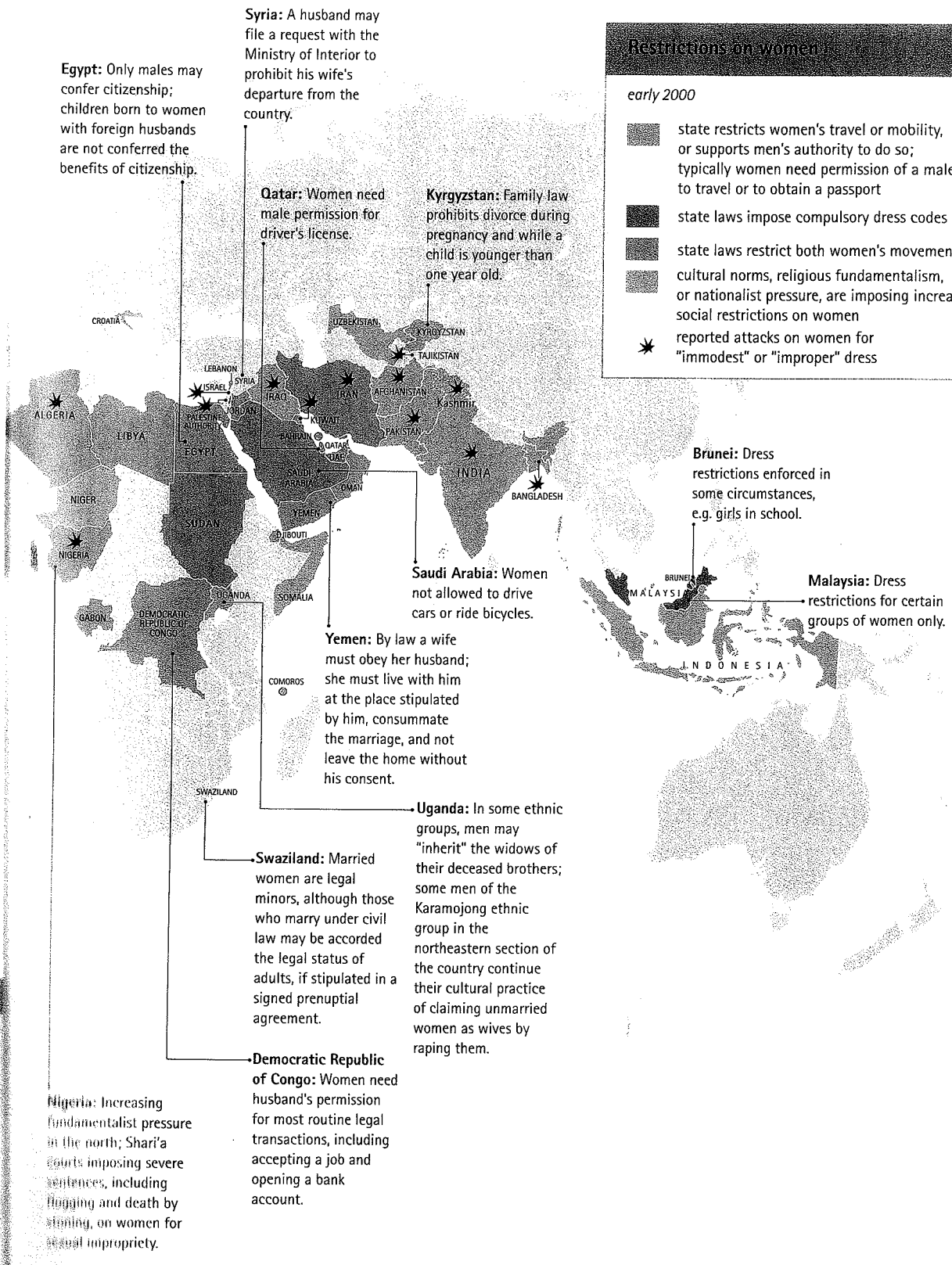


Nigeria: Increasing fundamentalist pressure in the north; Shari'a courts imposing severe sentences, including flogging and death by stoning, on women for sexual impropriety.

## Restrictions on women

early 2000

-  state restricts women's travel or mobility, or supports men's authority to do so; typically women need permission of a male relative to travel or to obtain a passport
-  state laws impose compulsory dress codes on women
-  state laws restrict both women's movement and dress
-  cultural norms, religious fundamentalism, or nationalist pressure, are imposing increasing social restrictions on women
-  reported attacks on women for "immodest" or "improper" dress



**Egypt:** Only males may confer citizenship; children born to women with foreign husbands are not conferred the benefits of citizenship.

**Syria:** A husband may file a request with the Ministry of Interior to prohibit his wife's departure from the country.

**Qatar:** Women need male permission for driver's license.

**Kyrgyzstan:** Family law prohibits divorce during pregnancy and while a child is younger than one year old.

**Saudi Arabia:** Women not allowed to drive cars or ride bicycles.

**Yemen:** By law a wife must obey her husband; she must live with him at the place stipulated by him, consummate the marriage, and not leave the home without his consent.

**Uganda:** In some ethnic groups, men may "inherit" the widows of their deceased brothers; some men of the Karamojong ethnic group in the northeastern section of the country continue their cultural practice of claiming unmarried women as wives by raping them.

**Swaziland:** Married women are legal minors, although those who marry under civil law may be accorded the legal status of adults, if stipulated in a signed prenuptial agreement.

**Democratic Republic of Congo:** Women need husband's permission for most routine legal transactions, including accepting a job and opening a bank account.

**Nigeria:** Increasing fundamentalist pressure in the north; Shari'a courts imposing severe sentences, including flogging and death by stoning, on women for sexual impropriety.

**Brunei:** Dress restrictions enforced in some circumstances, e.g. girls in school.

**Malaysia:** Dress restrictions for certain groups of women only.